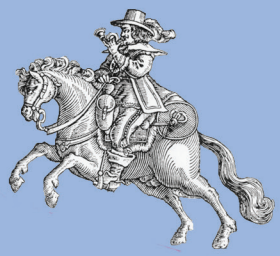
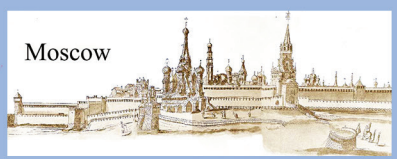
Cross-Cultural Communication in Early Modern Russia

Foreign News in Context

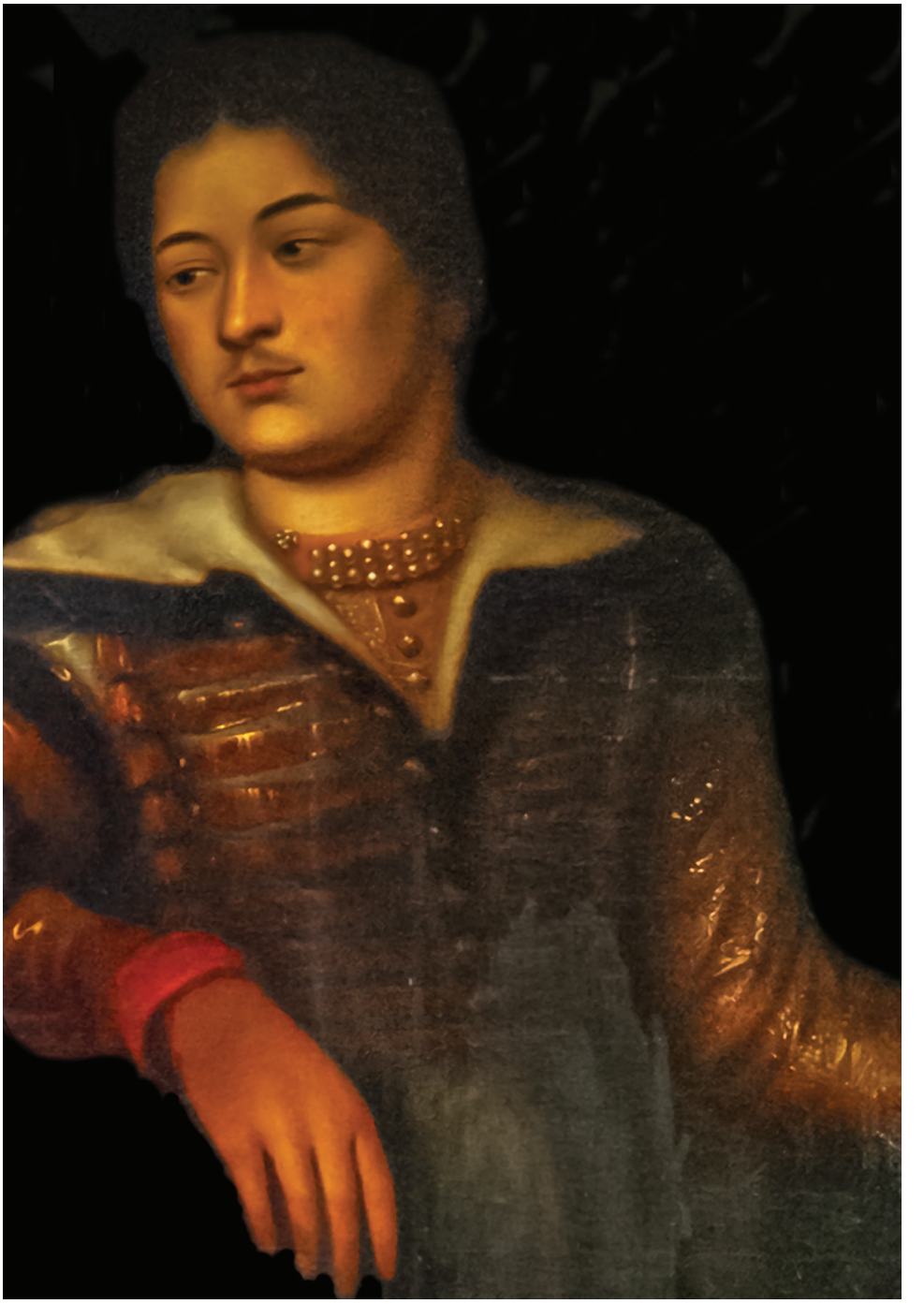
DANIEL C. WAUGH
and
INGRID MAIER





CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN EARLY MODERN RUSSIA:

FOREIGN NEWS IN CONTEXT



Ivan Afanas'evich Zheliabuzhskii (1638–ca. 1709), portrayed as a member of the Russian embassy to England in 1662. Collection of the State Historical Museum, Moscow. Photo: DCW.

Cross-Cultural Communication in Early Modern Russia:

Foreign News in Context

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This is a work about the acquisition of foreign news in Russia, an attempt to determine its significance not only for government decision making but also for the cultural changes which were underway there during the seventeenth century. The core material for the study is the *kuranty*, the Russian translations from periodical newspapers and separates, most of them published in Dutch or German in the major European commercial centers. However, the Muscovite government regularly acquired foreign news from many other sources, both written and oral. Their analysis is essential too if one is to understand the importance of the *kuranty*. What was the institutional context within which such news was being obtained and processed? Who were the individuals involved? Contextualization also invites serious consideration of how the foreign news was treated and understood in Europe, where there was a communications 'revolution' underway. Might there not be some similarities with what was happening in Russia, at the same time that there are significant differences? Do we see here evidence of 'influence', or might it not be better to think of 'creative adaptation' within a framework of existing pragmatic solutions to the challenges of obtaining essential information? The book thus has a broad comparative aspect which should offer new insights into the cultural, intellectual, and social history of early modern Russia and contribute as well to the study of the information revolution elsewhere in Europe.

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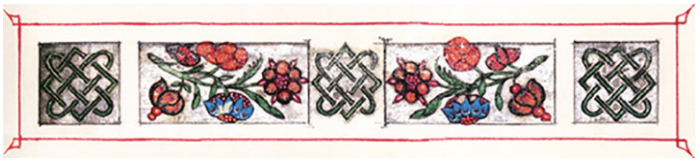

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Among the many institutions that have facilitated our work note especially The Russian State Archive for Ancient Acts (RGADA) in Moscow, under the directorate of the late Mikhail Petrovich Lukichev (until 2001) and Mikhail Rafailovich Ryzhenkov (until 2019). Also of great importance is the research institute 'Deutsche Presseforschung', located in the University Library Bremen. Without this institute, with its collection of most of the preserved German-language newspapers from the seventeenth century (on microfilms and printouts from the films), our research would have been very difficult. We are very grateful to Holger Böning and Michael Nagel – the last professors at the institute – for their support and hospitality. We thank Astrid Blome and Johannes Weber,

who also supported us during their time at the institute. Since now – thanks to Holger Böning's initiative – the whole Bremen collection of copies is digitized and accessible on line, we could make many last-minute checks for our book without going to Bremen. One 'archive' we both have visited – albeit in different periods – is the Museum Enschedé in Haarlem, which formerly housed the very rich collection of the Haarlem newspaper (moved to the Noord-Hollands Archief in 2015). We are grateful to the late Nellie Hoeflake and to Johan de Zoete, the curators of the Museum Enschedé during the relevant years, for their help.

We express our sincere thanks to the Institute for Modern Languages in Uppsala, IM's home institute, whose support extended to DW during his stays in Uppsala. We also wish to thank the university libraries and their staffs in Seattle and in Uppsala, particularly the interlibrary loan divisions, but also librarians who have purchased essential books for the project – above all Mirka Bialecka in Uppsala, and Michael Biggins and Theresa Mudrock in Seattle.

Last but not least, DW acknowledges his indebtedness to Charlotte Green Waugh, who has shared the long and often stormy voyage of this project and been instrumental in guiding it past the treacherous shoals of despair into safe harbor.

As our analysis of early modern news reporting and its reception demonstrates, many consumers of the news in the seventeenth century were very cautious about accepting it on face value without confirmation from other sources. In an age when the need for critical assessment of information seems ever the more important, we dedicate this book to our grandchildren – Alvar and Joar Olsson, Love Rabineau, and Tasman Waugh – with the hope that they will learn how to assess the accuracy of the news they hear, a challenge people have confronted down through history.

D. W.
I. M.

Shoreline, Washington, USA
Uppsala, Sweden

25 December 2023

CONVENTIONS

Our transliteration of the many Russian names and expressions follows the 'modified Library of Congress System', which avoids diacritical signs and is most commonly used in English-language works about Russian history and literature and in major library databases. Cyrillic letters in the old orthography (prior to 1917) that are no longer in use have been transliterated as their modern equivalents. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations into English are our own.

The rendering of proper names is complicated, since several ethno-linguistic territories are encompassed here, and many place names have changed over time. As a result, we have adopted practical, if not always consistent, compromises. There is no solution to the problem which will satisfy every reader. The polity which is the focus of our book is referred to variously in the literature. Although the term 'Russia' obscures the fact that its territories at one time or another included parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Ukraine, and the now independent Baltic countries of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, we have elected to use the common shorthand 'early modern Russia' as well as 'Muscovy' or 'the Muscovite State'. Its residents and officials, not always ethnic Russians, may be designated as 'Muscovites'.

We also follow 'common English usage' for some cities, for instance Moscow (not Moskva), Kiev (not Kyiv), Warsaw (not Warszawa), Archangel (not Arkhangel'sk), Vienna (not Wien), etc. We drop the indication of the terminal 'soft sign' at the end of Russian place names (e.g., Kazan and Astrakhan, instead of Kazan' and Astrakhan'). For many other locations, the basic principle is to prioritize the usage in our early modern primary sources. Thus we use Vilna (the Russian form but without the soft sign), Königsberg, Dorpat, Reval, and Danzig (not the modern Vilnius, Kaliningrad, Tartu, Tallinn, and Gdańsk). On first mention and occasionally later as a reminder, the modern or other alternative renderings of the names will be given in parentheses.

Places and personal names in Ukraine are a particularly thorny problem. The boundaries have changed, with locations at one time in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, another time under the autonomous Cossack hetmanate, and yet another time under Russian administration. The ethnicity and language of individuals is often difficult to know for certain. Here we have generally followed the sensible solutions adopted by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, as exemplified in its extensively indexed translation of Mykhailo Hrushevsky's *History of Ukraine-Rus'*, a work we refer to in tracking the events of the wars beginning in the late 1640s. Thus we write Lviv (not L'vov or Lemberg), Chyhyryn (not Chigirin or Czehryń), Zaporozhia (not Zaporizhzhia), Bila Tserkva (not Belaia Tserkov'), etc. The leader of the Cossack uprising is here called Bohdan Khmelnytsky (not Bogdan Khmel'nyts'kyi or Chmielnicki); the important magnate and diplomat is spelled Adam Kysil (not Kisel'), etc.

For other personal names, we use their national forms (in Russian, for instance, Aleksei Mikhailovich; in Polish, Jan Kazimierz), but in a few instances we make exceptions for common figures, notably Peter I ('the Great') rather than Petr I or Gustavus Adolphus (not Gustav II Adolf). Where we are not sure of the ethno-linguistic identity of a person, we will prefer the Russian rendering of the name as given in most of our primary sources. Hungarian names follow English practice, surname last, not first as in Hungary.

Unless otherwise specified, dates are given according to the Julian calendar, which was used in Russia, England, Sweden-Finland, Denmark-Norway, Prussia, and in most Northern German cities. Julian dates in the seventeenth century are ten days behind those of the Gregorian calendar, which had been adopted primarily in Catholic countries, but also in most provinces of the Dutch Republic (for instance, in Amsterdam). Where there may be some doubt, we specify O.S. or N.S. (old style, new style) or give both dates, e.g., 1/11 March. Dates in the form 1671–1672 designate the sequence of the two years in either calendar, whereas 1671/72 refers to the 'Russian year', which began on 1 September 1671 and ended on 31 August 1672.

In citing Russian archival sources, we preserve the abbreviations for deposit (f. = *fond*) and inventory (op. = *opis'*). We render the individual file unit by "No." any subsection by pt. (part), and individual folios (leaves) by fol. Thus, for example: RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1642–1644, No. 2, pt. 3, fols. 618–629^{v}. In many cases, our references are not directly to the archival document but rather to the unpublished inventories, which may be accessed by deposit number on the Internet from the RGADA website (http://rgada.info/). The inventories are in bound books, most written by Nikolai Bantysh-Kamenskii at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries (a few are typescripts or printed, the work of modern archivists). In Bantysh-Kamenskii's inventories, the year is that at the top of each folio; under it one sees the file descriptions in his numbering (No.), starting with No. 1 for any given year, but also with indications of scroll numbers, etc. While the individual file numbers for the most part correspond to the current archival numbering (often cited by d. [*delo*] or ed. khr. [*edinitsa khraneniia*] rather than No.), in some instances files have been renumbered if moved to other locations in the archive. In referring to the inventories, where we cite a folio number, it is that of the inventory, not the archival unit it lists (for example, RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 122, No. 1).

Minor early imprints are cited only in the notes but not listed in the bibliography. For those which are located in the standard databases of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century German publications (VD16 and VD17) – often with full-text files – we give the stable reference number (e.g., VD17 23:313535Q), which can simply be copied into the search box to bring up the title. For scanned texts in the database for Early English Books Online (EEBO) we provide the standard bibliographic reference numbers (generally according to the Short Title Catalogue or Wing). After the initial references to seventeenth-century newspapers by their full titles, for the frequently cited ones we use the abbreviations listed below. The list of abbreviations also includes standard journals and documentary collections, and frequently cited reference and source publications. Infrequently cited published primary sources are listed along with secondary literature in the bibliography. Short references to a publication and page number are in the main text in parentheses, although in a few cases relegated to footnotes to make the reading of individual paragraphs easier. Longer citations and additional commentary are in the footnotes. Since this is an e-book, readers should be able to search easily electronically; we therefore have not provided indexes.

In the few citations of URLs to online resources, we do not provide live links, and, to avoid odd spacing of lines, in some instances we have added a space in the electronic address which would have to be removed when pasting it into a browser. The links have all been checked during the final stages of formatting the book in autumn 2023.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Journals, Frequently Cited Printed and Reference Sources

AAE	*Akty, sobrannye v bibliotekakh i arkhivakh Rossiiskoi imperii Arkheograficheskoiu ekspeditsieiu Imperatorskoi akademii nauk*. 5 vols. Sanktpeterburg, 1836–1838
ADP	*Archiv für Deutsche Postgeschichte*
AI	*Akty istoricheskie, sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu*. 5 vols. Sanktpeterburg, 1841–1842; *Ukazatel' k Aktam istoricheskim, izdannym Arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu*. Sanktpeterburg, 1843
AIuZR	*Akty, otnosiashchiesia k istorii iuzhnoi i zapadnoi Rossii*. 15 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 1861–1892
Amburger-Datenbank	Erik-Amburger-Datenbank: Ausländer im vorrevolutionären Russland (https://www.amburger.ios-regensburg.de/)
AMG	*Akty Moskovskago gosudarstva, izdannye Imperatorskoiu akademieiu nauk*. 3 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 1890–1901
APT	*Archiv für Post und Telegraphie*
Bantysh-Kamenskii	Bantysh-Kamenskii, Nikolai Nikolaevich. *Obzor vneshnikh snoshenii Rossii (po 1800 god)*. 4 vols. Moskva: 1894–1902
Beliakov et al.	Beliakov, Andrei Vasil'evich, Andrei Gennad'evich Gus'kov, Dmitrii Vladimirovich Liseitsev, and Stepan Mikhailovich Shamin. *Perevodchiki Posol'skogo prikaza v XVII v.: materialy k slovariu*. Moskva, 2021
BLDR	*Biblioteka literatury Drevnei Rusi*. 20 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 2000–2020
ChOIDR	*Chteniia v Obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete*
DAI	*Dopolneniia k Aktam istoricheskim, sobrannyia i izdannyia Arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu*. 12 vols. Sanktpeterburg, 1846–1872; *Ukazatel' k pervym desiati tomam Dopolnenii k Aktam Istoricheskim*. S.-Peterburg, 1875
Delpher	Online database of Dutch publications including early newspapers, KB nationale bibliotheek/National Library of the Netherlands (https://www.delpher.nl/)
DP Bremen	Deutsche Presseforschung der Universität Bremen. Online database of seveneenth-century German newspapers (https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17)
DR	*Dvortsovye razriady, Vysochaishemu poveleniiu izdannye II-m otdeleniem sobstvennoi Ego Imperatorskago Velichestva kantseliarii*. 4 vols. in 5. Sankt-Peterburg, 1850–1855
DRV	*Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika, soderzhashchaia v sebe: sobranie drevnostei rossiiskikh, do istorii, geografii i genealogii rossiiskiia kasaiushchikhsia*. Ed. by Nikolai Novikov. 2nd ed., 1788
DRVM	*Drevniaia Rus'. Voprosy medievistiki*
EEBO	Early English Books Online (on-line database for English books printed 1470–1700, available through subscribing libraries)
Estreicher	Estreicher, Karol, comp. 1870–2020. *Bibliografia Polska*, Vols. 1–35. Kraków (accessed via https://www.estreicher.uj.edu.pl/home/)
FOG	*Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*
Hrushevsky	Hrushevsky, Mykhailo. 2002–2014. *History of Ukraine-Rus'*. Vols. 8–10 in 5 vols. Vol. 8: *The Cossack Age, 1626–1650*; Vol. 9. Bk. 1: *The Cossack Age, 1650–1653*; Vol. 9, Bk. 2, Pts. 1–2: *The Cossack Age, 1654–1657*; Vol. 10: *The Cossack Age, 1657–1659*. Tr. by Marta Daria Olynyk/Bohdan Strumiński; Editor in Chief Frank E. Sysyn. Edmonton; Toronto
JEMH	*Journal of Early Modern History*
JGO	*Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*

Knuttel	Knuttel, W. P. C., comp. *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek*. 9 pts. in 11 vols. 's-Gravenhage, 1889–1921
OSP	*Oxford Slavonic Papers*
PDS	*Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii drevnei Rossii s derzhavami inostrannymi*. 10 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 1851–1871
Perevodchiki 2019	*Perevodchiki i perevody v Rossii kontsa XVI–nachala XVIII stoletiia. 2019 Materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii Moskva, 12–13 sentiabria 2019 g*. Ed. by D. V. Liseitsev and S. M. Shamin. Moskva
Perevodchiki 2021	*Perevodchiki i perevody v Rossii kontsa XVI–nachala XVIII stoletiia. Materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii Moskva, 29–30 sentiabria 2021 g*. Vyp. 2. Ed. by D. V. Liseitsev and S. M. Shamin. Moskva
Perevodchiki 2023	*Perevodchiki i perevody v Rossii do nachala XVIII stoletiia. Materialy 12 Mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii 'Kompleksnyi podkhod v izuchenii Drevnej Rusi' 11–15 sentiabria 2023 g*. Vyp. 3. Ed. by D. V. Liseitsev and S. M. Shamin. Moskva
PKK	*Pamiatniki, izdannye Vremennoiu kommissieiu dlia razbora drevnikh aktov, vysochaishe uchrezhdennoiu pri kievskom voennom, podol'skom i volynskom generalgubernatore*. Vol. 1. 2nd ed. Kiev, 1848
PSB	*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*. 1935–2011. Wrocław etc. (Also available as *Internetowy Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, without the pagination of the print edition: https://bur.ur.edu.pl)
PSZ	*Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*. 47 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 1830
RBS	*Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*. 25 vols. Sankt-Peterburg/Petrograd, 1896–1918
RIB	*Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, 40 vols. Sankt-Peterburg; Petrograd; Leningrad, 1872–1927
RUD	*Russkaia i ukrainskaia diplomatiia v mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniiakh v Evrope serediny XVII v*. Moskva, 2007
SEER	*The Slavonic and East European Review*
SGGiD	*Sobranie gosudarstvennykh gramot i dogovorov, khraniashchikhsia v Gosudarstvennoi Kollegii inostrannykh del*. 5 vols. Moskva, 1813–1894
SIRIO	*Sbornik Imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*. 148 vols. Sankt-Peterburg, 1867–1916
SKKDR	*Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi*. 4 vols. in 9. Sankt-Peterburg, 1987–2017.
Solov'ev	Solov'ev, Sergei Mikhailovich. *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen v piatnadtsati knigakh*. 29 vols. in 15 books. Moskva, 1960–1966
SRIa XI–XVII	*Slovar' russkogo iazyka XI–XVII vv*. (31 numbered volumes and two reference volumes to date). Moskva, 1975–
SRP	*Svenska Riksrådets Protokoll med understöd af statsmedel i tryck utgifvet af Riksarkivet*. Ed. by Severin Bergh. Vols. 12 (1647, 1648); 13 (1649). Handlingar rörande Sveriges historia. Tredje serien. Stockholm, 1908, 1912
Sreznevskii	Sreznevskii, Izmail Ivanovich. *Materialy dlia slovaria drevnerusskogo iazyka*. 3 vols.. Moskva, 1989 (reprint of St. Petersburg 1893–1912 edition)
Tiele	*Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche pamfletten. Eerste afdeeling. Verzameling van Frederik Muller te Amsterdam*. Naar tijdsorde gerangschickt en beschreven door P. A. Tiele. 2 vols. Amsterdam, 1858–1861
TODRL	*Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* (Instituta russkoi literatury RAN)
VD16	Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts (https://www.bsb-muenchen.de/sammlungen/historische-drucke/recherche/vd-16/)
VD17	Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachraum erschienenen Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts (http://www.vd17.de/)
V-K I	*Vesti-Kuranty. 1600–1639 gg*. Comp. by N. I. Tarabasova et al.; ed. by S. I. Kotkov. Moskva, 1972
V-K II	*Vesti-Kuranty. 1642–1644 gg*. Comp. by N. I. Tarabasova et al.; ed. by S. I. Kotkov. Moskva, 1976

V-K III	*Vesti-Kuranty. 1645–1646, 1648 gg*. Comp. by N. I. Tarabasova and V. G. Dem'ianov; ed. by S. I. Kotkov. Moskva, 1980
V-K IV	*Vesti-Kuranty. 1648–1650 gg*. Comp. by V. G. Dem'ianov and R. V. Bakhturina; ed. by S. I. Kotkov. Moskva, 1983
V-K V	*Vesti-Kuranty. 1651–1652 gg., 1654–1656 gg., 1658–1660 gg*. Comp. by V. G. Dem'ianov; ed. by. V. P. Vomperskii. Moskva, 1996
V-K VI/1	*Vesti-Kuranty 1656 g., 1660–1662, 1664–1670 gg. Chast' 1: Russkie teksty*. Comp. by V. G. Dem'ianov et al.; ed. by A. M. Moldovan and Ingrid Maier. Moskva, 2009
V-K VI/2	*Vesti-Kuranty 1656 g., 1660–1662, 1664–1670 gg. Chast' 2: Inostrannye originaly k russkim tekstam*. Issledovanie i podgotovka tekstov Ingrid Maier. Moskva, 2008
V-K VII	*Vesti-Kuranty 1671–1672 gg*. Comp. by I. Maier, S. M. Shamin et al.; ed. by V. B. Krys'ko and Ingrid Maier. Moskva, 2017
VUR	*Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei. Dokumenty i materialy v trekh tomakh*, 3 vols. Moskva, 1954
ZhMNP	*Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia*

Archives and Manuscript Collections

BAN	Biblioteka Akademii nauk, Sankt-Peterburg
BL	British Library, London
GIM	Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei, Moskva
HAB	Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel
RA (Sthlm)	Riksarkivet, Stockholm
RA (Cop)	Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen
RGADA	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov, Moskva (formerly TsGADA: Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov)
RGB	Rossiiskaia gosudarstvennaia biblioteka, Moskva (formerly GBL: Gosudarstvennaia biblioteka SSSR im. V. I. Lenina)
RNB	Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka, Sankt-Peterburg (formerly GPB: Gosudarstvennaia Publichnaia biblioteka im. M. E. Saltykova-Shchedrina)
SLUB	Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden
SPbII RAN	Institut istorii Rossiiskoi akademii nauk, Sankt-Peterburg (formerly LOII: Leningradskoe otdelenie Instituta istorii SSSR AN SSSR)
Stabi	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz
TNA	The National Archives, London
UUB	Universitetsbiblioteket, Uppsala

Seventeenth-Century Newspapers and Serial Publications

BE	*B. Einkommende Ordinari und Postzeitungen* (Berlin)
CID	*Courante uyt Italien en Duytschlant* (Amsterdam)
DOF	*Dantziger Ordinari Freytags Zeitung* (Danzig)
EDC	*Europische Dingsdaegs Courant* (Amsterdam)
EMZ	*Europæische Mitwochentliche Zeitung* (Hamburg)
ESC	*Europische Saterdaegs Courant* (Amsterdam)
ESZ	*Europæische Sambstägige Zeitung* (Hamburg)
EWZ	*Einkommende Wochentliche Zeitung*
HM	*Hollandse Mercurius*, Vols. 1- . Haarlem: P. Casteleyn, 1651-
KDO	*Königsb. Donnerstags Ordinari PostZeitung* (Königsberg)
KSO	*Königsb. Sontags Ordinari PostZeitung* (Königsberg)
KSP	*Königsb. Sontags Post-Zeitung* (Königsberg)

MM *Mittwochischer Mercurius* (Berlin)

NM *Nordischer Mercurius* (Hamburg)

ODC *Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant* (Amsterdam)

OHC *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (Haarlem), its weekly issues being:
- *OHD* *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingdaegse Courant*
- *EHD* *Extraordinaire Haerlemse Donderdaegse Courant* (beginning in 1667)
- *OHS* *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant*

OMC *Ordinarise Middelweeckse Courante* (Amsterdam)

TVQ *Tijdinghe uyt Verscheyde Quartieren* (Amsterdam), published by Broer Jansz, but without title during its first decade, 1619–1628

WZ *Wochentliche Zeitung* (Hamburg), its three weekly issues being:
- *ODiZ* *Ordinari Diengstags Zeitung* (in 1649 replaces *Ordentliche Zeitung*)
- *WDoZ* *Wochentliche Donnerstags Zeitung*
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Fig. 21.7. Seal of Sultan Mustafa II and the signet ring retrieved from the body of the Turkish grand vizier. Collection of the Heeresgeschichtliches Museum (Vienna). Photo: DCW.

Fig. 21.8. The 'Bronze Horseman' of Vienna: the statue of Prince Eugene of Savoy erected in 1863 in front of the Hofburg, the imperial winter palace. Photo: DCW.

The vignette of the post rider on the cover and on several pages between sections of our book is from the broadside *Neuer Auß Münster vom 25. deß Weinmonats im Jahr 1648. abgefertigter Freud- und Friedenbringender Postreuter*. N.p., 1648 (VD17 4620:736947M). The headpieces and tailpieces on the opening and concluding pages of sections and chapters are adapted from the title page decoration in the elegant manuscript of the 1672 Moscow *Tituliarnik* (*Portrety* 1903).

This Book and Its History: a Personal Perspective

'The time has come', the walrus said,
'To talk of many things...'
– Lewis Carroll,
Through the Looking Glass

The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men
Gang aft agley.
– Robert Burns
'To a Mouse'

This is a book about the acquisition of foreign news in Russia, an attempt to determine its significance not only for government decision making but also in the cultural changes which were underway there during the seventeenth century. The core material for the study is the *kuranty*, the Russian translations from periodical newspapers and separates, most of them published in Dutch or German in the major European commercial centers. However, the Muscovite government regularly acquired many other sources of foreign news, both written and oral. Their study is essential too if one is to understand the importance of the *kuranty*. What was the institutional context within which such news was being obtained and processed? Who were the individuals involved? Contextualization also invites serious consideration of how the foreign news was treated and understood in Europe, where there was a communications 'revolution' underway. Might there not be some similarities with what was happening in Russia, at the same time that there are significant differences? Do we see here evidence of 'influence', or might it not be better to think of 'creative adaptation' within a framework of existing pragmatic solutions to the challenges of obtaining essential information? Our book thus has a broad comparative aspect which we hope will offer new insights into the cultural, intellectual, and social history of early modern Russia.

My co-author, Ingrid Maier, and I have agreed that I write this introductory essay, presented here in lieu of a joint preface. The explanation for this perhaps unusual decision is my belief that some personal history about at least my own long road traveled before arriving at the current book is relevant to help a reader understand how this complex study evolved, what we hope are its strengths, but also what we would wish could have been different but could not be achieved. There is an illusion amongst some scholars that personal, institutional, political or other constraints which may have influenced early work on a subject need not be discussed. In that view, what is important is to present the latest, impersonally objective results of the newest research, even if the author struggled to arrive at that point. Yet how can we really appreciate a new book, unless we know something about how the author got there? Defying convention, I shall

talk of many things, and to paraphrase Burns' words, part of the story is about how best laid plans indeed may go in unanticipated directions.

The essay can serve multiple purposes, one being to provide a brief review of my earlier work on the subject, rather than leave that for Chapter 1 on the historiography, where Ingrid Maier's scholarship will be covered. I shall try to explain the evolution of the ideas from what was originally conceived as a relatively narrow academic monograph to what is now a very complex and perhaps overly ambitious study (for specific references see the bibliography). There is still a great deal of that early scholarship, begun more than half a century ago, which retains some value and has been incorporated into the present volume, selectively and with many revisions. There have been some false starts, changes in direction, and rethinking of original premises. Readers who are impatient simply to have a systematic overview of our book's contents can skip ahead to the final section of this essay (starting on p. 25), which provides that sort of introduction to what follows.

THE PAST AS PROLOGUE

What began as a rather narrowly conceived Ph.D. dissertation in the 1960s relating to the history of early modern Russia is now a much broader and serious effort to write comparative history, even if its primary audience remains the same. Its potential audience now includes not just Muscovite history specialists but also historical linguists, specialists on the history of newspapers and communications in premodern Europe, and others. Expanding the purview of the work in this way is both challenging and risky, since the ambition of the project may well have exceeded the ability of the authors to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Should that be the case, *mea culpa*. Indeed, despite the size and detail of this study, in important ways I would characterize our book as a kind of 'interim' report, intended to summarize a great deal of existing scholarship and break new ground with an emphasis on important methodological issues which will need to be considered by those who, we hope, may pursue the subject in the future. This is a cautionary example of how, as the old adage says, the more one learns, the less one seems to know. As we shall elaborate, one of the chief obstacles to progress is the need for much more archival work and publication of basic sources. We are now at a stage in our lives where that task and the analysis of the new material has to be left for others.

My initial acquaintance with our core sources, the *kuranty,* was in an era that today's new generation of scholars might find hard to imagine, the time before personal computers, e-mail for almost instant communication with colleagues, digitization of archival materials and publications, and the removal of at least some important political and ideological controls. As an example, whereas now one can access online the inventories for the collections of the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), in my first and all too brief opportunity to work in the archive half a century ago, I had to rely on the expertise and good will of the staff to obtain material and never could be shown any of the inventories, which we often cite now in our book, to be able to identify other possibly relevant material. A kind of open-ended search to locate materials, especially in the

foreign relations files, was impossible for an outsider. The opportunities for studying this material have been transformed now, even if there are still many desiderata for even better access to the sources. It is difficult to imagine whether anything close to this book could have been written half a century ago, especially since in the interim there has been a surge of relevant publication of primary sources and academic studies. Scholarly communication across borders has become so much easier. However, just keeping up on the new literature is a challenge.

My early work focused on Muscovite *turcica*, the translated texts relating to the Ottoman Turks and Islam. Among these texts were *kuranty* translations, both from newspaper reports and separates, the latter including a great many anti-Turkish propaganda pamphlets devoted to an apocryphal correspondence of the Ottoman sultan. The work addressed questions of how and how rapidly the Western sources were acquired in Moscow and looked at the history of key institutions – the Ambassadorial Chancery (*Posol'skii prikaz*) and the Tsar's Privy Chancery (*Prikaz Velikogo Gosudaria tainykh del*). The latter, whose history is closely connected with the personal interests of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, oversaw the establishment of the first Russian foreign post in the mid-1660s. The main goal in establishing the post was to regularize the acquisition of foreign news. My aim was not only to situate the *turcica* in the context of other Western publications about the Turks but also to correlate the translations with particular moments in the development of Ottoman-Russian relations. My interpretive paradigm was the already somewhat worn but long-established emphasis on demonstrating how 'borrowing' and 'influence' from the West contributed to the processes of 'modernization' or 'westernization' in Russia during the century prior to the reign of Tsar Peter I ('The Great'). Such an approach retains its relevance, even though in the present study it has been reframed to take into account the adaptability of traditional institutions.

In certain ways, of course, my project was inherently comparative. The subject required looking beyond just the Russian sources themselves. I brought to the task doctoral fields in early modern European diplomatic history and in Ottoman history and at least a beginning acquaintance with Turkish that helped in analysis of diplomatic formulae contained in certain of the documents. Two years in the USSR on an academic exchange, where I was assigned not to a history department but supervised rather by early Russian literature specialists, helped to develop my skills in 'auxiliary disciplines' for manuscript analysis and for trying to determine who the readers were of the texts. To a considerable degree, I was learning by doing, where some of the essential tools were not ones that could have been acquired through prior study, there being no courses on Slavic palæography and codicology in U.S. universities at that time. My focus on text interpretation and manuscript study emulated what the many excellent early Russian literature specialists were doing and has remained an important part of my subsequent work, as will be apparent in the methodological discussions throughout our book.

Yet because of my focus on methodological questions – which might be subsumed under the standard Russian 'discipline' of 'source study' (*istochnikovedenie*) – the pub-

lished results of the dissertation were narrow in focus and, where they appeared in in-house journals, of limited access to other scholars. Furthermore, even if the primary audience for that publication was mainly the Russian specialists, there were barriers to acceptance, among them the fact that the research appeared in English. The parts of the original dissertation which made it into print included a number of items which later would be used, revised and corrected (by, among others, my co-author): a long review of the first volume of the new Russian series publishing the *kuranty*; work on the apocryphal letters, where at the time I wrote there was still reluctance to accept the argument that most of them were translations; an essay on the translations about the 'mystical messiah' Shabbetai Zvi; and articles devoted to some of the materials in Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery archive.

I planned that the book on the apocryphal letters (a much rewritten and expanded version of but one chapter in the dissertation) was to be followed by a second monograph, more broadly conceived, on the *kuranty*. In embryonic form it would have been something like the present book, with the goal of situating the *kuranty* in the context of European news acquisition and dissemination and in the Russian context broadened by an examination of other sources of international news. And here is where the plans went awry: a sabbatical year produced few results and convinced me to abandon the project. I think to a considerable degree I was confronting the problem about which the famous medieval Arab polymath, Ibn Khaldûn (2005: 414–415), had warned in his 'Introduction to History':

> [A]mong the things that are most harmful to the human quest for knowledge and to the attainment of a thorough scholarship are the great number of works available [...] Thus, the student must know all the works, or most of them, and observe the methods used in them. His whole lifetime would not suffice to know all the literature that exists in a single discipline [...] Thus he must of necessity fall short of attaining scholarship [...]

I simply was unable to see how it would be possible to contextualize even the still limited body of the *kuranty* that were now being published by Russian linguists, identify and discuss their sources (a task which would require extended research in European libraries), determine the accuracy and significance of the translated news, and assess its impact on the making of Russian foreign policy and importance in Russia's cultural transformation during the seventeenth century. My next two decades, occupied by other concerns, would have the unintended consequence of shaping my thinking in ways that would turn out to be both a blessing and a curse when eventually I agreed to resume work on the *kuranty*.

To begin to question the old paradigms about modernization developed logically out of my study of a provincial bookman and his library in the time of Peter the Great. There was a lot of evidence suggesting (as other scholars had been doing) that it was time to reconsider questions about Russia's march to modernity and the periodization which had always marked a break from 'traditional Muscovy' during Peter's reign. The adaptability of Russian traditions to meet the pragmatic needs of the government and society

is impressive well into the period when Western models were known and understood, many of them in fact of marginal value and difficult to replicate.

Less obviously connected with our current book is the fact that I had begun to develop a serious interest in studying, teaching and writing about the historic 'Silk Roads', which flourished in what some consider was the first era of globalization. Here too were some of the dangers inherent in trying to learn everything, especially in a 'subject' that defies easy definition and requires formidable skills even for narrowly conceived research on some small part of it. That said, it was easy to see potential parallels whose study might inform an inquiry relating to Russia's *kuranty*: ancient and medieval postal networks that were as good as those developed in Europe in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the importance of what we term 'relay' translation for the transmission of texts and in diplomatic exchange; the continuing role of oral communication in the era of the printing press, and so on. Even once I would commit to what was supposed to be an easy and quick collaboration on a book about the *kuranty*, I was still spending much of my time on the Silk Roads, and exploring every byway while also thinking about possible comparisons that might inform our book project.

A NEW BEGINNING

Much has been written about the practice and desirability of comparative history (for a critical review, see Levine 2014). An excellent example of how comparison can expand our understanding of developments in seemingly disparate polities and societies is the recent book by Anthony Barbieri-Low (2021). Trained as an early China specialist, he undertook serious study of Ancient Egypt (including learning to read its hieroglyphic texts) in order to compare New Kingdom Egypt (2nd millennium BCE) with Han Dynasty China (206 BCE–220 CE). His introduction (pp. 3–8) explains concisely what is involved in such work: "[Although] there is no standard accepted methodology for comparative study," the common goal of all such scholarship is "an assessment of similarities and differences between various cultures." As Levine (2014: 346) warns: "Taking up comparative work is – and should be – a daunting task. It requires prodigious work sometimes across languages or cultures. It requires imagination and flexibility. It takes a long time – which in today's corporate academic world earns you few friends in high places." In other words, here one is confronted with the obstacle Ibn Khaldûn recognized could stand in the way of "attaining scholarship". Barbieri-Low suggests (2021: 7) that to supersede the "problem of competency", it may be possible

> to collaborate with a scholar in the other field who can provide the necessary expertise in primary languages and historiography. This meeting of the minds can sometimes provide new insights and approaches that would not be generated by the single scholar approach, but the downside is that the work might lack coherence or the overarching narrative that a single scholar could provide.

In the case of our collaboration, I think it is safe to venture that both Ingrid and I separately had been engaging in comparative research and writing, if from differing disciplinary approaches and not as a result of following some theoretical model. The practical

demands imposed by our choices of subject informed what needed to be done with the material. That there was substantial overlap in our research at least had the promise that we could find common ground to produce an "overarching narrative".

Here is how our collaboration began and what were our somewhat vaguely defined expectations as to what it would accomplish. Preoccupied with my other work and not a specialist in historical linguistics, I had been unaware of Ingrid Maier's work when she inaugurated our e-mail exchange in 1999. If printed out now, that correspondence would fill several volumes. In her work on the *kuranty* as a source for studying the history of the Russian language, she had come across some of my old work. Her scholarship had required that she acquire expertise on the history of the first European newspapers and have fluency in a number of languages. My language competence was much more limited beyond Russian, I knew too little about the scholarship on the Western press and had but scratched the surface in searching out copies of the relevant premodern imprints. For the success of the book we now agreed to write, her expertise was essential. Without it, the work on the Western sources which the Russians were acquiring would be limited, as would any assessment of how the translators dealt with them. We very quickly established a fruitful exchange of materials relating to the history of the *kuranty*, sharing copies of otherwise difficult to obtain publications and commenting (often quite critically) on each other's unpublished work.

Within a month of our first e-mail exchange, she had ventured that our respective strengths might come together in a joint undertaking; I then agreed to consider taking up again the book project abandoned years earlier. The understanding was that we might produce "a monograph about the cultural and historical background of the V-K [*Vesti-Kuranty*]" (IM to DW, 25 January 2001). Embarking on the joint project had to await my retirement in 2006, after which I had the financial resources and was free to spend what we thought would take but a year in Uppsala. In theory it is 'relatively easy' to divide up the work in a collaborative project, but invariably there are unanticipated complications. I had to spend a lot of time just catching up on the publications relating to our project and was continuing to work on the Silk Roads. Neither of us anticipated how long it would take before we would complete a draft of our study. Were it not for the pandemic, which tied me to my desk in Seattle, the book might have taken even longer. Without the Internet, working seriously from home would have been impossible.

THIS BOOK: AN OVERVIEW

The book which has emerged, now very broad in scope, still has at its core the effort to contextualize the *kuranty*. To do that though means incorporating a great deal of material which may seem to have little direct bearing on Muscovite history. The detailed table of contents, with many subsections, provides an overview of everything; within the various sections and chapters, there are numerous cross-references to assist in connecting what at times may seem to be discrete essays. The introductions and conclusions to sections and chapters should provide adequate signposting along the way.

We open with a review of historiography and sources (Ch. 1), where there is considerable emphasis on the challenges of source study, addressing both the strengths and limitations of what materials are available and discussing methodologies which need to be employed for the proper analysis of the primary sources. Methodological issues are an important subject in the analytical chapters later in the book. Thanks to the publication of the *kuranty* in what is now seven volumes (under the generic title *Vesti-Kuranty*, hereafter abbreviated V-K) and the identification of many of the Western sources for the translations, there is ample material to discuss our subject at least up to the beginning of the 1670s. Digital archives of early imprints have greatly facilitated research. However, much more awaits publication and study, a process which will extend long into the future before the last decades of the seventeenth century can be dealt with in equal depth. Even for the period so far covered in the V-K series, we have discovered a lot of evidence about texts which should have been included in it and regarding which we still lack details.

Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to two developments deemed of particular importance in Europe's transition to 'modernity': the emergence of the periodical press and the development of the postal network. We assume that specialists on Muscovy may not know that literature. To discuss these subjects at the outset, before turning to the Russian material, is essential for our comparative analysis. Our subject is, in the broadest sense, 'news', which may include what others would call 'intelligence' as well as information that could best be described as 'rumor'. How was it treated in the West? And were the developments there as dissimilar from those in Russia as a first acquaintance might suggest? After all, there was no periodical press in Russia before the eighteenth century; unlike in the West, foreign news was not a public commodity whose dissemination was largely in the hands of private entrepreneurs. Yet there was communication of news between East and West, where there might be communalities in the way it was reported and spread. To treat the many *dissimilarities* too is not to suggest one is comparing apples and oranges and should abandon the effort, since often such analysis can provide new insights. The discussion of postal communications in many ways is simpler, since even in antiquity governments and at least some private individuals addressed the challenge of how to have rapid communication over long distances. Development of the European postal networks in the seventeenth century was essential before Russia could establish an international post (that subject to be treated in our Chapter 18), but of itself the new international post was unevenly replacing the institutional mechanisms for communication which already existed.

Earlier studies of premodern Russian cultural history devoted attention to the growing engagement of the Muscovite state with European polities and the concomitant expansion of diplomatic contacts. Even though for most of the period that concerns us Russia had no permanent diplomatic representation abroad, ambassadors were expected to record and report anything they might learn about the countries they visited, the current political alignments, military activities, etc. The ambassadorial records thus con-

tain a considerable amount of information about what foreign news was being acquired starting well prior to the development of the press. Our Chapter 4 treats the evolution of Muscovite diplomacy and its institutions, and Chapter 5 shows in some detail what information was being obtained through diplomatic channels.

Among the important factors which had an impact on the successes or failures of Russian diplomacy was the professional competence of the personnel involved. Ad hoc appointments of those with no foreign experience or knowledge continued to be common, but there also was a development of specialists. Of particular relevance for our subject is the question of language expertise, the subject of our Chapters 6–9. Who were the translators? How did they obtain their expertise? Was their language ability appropriate to what the government needed, and were they competent to fulfil their assignments? There are many studies of individual translated texts, but they often say little about techniques of translation. A lot of recent literature pulls together statistical information derived from staffing lists of the Ambassadorial Chancery. However, the documents listing names and language specialties can be misleading about the origins and real competence of the translators and whether the chancery was adequately staffed. These chapters of our book explore the evolution of the ways in which the Russian government addressed the need for competent translators, often by a very pragmatic approach to hiring. Individual examples, where something can be learned about biographies, broaden our appreciation of the capabilities of the translators. Even though in most cases there is no attribution of *kuranty* translations to a particular person, there is quite a bit of evidence about the work of some of the key individuals. What we can learn about the best of them raises doubts about the skepticism expressed in some of the older literature concerning the quality of their work. Since some of the negative assessments of the translators come from contretemps which arose in the course of diplomatic negotiation, we devote a separate section to the question of how embassies handled translation.

With this background material in mind, we move into a detailed analysis of foreign news in Chapters 10–17. These chapters encompass the period from ca. 1620 to ca. 1665, the exposition presented in approximate chronological sequence. This is the part of our study which I had found too challenging some decades ago. Even though the current chapters contain extensive detail, they embody but selected examples from what potentially is an unwieldy body of material. The selections focus on the instances where there happen to be many *kuranty* translations (and preserved copies of the newspapers from which they were made) but also a lot of evidence in other sources. It was important for us to choose examples where the contextualizing diplomatic history has been studied in some detail with an emphasis on the relationship between the acquisition of news and the formation of policy. The result of our analysis, dictated to a considerable degree by the source base, leaves many gaps and is not intended to provide a coherent overview of Russian foreign relations for the indicated period. Thematic sections occasionally anticipate developments in a later period.

Given these caveats, our sometimes discrete examples, each of which develops a par-

ticular point, illustrate many of the characteristic developments in the production of the *kuranty*, and the degree to which the government made any effort to improve the mechanisms for obtaining European news. This part of the book discusses how the information in the translated news fits within the broader context of European news reporting, and the possible influence that news had on decision making within Russia. Among the focused subsections is analysis of the reporting on early stages of the Thirty Years War and the response to the death of Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus in 1632. There is an extended analysis of the effort by a Swedish official in 1644–1645 to supply news on a regular basis to Moscow, an initiative that was short-lived for want of Russian interest. A Russian embassy in Stockholm in 1649 engaged in systematic translation from the German press. The Cossack revolt against Polish-Lithuanian rule in Ukraine and the subsequent long war in which Russia became involved offer valuable evidence about the role of intelligence gathering by border commandants and the role played by rumor. Even apparently minor functionaries, such as the courier Grigorii Kunakov, sent on several missions to Poland, were able to provide a great deal of information, whose focus and value can be juxtaposed to the reporting in the Western press regarding Eastern Europe.

To a degree, the conclusion from the analysis in these chapters questions some of the assumptions we had held when first embarking on the study. For some of the most pressing concerns of the government regarding state security and foreign relations, there is little evidence to suggest that the *kuranty* were as important as some of the other sources on which the Russian government relied to obtain intelligence. Nonetheless, by the end of the indicated period, the tsar and some of his advisers – noteworthy among them Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin – had become convinced that it was essential to obtain foreign news (especially newspapers) on a regular basis. The mechanism to make that possible was the establishment of the foreign post.

Chapter 18 is devoted to the early history of that post. A major study of the post, including a collection of primary source documents, had been published by I. P. Kozlovskii in 1913, but little serious work had been done since then to expand on that still valuable history. In part thanks to the evidence of the *kuranty*, whose translations commonly include data on which postal delivery had brought the originals, it has been possible to flesh out the history of the early years of the post. The example of the international post provides an excellent case study of how foreign models and entrepreneurship were important in late Muscovy, at the same time that innovations would be integrated into the existing horse relay system. Elsewhere in Europe, the development of a polity's postal networks commonly involved the hiring of entrepreneurial experts. The first Russian postmasters were all foreigners or from European émigré families. The longest serving of them was Andrei Vinius – son of a Dutch entrepreneur – who was first employed as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery and who figures prominently in our discussion of the *kuranty* translations. By the reign of Peter I, who was especially impatient to have rapid communication, postal institutions both within Russia and to other countries could provide it.

Chapter 19 examines evidence about how the introduction of the foreign post, whose primary purpose was to regularize the acquisition of foreign news, indeed transformed the ability of the Kremlin to keep track of European affairs. Despite gaps in the source base, there is quite convincing evidence that newspapers were being received on something like a 'subscription' basis. Whereas in earlier decades the tendency had often been to translate entire issues of the relatively few foreign newspapers which were obtained, now the volume of information coming in with every post meant that there was much greater selectivity: few full translations even of individual articles. Thus, there is evidence about what news was perceived as having particular value, the assumption being that the translators had a clear understanding about what the tsar and his foreign-affairs advisers wanted to know. Topics that we know were of continuing interest included reports about Poland-Lithuania, Sweden, Ukraine and the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting, too, to examine cases involving the initiation of foreign relations with states with which there previously had been little or no direct communication, the examples including Spain and Brandenburg-Prussia. News about the Dutch northern Netherlands occupies a prominent place in the translations, even if political relations with the Dutch were arguably of less importance than those with Russia's immediate neighbors. We therefore chose to look closely at the evidence regarding Dutch international trade, the second Anglo-Dutch war of 1664–1667, and the subsequent War of Devolution, which broke out as a response to the expansionist ambitions of King Louis XIV. These examples offer opportunities to examine how some of the concerns of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich beyond purely political matters, and the personal interests of the translator Andrei Vinius, may help to explain choices as to what was translated.

Rather than attempt to continue the detailed examination of political news into the last decades of the century, in the final chapters of the book we focus primarily on selected examples which illustrate the interest in news that arguably had little relevance for the making of foreign policy. This choice in part reflects practical considerations – too little of the source material has been published (the V-K series now extends only into 1672, for example), and we have had to confront both space and time constraints. By choosing selectively to examine evidence primarily about news which may not have had a direct bearing on policy, we can broaden the perspective on what was of interest to government officials and, increasingly, to wider segments of Russian society. So our last substantive chapters (20 and 21), under the general rubric of 'readership', highlight various examples of news sensations, natural and unnatural. There are odd 'curiosities', unusual celestial phenomena, reports about mendicant prophets and a pseudo-Messiah, and apocryphal letters which were widely disseminated as propaganda. A lot of this material, especially that which had some religious focus, can be correlated with aspects of traditional Muscovite culture, in a period of increasing government efforts to control religious life. Thus, there seems to have been a conscious effort to prevent the dissemination of some of the foreign texts that otherwise might have been of widespread interest in an era of eschatological expectations. However, propaganda, such as the

diatribes against the Turks and Islam which reinforced government priorities, spread beyond the walls of the chanceries. Our concluding example concerns reports about the Habsburg victory over the Turks at Zenta in 1697. The Zenta case study illustrates how well integrated Russia had become in the news and communication network of the West.

Chapter 22 both summarizes and looks to the future, pointing out some of the topics which surely need further study that this book could not adequately address. We have found that in many respects, the Muscovite government was a lot better informed about foreign matters than has usually been assumed. At the same time, though, we push back against contrasting interpretations which exaggerate the impact of the growing awareness about the wider world that can be documented, especially in the seventeenth century. The evidence poses the perhaps unanswerable question of whether the glass is half empty or half full. Did the tsar and his advisers always know enough for effective, pragmatic policy making? Was the knowledge of the wider world too little and too restricted to have much of an impact on Russian culture and society? Were Western models really so important when traditional institutions may have continued to serve quite well the perceived needs for foreign news?

More insight into such questions will require additional research. We have consciously focused on news about Europe (to treat fully news about the Middle East and East Asia would require a separate volume). For Ukraine and Poland-Lithuania, we have but touched on some of the most important literature. Much more needs to be said about what constituted 'news' in Russian society, not just for the narrow circles of government. There is a great deal which can be done to explore the role of oral communication at the interface between the government and society at large. 'Readership' is a very difficult subject to study; the written word is only a small part of how information was transmitted. The government was assiduous in its efforts to acquire news and to verify its accuracy – it is not as though there was simply uncritical assessment of information. However, much of the news that was deemed important came not from the Western press but directly or indirectly from oral communication. More needs to be done to analyze rumor — the contexts in which it arose, the mechanisms by which it spread, and the degree to which it could be confirmed by other evidence. The government clearly had an interest in controlling the spread of certain kinds of news, but more can be done to show how it also accepted the necessity of its selective dissemination in support of policy initiatives. The mechanisms for achieving that were ones embedded in Russian tradition.

Previous scholarship has often, and not inappropriately, treated the *kuranty* as the precursors of the first published newspapers in the 'modernizing' era of Peter I. However, by examining more closely what the *kuranty* were and were not, it may be possible to learn much more about the complexities of the interaction between the 'old' and the 'new' in Russia's seventeenth century. Framing the analysis by a broad comparative approach not only can contribute to rethinking the history of early modern Russia but also may offer some new perspectives for the study of the 'communications revolution'

elsewhere in Europe. Many of the factors within Russia that affected choices about what news was important and how rapidly it could be obtained also are to be found in the West, where not all roads led directly to the ‘modern world’.

— Daniel C. Waugh

In the year [7]173 [1665] on May 18, I, Jan van Sweeden (*Ivan fan Svedin*), agreed in the Privy Chancery of the Great Sovereign, Tsar and Grand Prince Aleksei Mikhailovich [...] that I or those authorized by me will supply all kinds of printed and handwritten news sheets and letters from various states: from the Empire, Spain, France, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, England, Italy, Holland and the Netherlands, from all capitals every two weeks, and from the Turkish Empire, from Persia and from India, and also from many other lands, all kinds of news from time to time, concerning military, trade, and all other affairs occurring in the above-mentioned states and cities.

– From the contract establishing the first Russian international post in 1665

I. PRELIMINARIES

CHAPTER 1

Parameters, Sources and Scholarship: an Introduction

The political, economic and cultural development of early modern Russia has long drawn the attention of scholars. Beginning in the nineteenth century, prevailing narratives of Russian 'backwardness' came to be questioned, as attention increasingly focused on evidence about the interconnectedness of Russian developments with synchronous ones occurring in Western Europe. Important in this reinterpretation was the abundant documentation that included travel narratives, the development of diplomatic exchanges, and translation of Western books and news. A key question has been: to what degree did Russia participate in what we now tend to think of as an 'information and communication revolution', which in the West involved, importantly, the advent of printing with moveable type, the development of postal networks to speed exchange, and the emergence of a periodical press? This book takes a fresh and deeper look at the Muscovite state's acquisition of news, which – when placed in a comparative context – provides evidence that can be used to support arguments about 'modernization' and 'westernization' but argues as well for the continuing strength of tradition. Indeed, the Russian example should inspire some reconsideration of the paradigms of modernization that have framed many studies of news and communication elsewhere in Europe. Background information on the developments outside of Muscovy will be the subject of our Chapters Two and Three.

1.1. Parameters

We understand 'news' to be information presumably of potential or actual current interest for its recipients, either because it was new to them or because it related to matters that they might have perceived affected their daily lives. That is, news is something that may relate to ordinary experience but has some element of novelty, and possibly would have some consequence requiring action.[1] Within this broadly defined range of what

1. Cf. the more specific definition by Droste (2021: 1), who in his recent book distinguishes 'news' from other kinds of 'information': "News (*Nachrichten*) is a report, which fixes the experience of a current event. This report defines its object through assigning it a location in place and time. The news report mentions the place and date in and at which this experience is transformed into news. These are, however, neither the place or date of the event reported on. The news report answers a number of questions: who took part, where did the event happen, what happened, why, when, and how? As a rule, it includes no value statements or personal points of view. The report, formalized both rhetorically and

might be considered news, we shall focus in the first instance on the foreign news which was obtained by the Muscovite government in various ways and translated into Russian to inform the tsar and his close advisers who dealt with foreign relations. A significant part of this material is to be found in the files of the *kuranty*, compendia of those translations and summaries of news whose content might range widely to include not only accounts of wars and politics or material of relevance to foreign trade, but also descriptions of paranormal events and natural disasters, and much more. The term *kuranty* – from the Dutch word *Courant(e)*, in the title of some of the Dutch newspapers – came to be used regularly in the 1650s.[2] The Russian officials used the term to refer not just to the translations but to the original newspapers. The establishment of the Muscovite foreign post in the mid-1660s made possible the regular acquisition of foreign newspapers and newsletters, which then served as the main source for the *kuranty*. However, there were also many other channels for obtaining foreign news, in the course of diplomatic negotiations and via border commandants whose duties included the gathering of intelligence of all kinds. While clearly those who processed this information were amongst the readers of the news, it was deemed confidential and not intended to be broadly disseminated (with few exceptions). Thus, what was newsworthy for ordinary Muscovites undoubtedly had little to do with events involving other countries; rather, their concerns related to local issues in daily life.

To place the *kuranty* in context requires examination of the broader patterns of news and communication in Europe, analysis of certain aspects of Muscovite institutional history and the making of Russian foreign and domestic policy, as well as exploration of topics in Muscovite cultural history. The potential source base for this study is thus large and complex, as are the methods by which it must be analyzed. Practical considerations regarding the availability of primary sources and our realization that the book must be finished now, since we cannot expect to have the luxury of another two decades to work on it, have imposed some limitations on our coverage. We look in detail at the material up through the beginning of the 1670s, and only episodically at that which follows, leaving readers to learn more about the last quarter of the seventeenth century from the work of Stepan Shamin and others who have regular access to the Russian archives. Furthermore, even if it would be desirable to examine Muscovy's interactions with all of the states with which it engaged, we have focused in the first instance on relations with Europe and, with some limitations, the Ottoman Empire. Another volume would be needed to treat the subject of Muscovite relations with all the polities in Asia.

Since the use of terms such as 'modern', 'early modern', and 'traditional', describing

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in terms of content, communicates trustworthiness, which can be strengthened by references to the sources of the news in question."

2. For instance, the title of the first Dutch newspaper, founded in 1618, was *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, etc.* Cf. *coranto* and *krant*, the modern Dutch word for 'newspaper'. For a discussion of the first Russian use of the term in the seventeenth century, see Waugh 1972, Appendix IIa, and Shamin 2007b.

processes often called 'modernization' and 'westernization', continues to be disputed, we must say a few words at the outset to help frame what follows.[3] In its crudest form, modernization theory posits a dichotomy between the 'new' and the 'old'. Modernization involves 'progress' from 'traditional' societies to those exemplified by the most 'advanced' states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; all societies are assumed to go through this process, although at possibly different rates and in different periods on any absolute chronological scale. Key developments in Europe, it is argued, began in the Renaissance, and the period from the late fifteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth centuries now is conventionally termed 'early modern'. Even in its heyday, modernization theory was modified in some very important ways in order to accommodate individual paths of development. Among the most important modifications of the theory have been analyses stressing the degree to which 'traditional' societies in fact are not static but constantly accommodate change. Although some would argue the two concepts are not coterminous and one of them may be acceptable whereas the other is not, modernization is often considered to be synonymous with 'westernization'. Often the two terms have been used interchangeably with reference to the Russian experience.

To a considerable degree, much of what has been written regarding news and the mechanisms of its communication both in Europe generally – and more specifically in Russia – has been framed in a discussion of the 'routes to modernity'. That is, there is either an explicit or tacit assumption that the changes which occurred in the transmission of news starting in the fifteenth century contributed in an important way to the emergence of the 'modern' world, a world characterized, among other things, by the ability of many in society to learn rapidly about events both near and far, and by an increasingly 'rational' approach to evaluating such information. Narrowly circumscribed concerns animated in the first instance by a providential set of explanatory beliefs now came to be replaced. The introduction of printing with moveable type was a key develop-

3. For an introduction to the theories about 'modernization' and the critiques of them, see Tipps 1973 and Gavrov and Klyukanov 2015. Increasingly scholarship on the Russia of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is questioning the applicability of the term, in the process demonstrating that the traditional periodization dividing the 'new' from the 'old' in the time of Tsar Peter I needs to be reconsidered. A judicious summary treatment of the evaluations of Peter's accomplishments is in Hughes (1998: 462–470), arguably the best detailed book on his reign. Dixon (1999) reconsiders the applicability of modernization theory to the Russian experience; Baron and Kollmann (1997) include stimulating essays with a focus on religious culture. Waugh (2001) provides a somewhat controversial approach to the subject, but one relevant to some of the material analyzed in our book (see also Waugh 2003). Several articles in a special forum in *Slavic Review* 69/2 (2010) address issues of periodization, to a considerable degree questioning whether the reign of Peter I marked a real break with the past. A recent discussion by Russian historians, for example, is Seniavskii 2013, whose chronological horizons start with Peter I and move on from there. While not directly engaging modernization theory, Nancy Kollmann (2015) contributes in important ways to a reassessment of the Russian place amongst other early modern states, arguing that late Muscovy was not an outlier and substantially different in its approaches to governance. Hennings (2018) is very relevant to our analysis for his demonstration of the similarities across Europe (including Russia) in the 'cultures of diplomacy'. For an overview of recent arguments about the applicability of modernization theories to Russia, see also Maier and Watson 2015.

ment, and in particular the use of the technology to produce the first printed newspaper, which appeared once a week (1605, in Strassburg).[4] After that came the deluge, as the periodical press quickly spread to other European cities in their respective vernaculars, and soon would even appear twice or thrice weekly on its way, eventually, to becoming daily. Among the characteristics of the newspapers were their regular appearance, their relative cheapness, their ostensible objectivity, and their focus on rational reporting.

The new printed media did not immediately displace other sources of news: handwritten newsletters continued to circulate, and they were the most important source for the news that was printed. Published pamphlets still satisfied the demand for sensations, ranging from reports of some great military victory to accounts about paranormal events. The newspapers might report on the paranormal or on 'natural wonders' but – unlike the separates – tended to avoid interpretive comment on their significance. Rumor might be printed, but often with caveats about its needing to be confirmed. News that may earlier have circulated mainly amongst government officials and the elite now came into the hands of a much broader segment of society. The European news 'revolution' was facilitated by the creation of a regular postal system in Europe: the post made possible the rapid acquisition of what then was printed in the newspapers and in turn made possible their dissemination.[5]

The substantial literature on news and especially its printed forms for various countries in Europe often has focused on commercial aspects of news production or the way in which dissemination of the news connects with broader political or social developments. Much of this literature has little relevance for understanding the situation in Muscovy, where news was not printed, its dissemination largely very restricted, and there was nothing like the commercial market for it that developed elsewhere. Sources for the Muscovite acquisition of foreign news ranged across the spectrum of ambassadorial reports, newspapers, pamphlets, and handwritten newsletters. We are convinced that newsletters played an important role in Moscow, but very few of the originals have been preserved; possibly they were not considered to be of any value after they had been translated – or put aside – and were simply thrown away.[6] We know them only from manuscript copies or translations. The role of handwritten newsletters in the West has

4. The now classic statement emphasizing the importance of the printing press is Eisenstein 1980, though since the appearance of her book, studies have questioned some of her arguments. For the first printed periodical newspaper see Weber 2006; for good examples of scholarship focusing on the early press, Böning 2002, 2008a. A recent overview of the first decades of German newspaper publication is Hillgärtner 2021; and see also our discussion in Chapter 2.

5. The authoritative study of the development of the European postal networks is Behringer 2003, whose work will be discussed in our Chapter 3.

6. During our extensive research periods at RGADA, working with the Russian *kuranty* and their sources, we have come across fewer than a handful of manuscript newsletters. One of them is transcribed in V-K VII: 348–349, because we also have its Russian translation (commentary on the translation ibid.: 349–351). In contrast, this archive preserves 2684 (different) newspaper issues in German and 688 in Dutch (Simonov 1979; Maier 2004a), as well as a couple of additional issues in other languages (Polish, Latin).

as yet been imperfectly analyzed, among other things, because they are scattered in a great number of archives.[7]

1.2. Some observations on the primary sources

Scholarly interest in what Russians might have been able to learn about foreign countries dates at least back to the late eighteenth century, when Nikolai Novikov, well known as one of the early Enlightenment educators and publishers in the reign of Empress Catherine II, included in his multi-volume publications of primary sources some of the ambassadorial reports (*stateinye spiski*) from the seventeenth century.[8] The exact processes by which returning envoys compiled their reports might vary – did they always keep a careful written record of what transpired during the time abroad, or was much written down from memory only upon their return?[9] Apart from the written reports, envoys were expected to deliver oral ones, during which they might be interrogated about details which never made it into the written record. In some instances, there are 'competing' versions of the reports of an embassy, written by different participants (who might have disagreed on important matters). In the absence of any means to send interim reports back to Moscow before their return, what ambassadors had learned and included in their reports might arrive only with considerable delay.

The systematic publication of some of the diplomatic files that started in the middle of the nineteenth century made more of the ambassadorial reports available, along with related documents contained in the ambassadorial books (*posol'skie knigi*), compiled from the early sixteenth century as a way of preserving the most important materials pertaining to a particular mission or relations with a particular state.[10] Frequently the entire contents of these books were devoted to the often long reports submitted by envoys on the completion of their mission. Apart from publication in several important series, there have been numerous separate editions of ambassadorial books and the *stateinye spiski* (examples of which will be analyzed in our Chapter 5) or, most commonly, excerpts from them for compilations devoted to a particular theme or period. Many of these editions fail to include all the material relevant to the acquisition of foreign intelligence.

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7. Many scholars have focused on letters in one archive, e.g. Kleinpaul 1930; Fitzler 1937; Sporhan-Krempel 1968; Barbarics and Pieper 2007. Wilke 2010 provides an overview.

8. The series title is *Drevniaia Rossiiskaia Vivliofika* (hereafter abbreviated *DRV*), which appeared in two eighteenth-century editions, the second much expanded with additional texts. All of the volumes may be accessed on line through the Russian State Library (RGB). For the contents of the expanded, second edition (1788–1791), see Neustroev 1874; for an analysis of Novikov's approach to editing his sources, Moiseeva 1970.

9. For a discussion of these issues, see *Puteshestviia* 1954: 319–346; Novosel'skii 1961; Rogozhin 1994: 99–109.

10. The two most important of these multi-volume series were *Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii drevnei Rossii s derzhavami inostrannymi* (*PDS*) and *Sbornik Imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva* (*SIRIO*).

The best analysis and bibliographic guides to the *posol'skie knigi* are in books by Nikolai Mikhailovich Rogozhin, which need to be supplemented by several editions that appeared after his work.[11] Of special interest among the latter are a recent volume relating to a crucial period of relations with the Crimean Khanate in the middle of the sixteenth century, a volume containing the records of the first diplomatic exchanges with Brandenburg-Prussia in the middle of the seventeenth century, and the documents on the first ever Russian embassy to Spain in 1667–1668.[12] The last of these might serve as a model of best practice, for its inclusion of documents from both states' archives.[13] Whereas for the sixteenth century somewhat over half of the extant ambassadorial books have been published, the seventeenth century has not fared as well.[14] And there are major gaps in the published records for some of the most important concerns of Muscovite policy makers in the seventeenth century – namely, relations with Sweden, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Ottoman Empire.[15] As will be evident in later chapters, even minor envoys, whose main task was simply to deliver letters to another court, might nonetheless acquire significant news while abroad. In contrast to the ponderous, high-level embassies, which might not report back to Moscow quickly, these lesser missions might return without major delay. The lesser envoys were always expected to collect intelligence and include it in their end-of-mission reports. Few of those reports have been preserved as separate ambassadorial books, but at least some of them have been published from the original archival scrolls.

As Rogozhin emphasizes, the books, bound in quires, represent in fact a second stage in the copying and archiving of Muscovite diplomatic documentation, since ongoing affairs first would be recorded in the scrolls, not all of whose content might be selected for inclusion in the books.[16] Scrolls in the diplomatic relations files and in collections concerning the activity of some other chanceries included reports sent to Moscow by military governors – frequently the best source of information about what was going

11. Rogozhin 1990, 1994, 2003 (Chapter III and Appendix, pp. 333–352).

12. These editions are, respectively, *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016, *Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013, and *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018.

13. One of the most valuable contributions to the study of a crucial period in Muscovite foreign policy is the collection of excerpts from diplomatic files both of Russia and the countries with which it interacted, *Russkaia i ukrainskaia diplomatiia* (*RUD*) 2007. Each section is carefully selected, introduced and annotated by an expert. The value of the volume would have been enhanced had it included more of the documents containing news and other intelligence which had a bearing on decision making.

14. According to Nikolai Rogozhin (2001: 63), by 1999 only 115 of the extant 537 *posol'skie knigi* for the period through to the end of the seventeenth century had been published.

15. For example, those who do not have access to the archival documents for relations with Sweden frequently turn to the still valuable collection of excerpts in Iakubov 1897. More recent publications, such as *Russko-shvedskie* 1960, emphasize material (in the given instance, concerning economic relations) which may shed little light on how much information that was essential in the shaping of the relations with its northern neighbor was being acquired in Moscow.

16. Rogozhin (2003: 254–279) provides an excellent summary of the documentary practices of the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery.

on outside the Russian borders. Among the archival deposits of especial interest in this regard are the ones kept by the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*) and the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery (*Malorossiiskii prikaz*). There are extensive published collections of such material which we have consulted, recognizing, however, that what is available is but a fraction of what has been preserved in manuscript.[17] Nikolai Ogloblin (1885) laid out criteria for assessing the reliability of different sources for the information collected by the border commandants and emphasized the significance of this material in evaluating how well informed was the Muscovite government (for details see our Sec. 14.4).

For the yet unpublished scrolls, an examination of the short descriptive listings in the archival inventories (*opisi*) can identify a great deal of new material to flesh out our knowledge of the government's acquisition of news. The still most detailed inventories for much of the archival material were compiled around the beginning of the nineteenth century by Nikolai Nikolaevich Bantysh-Kamenskii (there are supplements and some typed copies which were compiled later).[18] Searches in the inventories have continued to identify new sources of possible value for a study of foreign news acquisition, and now the inventories can be accessed on the Internet.[19] In a number of cases in our book we cite such material from the inventories, which we hope may encourage others to study and publish texts to fill in gaps in our coverage.

However, the inventories must be used with caution. The work of Bantysh-Kamenskii and others included separating the individual sheets that had been pasted together in Muscovite times to form the scrolls. To a considerable degree, the scroll divisions now may differ from the original ones. When listing the contents of the scrolls in chronological order, he preserved the contents of each one and assigned it a number. In the process of cataloguing, the order of the items in a given scroll may have been changed, material from a different scroll might have been inserted amongst the documents from an earlier one, and not infrequently, the loose sheets may have been mixed up and some lost. What this means is that *de visu* examination of the manuscripts really is necessary to establish, if possible, the original (seventeenth-century) archival sequences, through an analysis of the handwriting, paper, and the *skrepki* – that is, the scribal signatures

17. Two of the series that have been particularly valuable here are *Akty, otnosiashchiesia k istorii iuzhnoi i zapadnoi Rossii* (*AIuZR)*] and *Akty Moskovskago gosudarstva, izdannye Imperatorskoiu akademieiu nauk* (*AMG*).

18. Drawing on his careful sorting of all the archival files pertaining to Russian foreign policy, Bantysh-Kamenskii (1894–1902) compiled a still valuable summary of Russian relations with various polities, for each country the entries arranged in ascending chronological order and providing summaries of the specific substance of the exchanges.

19. The access point for the *opisi* online is: http://rgada.info/poisk/index.php?Sk=30. Entering the deposit (*fond*) number in the 'Nomer fonda' box brings up the links to the various inventories for that deposit. Generally for the diplomatic records, *Opis'* 1 contains the most relevant information, the inventory first listing the ambassadorial books chronologically and then in chronological sequence the material from the scrolls. The detailed inventories for the two most important deposits of documents on Ukrainian affairs have now been published: *Malorossiiskii prikaz* 2012; *Malorossiiskie dela* 2016.

across each seam where the sheets had been pasted to form the scroll. To the degree that one can assume Bantysh-Kamenskii's listings preserve those sequences, the proximity of separately numbered units may be an indication that they are connected. Thus, a copy of a foreign publication or its translation, listed as a separate item, may be connected with a preceding unit containing the other materials of a particular embassy or negotiation. These considerations are important in our analysis of the materials in the *kuranty* files, which contain the translations of western news reports.

1.3. The *Vesti-Kuranty* (V-K) series: its strengths and weaknesses

The key development which has opened the way for the more extensive and deeper analysis of Muscovite acquisition of foreign news was the decision by historical linguists to publish the *kuranty* in a series of volumes (the first one appeared in 1972).[20] The coverage in the seven volumes to date is from the beginning of the seventeenth century through 1671–1672 (cited subsequently as V-K I, V-K II … V-K VII.). The editors titled the volumes *Vesti-Kuranty*, reflecting the fact that the contents would include news sources termed by contemporaries generically as 'vesti' as well as the foreign newspapers to which the term *kuranty* would be applied beginning in the middle of the century. At the very outset, what might be included in the volumes was not precisely defined. Among the documents are letters which contain foreign news but arguably are more valuable for what they tell us about the mechanisms through which the news was being obtained. Until the establishment of the foreign post in the 1660s, the government relied heavily on what resident foreigners willingly or unwillingly supplied from their personal correspondence, which could include copies of foreign newspapers. The early volumes also drew heavily on a range of archival files relating to foreign policy. However, with the availability of the long runs of translated news reports in RGADA, f. 155 ('Foreign news [*kuranty*] and newspapers'), the contents of the series began to be limited mainly to that one archival deposit, which is a creation of modern archivists and as such cannot be assumed to mirror directly the original chancery practice (FIG. 1.1).[21] To a considerable degree, this limitation in the scope of the sources reflected the fact that editorial burden for an already large project had fallen to Vladimir Georgievich Dem'ianov, who had little assistance in his final years.

20. A plan by Prince N. M. Golitsyn to publish the *kuranty* at the beginning of the twentieth century was abandoned after he had already invested considerable effort in gathering and editing the texts (see V-K I: 10–12; V-K VI/2: 16–17; Shamin 2011a: 16–17).

21. As is clear from Stepan Shamin's analysis of the archival collections in f. 155 (see especially his introduction to V-K VI/l), it is possible to show how some of the *kuranty* manuscripts there originally were in Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery. Even during the tsar's lifetime, news sent directly to him would be passed on to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation (copies then kept there as well as made for the Privy Chancery). After the tsar died in 1676, the *kuranty* copies in the Privy Chancery archive were transferred to the Ambassadorial Chancery and combined with its collection. Careful examination of handwriting, paper sequences and clerical notes can delineate intact sequences of news within scrolls that may include several such sources.

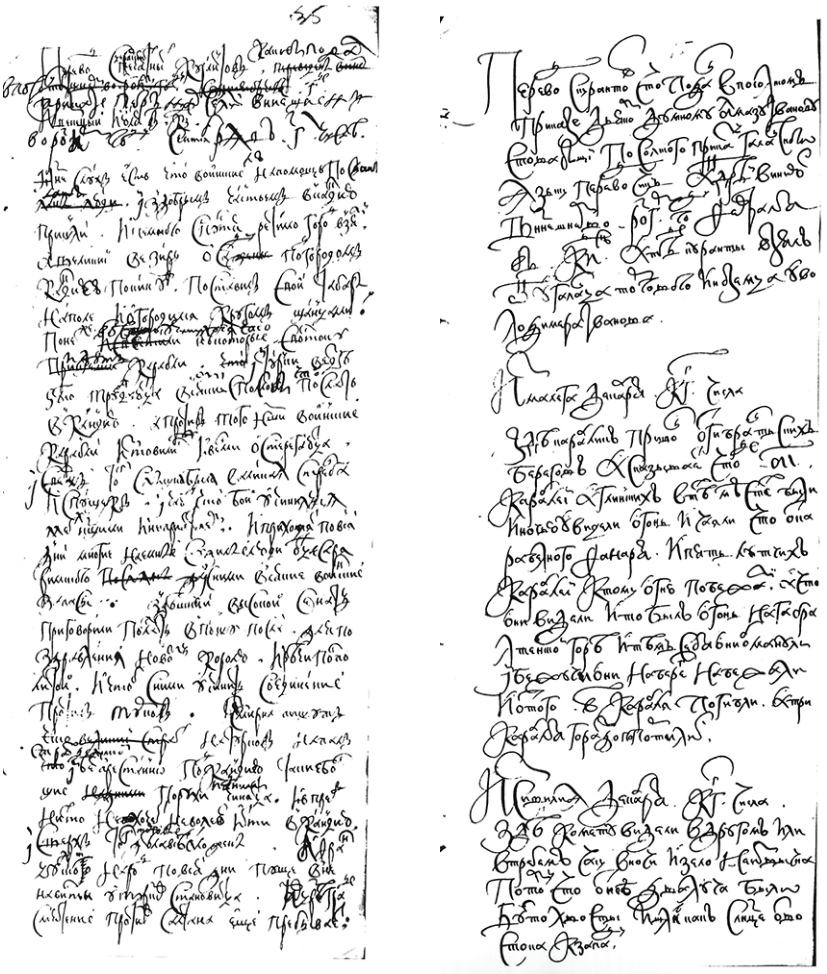

FIG. 1.1. Examples of individual sheets from different *kuranty* scrolls of the 1660s: a draft copy (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1669, No. 8, fol. 35) and a fair copy (ibid., 1666, No. 11, fol. 15).

It is easy to demonstrate how uneven is the coverage, even in the first volumes, with many lacunae which might have been filled by a more careful search in other archival deposits.[22] Particularly problematic in this regard is V-K V (1996), covering the 1650s and into the beginning of the 1660s, but with gaps for entire years. The gaps, of course, may be due to the loss of manuscript copies of news translations and should in no way

22. For a critique of V-K I, Waugh 1973; for a detailed review of V-K V, Krys'ko and Maier 1997. Many of the deficiencies pointed out in these reviews have been addressed, finally, in V-K VI and VII (anticipating V-K VI, see Maier 2003b). Not the least of the inadequacies of the early volumes was a lack of precision in the indexing of of proper names and toponyms, which is important if we wish to trace news from a particular place or about a particular person. This problem has been corrected in V-K VI and VII through the efforts by Ingrid Maier and Vadim Krys'ko. For a review of V-K VII, placing it in the context of the previous volumes, Waugh 2018b. Additional detail about the problems with V-K V, situating its material in the context of the other news sources for the 1650s, is in our Ch. 16.

be taken to indicate that there simply was no news being received and translated in those years. To bridge some of the lacunae for V-K V, Dem'ianov located a substantial set of news files in RGADA, f. 141 ('Prikaznye dela starykh let'), a catch-all deposit containing a range of thematically unconnected documents. While most of these files correctly date from 1652, unfortunately some parts seem to have been collections of fragments from the original translations made in the Ambassadorial Chancery without any clear indication of a year. Only by examination of their individual news reports and comparing them with actual events can absolute chronology be established. And indeed, some of the news 'packets' published in V-K V have been misdated, in at least one case by as much as a decade, in the absence of careful textual and codicological scrutiny.[23] Analogous problems in the ordering and dating of texts in other volumes of the series can be attributed in part to the lack of proper palæographic analysis of the manuscripts. In some instances it would have been possible easily to restore the original order of the individual manuscript pages, which had been mixed up after the separation of the scrolls into their component sheets.

In the entire volume V-K V, there are only two short reports drawn from manuscripts in the foreign relations files, whose inventories confirm how much else was being obtained and translated, some of it directly relevant to any project to publish translations of western news sources. One example would be the texts of several treaties. As we shall see, on the whole the makers of Russian foreign policy seem to have done an excellent job of obtaining and translating entire treaties or at least summaries of their important provisions. A striking example is the Treaty of Osnabrück, one of the two monumental documents that formally ended the Thirty Years War in 1648. Twice copies of it arrived in Moscow, and an extended translation of most of this long document was made.[24] Yet the Swedish agreement with the Lithuanian magnates at Kéidianai in 1655, which was received in Moscow by the end of 1655 and proved to be of huge interest for the tsar and his advisers, is not among the reports in V-K V. Similarly, V-K V does not include the Marienburg treaty between Sweden and Brandenburg in 1656, though at least a manuscript copy was obtained by a Russian diplomat in Vilna. We know that foreign envoys in Moscow often would give their Russian counterparts newspapers, newsletters, and copies of documents, of course not necessarily with the purpose of providing an unbiased source of information. The Swedish Affairs files contain both the original and a translation of a treaty of alliance between England and Sweden concluded in 1661, another item not included in V-K V or its successor volume V-K VI/1.

A particularly rich source for supplementing the material in the V-K series for the period from the mid-1650s through much of the 1660s would be the papers of Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin, who emerged in that period as one of the most influen-

23. In his invaluable introduction to V-K VI/1: 20–23, Stepan Shamin analyzed the f. 141 news files in order to straighten out as best possible the problems in using them.

24. The translation is in V-K IV: 15–64, No. 1, published from the Swedish Affairs files.

tial and best-informed Muscovite officials dealing with foreign policy.[25] A fair number of his reports have been published in V-K VI/1. Yet the archival inventories and references in secondary works by Elena Igorevna Kobzareva (1998) and Boris Nikolaevich Floria (2010, 2013) suggest there is a huge amount of additional material to be examined and published from his extensive correspondence. He cultivated close relations with counterpart officials outside of Russia, had other contacts for obtaining foreign news, and sent much of what he acquired to the tsar and to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Both Kobzareva and Floria used this archival material and, where it seemed relevant, referred to the published *kuranty* translations.[26] Yet it is impressive how *infrequently*, in their telling, the *kuranty* are cited, a fact which raises questions about how important they really were in policy making. Our subsequent chapters will explore this issue in some detail.

1.3.1. Dating the *kuranty*

To assess the value of the news we need to know whether it was current or recent, or whether by the time it was received it was hopelessly dated and thus, if acted upon, could result in policy mistakes.[27] One of the challenges in using the texts published in the V-K series is to establish a meaningful chronology not only for the reports themselves but, more importantly, for the date when the news arrived in Moscow and was translated. The clerks in the Ambassadorial Chancery generally were diligent in noting the provenance and date of either receipt or translation of news packets. The headers usually specify the translation date, which we assume to have been on the day when the original had been received, or on the next day. Relatively rarely do headers specify both a date of receipt and a date of the translation. Headers of letters may indicate the date when they were written. There are some instances where, due to translator or copyist confusion, a packet may be dated according to the header in the first news item.

Dates of *kuranty* packets in Moscow employ the Julian calendar used in Russia (Old Style – O.S.), ten days behind the Gregorian calendar (New Style – N.S.). Occasionally, the translators may specify the calendar, even if a news report does not do so. However, since many of the packets as published in V-K lack such headers, the editors decided to 'date' them simply on the basis of the dates mentioned in the news reports they contain.

25. Judging from the archival inventories, the Swedish and Polish affairs files (RGADA, *fondy* 96 and 79 respectively) contain a huge amount of documentation relating to the activities of Ordin-Nashchokin. Significant collections of his letters also are in RGADA, f. 210, op. 9, Moskovskii stol, Nos. 272, 279, from which a number of documents have been published in *AMG* 2. On Ordin-Nashchokin, see our Sec. 17.5.

26. Also Kobzareva (1998: 57, 68, 79) specifically noted texts that had not been included in V-K V.

27. For our early attempts at assessing the elapsed time between an event and the receipt of reports about it in Moscow, see V-K VI/2: 67–73; Waugh and Maier 2009. Shamin (2011a: 88–89, 94–97) summarizes data about the frequency of the posts and the elapsed times for deliveries in the 1670s. Maier and Shamin (2011: 97–101) include data on the elapsed times for receipt of foreign newspapers in St. Petersburg in the 1720s with some comparative statistics for the previous century. There is as yet no comprehensive study dealing with elapsed times for the receipt and publication of news reports in Europe.

Undated news translations, published in the V-K series as separate entities, may provisionally be dated by their proximity to dated letters or reports in the original scrolls. We say provisionally, since archivists' separation of the scrolls into their individual sheets, as they currently are filed, may not preserve the original, seventeenth-century sequences. So it is not enough to analyze all the individual packets of news separately; codicological analysis of the manuscripts, where possible, is also important and *may* provide the basis for reasonable hypotheses as to who had provided the news and when it had arrived in Moscow.[28]

One way to document how and when the news was obtained is to look at a correspondence that of itself may have contained little news but may have accompanied news reports and in many cases the original newspapers. That is, the suppliers of the news in some instances wrote cover letters for enclosures. The inclusion in the early V-K volumes of such correspondence from foreigners who had been in Moscow or involving the foreigners resident there has been very helpful in reconstructing the transmission of news in the decades antedating the establishment of the foreign post. Some foreigners' letters, many of which were intercepted by the Russian authorities but others of which probably were turned over voluntarily by the recipients, included references to enclosed news. In some cases such references may be matched with extant translations and their sources identified. Unfortunately, given the understandable focus of the most recent V-K volumes on the news translations themselves, much remains to be done to situate the news in the context of the correspondence by those who were responsible for providing it – the foreign postmasters, intelligencers who sold their services as informants, or merchants with extensive commercial networks.

Another challenge in attempts to calculate the elapsed time between an event, its report in Western newspapers, and the receipt and translation of the news in Moscow is the question of which calendar is employed in the foreign sources. Following Pope Gregory XIII's proclamation in 1582 of the new calendar, it was adopted by most Roman Catholic polities, as well as most provinces of the Dutch Republic (for instance, Amsterdam). During the seventeenth century, Russia, England, Sweden, Denmark, and Protestant regions and cities in Germany continued to use the Julian calendar. The dates for newspaper reports commonly do not indicate which calendar is being used, although occasionally they specify O.S. or N.S. (st. v., st. n.), and in some instances they provide both dates (in the form O.S./N.S.). In the absence of such a specification, we suppose that the reporting of the event uses the calendar of the location where the news originated. However, we cannot be certain what exactly happened to a date when a handwritten

28. Although the ordering of the texts for V-K VI/1 had been fixed by Dem'ianov and could not be changed, Shamin's introduction (V/K VI/1: 9–59) provides detailed guidance for straightening out the chronology, both by examining carefully the ordering in the archival scrolls and by tabulating all the headers that specify the provenance and acquisition dates of the individual packets. Waugh (1973) had pointed out such problems in his review of the first volume of the series. V-K VII is the first volume of the series whose editors have not had to work within the constraints that affected adversely the presentation in the earlier volumes.

report was copied (multiple times, by different persons), perhaps even translated, on its way from the place where it was composed to the printer – there were too many agents involved who might have attempted to adapt a date to their own calendar, never being completely sure whether the previous copyist already had changed the date. While such a situation is possible and we cannot exclude it, our impression is that the dates usually were *not* changed, so that even in Hamburg, a German reader of a news item from Warsaw or Rome would have known that the date given in the header is an N.S. date. This also means, in our experience, that newspaper editors usually did not change the dates of the incoming newsletters, adapting them to their own calendar – a procedure that certainly only would have exacerbated the problem. Even less likely, the translators in Moscow (there are always a few exceptions) might have 'adapted' a date to their own calendar, accidentally. On the other hand, as we know from our experience comparing translations with their sources, the translators in Moscow might select only one date where the original has both O.S and N.S. This fact underscores the importance of locating the actual sources they used.

1.3.2. Identifying the foreign sources for the translations

Apart from the Russian texts published in the V-K series, even at its beginning, the editors recognized the relevance of providing at least an impression of the possible foreign newspaper sources. Initially they were appended as photographic supplements.[29] Later Roland Schibli (1988) identified a lot of German-language newspaper issues that had been translated and published in the series. In her monographs Maier (1997, 2006a) expanded substantially the corpus of presumptive sources for the *kuranty*, among them a number of published pamphlets.[30] When Maier had become a member of the editorial team that was preparing the sixth part of the series (which resulted in the two vols., V-K VI/1–2), it was decided to include in V-K VI and V-K VII not only the Russian translations but also her annotated transcriptions of the presumed original source texts, insofar as she had located them. As became apparent, with the tendency increasingly to epitomize rather than fully translate the foreign material, there can be uncertainties as to what the exact sources for some reports in the *kuranty* might have been – often news of the same event would be published in several newspapers and with some variants in how it was reported. For each of the texts that was identified as the most likely source, her commentaries point out what was or was not selected, indicate the degree of precision (or lack thereof) in rendering the source in Russian, and also suggest why a translator might have added something that is not in the original. Command of the relevant lan-

29. Cf. the reproductions of some German newspaper issues from the Moscow archive in V-K II: 372–395, of Dutch papers in V-K III: 397–404 and V-K V (without page indication, between p. 160 and 161).

30. Maier (2006a: 455–459) tabulates the presumed Western printed sources for translations published in V-K I–V that had been identified by that time. Subsequent work has now expanded and in a few instances corrected those listings when it comes to exact publications. Specific examples will be cited in our later chapters.

guages is necessary to understand what a particular passage might literally mean, even if that is not the way the translator rendered it. There is a lot here to inform us about the abilities and knowledge of the Muscovite translators of the *kuranty*, who were working under considerable time pressure to produce news summaries almost immediately upon receipt of the latest post. It is impressive how the translators often were able to produce a more readable rendering of the news by simplifying the sometimes convoluted syntax of the original, adding, for instance, necessary identifications or explanations. The work of the translators will be examined closely in our Chapter 8.

To determine the foreign sources for the *kuranty* involved challenges both in terms of linguistic ability (at very least, knowledge of German and Dutch; in some cases Swedish, English, Latin, and Polish) and the ability to travel extensively to scattered European collections. A serious limitation that cannot be overcome by any means is the low survival rate of early newspapers. It is *extremely* difficult to extrapolate from the preserved copies of seventeenth-century newspapers how many issues are lost, because we rarely know the exact date when a certain newspaper came into existence, nor when it ceased to appear. A survival rate of 20% for the German newspapers, as suggested by Weber (2008: 42) and 40% for the ones in Dutch (Weduwen 2017: 175), may be far too high. There are papers for which we have only a single copy of one issue. What should we extrapolate from this fact about newspapers which have not even left a trace in the form of one single issue?[31] For the early German newspapers, the research institute Deutsche Presseforschung in Bremen in the 1950s started collecting microfilms from all over Europe. Reproductions on paper were made from all these microfilms (originating from more than a hundred repositories), and the Bremen research team – above all Else Bogel with her admirable detective capacities – classified all the issues from hundreds of microfilms. As a result, the major part of all preserved German-language newspaper issues have been accessible in the form of photo copies at least for a couple of decades.[32] In recent years, all their copies of the early German press have been scanned and made available in an online database.[33] Scholars can now bring up any of the newspaper issues in the Bremen collection, among them possibly even some that have not survived in the original archive. Of course, there are huge gaps – issues that are forever lost. We

31. About 60% of the preserved Dutch newspapers are extant today in a single copy. The almost incredibly high survival rate in the Dutch case is based on the fact that about 80% of the issues of the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (*OHC*) are preserved: there are almost complete runs from 1665 to 1679 and again from 1683 (the publishers themselves used to hold back at least one copy), and of the *Amsterdamsche Courant* likewise from Sept. 1684 (Weduwen 2017: 175, 1160). All other newspapers have a much lower survival rate, sometimes 1–3% or even less. It might well be that the general survival rate is lower, around 30% (Arthur der Weduwen, e-mail 7 Feb. 2019; see also below, esp. note 35). Hitherto uncatalogued Dutch newspapers can still be located, above all in archives. See, for instance, the recently found newspapers from Brussels and Utrecht, described in Weduwen 2017: 52, 423–425.

32. The still standard bibliographic guide to the early German periodical press is Bogel and Blühm 1971–1985. For the German-language newspapers published up to 1650, see also the recent listing in Hillgärtner 2021, Appendix B: 257–294.

33. DP Bremen <https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>. The newspaper issues found in recent years by Jan Hillgärtner are not included in the database.

should never forget that only small fragments have been preserved, above all from the first half of the century. Especially unfortunate is the paucity of extant issues for newspapers published in Berlin, Danzig, and Königsberg, which were deemed very valuable by the Russian officials. The collection in RGADA fills these gaps to a certain degree; almost without exception, the hundreds of Moscow issues from these locations are the only ones we have: only *one* of the 875 Berlin issues at RGADA is also preserved somewhere else, and *none* of the 540 Königsberg issues. For Danzig the numbers are slightly better: of the 490 issues, 470 are unique copies.[34] The comparatively high number of issues from these cities preserved in RGADA has contributed a lot to our knowledge of the history of these papers. The German newspapers from RGADA have been included in the Bremen database. However, for special purposes – for instance, if we want to read notations made on the newspapers by the Russian translators – we still have to go to the archives, because such notes will rarely be visible on the microfilm (and thus in the database).

When it comes to the online availability of Dutch newspapers, the situation is not as good as for the German ones: the Dutch portal Delpher (https://www.delpher.nl), at the Royal Library in The Hague, did not attempt to collect every single Dutch-language newspaper issue that is preserved somewhere in the world. Copies from many repositories, some with major collections of Dutch newspapers, have not been added to Delpher. According to an estimate by Der Weduwen (2015: 27), about 40% of the surviving issues were available online via Delpher at the time he wrote.[35] Among them are some copies from RGADA (mostly unique issues), albeit not the whole collection. However, we now have his superb guide to the seventeenth-century Dutch press that identifies all the copies known to have been printed and indicates the locations of extant copies (Weduwen 2017). For some of the most valuable Dutch papers, among them ones that were read in Moscow, there are major lacunae (particularly issues from Amsterdam).

When we are dealing with non-serial imprints (for instance, pamphlets), Delpher is a very rich source. For the corresponding early German imprints we now have two large

34. Simonov 1979: 220. The authoritative bibliographic guides to the German and Dutch newspapers preserved in RGADA are, respectively, Simonov 1979 and Maier 2004a.

35. Delpher provides at least a reasonable sense of how few copies of the important Dutch papers have been preserved from the period 1650–1665, a period of great interest for our discussion below in Chapter 16. On the average in any given year for that period only 21 individual issues are available via that database. The numbers range from a low of seven issues in 1656 to a high of 48 in 1661. Starting in 1666, the numbers jump to over 100, thanks especially to the extensive preservation of the important *OHC*. But even then, important Amsterdam papers have been poorly preserved, among them ones which we know in earlier times had been obtained in Moscow and in some instances are still extant in the Moscow archive. It is possible to refine the Delpher data by checking Weduwen 2017, which lists all the presumed copies of each newspaper, in the process indicating which are extant (irrespective of whether they are available via Delpher). To take just one example, a newspaper we know was occasionally received in Moscow, the Amsterdam *Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant*: for 1650–1653 – when there were 52 issues a year, making a total of 208 issues for the whole period – only 13.5% have been preserved. For 1654–1665, a period when the paper was published in alternate weeks with the *Ordinarise Middelweeckse Courante* (a total of 312 issues), 17.9% of the copies are extant.

databases: VD16 for the sixteenth century, with at present (November 2023) 106,000 digitized titles, and VD17 for the seventeenth century (over 300,000 titles, more than half of them with a link to a digital copy). These databases have made it possible to locate many imprints in our searches for originals to the Russian translations.

There are many other bibliographic resources for early modern publications which can be searched for additional sources of the Russian translations or at least comparative material of the kind we frequently cite. Of particular value in this regard has been the classic multi-volume bibliography compiled by Karol Estreicher (1870–2020) for Polish imprints and publications relating to Poland, which now can be searched online. Many of the Polish books relevant to our project have been scanned and are available online. While relatively few early English imprints were translated in Muscovy, Early English Books Online (EEBO, available on a subscriber basis through many academic libraries) is one of the most complete national databases and provides in the great majority of cases full-text access. The English perspective on the news in some cases provides an important corrective to the reporting in the Dutch press which was being received in Moscow.

1.4. Scholarship on the Muscovite acquisition of foreign news

The attempts by scholars to establish what Muscovites knew about other countries began with the study of the ambassadorial end-of-mission reports (*stateinye spiski)*. One of the first serious efforts to analyze them was that by Alexander Brückner, who took a rather dim view of Russia's 'oriental' backwardness, but found in the reports evidence that Russians who went abroad between the middle and end of the seventeenth century gradually acquired the knowledge which would contribute to the 'Europeanization' of the country.[36] Interest in the ambassadorial reports as sources of knowledge about other countries has continued to the present, since they do make it possible to track how at least some Russians' knowledge of the outside world and the capacity to describe it evolved between the late fifteenth and the end of the seventeenth century. As a literary genre, the reports have some merit, where they contain descriptive prose of a kind that is absent in other genres of early modern Russian literature. A great deal of the emphasis in the studies based on these documents has been on their descriptive content, observations about cities, buildings, manners, religion, dress, and so on.[37] Thus the role of envoys as intelligence agents commissioned with obtaining 'news' has received less attention. Moreover, to focus narrowly on the ambassadorial reports in order to determine what foreign-policy makers in Moscow really knew about the politics of other states is to ignore a range of other sources that help document that knowledge.

36. See Brückner 1878 for his analysis of what the Russians abroad learned. His more general treatment of the process of Europeanization is Brückner 1888, in which Ch. 10 discusses the Russians abroad prior to Peter the Great's own travels to the West in 1697, and Ch. 11 deals with the same topic for the Petrine period.

37. These considerations explain the publication of the still very useful compendium of ambassadorial reports in *Puteshestviia* 1954, a volume that appeared in the series 'Literary Monuments'.

The problem with many assessments of 'what the Ambassadorial Chancery knew' is that they often try to generalize too broadly, either by looking at only a particular type of documentation or by viewing the material through the lens of expecting a steady progression and improvement in information reporting as one aspect of Russia's 'modernization' or 'westernization'. Although there is a big difference between the picture for the early sixteenth century and that for the last third of the seventeenth century, this is hardly a matter of steady progress and improvement. Knud Rasmussen (1978), who reached a rather skeptical conclusion about how well the Ambassadorial Chancery was informed in the sixteenth century, based his conclusion mainly on an analysis of the instructions regarding intelligence gathering. At the opposite interpretative pole is Mikhail Alpatov's essay (1966), addressing the same question but for the seventeenth century, where his evidence is mainly from the end-of-mission reports, some of which indeed are impressive for their detail. The current doyen of experts on the Russian diplomatic files and the Ambassadorial Chancery, Nikolai Rogozhin (1999: 368), has concluded that by the end of the sixteenth century, if not before, Russian diplomacy was well supplied with intelligence about other countries and their affairs, but a closer look at case studies reveals that this was by no means uniformly true even decades later.

To hope to reach a consensus from this evidence that might demonstrate a pattern of steady progress is unlikely. It is worth keeping in mind the distinction enunciated in his eloquent lectures by the revered Russian historian Vasilii Kliuchevskii (1957–1959, 3: 319–364), who, following the lead of his mentor, Sergei Mikhailovich Solov'ev, actively explored the antecedents to the 'reforms' of Peter I. Kliuchevskii illustrated his points with his evocative portraits of individuals in the seventeenth century, among them Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich and the influential official Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin, who stood somewhere on the ill-defined divide between the 'old' and the 'new'. Kliuchevskii wrote (ibid.: 256; our translation and emphasis):

> Earlier, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Russia was acquainted with Western Europe, had some dealings with her – diplomatic and commercial – borrowed the fruits of her enlightenment, sought out her artists, craftsmen, doctors, and military men. This was intercourse but not influence. Influence starts when the society which accepts it begins to recognize the superiority of its milieu or the influencing culture and the necessity of learning from it and submitting morally to it, borrowing from it not only worldly comforts, but the very foundations for the ordering of life, the opinions, understandings, customs, and social attitudes. Such indicators appeared among us with respect to Western Europe only *beginning* in the seventeenth century.

Interest in the earliest Russian acquisition of foreign newspapers dates back at least to 1827, when Aleksandr Bulgakov responded to a question posed by a reader of the journal *Moskovskii telegraf* regarding when newspapers first were published in Russia. He included in his response a listing of seventeenth-century foreign newspapers which he found still preserved in the archives in Moscow (Bulgakov 1827). Although he was

aware of the existence of the *kuranty*, they were not his primary concern.[38] Thus, even the very first recognition of their existence was framed with reference to the eventual first publication of a newspaper in Russia. Some fragments of *kuranty* texts were published in subsequent decades – for example, by the philologist Fedor Ivanovich Buslaev – but the early 20th-century project for a large-scale publication of them was abandoned.

In his pioneering bibliographic monograph about Russian translated literature Aleksei Ivanovich Sobolevskii (1903) included a few examples of '*kuranty*-type' material, drawn primarily not from the long runs of archival documents but rather from the few copies found in manuscript miscellanies.[39] Over the decades following the appearance of his work, various studies had examined in greater detail many of the translations he described, but only a few of which might reasonably be termed objective 'news' reports. To take one example, he was aware of Russian versions of pseudo-epigraphic correspondence between the Ottoman Sultan and various rulers, texts produced as anti-Ottoman propaganda. This correspondence became the subject of careful study by Marianna Davidovna Kagan-Tarkovskaia (1957, 1958a, 1958b), who published critical editions of the texts, based on a much more extensive knowledge of the manuscript traditions. Unlike Sobolevskii, she considered most of them to be original Russian compositions. In an article, his dissertation and subsequent book, Waugh (1971, 1972, 1978) demonstrated, on the contrary, that they were translations and should be considered in the broader context of the translations of foreign news in Moscow. This conclusion was initially greeted with skepticism but is now widely accepted and reinforced by discoveries of additional sources and manuscript copies.[40]

1.4.1. Pokrovskii and Shlosberg on the *kuranty*

The first serious attempts to study the *kuranty* were by Aleksei Alekseevich Pokrovskii (1906) and especially in an important article by Artur Nikolaevich Shlosberg (1911). Significantly, both scholars emphasized that the manuscript *kuranty* were precursors of Tsar Peter's published newspaper (*Vedomosti*), the first number of which was printed at the end of 1702.[41] Pokrovskii's discussion was a prefatory essay to his (re-)publication of the *Vedomosti*. Shlosberg explicitly framed his analysis with reference to the noted

38. The manuscript inventory (RGADA, f. 155, *Opis'* 1) lists first the foreign newspapers preserved in the collection and only secondarily the translation files of the *kuranty*. It would have been easy for Bulgakov to compile his list from the *opis'* without necessarily even examining any of the newspapers themselves.

39. For a review of what Sobolevskii included and what he missed, see Shamin 2011a: 31–45. Sobolevskii was aware of the few actual *kuranty* texts which no longer are in their original archival environment but rather form part of the collection of the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg (MSS 32.14.11, 32.14.12, described now in Kopanev et al. 1965: 324–329).

40. Maier 2006b; Maier and Shamin 2007; Shamin 2015; Waugh 2019.

41. Many treatments of the Petrine *Vedomosti* date their beginning to early 1703, on the basis of extant copies. However, Kharlampovich (1918) produced evidence that at least one issue (known only from a manuscript copy made from it) had appeared close to the end of 1702. For more on his source, Waugh 2003.

historian Sergei Solov'ev's pioneering emphasis on the need to find the antecedents to Peter's reforms back in Muscovy.

Even the recent and substantial study of the *kuranty* by Stepan Mikhailovich Shamin (2011a), published exactly a century after Shlosberg's article, echoes its predecessor in the subtitle 'The European press in Russia and the emergence of the Russian periodical press' (see also Maier 2004b). Such an emphasis is certainly not totally misplaced: the institutional arrangements for obtaining foreign newspapers through the post that had been put in place prior to Peter continued to supply such news, and the approach to translation and summary of the sources did not substantially change (Maier and Shamin 2011; 2018). However, there is the risk of wanting to read too much back into the manuscript news compendia with their deliberately restricted audience. The mode of production and dissemination with the advent of printed news in Russia really distinguished the *Vedomosti* from what went before. Ironically, the first printed Russian newspapers seem to have attracted little interest amongst contemporaries, judging from the statistics about how much of the print runs remained unsold.

Shlosberg's monograph-length article was remarkable for setting so many of the themes which would be the focus of subsequent studies of the *kuranty*. He devoted considerable attention to the different paths by which officials in Russia gathered foreign news prior to the establishment of the international postal connection in the 1660s. His purview included not just the evidence about reports based on foreign news sources but also ones obtained through intelligence activities, interrogations, and the like. He provided an overview and examples of the kinds of news, especially political, which their compilers selected and did so for a range of decades through the seventeenth century. In this he anticipated what Shamin would do in much greater depth in his dissertation, defended in 2003 and later published in an enlarged and updated monograph (Shamin 2011a). Although Shlosberg focused on a narrow period of the 1640s when comparing the translations with some of their Western sources – published German newspapers which he found in the archives – he anticipated the serious work by the Swiss philologist Roland Schibli (1988), who would also use examples from the 1640s in his pioneering linguistic analysis of the texts. (When he published his dissertation, V-K V etc. had not yet appeared.) Schibli's detective work since has been extended in the monographs by Maier (1997, 2006a). The focus mainly on the 1640s for the comparisons made by Shlosberg and Schibli led to somewhat misleading conclusions about the completeness of the translations, where we now know that the increasing availability of foreign sources subsequently dictated that translations be more selective and contents sometimes just epitomized.

Where Pokrovskii had maintained the *kuranty* were but supplemental sources of information for the makers of Russian foreign policy – the reports of ambassadors being more important – Shlosberg attached much greater significance to the *kuranty* for their role in supplying on a regular basis current information about European events. Pokrovskii had argued that the regularization in the acquisition of foreign news resulted

from the establishment of the international postal connection. In a somewhat curious reading of the headers provided for the translated newspapers, Shlosberg argued that the regular acquisition of the news had in fact antedated the 1660s. On the basis of the documents that have come down to us, with lacunae for many years, it is impossible to be certain, but arguably the regularization in the acquisition of foreign newspapers was a gradual process. There were periods when few were received until the postal connection had been established.

For Shlosberg, the *kuranty* indeed represented periodical 'news', if in manuscript rather than in print, and they thus served as the direct inspiration for Peter I when he decreed the publication of the *Vedomosti* in 1702. In his conclusion, Shlosberg addressed the interesting question of whether the *kuranty* and then the *Vedomosti* represented a kind of foreign borrowing, planted on yet unprepared Russian soil. That is, he asked, might one not find evidence earlier and in various parts of the Russian manuscript traditions regarding an interest in the regular recording and thus transmission of news, even if not news primarily concerning foreign events? The *Vedomosti*, after all, had as their first focus domestic affairs, serving as a medium for propagandizing Tsar Peter's achievements. Shlosberg's conclusion was that there is such evidence: in the Russian chronicles, in the records of court ceremonial (*dvortsovye razriady*), and in manuscript miscellanies. While his comments on this material were perforce sketchy, in striking ways he anticipated some of the considerations in our conclusion.

1.4.2. The renewed scholarly interest in the *kuranty*

In the 1960s, when Waugh began to examine the *kuranty* for his dissertation, for practical reasons he confined his work on the texts primarily to the 1660s. The choice of years deliberately encompassed the time when the first Muscovite international postal connection was established, in the hope of demonstrating what its impact might have been on the acquisition of foreign news.

The initial charter for the creation of the Russian international post in 1665 explicitly stated that it was to ensure the regular acquisition of news.[42] As we shall see, the longest serving among the first Muscovite postmasters, Andrei Vinius (Andries Winius), who began his career as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery, played a key role in the acquisition and dissemination of foreign news in Moscow. Waugh concluded that even in those early years of the foreign post, the translators were being much more selective than they had been back in the 1640s, presumably because they now were receiving much more news on a regular basis than they could possibly hope to translate quickly. Condensation or epitomization increasingly became the norm, even if certain items deemed of great interest still would be translated in full. Maier extensively documented such practices (in V-K VI/2), and as Shamin (2012b) would later establish, by the late seventeenth century, there even developed a practice of epitomizing the already con-

42. On the history of the Russian foreign post, see our Chapter 18.

densed selections of news in the *kuranty*, probably because the young Tsar Peter was too impatient to listen to or read much detail.

In the period when the first volumes of the *Vesti-Kuranty* (V-K) had appeared, the late Elena Igorevna Kobzareva (1988) devoted her valuable dissertation to an assessment of foreign news acquisition by the Ambassadorial Chancery in the seventeenth century. One virtue of the work was her review of all the different kinds of sources available in Moscow regarding other countries: diplomatic reports, private correspondence, intelligence collected by border commandants, and the *kuranty*. Her dissertation highlighted the example of Russian knowledge about England and how much it improved as the seventeenth century progressed. Despite the fact that there had been a long history of interactions with England dating back to the middle of the sixteenth century, well down into the seventeenth century, the Russian government's understanding of English affairs was quite limited. This resulted in policy decisions and initiatives which sometimes bore little relationship to English realities. The *kuranty* certainly must have played a role in improving the government's knowledge of English affairs during the seventeenth century. Only one summary article from her dissertation appeared in print (Kobzareva 1989); rather than pursue in depth a study of the *kuranty*, she devoted her subsequent work to studies of Russian foreign relations, especially with Sweden (Kobzareva 1998, 2000, 2017). Her work was informed by careful attention to the relationship between the acquisition of news and the making of policy. In her final book, published posthumously, she reiterated her belief that 'in the second half of the seventeenth century for the Russian authorities the *kuranty* became the main source of information about international events' (Kobzareva 2017: 16). Indeed, where possible she cites the *kuranty* files, at the same time that her research seems to show how much of the other information being obtained through diplomatic channels was probably of greater importance for any specific negotiation. That said, at times the argument seems to fall into the logical trap of 'post hoc ergo propter hoc', that is, receipt of particular information prior to some event or decision must have been the cause for that decision.

1.4.3. The contributions of Stepan Shamin

Among the contributions to the study of the *kuranty* in recent years, the work of Stepan Mikhailovich Shamin is particularly important. We have already noted his editorial contributions to the most recent volumes of V-K. His knowledge of the *kuranty* manuscripts and a great deal of the related manuscript material is unsurpassed. A number of his valuable publications (cited in our bibliography) are co-authored. His first (*kandidat*) dissertation of 2003 – subsequently published as a monograph (Shamin 2011a) – focused on the *kuranty* in the reign of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich (1676–1682), a time when the mechanisms for processing the foreign news reports were firmly in place. From the beginning of his work on the subject, he emphasized the contribution of the *kuranty* to the integration of Russia into the broader diplomatic system of Europe.[43] The starting

43. Shamin 2002a; also Kobzareva 2015.

point for his analysis was the middle of the seventeenth century, when the term *kuranty* first came to be used in Moscow to refer to the foreign news sources and translations and the acquisition of foreign news became regularized through the establishment of the foreign post. In his recently defended second (*doktorskaia*) dissertation (Shamin 2020b) he included a more expansive discussion of news acquisition, starting back at the end of the fifteenth century. Shamin's focus on the *kuranty* for a relatively short period – beginning in the 1670s and going down into the 1680s – is of particular value, since he relies heavily on the yet unpublished *kuranty* files. He has statistics on the frequency of news deliveries and quotes extensively from the unpublished texts. Thus his work complements (but does not duplicate) our study and provides a framework for assessing the acquisition of foreign news down to Tsar Peter's publication of the first Russian newspaper. Shamin's work is based first and foremost on the Russian texts; with rare exceptions, he has left to others the identification of their foreign sources and their comparison with the translations.

One of his most substantial chapters deals with the Russian government's interest in what was published about Russia and the degree to which the government in turn may have influenced such reportage abroad. Shamin's material complements that in Martin Welke's study (1976), which is based on reports about Russia in contemporary German newspapers, and some more recent studies.[44] One of the most interesting impacts of Moscow's growing awareness of foreign news is how fast the Kremlin came to appreciate its propaganda value, to the extent of demanding punishment for foreign publishers of news it deemed unfavorable. Shamin includes striking evidence about efforts to influence foreign coverage of Russian affairs by planting stories in the Western press.[45]

Of course, part of this topic involves trying to determine what were the sources for European publication of news from Moscow. Resident foreign agents or other foreigners in Russia were sending home regular reports, at least some of which seem to have supplied news for the Western press. Even if it can be difficult to establish for certain the connection between such reports and what was printed, to examine the mechanisms by which the foreign residents communicated reveals a great deal about the possibilities for news to flow in the opposite direction, from Europe to Moscow. Some of the important Swedish intelligence reports were published long ago.[46] An even more impressive example is the intelligence provided by Christoph Koch (ennobled von Kochen), a long-term

44. See esp. several essays in Griesse 2014, including Maier and Shamin 2014; also Kazakov and Maier 2018, and Maier 2017a.

45. See also the recent treatment of the Russian government's effort to disseminate news about its military accomplishments during the war against the Ottomans in the late seventeenth century (Gus'kov et al. 2022, a book which Shamin co-authored). On reports in the foreign press about the Russian 'Great Embassy' which Peter I undertook in 1697–1698, see Guzevich and Guzevich 2020b.

46. See Iakobov (1897: 407–474) for Russian translations of the reports by Karl Pommerening, 1647–1650; Kurts 1914 for those by Johan de Rodes, 1650–1655. For the period of De Rodes' residency, see Rauch 1952. A still valuable study of the importance of the Scandinavian sources over a longer period is Ellersieck 1955, which, unfortunately, was never published.

Swedish resident in Moscow in the last third of the seventeenth century (see Droste and Maier 2018). Unlike his predecessor residents, he was able to send regular newsletters through the post via the Swedish officials in Livonia. A recent book publishes his reports about the political crisis in Moscow at the death of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich (Kazakov and Lavrov 2022). Such evidence emphasizes how the study of news flows and exchanges in the circles of the Russian government in the last third of the seventeenth century must take into account what was an increasingly cosmopolitan environment, where Russian officials and members of the foreign community might interact on a regular basis. Paul Bushkovitch's analysis (2001) of court politics in the time of Peter I contains vivid evidence from the resident foreigners' accounts demonstrating how well they were informed and why.[47]

In addition to its discussion of 'political' reporting, Shamin's book (2011a) contains sections – often drawn extensively from his separately published articles – on news about wonders of nature, on what were believed to be miraculous occurrences, on the various religious disputes in Western Europe, on ceremonial at European courts, and much more. In order to demonstrate what can be learned from the *kuranty* about readership and the possible influence of the news on the cultural horizons of the Muscovite elite, he discusses annotations about the reading of the texts to the tsar and boyars (a more or less regular practice). Moreover, he advances the innovative – if not entirely convincing – argument that the changes over time in marginal glosses about European cities or regions mentioned in the texts (for instance, in which country they are located) may tell us which ones had become so familiar that they did not require any explanatory notes and which ones still might have been little known and needed explanations. Curiously, perhaps, there is very little analysis of how the news about wars, diplomacy, etc. might have influenced foreign-policy decisions. Shamin clearly recognizes the potential for the *kuranty* to have contributed to the making of foreign policy but had to leave the detailed analysis of concrete examples to others.

Apart from the possible role of the *kuranty* for government decision making, there is an equally interesting question of the degree to which the foreign news 'escaped' the chanceries and made it into wider circulation. Foreign news was considered to be privileged (a state secret). Yet occasional translations which constituted part of the *kuranty* are to be found in manuscript contexts outside of the chancery milieu. Shamin brings together numerous examples, in some cases analyzing little known manuscripts of texts that had been studied previously.[48]

He has recently expanded on this material in a substantial monograph, devoted to 'pamphlet curiosities' that were translated in Russia between the sixteenth and begin-

47. For the reports of Mogens Gjøe, the first Danish resident, Shcherbachev 1917; Bushkovitch 2001: 65–88. Bushkovitch quotes *in extenso* from Gjøe's reports preserved in the Danish archives. On the reports by Johann van Keller, the Dutch resident, Belov 1964; Eekmann 1992. Bushkovitch also mines his reports. See also Loewenson 1932, and for the very end of the century Brockmann 1990.

48. Shamin 2007a anticipates the treatment in his book.

ning of the eighteenth century (Shamin 2020a). These are the short texts that most commonly would have been printed in the ubiquitous pamphlets in the West, publications often devoted to sensations. So we have here chapters on heavenly signs, prophecies, political pamphlets, public ceremonies, and much more. The book develops material he explored in his earliest published work (e.g., Shamin 2001, 2002b). There is a chapter on the tales about two mendicant prophets, which he wrote about in detail in 2008 and concerning which he has found new manuscript evidence. His chapter on the apocryphal correspondence of the Ottoman sultan cites appropriately the basic study (Waugh 1978) but focuses mainly on manuscripts which had not previously received adequate attention. His appendices include copies of several texts either previously unpublished or published from different copies. Taken as a whole, the material Shamin brings together in this book represents the most comprehensive survey and updating of what Sobolevskii (1903) had rather sketchily included in his descriptive bibliography of Russian translated literature.

Shamin's penultimate chapter is devoted to his evolving views about how the proliferation of translated texts may have been transformative for the world view of readers in Muscovy. He devotes several pages to words borrowed from other languages, which were first documented in the *kuranty*, though he has to admit that, absent discussion or explanations, borrowed terms or proper names (his examples relate to Classical Antiquity) may have been meaningless for those who encountered them. To a degree his discussion rests on the unstated premise (albeit one obviously shared by others who have written on Russia's 'westernization') that the Renaissance revival of interest in the Ancients laid the intellectual foundation for the erection of modernity.[49]

Apart from his own work on the *kuranty* and related texts, Shamin's contributions that are relevant here include helping to organize and edit (with D. V. Liseitsev) the proceedings from recent conferences devoted to translators and translation in Russia.[50] With several colleagues he has compiled a reference volume about the translators of the Ambassadorial Chancery in the seventeenth century (Beliakov et al.). Much of this material focuses on career patterns, salaries and other forms of compensation, and appointments to specific missions. Among the contributors to the essay volumes are the authors of this study and Maier's Ph.D. student Olena Jansson, all of whom investigate questions about the ability of the translators and the quality of the work they produced. These conference publications make a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the translation capabilities at the Ambassadorial Chancery, a subject which is the focus of our Chapters 6–9 below.

1.5. Determining the impact of foreign news on Russian foreign-policy decisions

Even if the cultural impact of the *kuranty* may still be difficult to establish, to determine

49. On the significance of Classical references in the translated literature of the Petrine period, cf. Nikolaev 1996a: 31–37.

50.. *Perevodchiki* 2019; *Perevodchiki* 2021; *Perevodchiki* 2023.

the influence of the acquisition of foreign news on key aspects of government decision making *should* be easier. The shaping of Russian foreign policy is an obvious place to look, but with rare exceptions until recently, scholars who have written on the foreign relations of early modern Russia have failed to consider carefully whether particular news (or the failure to receive current information) helps to explain the decisions that were reached. Since we have been unable to work extensively in the Russian archives, we have had to lean heavily on published source collections and the studies which have also mined the unpublished archival material. Although it is an artifact of nineteenth-century scholarship, Sergei Mikhailovich Solov'ev's massive *History of Russia* is still indispensable for its quotation of archival material that may not otherwise be available in print.[51] Particularly relevant for our study is Boris Fedorovich Porshnev's study (1976) of the Russian and Swedish involvement in the Thirty Years War.[52] He examined the Russian archival documents in part to establish exactly when and how news of the war made it to Moscow and might thus have influenced decision making. However, he was handicapped by more limited access to non-Russian materials and the ideological constraints imposed on Soviet scholarship at the time. Among the more recent studies, we have already mentioned the books by Elena Kobzareva, of which her 1998 monograph deals with one of the crucial periods for our analysis.

The most prolific of the current students of Muscovite foreign policy is Boris Nikolaevich Floria, legendary for his thoroughness in archival research. His book on the beginnings of the Thirty Years War is essential for its careful analysis of information flows (Floria 1986). For the 1650s and 1660s, his two monographs are unsurpassed in their detail about the relationship between the acquisition of news and other intelligence and the decision making in the Kremlin (Floria 2010, 2013). Indeed, he cites the *kuranty* texts where they are relevant, but as with Kobzareva, those citations are infrequent. Most of the information of relevance for policy decisions came from other sources, a significant part of them yet unpublished. His monograph on the foreign policy of Ordin-Nashchokin (Floria 2013) is of particular interest for the critical look the author takes regarding his subject's career and influence. Ordin-Nashchokin has long been held up as a model for the 'new Muscovite men' who possessed a good knowledge about the West and thus were in a position to promote an increasing Russian engagement with Europe (see, e.g., Kliuchevskii, cited earlier). It is not as though Floria questions such a depiction, but rather he argues that Ordin-Nashchokin had certain *idées fixes* which meant he did not always accept the implications of news he received and thus supported policies which were to the detriment of Russia's international interests.

51. There are several editions. We have used the reprint (Solov'ev 1960–1966), whose editors have added notes to the current archival locations of the documents he often quotes *in extenso*.

52. Reviews (by Brian Davies, in *Russian Review* 57/1 [1998]: 127–128, and David Kirby in *History Today* 47/6 [1997]: 56) of the condensed 1995 English translation of Porshnev's book find it to be dated and are very critical of his interpretations. However, they underestimate the value of his evidence about the material in the Russian archives that is otherwise not readily accessible. We have used the original, full Russian edition.

In his most recent work, extending his studies into the foreign policy of the 1670s, Floria examines the activity of the first resident Russian diplomat abroad, Vasilii Mikhailovich Tiapkin, who was posted to Poland following the agreement reached in the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667.[53] Tiapkin's mission had been the subject of a still very useful monograph by Aleksandr Nikolaevich Popov (1854), which cited the Russian resident's complaints about how difficult it was to obtain good information at the Polish court.[54] In fact, Tiapkin's reports were substantial, and among other activities, he was obtaining Polish books on a regular basis and sending them to Moscow (Nikolaev 1989a). The information about Tiapkin's activity underscores how important it was to have a resident agent in a foreign capital, one who could create and maintain a network of reliable informants. However, as we shall see, even non-resident envoys – especially if sent more than once to a particular country – might manage to establish (perhaps by bribery) relations with officials who could supply insider information and copies of important documents.

The world of secret agents on Moscow's payroll still requires study. To the degree that such intelligence gathering has been examined, the Russian studies have been primarily concerned with foreign espionage within Russia and seem consciously to have avoided dealing with corresponding Russian efforts abroad.[55] Yet the latter activity is central to our focus on how foreign news and intelligence of all sorts was being obtained. The detailed study by Kirill Aleksandrovich Kochegarov (2008) on the diplomacy leading to the 'permanent peace' between Russia and Poland in 1686 highlights the activity of a particularly important agent, Nazarii Mikhailov syn Kraevskii, who held an administrative position in Lithuania, but was on occasion able to travel across the border to Russia and had a secret channel of communication directly to the Ambassadorial Chancery. For a full assessment of his activity, the publication of his reports will be essential. While the examples of Tiapkin and Kraevskii fall beyond the chronological limits we have chosen for our detailed study, they are extremely important to note for future study of the evolution of foreign news acquisition in Muscovy during the remainder of the seventeenth century.

1.6. Reading in premodern Russia: methodological considerations

A very broad definition of 'reading' is essential to appreciate the ways in which news disseminated in Muscovy. If we limit the inquiry to reading in the narrow sense of directly accessing information from a written text, it is difficult to find concrete evidence, and much of that leaves unanswered why the 'reader' might have been interested in a given

53. Floria 2016a. For his other ongoing work about the foreign relations of the 1670s, idem, 2015, 2016b, 2017, 2018, 2019.

54. See also Waugh 2018a: 146–148; Domrachev 2021.

55. This is evident in Aver'ianov 2001 and Sokolov 2001, whose focus is counterintelligence. The volume containing their essays, published in celebration of the establishment of the Ambassadorial Chancery, has no equivalent essay on Russian intelligence networks. For an example of what can be done to study the espionage engaged in by other governments see Haynes 2009, one of many studies relating to the English secret service.

work. Yet, to broaden the inquiry to include the indirect acquisition of information by hearing it read or reported raises a host of additional problems, since to document oral communication in any meaningful way can be impossible. At best, then, we may be able to document situations where that which existed in written form was communicated (either in writing or orally), even if we can but tentatively say much about its audience and how they responded. And indeed there may be considerable information or news which never was written down.

Whereas much has been written on readership in premodern Russia, even the best scholarship has had to fall back on indirect ways to analyze the subject.[56] There is a wide spectrum of opinion about the degree to which there was early Russian formal literacy that could have enabled anyone actually to read directly a written text. The more sober assessments tend to agree that literacy levels, while uneven across society, were on the average quite low. Even with the considerable production of printed books in Muscovy in the seventeenth century (which in the first instance were used as textbooks for the acquisition of reading skills), there is little that can be documented as to how they were used and by whom, and whether they made a significant dent in the generally low level of literacy, especially among the non-elite (Marker 1990). At the same time, the abundant production of manuscripts, the often complex editing and writing of certain texts, and the imposing production of bureaucratic paper in Muscovy of themselves bear witness to the fact that at least among the elite, there were many literate men. To the extent that a text can be connected with a person, we may be able say something about who the readers were.

Of course, owning a copy of a text does not necessarily mean that the person has read it. All too often discussions of readership in early Russia cite primarily evidence based on book ownership. Starting in the late fifteenth century, we can begin to document the contents of Russian libraries, in the first instance those of religious institutions. Although they vary in detail, and most in any event are cryptic, there are contemporary inventories. To supplement such information, studies of Russian book culture have begun systematically to record owners' inscriptions, and the best recent scholarship has employed sophisticated tools of codicological analysis to write the history of individual books and thus determine something about where they were produced or may have been used. Documenting in similar detail individuals' libraries, and especially those of laymen, is difficult at best.[57] For a study such as the current one, where the emphasis is on the dissemination of foreign news, such limitations understandably are frustrating.

To the degree that texts containing 'news' such as that in the *kuranty* may have circulated outside of the chancery milieu, the most likely form of preservation is not a separate document but rather a copy contained within a florilegium or miscellany, a

56. Much of what follows here about the general methodological problems is a distillation of Waugh 2020, where there are references to the literature.

57. Recent work shows, however, that there is still a lot to be learned about such libraries. See, for example, Poliakov 2017a.

manuscript that contains many different works. To try to understand why the text of particular interest may have been preserved in that way requires first of all codicological study to establish the book's provenance and when it came together in its current form. The context within which the news item is now found may then suggest why it was of interest. That is, the 'convoy' of the other works with which it is found may include ones with thematic threads that also are in the news text.[58] Even in the absence of any specific indication of who owned the book, it may be possible to hypothesize about what the interests were of those responsible for its production and preservation. Thus there is indirect evidence about 'readership'. Sometimes palæographic features of a manuscript containing news – in particular, the style of handwriting – may provide a clue about the likely provenance, although to see a 'chancery hand' on the page still leaves a very wide range of possibilities concerning the identity and location of the copyist. There is as yet much to be learned in order to make palæographic analysis more precise.

Where such evidence cannot be adduced, it is necessary to fall back simply on content analysis. Why might the subject have been of interest and to whom? Perhaps by analogy with other contemporary materials, there can be a reasonable hypothesis of why a text was copied and spread. Equally interesting may be cases where a text languished in an archival copy and never seems to have made it to a wider audience. Why the dissemination of one item, but not another? Sometimes archival documentation demonstrates a direct connection of an individual with issues addressed a particular text. Understandably, such analysis can be highly speculative and may say more about the modern scholar's reconstruction of the historical context of centuries ago than it does about the realities of 'readership' then. Furthermore, if our subject really is 'news', to document the copying and reading of 'news items' at some remove from the time when what they contained was current has to raise questions about whether this tells us anything at all about *news* readership. News, by definition, presumably has some relevance to current events or concerns.

1.7. Anticipating a conclusion

It is reasonable to ask whether one can ever hope to establish fully the impact on Muscovy of foreign news and information about foreign countries. Granted, even a cursory examination of the *kuranty* suggests many topics they cover which can *logically* be related to what one can *assume* were the concerns of Muscovite officials and some members of the literate elite. However, such assumptions just might miss the mark, and there also is much whose possible interest ('relevance') is somewhat mystifying. For example, most of the reports translated from Western newspapers about specific events during the Thirty Years War (1618–1648) are so obscure that their significance surely would have been lost on anyone reading them in the Kremlin, a challenge that was the greater

58. On the importance of studying 'convoy', see the seminal article by Likhachev 1962. On the importance of florilegia in reading, Dmitrieva 1972.

for the fact there seem to have been many gaps in what was being received. Why then were they translated? Perhaps the explanation is simply that they arrived at the time when still only a limited amount of Western news came into the hands of the translators in Moscow. The newspapers which were acquired thus could be translated more or less in their entirety, irrespective of whether individual reports in them were understood or had any bearing on immediate policy concerns. On the other hand, the number of instances where the decision makers obtained and translated in full documents such as the texts of treaties is impressive and understandable, even if some of the minutiae of those agreements might have been deemed of little significance.

In the later decades of the seventeenth century there was a much more conscious process of selection by individuals who perhaps were better informed about foreign affairs than had been their predecessors in the chancery. However, there was still a lot of the detail in the *kuranty* which would seem to have had at best a peripheral bearing on the concerns of the Russian government. Arguably the *kuranty* were important for broadening the understanding in Moscow about the internal politics of other states. Diplomatic missions sent abroad, especially when staffed by translators or secretaries who had long experience in the Ambassadorial Chancery, seem increasingly to have been well informed. Yet, did the makers of foreign policy always pay attention and make use of the material about what arguably were areas of peripheral concern?

The difficulty in establishing what readers of the news made of it are not unique to the Russian case. Evidence for elsewhere in Europe has been difficult to find or at least until recently had not drawn much attention (Groesen 2016). Whereas for the West there are diaries, a great deal of correspondence, and archival records of diplomatic decision making that can document how news was received and understood, there is relatively little of such material for Russia.[59] So the tendency is to fall back on inference: if a current concern was about relations with country X, then *ipso facto* any news reports relating to that country surely were of interest. The studies by those who write about what news might have been of interest for the making of Russian foreign policy – by Shamin and by the authors of this book – have all made such assumptions. Even if we accept those premises, it is essential to pay close attention to chronology: when was any item of news received, translated (if necessary) and read by or to the tsar and his foreign-policy advisers? Unfortunately, we do not always have a firm answer. For Moscow to learn about events in the West certainly took longer than it did for that same news to become available in, for instance, Paris or Vienna. Was that therefore a handicap? News everywhere still traveled slowly by any modern standard (Woolf 2001: 85). The impact of keeping up

59. As an example, there is a series of volumes which publish the proceedings of the State Council (Riksråd) in Sweden (*SRP* 1908, 1912). No equivalent set of detailed records was ever kept in Russia for the meetings of the tsar with his advisers. Notations on archival copies of documents often indicate that the contents were read to the tsar and the boyars, and such notations may provide a pithy summary of a decree that was issued after a report was read. However, there is nothing like a stenographic record of the discussions.

to date on foreign news – what Brendan Dooley (2008, 2010a) has characterized as the development of a sense of 'contemporaneity', thanks to the emergence of the periodical press – is very difficult to document. By placing our study of the *kuranty* in a broad comparative context, we may discover that the Russian government interest and success in obtaining foreign news developed in similar fashion to that of other governments, even if with a certain time lag.

Some of the best traditional scholarship on the Russian evidence relating to the early modern 'information and communications revolution' was based on a comparative perspective. Even if he did not pursue the subject, Artur Shlosberg arguably was right in his instincts about wanting to situate the emergence of a Russian periodical press in an earlier and very broadly conceived context of what could have constituted news for Russians. A knowledge of European postal history informed Ivan Kozlovskii's magisterial study, in which he framed his analysis of the Russian material by emphasizing the potential cultural importance of the international post. He was forced to conclude that it did not live up to that potential by the end of the seventeenth century, since there was so little use of it by Russians other than those in government service. International news surely should have had some 'relevance' for those amongst the Muscovite elite engaged in professional activities such as trade or diplomacy. Yet even for them, what they took away from the news may have been tempered by traditional preconceptions. Caution is advised before jumping to conclusions about the incipient modernity of readers, and there is good reason to question the traditional paradigm about how the 'revolution' in news and communications set early modern Europe firmly on the road to 'modernity'. Study of the Russian case may reinforce that conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

The 'News Revolution' in Early Modern Europe

The 'shrinking of space', which occurred in Europe beginning as early as 1500 with the development of postal networks, helped to make possible significant changes in the communication of news (Behringer 2006: 363). Many of the standard accounts about the development of news media emphasize the importance of print, and in particular the rapid spread of newspapers starting in the seventeenth century. Yet oral transmission of news – including unverified and often misleading rumor – has continued even to the present. Moreover, throughout the period that concerns us, manuscript news coexisted with print media and complemented the latter. If we are to understand the context in which the *kuranty* appeared, to assess their importance, and to compare and contrast the Muscovite experience with that of the rest of early modern Europe, we need to consider the several forms in which news was transmitted. Our primary focus will be on print media, but some comments on oral and manuscript transmission are appropriate. The Russian government's reliance on sources other than printed newspapers (via their translations) was certainly not exceptional. This review will demonstrate that the various media were interconnected and did not simply exist in parallel to one another.

2.1. Oral transmission of news and news in manuscript

As Andrew Pettegree has stated, "pre-industrial society was still to a very large extent an oral culture," one of the important reasons being that many simply could not read.[1] The greeting 'What's news?' was widespread, among other places in England in the seventeenth century, evoking there oral communication of news which could get the speaker in trouble with the authorities, who diligently tried to suppress the spread of rumor. The Oxford scholar Robert Burton lamented in 1621 the "confusion" created by the overwhelming amount of news which assailed him – "I hear new news every day"– at least some of it coming via oral communication. "[N]ews could run freely between speech and writing or print" (Woolf 2001: 86, 91).

Once written down, not only might orally communicated news travel long distances, but it also might eventually serve as the source for a new round of oral communication.

1. Pettegree 2014: 118. His book is currently the most balanced introduction to the history of news in early modern Europe, since he discusses print media along with careful consideration of manuscript news and the role of oral communication. For the now substantial historiography relating to early modern oral culture, see the review by Horodowich (2012), introducing several essays in a special number of *Journal of Early Modern History*.

There were numerous public and private spaces in which news might be exchanged, among the most important being market places and taverns or coffee houses which subscribed to news services, especially printed newspapers or pamphlets (Pettegree 2014, Ch. 6). In those spaces, written news might be read aloud for the illiterate; by all accounts, lively discussion might ensue. Anyone who heard the news might then retell it in other places.

Both in the process of telling and in the process of writing, the content of the news as originally received and reported might change significantly. Brendan Dooley (2010a: 12–15) has made an attempt to schematize how news texts might develop, where different eyewitness or oral reports regarding single or related events would be written down, might circulate in newsletters and eventually make it into printed papers. Along the way, there could be 'feedback loops' through which the news would be conflated and possibly garbled. That is, an oral report, written down and disseminated in written form, might then be read aloud, repeated orally, and make its way back into written communication.

Whether transmitted orally or in writing, 'news' might incorporate what is frequently denigrated with the term 'rumor'. Jean-Noel Kapferer (1992: 60) has provided a pithy definition: "Rumors are what is left unsaid, that is, things not yet confirmed by official sources." Implied in most assessments of rumor is the understanding that its information may not be trustworthy. Astute Italian merchants in the late Middle Ages were certainly aware of the dangers of relying on incorrect information, but nonetheless tried to ensure that they be informed of rumors. According to Pettegree (2014: 50), "The whole issue of when rumor became news was a thorny one. It was up to each man's judgement to know what to believe, and when to act." While it has been common to distinguish rumor from 'gossip', the latter having a very narrow, often personal focus with no broader implications for society or polity, such distinctions now have come under question (Horodowich 2012: 308). From the standpoint of the political and religious authorities, rumor and gossip, spread in the first instance by word of mouth with astonishing rapidity, were potentially dangerous and could foment unrest, although they could also be manipulated to serve the interests of state and church. Shakespeare was well aware of this. His *Henry IV, Part 2* opens with Rumour deliberately conveying false information and boasting:

> The posts come tiring on,
> And not a man of them brings other news
> Than they have learned of me. From Rumour's tongues
> They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true wrongs.

Rumors often appear 'spontaneously', that is, not as a result of some conspiracy, even if suspicion about their origins frequently accompanies their dissemination. It can be difficult to locate the source of a rumor. In any event, what undoubtedly is more important in studying rumor is to learn about the mechanisms by which it is spread and trace its impact.

As with all kinds of oral communication in the era before modern technology, rumor can be studied only on the basis of written texts (Cohen 2012: 406–407). These can include news reports, diaries and – importantly – legal documents produced in connection with the official efforts to suppress rumor and apprehend those who disseminated it. News writers who were conscious of the need to cultivate the trust of those who subscribed to their services, frequently would transmit unconfirmed oral reports, but often with the caveat that the accuracy of the information was uncertain. However, genres such as illustrated separates, in catering to a readership eager for sensation, had few qualms about presenting rumor as incontrovertible fact.

A good illustration of the perceived importance of rumor and consequently the efforts to suppress it is reporting on the papacy.[2] The death of a pope had significant implications both locally in Italy and throughout Europe, and the choice of a successor had political repercussions internationally. The possibility of lucrative appointments attracted the interest of both secular and clerical elites. Moreover, for both ordinary people and papal servants, the instability during an interregnum offered opportunities for looting. Given the advanced age of many popes, speculation on their demise was widespread. Whether or not the pope was seen in public was taken to be an indicator of his health, and the appearance of a comet or any number of other omens might be interpreted to portend his death. In anticipation of an interregnum and during the supposedly secret conclaves of the cardinals who elected the next pope, there would be a deluge of rumors. Until the papacy in the late sixteenth century undertook serious attempts to stop it, wagering on the outcome of the papal election was a lucrative business in and around Rome, and even high prelates engaged in it. The proceedings in the conclave almost invariably were leaked, which only fueled further speculation (Hunt 2012: 361).

Rome was a center for the writing and circulation of manuscript news reports (*avvisi*; Pettegree 2014: 111–113, 206). The *avvisi* writers were quick to disseminate every rumor. Indeed, oral and written news were interconnected, the result in some instances far removed from any semblance of objective reporting. Once disseminated in the *avvisi*, the rumors from the Vatican would reach across Europe.[3] The papal response was to criminalize the dissemination of unofficial 'news' about the papacy. Speculation about the pontiff's health and imminent death flourished, and the news was also spread by newsletters both within Rome and outside Italy (Hunt 2014). In 1571, Pope Pius V had some newsletter writers executed, and in 1630, Urban VIII responded to prognostication about his death by jailing astrologers (ibid.: 156). However, such measures were largely powerless to prevent oral transmission of rumor.

There is a great deal of evidence about the impact of rumor in England during the sixteenth century and the first decades of the seventeenth. On one level, as David Coast (2012) has demonstrated, elite court appointments often were influenced by rumor re-

2. For instance, Hunt 2012, 2014, and Dooley 1999 (esp. Ch. 1).

3. For an example of what proved to be an erroneous report about a papal election in 1670, see p. 99 below.

garding promotions or dismissals, whether or not the information was true. The perception of reality could be more important than the truth and could thus in a sense predetermine outcomes by elevating the stature of individuals or discouraging competitors for favor. Such was the case especially under King James I (r. 1603–1625) and seems to have contributed to a substantial turnover in the ranks of key courtiers. Some of the rumors were spread deliberately to discredit a competitor, others may have simply been expressions of wishful thinking. The evidence is all to be found in private correspondence, which served in some cases to spread the information well outside of London.

In England there were "strict laws of sedition and censorship which made it a criminal offence to speak or write ill of the government, its personnel, or anyone in authority."[4] The potential political instability of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was compounded by religious controversy, following King Henry VIII's break with Rome. The concerns of those in authority often focused on what was deemed to be the threat of the restoration of Catholicism as the official religion. The mechanisms for domestic surveillance and foreign espionage developed by Sir Francis Walsingham under Queen Elizabeth I were preoccupied with this threat.[5] As was the case with the papacy, among the rumors considered most dangerous were ones speculating on the health or death of the monarch, often invoking prophecies of imminent misfortune. And, there might be reports that dead rulers were still alive (Fox 2000: 361). It is possible to trace the networks of oral communication from the hundreds of reports about the arrest and interrogation of people accused of spreading false information about state affairs.

We might schematize the networks as emanating from a hub, London, from which frequent travelers to the provincial towns would convey news, and those towns in turn would serve as hubs for its dissemination further into the countryside. A lot of the travelers were pursuing their economic livelihood in some legitimate business, but there also were many messengers hired by newsmongers to carry information to paying clients. Along the roads were inns and alehouses (in 1636, an estimated 25,000–26,000 of them), "revolving doors of news, rumor, and gossip, drawing in stories before radiating them out again via the many people who passed through." Later, in the seventeenth century, coffee houses became "the market place of news. 'What news have you, master?' was the first question of the coffee man to his customer and on his tables lay pamphlets and lampoons, a 'store of mercuries' and the 'last coffee letter'." The coffee houses became a particular focus of government efforts to control the news; in one of them in London, among the written newssheets which were seized in 1678 was a copy of the *Haerlemse Courant* (ibid.: 351–352, 376, 378).

Written and oral communication of rumor interacted, with the written texts sometimes being the original source for oral transmission. A very interesting example is documented from 1537, when parishioners in East Riding accused their vicar of spreading

4. Fox 2000: 337. This discussion is drawn largely from his Chapter 7 on 'Rumour and News'.

5. Budiansky 2006, Haynes 2009. Speculation about the royal family (including rumors about deaths) were known in Russia and investigated by the authorities. See, e.g., Bakhrushin 1982.

prophecies both from his church and the local alehouse. The subsequent investigation revealed a complex thread of personal interactions, in which the people involved shared verses of a popular political ballad and some sets of prophecies, which they then copied and further disseminated. The accused vicar had acquired copies from an acquaintance (who had also read them aloud), took them back to his village and related their contents orally to those whose response was to report him to the authorities. In 1619, an apprentice wrote home to the provinces from London with news of some strange portent – seeming to foretell an uprising – which he had heard on the streets of the capital (ibid.: 364–366, 373–374). A 'common carrier' delivered his letter to the apprentice's father some twelve days later. The father then showed it to the local deputy mayor and others; meanwhile, the apprentice's mother 'lent it out' to the neighbors. Copies were distributed: the other children in the family posted one in a public place and it was read aloud in the streets.

Oral and manuscript transmission of news were important in England in part because of the stringent measures taken by the government to regulate printing (ibid.: 393–394). For example, when the printing of the first corantos was authorized in 1621, they could include only foreign news; the newsbooks of the 1630s were suppressed within a few years. During the Civil War, press control broke down, opening the way to a proliferation of journalism. At least one of the many pamphlets produced in connection with the imprisonment – and later execution – of King Charles I even made it to Moscow, where it was translated (Maier and Mikhaylov 2009). With the Restoration, again there were efforts to control news. The renowned 'spymaster' Joseph Williamson, who received reports from his correspondents scattered across Europe (including Patrick Gordon in Moscow), was responsible for what appeared in the *London Gazette*.[6] However, publishing by political factions again accelerated. As printed media became more widely available in the seventeenth century, it seems that they – not oral communication – were responsible for initiating rumor. Adam Fox emphasizes (2000: 380): "[T]he news on paper was certainly no more reliable than that spread orally," with many of the wildest rumors having originated in a newsletter.

Whether this was equally the case in other countries is, of course, a good question. Allyson Creasman (2009: 259) underlines that, at least in the early years of the Thirty Years War, when the publication of German newspapers was in its cradle and their readership still was quite limited, "[t]he average person was more likely to get their news from one of the many ephemeral news-ballads or pamphlets that occasionally appeared [...] Above all, news vendors focused on what would *sell*, not necessarily what was *true*." The city council of Nürnberg, which insisted on a very serious preventative censorship, turned down a petition by the local printer Joachim Lochner, asking for authorization to publish an imprint about Moscow ('muskowitisch zeitung') in 1572: since Nürnberg

6. Fraser 1956; Pettegree 2014: 237–239.

citizens are trading with Russia, 'this could be to their detriment.'[7] Presumably the pamphlet would have been one of those accusing the Russians of barbarism during the Livonian War. In November 1618, at the onset of the Thirty Years War, with an abundance of rumors and polemic circulating, the Augsburg city council decreed a crackdown on the popular reports about the revolt in Bohemia (Creasman 2012: 187). Such efforts at control over the sources of public opinion were common elsewhere in the empire and had a long history.

It is understandable why diplomats, even in an era when they would file detailed written reports, also would be expected to report orally at the end of their missions when they could be interrogated about details. Records of diplomatic exchanges regularly would convey what was said, often very explicitly, including the communication of some important news item that had not been supplied in written form. Diplomats at a foreign court could develop networks of informants with insider information, especially if they were resident there for a lengthy period (Fett 2012). One reason why the private newsletter business continued to flourish alongside the newspapers in the seventeenth century was the fact that the newsletter writers often cultivated informants in the same way that accredited diplomats did. The result of such contacts, where surely much of the information was first transmitted orally, was that at least private manuscript newsletters might include reports of court intrigue or noble family secrets which were not likely to make it into the press. This is not to say the newspaper publishers might not have had some of the same information, but they would usually suppress it from fear of losing their privileges to operate.

Apart from formal diplomatic representation and reports from far-flung officials, the best-informed rulers cultivated extensive networks of agents, who were able through their own networks to acquire often what proved to be the most reliable and detailed intelligence. As Cristina Borreguero Beltrán (2010: 35, 42) has stressed, in order to administer his huge empire, King Philip II of Spain (1556–1598) developed an impressive information network, taking advantage of the Taxis (Tassis) post to ensure regular delivery of reports to Madrid, but supplementing it, where necessary, by sending special couriers. Among his agents was a Moroccan, Baltasar Polo, who obtained intelligence from conversations at the docks with returning seamen. In 1597, in connection with the preparation of the Great Armada to attack England, another of Philip's agents, Antonio de Cisneros, reported on his conversations with Catholics in Ireland. King Philip's information network was so widespread and productive as to raise questions whether he was capable of processing and digesting all the reports he received.[8]

7. Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 69, 148. See, however, the pamphlet printed in Nürnberg eight years later (cited in our n. 26). Apparently, in certain periods it was easier to get permission from the censor for a pamphlet about Russian affairs.

8. Paul Dover (2012: 119) suggested on the basis of this example: "[W]hat early modern information consumers were in need of, and were seeking to construct, was an effective filter for the data that they were receiving."

In this regard, Heiko Droste has argued, personal connections and trust in the individual supplying the news were crucial. To understand the "baroque market" for news requires, in his view, to appreciate that "news was primarily an instrument of social exchange between members of functional elites – that is, an instrument of social order formation. This social exchange was made possible by the regularized shipment of formalized newsletters over spatial and temporal distances" (Droste 2021: 39). For years the powerful Swedish statesman Axel Oxenstierna (1583–1654) was supplied regularly with news from the Netherlands by a trusted agent, Michel le Bon, whose contract specified that he 'apply all diligence to persuade some persons of different conditions, and in separate offices and places, to give interesting *avvisi* and intelligence' (quoted by Noldus 2006: 53). An artist and art dealer, Le Bon had an entrée into elite circles; he also served as Oxenstierna's agent for acquiring paintings, sculptures, and books.[9] In England, Joseph Williamson (1633–1701), first as under-secretary, later as one of the secretaries of state for foreign affairs, cultivated a network of agents beginning in the 1660s.[10] Hamburg was one of the key commercial and information nodes in northern Europe; the English representatives there took advantage of the good postal connections as well as the merchant and diplomatic traffic to keep themselves informed. While a lot of what they reported derived from written communications, they also clearly took every opportunity to pick the minds of informed individuals directly.

2.2. Newsletters and manuscript newspapers

"News of some kind – oral or written communication of some new event, some fluctuation in the 'normal' process of things – is of course as old as civilization" (Woolf 2001: 81). The sending of letters inscribed by various means, whether or not they could be delivered rapidly, was part of the process of communicating information, especially where the carrier of the message was not someone empowered to convey it orally. Of special relevance here is the role of written communication in early modern Europe, as it became possible to send messages rapidly and regularly so that they might serve as a source of current political and economic news.[11] The communication of news in such regular fashion became the professional occupation of 'newsmongers' who were

9. On the importance of trusted agents for transmitting information in the era when postal connections were still developing on northern Europe, see Droste 2006. A good example illustrating client relationships in the elite news networks is that of William Frederick of Nassau (1613–1664), stadholder of Friesland (Janssen 2005). He received domestic reports from clients, who were indebted to him for their government positions or economic privileges, and foreign news both from private agents and from commercial purveyors of newsletters. One of his important agents was Conraat Clenck (Coenraedt/Koenraad van Klen[c]k) in Amsterdam, whose involvement in the Baltic and Muscovy trade gave him opportunities to obtain news from Eastern Europe. Klenck headed a Dutch embassy to Moscow in 1675–1676 (Boterbloem 2010). For Klenck's report, Coyett 1900.

10. Fraser 1956; Marshall 1994. The reports sent to London from Hamburg are in TNA, SP 82.

11. A valuable compact summary of the development of manuscript newsletters is Infelise 2007 (esp. pp. 33–44), which epitomizes his book-length study in Italian. See also Sporhan-Krempel 1968, Barbarics and Pieper 2007, Barbarics-Hermanik 2010, Infelise 2010, Wilke 2010, Böning 2011 (esp. pp. 24–32), Droste 2011a and 2021, Pettegree 2014 (Chapters 2, 5).

employed by a client or sold their wares to multiple clients. This development – the dissemination of what we can call manuscript newspapers – laid the foundation for the first printed papers in the seventeenth century (although professional newswriting did not, of course, guarantee the accuracy of what was reported). Despite the fact that the printed papers could reach more subscribers at considerably less cost, manuscript news business continued down into modern times. While as yet understudied, given their lack of systematic cataloguing, it is clear that the manuscript newsletters played a significant role in shaping views and in political decision making.

Even though governments and merchants shared an interest in obtaining news on a regular basis, it was the merchant networks that took the lead in providing reliable and rapid communication of it. Venice became an important hub for the collection and dissemination of news by the late fifteenth century, as the diaries of Girolamo Priuli (1476–1547) and Marin Sanudo (1466–1536) attest.[12] In one short span from 2–15 November 1519, Sanudo recorded in his diary that news had arrived in letters from Rome, Naples, Barcelona, Corfu, Palermo, Messina, Milan, Verona, Spain, France, Hungary, Dalmatia, Constantinople, and Aleppo. The news included ambassadorial reports, which were read aloud in the Venetian Senate, and private letters. In some instances, Sanudo is silent about the identity of his informants – an indication of "the transformation of the private letter into an anonymous *avviso*, written deliberately for a general, anonymous, public," and "an important moment in the development of a more modern news and information network" (Infelise 2007: 37–38). Between the late fifteenth and end of the sixteenth century, such *avvisi* came to have a standard form, with each news item prefaced by the indication of where it came from and its date. The collection and dissemination points for such *avvisi* were the main nodes in the postal network, and increasingly their schedule of production was tied to the schedule of postal departures (ibid.: 40–41). However, the postmasters seem to have had little to do with the compilation of the newsletters, a task which occupied instead a wide range of private entrepreneurs.[13]

Major 'news consumers', such as the Fuggers in Augsburg, developed complex networks of agents who could gather and forward *avvisi* from various sources.[14] The agents

12. Infelise 2007: 34–38. For the broader context of Venice as a center of information, see Burke 2000.

13. Barbarics and Pieper 2007: 63. Many of the news writers were small-scale in their operations, but others, like Giovanni Quorli in Venice (in 1652–1668), ran large offices. Quorli had some 60 subscribers scattered all over the continent who would receive his newsletters every week (Infelise 2010: 55–62).

14. Barbarics and Pieper 2007: 63–64. A major part of the letters is kept at the Austrian National Library in Vienna, which now has made its collection available online, in facsimile and with thorough indexing (https://fuggerzeitungen.univie.ac.at/en). A convenient sampling of them in translation is in Matthews 1959. Schobesberger (2016) provides a valuable introduction to some of the ongoing research on the collection that takes advantage of the digitization of the letters. Among other things, note his emphasis on the way in which certain nodes were the collecting points for news from larger 'catchment areas', a pattern that can readily be traced in the published newspapers of the seventeenth century. Another of the major collections, which can now be searched through an online database is that of the Medicis in Florence. See Dooley 2005 and Barker 2016. On merchants' letters, see also

might filter what they received with the aim of ensuring that they sent only the most accurate reports. Statistics on the origin of the newsletters sent to the Fuggers in 1571–1573 provide a sense of the scope of their network (Barbarics and Pieper 2007: 74–75). Most reports they received came from Venice and Rome. However, a significant portion came from Antwerp (the major commercial center in northern Europe), a fair number from Amsterdam, and also from the important imperial cities of Vienna and Madrid. Overall, the suggestion is that northern Europe was becoming an important source for the production and dissemination of newsletters. Much more work is needed before we will have a full sense of how the various centers of news production operated, how the news writers used (or abused) their sources, and what was the relationship between news in manuscript and in print.

The extensive scope of the Fugger collection offers an illustrative example of how reportage largely through manuscript newsletters unfolded in 1571–1573 (ibid.: 65–78). The news sensation of the time was the Battle of Lepanto – "the first of several major news events which [...] engaged the attention of the whole of Europe" (Pettegree 2014: 139). In this battle the Christian fleet destroyed that of the Ottomans (on 7 October 1571), the victory proclaimed as a turning point in what had seemed to be an irresistible threat of Ottoman conquest. A sequence of newsletters, the first sent from Venice on 12 October, reported on the preparations for the battle and then, on the 19th, its outcome. The newsletters continued through 3 November with additional details and analysis of what might be expected as the war with the Ottomans continued. Although there were some inaccuracies and differences in the reports, their information was "more or less correct," and the speed with which it reached first Venice (12 to 15 days), then Rome (13 to 16 days), and Augsburg a fortnight later was impressive (Barbarics and Pieper 2007: 71). Printed broadsheets about the battle soon followed, based on a collation of news from the manuscript reports. The majority of the prints were produced in Venice, but several also appeared in Augsburg. Whereas the reports in individual newsletters were for the most part brief, the broadsheets – some illustrated with a woodcut – could provide a more expansive narrative and, of course, reach a wider public. Where the newsletters primarily focused on providing the quickest possible factual reporting, the broadsheets consciously shaped the news in the interest of political propaganda, thus exaggerating the degree to which the battle really marked a turning point in geopolitics of the time.[15]

Trivellato 2007 and for Dutch commercial correspondence, Veluwenkamp 2006.

15. Barbarics and Pieper 2007: 79. The long-lasting impression made by the battle is documented in other ways, an interesting example found in the remarkable stucco decoration (by Giacomo Serpotta) for the Oratorio del Rosario di Santa Cita in Palermo (Sicily). Above the altar there is a depiction of the naval battle, the victory interpreted as evidence of the Divine intervention by the Virgin Mary to whom the chapel was dedicated (for an image, see: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Oratorio_del_Rosario_di_Santa_Cita_13.jpg). The subject of how news of one era was treated by subsequent generations (when it already was history, not reporting on current events) is important to consider in discussions of readership and artistic evocations which often have shaped our understanding of the actual event.

It is important to keep in mind that far from all newsletters are manuscript newspapers ('geschriebene Zeitungen'): letters containing news had existed for centuries before the latter appeared, and theoretically we can still today send manuscript newsletters to family or friends. Manuscript *newspapers*, which were publicly available (albeit only for a tiny, very cash-rich clientele), first appeared during the late sixteenth century and became more common in the early seventeenth. Their compilers – subscribers to newsletters from correspondents in different places – combined the incoming news items, apparently without a lot of editing, if any; then they sent off copies to their own subscribers (Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 138). They were more or less professional newsmongers, whereas the correspondents had all kinds of professions: they were 'merchants, patricians, officials in cities and residencies, agents and court residents, postmasters, printers, booksellers, professors, students, poets, and clerics' (Böning 2008c: 212). To this list we can certainly add diplomats, military leaders, and other men with special knowledge in certain fields. All printed copies of a certain newspaper issue usually were identical.[16] However, the copyist of a handwritten newspaper could make both smaller and bigger changes between the (few) copies he would send out. Some variants could emerge just by chance (he could leave out a word or a sentence), but he could also make conscious changes – update a news item if more information had come in; adapt the content with respect to the addressee of the current copy, etc. This is what Droste terms 'particularistic news', as opposed to what media historians label as 'public news' that began to appear in print.[17] What made the compilation and rapid regular distribution of publicly available manuscript newspapers possible from the last decades of the sixteenth century was the fact that reliable networks for obtaining news on a regular basis had been put in place, mainly through postal communications.

One of the earliest compilers of a manuscript newspaper in the German-speaking regions whom we know by name was Johann Carolus in Strassburg.[18] Another early example was Johann Weinreich, who issued a manuscript newspaper every week, in Nürnberg, at least from 1618, possibly already since 1607. No issue of any of these two manuscript papers has been preserved.[19]

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16. There were some exceptions: typesetters' mistakes could be corrected during the printing process, leading to tiny differences; last-minute news could be inserted instead of an older news item; and some publishers printed their paper on two presses, typesetting the whole text twice, which resulted mainly in differences regarding spelling, punctuation, and layout. See Dahl 1946: 15–26; Böning 2002: 127; Weduwen 2017: 176.

17. Droste 2021: 1. In analyzing the views of Rudolf Schlögl, Droste also asserts that "the printed newspaper was, however, at best a public medium in theory. This publicness, moreover, was still completely undefined as an abstract concept" (ibid.: 35–36). The issue here is whether 'publicness' became possible only through the medium of print.

18. Carolus' manuscript newspaper probably lasted for less than one year, in 1605; see Welke 2008: 84, esp. n. 325. Carolus started printing his newspaper in the autumn of 1605 (see below).

19. For the early handwritten newspapers from Nürnberg, see Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 117–118, 126.

Although handwritten newspapers coexisted with printed ones for a long time, it is much harder to assess the role they played when the printed papers had been firmly established. The earliest contemporary theoreticians of the newspapers do not mention them at all.[20] This could, of course, mean that they simply did not distinguish between newspapers in manuscript and in print. However, the fact that words like *printer* and *printing* do appear makes it more likely that for them – as for us today – newspapers were *imprints*, not manuscripts. In contrast, the last seventeenth-century newspaper theoretician, the well-known German poet, playwright and court functionary Kaspar Stieler, does mention newsletters explicitly (as 'geschriebene Novellen'), but almost exclusively as fodder to fill the pages of the newspapers, not a channel of its own: 'It is certain that all printed newspapers first must be written' (Stieler 1969: 28). This situation did not change until the emergence of modern technologies: the publishers of newspapers received their sources in the form of manuscript newsletters. So it is perfectly clear that news in manuscript played a huge role throughout the early modern era, but it is not impossible that the – less specialized – newspaper theoreticians like Ahasver Fritsch, Christian Weise, and Tobias Peucer were not aware of any publicly available manuscript newspapers, although they certainly were aware of the existence of correspondents, providing the newspaper publishers with an ever-growing quantity of news. Since manuscript newspapers always had been produced in very small quantities, few people would ever have seen them, and not everybody might have been aware of their existence. Some newspaper publishers – for instance, Georg Greflinger in Hamburg, Théophraste Renaudot in Paris, Abraham Casteleyn in Haarlem – did send out newsletters in exchange for intelligence from other places, but these newsletters were apparently not publicly available manuscript newspapers (which, in this case, would have competed for readers with the printed papers). It was rather their way to obtain the best intelligence without paying a fortune for it. Droste (2021: 116) claims that "the hand-written newspaper was an exclusive news product that generated comparatively high profits (although requiring high investments). As such, it flourished well into the eighteenth century." However, not all scholars agree with this statement. For instance, Behringer (2003: 375) asserts that manuscript newspapers had been replaced with printed ones by the 1630s. The situation was certainly very different from region to region.[21]

In any event, more and more compilers of *geschriebene Zeitungen* adopted the new technology of producing their newspaper and gave up the time-consuming manual re-

20. See the edition of the texts written between 1629 (Christophorus Besold) and 1690 (Tobias Peucer) in Wilke 2015. Kaspar Stieler's monumental monograph (first printed in 1695) was reprinted already in 1697; a modern edition appeared in the 1960s (Stieler 1969). For a recent interpretation of the contemporary tracts about newspapers, see Droste 2021, Ch. 3.

21. According to Mario Infelise (2007: 38), the *avviso* "remained the primary vehicle of news communication until the end of the eighteenth century." The latest series we have seen is a paper from Hamburg, received by the Senate in Bremen in the years 1731–1757 and kept at the University Library of Bremen (see Böning 2008c: 234 n. 114). On the continuing importance of newsletters, see also Moureau 1993.

production. Since the former were considerably more expensive than printed ones, it is not surprising that the latter eventually took over all larger parts of the newspaper market.[22] That it was hard for a compiler of a manuscript newspaper to compete with the publishers of printed papers is evident from a statement by Georg Ayermann, who maintained a manuscript news service in Nürnberg: in a letter of 22 December 1635 he wrote that 'what is new in the world, almost everything is being printed now.' Incidentally, Nürnberg was kind of a paradise for manuscript newspapers, because, on the one hand, the city council itself was among the subscribers – and, at the same time, they prohibited regular newspapers (until 1673), thus minimizing competition from those (Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 97, 67, 173). Handwritten newspapers must have been received and translated at least sporadically in Moscow, especially in the first decades of the seventeenth century, though no copy of the originals has yet been documented with any certainty.[23]

2.3. The news in print: pamphlet separates and broadsides

The printing of 'news' in Europe began back in the fifteenth century. The trickle of occasional pamphlets about noteworthy events became a flood with the Reformation, "Europe's first mass-media news event," in which Luther became "a publishing sensation" (Pettegree 2014: 68–69). A market developed for quickly produced and inexpensive tracts beyond just ones with a religious focus – a range of other types of publications conveying all kinds of news began to appear. Until recently, analysis of the various separates – many of which ostensibly appealed because of sensational content – has not been integrated into the larger picture of the emergence of 'modern' news media in Europe, embodied, in the first instance, in regularly published newspapers.[24] Even in the era of the purported secular and rational emphasis of the early newspapers, the separates – pamphlets, broadsides, newsbooks – continued to be important, and in some places they were in fact the main type of printed news. A historiography that has focused on

22. Cf., however, Droste (2021: 108–116), who analyzes in some detail challenges of determining the costs and the profits to be made from handwritten (particularistic) newsletters as opposed to printed newspapers. For those who actively sought out elite subscribers for the newsletters, the rewards might not be monetary but rather social capital and the possibility of gaining financially beneficial appointments. For a newspaper publisher to continue to produce handwritten newspapers "produced substantial income because their prices were at a completely different level" (p. 115).

23. For a late (1671) example of what might be considered a manuscript newspaper (as opposed to a newsletter), see V-K VII: 54–55, No. 1.3–4^{v}; with the original and commentary on 348–351.

24. For programmatic statements and a review of the earlier literature, see Köhler 1987 and Bellingradt 2008, 2011a, 2011b: 11–19. As Bellingradt points out, there is still much to be done to probe the textual interrelationships between the 'accidental' – that is, the occasional – pamphlets and the regular newspapers, which are, indeed, interconnected. The focus of much of his work is the eighteenth century. For an overview of the broadsides, their relationship to 'sober' news reporting and their other functions, see Harms 1987 (with many illustrations); Lang (2011) emphasizes the differences between the pamphlet *Neue Zeitung* and the periodical newspaper. Schilling (1985) discusses how the separates might be used by the authorities to influence the activities of the populace.

demonstrating how the interest and ability to obtain news extended beyond elites into broader segments of the population and set them on the path to 'modernity' has nonetheless tended to ignore sources such as the published separates, because they seem to have appealed mainly to the 'irrational' and premodern outlook attributed to the lower echelons of society. Furthermore, there has been a perception that newspapers – dry, detailed and factual – would have been read or understood by few, whereas illustrated pamphlets or broadsides, highlighting a singular event, were aimed at a kind of lowest common denominator of consumer, who had little interest in anything beyond immediate survival in a narrowly circumscribed world. In fact, such simplified perceptions of audience and readership should be reconsidered, even if it is true that the publishers of the separates were very conscious of the need to tailor them to particular audiences (Chartier 1999). Many difficulties arise in efforts to explore the intended purposes of the separates and the reception of them. At very least, it is clear that there are challenging levels of complexity in such analysis. Grouping them according to thematic content can facilitate discussion. However, the boundaries between one type (and its presumed intent) and another can be quite porous.

One type of the separates contained what we might term 'sober' reports on newsworthy events. About a century before the publication of the first newspapers (which will be discussed in our next section), quarto pamphlets – many entitled *Neue Zeitung* ('New report; News') and illustrated on the front page with a woodcut – began to report on recent events, usually only a single event with a focus on ones of geopolitical consequence. Andrew Pettegree (2014: 75) sums up: "[T]hese were the first publications in the new era of print to acknowledge on their title-pages that the bringing of news of current events was their primary purpose."

Published pamphlets covered the wars in northeastern Europe. The Livonian War dragged on for years, from 1558 until 1582. Reporting on atrocities committed by the Russian armies helped create the lasting image of Tsar Ivan IV (1533–1584) as 'Ivan the Terrible'.[25] Occasionally the illustrations for these pamphlets were simply borrowed from anti-Turkish ones, depicting a turbaned ruler or an oriental scimitar.[26] The emphasis, of course, was on the barbarism of the Orthodox Russians, who were the enemies of 'the true Christian religion'. Although the rapid publication of current news was the ostensible goal of such pamphlets, the 'newness' proclaimed in many of their titles was often belied by the fact that they were reprints of what had first appeared a year or two earlier. For instance, in 1579 – two years after the defeat of Danzig by the army of Polish King Stefan Bathory in 1577 – an imprint about that event appeared in Königsberg.[27]

25. Kappeler 1972 and Filiushkin 2013, esp. Ch. 13.

26. For example, *Absag Brieff Königlicher Mayestat in Polln [et]c. dem Moscouittischen abscheulichen Tyrannischen Feind* […], known in at least three different editions of 1580 (VD16: P 3939, P 3937, P 3936), on the title page of which is a scimitar. The Nürnberg edition (P 3937) has a second woodcut on fol. a^{v}, showing the delivery of a message in a court, surely that of the sultan (both depicted persons are turbaned).

27. VD16 H 4028; cf. Körber 1998: 343.

Recent history must still have found an audience – perhaps to heighten awareness of ongoing dangers – even if it was no longer fresh news.

A particular focus of the news in the period, one that embodied the urgency of current events and might also serve didactic purposes, was the reporting on the threat posed by Ottoman Turkish expansion. War or threat of war against the Turks was an almost unbroken concern in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While some of the anti-Catholic Lutheran propaganda even went so far as to paint the Catholics as a worse threat to true Christianity than were the Muslim Turks, for the most part the polemical thrust was predictable.[28] There might be more or less unvarnished reports on the latest battles, but objective reporting quickly morphed into tirades intended to stir Christians in their confrontation with the Islamic threat. The Ottoman advances were punishment from God, inflicted on Christians – Catholic and Protestant – because of their sins.[29] Similar interpretations would become part of the response to other sensational, newsworthy events covered by the pamphlet literature, for example in reporting unusual natural phenomena.

The Habsburg wars against the Ottomans in the 1590s and 1660s, the long and ultimately successful Ottoman attack on Venetian-held Crete (1648–1669), and the sieges of Vienna in 1529 and 1683 produced a massive outpouring of publications. The participation of Venice in the long war to drive the Turks back from Europe, following their retreat from Vienna in 1683, unleashed a new wave of publication in Italy in the form of regular reports about single events and more substantial but irregularly issued military journals.[30] "Inevitably, in Venice, the flood of information served to fire the enthusiasm of the crowds who avidly read it and, when it reported victories, rushed into the streets"

28. John Bohnstedt (1968) discusses the booklets normally termed *Türkenbüchlein*, which were a response to events between 1522 and 1543 and focus on the religious issues that came to the forefront in the Reformation. He does not discuss a range of other *turcica*, including basic news reports, prophecies, etc. (ibid.: 10 n. 15). For an extended treatment of the 'Turkish question' in European public opinion in the sixteenth century, see Göllner 1961–1978, vol. 3. His bibliography (vols. 1–2) lists 2,463 items, most of them small brochures and broadsides. Hammer-Purgstall (1827–1835, 10: App. 12) listed more than 3000 items, over half for the seventeenth century, a bibliography that is very incomplete.

29. Contrasting with the treatment in such popularly distributed pamphlets were various more sober attempts to describe the Ottoman Empire and its institutions. Later in the seventeenth century, a book published originally in Italian which then appeared in a Polish version, translated and considerably enlarged by Szymon Starowolski, entitled *Dwór cesarza tureckiego*, was translated in Moscow half a dozen times. See Waugh 1972, Ch. 5, and the recent monograph by Eliza Małek (2018). A new analysis of the Russian translations is in the ongoing dissertation research by Olena Jansson in Uppsala. The Italian book described the sultan's court and institutions in Istanbul. One of the most striking accounts of the Ottomans for its positive description of their empire (explicitly contrasting it with Christian states in Europe) was in the letters written by the Habsburg ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, who was there in 1555–1562 (see the modern edition Busbecq 1927).

30. Infelise 2001. One reason for the flood of such publications was the tension in Venice itself regarding the involvement in the war and the political and military leadership. Analysis of the complex situation there and the various cultural responses to the war can be found in the widely ranging essays in Infelise and Stouraiti 2005.

(Infelise 2001: 224). Celebrations of Venetian victories in various Italian cities included fireworks and public theatrical extravaganzas.

The pamphlet *turcica* of the second half of the seventeenth century in many ways simply repeat the anti-Islamic propaganda found in the sixteenth-century pamphlets. However, there are some differences: there is greater attention to precise description of battles, often with elaborate illustrations showing fortresses and armies or with detailed symbolic depictions of rulers and their entourages (Schumann 1998: 229–242). Internal Ottoman politics (real or fictionalized) often receive a lot of attention – for example, the execution of the Grand Vizir Kara Mustafa, following his failure to take Vienna in 1683. An underlying message in the pamphlet literature is the geopolitical rivalry that eventually would break out between the Austrian Habsburgs and France in the War for the Spanish Succession in the early eighteenth century. The good Christian ruler, Emperor Leopold I, in fighting the Turks, is implicitly contrasted to rulers of France, who traditionally had maintained good relations with the Ottomans. The pamphlet *turcica* illustrate a common phenomenon in early modern news publications and description of other cultures: narratives that on the surface have one focus may serve multiple purposes of propaganda.[31]

The pamphlet literature of the period contains many examples of the permeable boundaries between fact and fiction. Apocryphal documents and reports of preternatural events were an integral part of what was passed off as 'news' and at all levels of society may have been believed. As we will discuss later in our examination of the Muscovite *kuranty* (Sec. 21.3), of special interest among the *turcica* are fictive letters of the sultan, which in some cases were accompanied by likewise fictional responses of the Christians to whom he had addressed his threats. These apocrypha were created for propagandistic purposes as early as the late fifteenth century and were copied, translated, published and republished dozens of times in subsequent centuries, reappearing with predictable regularity at moments of particular tension or imminent war with the Turks. The numerous published versions of one of the letters appeared in several languages over a period of decades, among them an illustrated English broadside ballad.[32] Readers were told that the verse could be sung to the tunes of two popular songs of the period. What we have here is evidence of how news sensations could reach a wider audience in a culture where itinerant peddlers might sell broadsides, or street singers perform the ballads printed

31. A good example of this is Giles Fletcher's *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, published in England in 1591. On the surface a denunciation of Muscovite autocracy, the underlying purpose seems to have been veiled commentary on the autocratic tendencies Fletcher witnessed at home in England under Queen Elizabeth I (see the introduction by Richard Pipes to the edition Fletcher 1966).

32. *The great Turks terrible challenge, this yeare 1640. Pronounced against the Emperour of Germany and the King of Poland by Soloma Hometh who lately deceased, but continued by his brother Ibraim, the first of that name. To the tune of My bleeding heart, or Lets to the wars againe.* [London]: Printed for Richard Harper at the Bible [and Harp in Smithfield, 1640] (STC, 2nd ed., No. 23424.7).

on them.[33] Whether such a text would have been appreciated for its 'newsworthiness' is, of course, hard to know; possibly by the time it reached the streets and taverns it had become simply a form of light entertainment.

The news sensations of the period included a great many reports of unusual events, some being genuine occurrences in nature, others clearly imagined.[34] Writing and publishing about them could certainly be profitable, as dramatic news which could be illustrated with woodcuts in broadsides readily found buyers. This was still an era where such reports in the first instance lent themselves to providential interpretation about the Divine will, could be invoked in religious polemic or were seen to be portents of imminent disaster, although at the same time, by the later seventeenth century, it was increasingly possible to find 'rational' explanations based on scientific inquiry.

The general point to be made here is that in our consideration of the various forms of communicating news – the pamphlets with their sensations being just one of several genres – we should be cautious about assuming some logical and inevitable progression leading to the supposedly rational and objective news media of the 'modern world'. In fact, the picture is one of complexity and interconnectedness of the 'old' providential interpretations and the 'new' scientific and rational ones throughout the period of concern to us.[35] The evolution toward a 'modern' skeptical viewpoint varied from place to place; even some of the most famous scholars who laid the basis for modern science did not entirely abandon some of the older conceptions about the Divine plan and its workings in the natural world. Unfortunately, in our era of 'fake news', the idea that most modern media can be characterized as objective and rational does not hold up under scrutiny.

Weather and astronomical phenomena were an important focus of the pamphlet literature. A learned canon in Zürich, Johann Jakob Wick (1522–1588), collected contemporary pamphlets ranging in date of appearance from 1504 to the end of his days. Among some 430 items in his collection, 98 reported heavenly apparitions; of those 24 involved

33. An interesting example, also involving Turkish matters, is in the Polish nobleman Jan Chryzostom Pasek's description of how the news about the lifting of the siege of Vienna (Sept. 1683) was received in Danzig: pamphlets and ballads were being sold and sung in the streets to satisfy the considerable public interest (Pasek 1968: 502–503; see also Böning 2002: 181–182). Whether such ballads would have been appreciated for their 'newsworthiness' or rather as entertainment is addressed by Angela McShane Jones (2005: 146), whose examples come from England. Una McIlvenna (2016) stresses the importance of studying news ballads if we are to understand in which ways ordinary people might have learned about news. For Muscovy, such a study would have to look at the very extensive corpus of what generally are termed 'historical songs' in order to determine to what degree they might have been composed and performed in close proximity to the events they describe. See our concluding comments about possible research on this subject (Ch. 22).

34. Regarding the evolution of reporting about natural disasters, see the interesting survey article by Caracciolo (2016), who shows how the emergence of the periodical press changed the way such news was treated.

35. In this regard, see Park and Daston 1981, and Daston and Park 1998. Much of their evidence concerns the treatment of 'monsters' in early modern Europe, a subject that was not necessarily of interest throughout Europe but illustrates the need for caution in generalizing about the march toward the rationality of the modern world. As Crawford (2005) discusses, news about 'monstrous births' frequently was overlaid with religious polemic.

astronomical phenomena – mostly comets – and 74 dealt with meteorological events. Another 84 pamphlets covered wondrous births (Homeyer 1998: 139–140). At very least, this example illustrates a high level of interest in such material, even if we should be cautious not to generalize from a single case. The fact that so many of the contemporary pamphlets and broadsides contained dramatic illustrations certainly would have sparked the interest even of those who could not read their texts. The subject of such publications could be drought or its opposite, excessive precipitation leading to flooding and the spoilage of crops. Windstorms that tore off roofs or toppled church steeples were fodder for speculation, as were major thunderstorms and hailstorms. Infestations of insects occasionally were of concern. There is a long history of human fascination with astronomical phenomena such as meteor showers and comets, which generally were taken to be ominous portents and in medieval texts might be conveniently 'redated' so as to precede some genuinely catastrophic event.[36] Signs in the heavens might include multiple suns, weapons, crosses, horsemen, and whole armies.[37] Of course, to most early modern observers such an unusual atmospheric spectacle was a kind of prodigious event, which generally was associated with some imminent calamity. It might also be interpreted as foretelling some fortuitous event such as a military victory. Comets and other such heavenly 'signs' attracted a good deal of attention in Muscovy, as we shall discuss in Secs. 20.3 and 20.4.

Clearly scientific observation and rational skepticism about comets were growing before the end of the seventeenth century. The Royal Society in London, founded in the early 1660s, was one of the innovative institutions advancing scientific knowledge. One of its members was Sir Peter Wyche, onetime ambassador to Russia and subsequently English resident in Hamburg, from which he regularly sent news back to London, among them reports in late autumn and early winter 1680–1681 about what was the most famous of the seventeenth-century comets to appear in the skies over Europe. Wyche surely would have seen some of the ephemeral publications and talked with people about the comet. In his reports, he mentions the widespread popular foreboding, but then emphasizes that he himself did not believe in such things. He reported he was recording carefully his observations of the comet in order that the notes be submitted to the Royal Society (Waugh and Maier 2017: 103–104). Presumably Wyche's data were appreciated in the Royal Society, whereas two Italian tracts on the comet, full of astro-

36. On the evolution of image and interpretation of comets, see Lehmann 1985, Schechner Genuth 1997, and Mauelshagen 1998. A valuable discussion of comets and the history of their study is Yeomans 1991.

37. Perhaps the most famous of such broadsides was one illustrating the celestial phenomena reported to have appeared over Nürnberg on 14 April 1561, printed 'Bey Hanns Glaser Brieffmaler/ zu Nürmberg' (*Nürnberger Himmelsspektakel*; copy in the Jakob Wick collection, Zentralbibliothek Zürich, the image accessible online). The descriptive text mentions crosses, globes, two lunar crescents, a spear, and some tubular objects (cannon?). A particularly interesting example for the variety of its signs, which include rainbows, armies, suns, swords, a comet and cannon is: *A lamentable list of certaine hidious, frightfull, and prodigious signes* [...] *Printed at London:* [by J. Oakes?] *for Tho. Lambert, and are to be sold at the sign* [...] [1638] (STC, 2nd ed. /15706.5).

logical prognostications, were ridiculed there. However, an analysis of the writings of the most eminent scholars who contributed to the scientific understanding of comets, Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and Edmond Halley (1656–1742), reveals that they never abandoned the idea that God regulated the natural world, a world which included comets. For Newton, comets "remained apparitions of God's design" (Schechner Genuth 1997: 154). The boundary between traditional views and scientific rationalism was still quite permeable.

Summing up, we can say that the literature of pamphlets and broadsides certainly was diverse, some of it containing rather objective news reports (for instance, on war events), some of it clearly serving as propaganda, and a lot of it devoted to sensational stories that would sell to a public eager to believe in the preternatural.

2.4. Newsbooks

A different genre of printed information were the compendia usually produced twice per year, in connection with the big fairs – *(Handels-)Messen* – mainly in the 'fair centers' Frankfurt and Leipzig, but also in other places, such as Cologne, Erfurt, Halle, Magdeburg, and Strassburg.[38] The 'fair relations' (*Messrelationen*), which began to appear regularly in the 1580s and existed until 1805 – thus for two hundred years parallel to the printed periodical newspaper – can be regarded as one of the precursors to the latter. The news for the *Messrelationen* came through the same 'channels' as the news that was published in the newspapers, which started a quarter of a century later.[39] Of course, the *Messrelationen* lacked the immediacy and currency provided by the printed periodical newspapers. The compendia for the fairs – generally quarto books ranging in length from some 30 to 150 pages – were reviews of events that stretched back over several months, so that much of their content could no longer really be 'news'. However, their compilers were eager also to include the latest news – events that had happened just days before the compilation was given to the printer. A well-informed merchant attending fairs might already have heard about some of the events through his correspondence networks, but the 'fair relations' were sold in bookshops in many cities and reached a much broader readership. Thus the fair books were both reviews of recent history and sources for the latest news (Körber 2016: 17–18 and passim). Their content might overlap with the latest (written or printed) newspapers, whereas there would be still more

38. The most recent and most complete study about the *Messrelationen* during their long history, is the monograph by Körber 2016. The now authoritative bibliography of the *Messrelationen*, with 1330 analytical entries, is Körber 2018. See also Bender 1994.

39. Bender 1994: vii; Behringer 2003: 309–310, who also claims that if a reader would bind a whole year collection of a periodical newspaper – something that happened from time to time – the result was very similar to a 'fair relation' for one year (ibid.: 318). That we still can study complete collections for the year 1609 of the two first printed serial newspapers worldwide, viz. the *Relation* from Strassburg – whose title, incidentally, is influenced by the *Messrelationen* – and the *Aviso* from Wolfenbüttel, is due to the fact that their readers collected them and had them bound by a bookbinder. The slim papers – consisting of two or four quarto leaves – often did not survive when kept individually; bound books had a better chance (ibid.).

overlap with older newspapers. In any event, the periodical appearance and the fact that they were made available to a broad public means that they anticipated printed newspapers. As Johannes Weber (2006: 389) puts it: "[T]he *Messrelation*, then, is the earliest example of the political periodical." The compilers of the books might inform their readers of the purpose for the publications, which could include just transmitting knowledge, but a compiler might also – cautiously – show his own political or religious position (Körber 2016: 27 and passim). A more direct 'ancestor' to the printed newspaper was, however, the manuscript newspaper.[40]

In the seventeenth century yet another type of publications would appear, notably annual volumes, generally very substantial in size, containing a selection from the most important news stories that had been reported throughout the year, for instance, the *Diarium Europaeum* and *Theatrum Europaeum* (both in German) and the *Hollandse Mercurius* (Haarlem, in Dutch). The latter was published by Pieter Casteleyn, and after his death by his brother Abraham, the publisher of the widely respected *Haerlemse Courant*, which was a source for material that appeared in the annual. The long-time Moscow postmaster, Andrei Vinius, owned an extensive set of *Hollandse Mercurius*.[41] According to the seventeenth-century scholar Daniel Hartnack, such publications were the second distillation of news, the *Messrelationen* representing the first distillation – and newspapers being the primary source (not yet distilled).[42]

2.5. The periodical press in the seventeenth century

The main outlines of early newspaper history are now well established, even if there is still much more to be learned about the relationship between the newspapers and other forms of news reporting. Our focus here will be on German and Dutch newspapers, the only ones that came to be regularly received in Moscow.

2.5.1. The German press in the seventeenth century

The credit for inventing the serial printed newspaper goes to Johann Carolus, a newsmonger and printer in Strassburg, who in December 1605 requested from the city council a privilege granting him monopoly rights on printing weekly newspapers.[43] At that time he had already published a dozen issues (none of which has survived), and he was afraid

40. Weber 2006: 390; also our Sec. 2.2.

41. Savel'eva 2008: 103–113. Vinius' set consisted of vols. 11–40, covering the years from 1660 to 1687. Some may well have been contemporary reprints; there is no indication when and how he obtained them. The title of some volumes has variant spellings: Hollandtze, Hollandsche.

42. "Die *Nouvellen* vergleich ich hierin der ersten *Collection* oder Samlung der *Materien*, die die (sic!) halbjährigen *Relationes* der ersten/ das bißherige *Diarium* und noch itzige *Theatrum Europaeum* der andermahligen *Destillation* […]" (Hartnack 1688: 60; cf. Wilke 2015: 163).

43. See the summaries in Weber 1992, 2006 (the latter with a translation of Carolus' petition as an appendix), and 2010: 72–74; the transcription of the original German text is in Weber 1992: 259, the first page in facsimile ibid.: 260. The most detailed study of Johann Carolus' life and his invention of the printed newspaper is Welke 2008.

that a competing enterprise might turn up, now that the invention had been made.[44] Carolus already had the necessary contacts with one or more news agencies, as well as a (small) list of subscribers for his manuscript newspaper. His printed paper (and the ones to follow) adopted the presentation style of the written ones, which served as their sources: an individual issue did not have a title; each entry had a dateline, containing the place where the news had been collected and fed into the 'communication channel', as well as the date. Usually there were no illustrations and no commentary. Andrew Pettegree (2014: 183) states: "The contents were almost exclusively the same dry political, military and diplomatic reports that had dominated the *avvisi*."[45] There was no local news, among other reasons because the arriving newsletters came from far-away places.[46] Behringer (2003: 360) has shown that 90% of the news reports printed in the first extant year collection of Carolus' paper (1609) came from cities housing the main European post offices: Cologne, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Prague; the rest came from other important postal cities: Lyon, Pressburg (Bratislava), Cracow, Kaschau, Linz, Frankfurt, Erfurt – and one news item, an 'outlier', from the Russian city Novgorod (here called 'Novigrad'). Of course, since Carolus (and other founders of printed papers) still received exactly the same newsletters as before, there could be no major difference in content, the outgoing papers simply reproducing in print what had previously been sent out in manuscript. The degree to which the early newspapers were edited and how this changed during the seventeenth century will be discussed in Sec. 2.6.1 below.

The earliest theoreticians of the newspaper – Christophorus Besold, 1629; Ahasver Fritsch and Christian Weise, both 1676; Johann Ludwig Hartmann, 1679; Tobias Peucer, the author of the first doctoral dissertation about newspapers, 1690 – all agree that one moving force behind the birth of the newspapers was human curiosity, which they document from the work of Julius Caesar and the New Testament.[47] The other moving force is said to be 'greediness; eagerness for profit' (*Gewinnsucht*), a term with negative connotations, although an economic stimulus is as essential for a newspaper publisher – and, for that matter, for a compiler of a manuscript newsletter – as it is for a plumber or a farmer. Kaspar Stieler, the last of the seventeenth-century theoreticians, is no exception in this respect: he says that those who write, sell, and print newspapers do this in order to support themselves, something he finds legitimate, 'just as nobody would guard

44. In fact the first preserved examples are from 1609, the year when a second newspaper began to be published, in Wolfenbüttel.

45. See also Weber 2006: 400–401. A convenient summary about the origins of the German press is Schröder 2001.

46. "Striking was the absence of local news, in newspapers throughout Europe. A newspaper from Hamburg did not contain news of events in the city but a title from nearby Altona could print Hamburg news since the printer was subject not to the council of Hamburg but to Danish rule" (Hillgärtner 2021: 19).

47. Quoted, for instance, by Besold, in 1629 (see Wilke 2015: 45). For the biblical citations, see, for instance, Acts 17.21: 'Now all the Athenians, and strangers that were there, employed themselves in nothing else but either in telling or in hearing some new things.' Wilke 2015 provides a modern edition of the early texts about newspapers (most of which were originally published in Latin).

the holy grave for nothing' (Stieler 1969: 45–46). Whereas most of the earliest authors' writing about newspapers advocated prohibiting them altogether, others accepted their existence in spite of some shortcomings.

Thomas Schröder (2001: 146) summarises the birth of the printed newspaper: 'The step from the *Geschriebene Zeitung*, *Neue Zeitung*, and the *Messrelation* to the weekly press was not so great. Nor was it spectacular. What was spectacular was the initial success of the newspaper, its tremendously rapid diffusion, its continually increasing audience and its resonance throughout many different social classes.'[48] The rapidity with which newspaper publishing developed can be seen from the following listing of when and where the first German-language ones appeared (for a typical example, see FIG. 2.1): 1605 Strassburg; 1609 Wolfenbüttel; 1610 Basle; 1615 Frankfurt am Main; 1617 Berlin; 1618 Hamburg; 1619 Danzig, Freiburg im Breisgau, Halberstadt, Hildesheim, Stuttgart; 1620 Cologne; 1621 Güstrow; 1622 Vienna; 1623 Königsberg, Zürich (two competing enterprises), etc. (Weber 1999: 23; 2006: 396). Moreover, between 1618 and 1623 another nine German-language papers were initiated whose place of publication has not yet been determined. The fact that the Holy Roman Empire was so decentralized, that there were so many small states, possibly contributed to the initial success of the newspaper exactly in that region. The Thirty Years War "encouraged a strong interest in up-to-date-news, and the Protestant Reformation out of which the war grew had had the effect of raising overall literacy rates" (Popkin 2005: 7). So at least a dozen new German papers appeared in the 1630s; the constant barrage of misfortune and anxiety during the war created an endless demand for news and served as a catalyst for the development of the press.

Wöchentliche Zeitung auß mehrerley örther. Nº. 1621.

Erstlich

Auß Wien vom 8. Decembri.

Auß Praag vom 9. diß.

Auß Baaden vom 3. Decembri.

FIG. 2.1. A typical quarto-format early German newspaper: The Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung auß mehrerley orther* 1621, No. 51, p. [1].

Hamburg became one of the major centers for news collection and dissemination both in print and in manuscript, benefiting from its importance as a commercial center and communications infrastructure (Droste 2021: 91–96, 103–108). Its papers generally tried to provide balanced war coverage. News collected and published in Hamburg

48. Elger Blühm (1985) interjects a note of caution about assertions concerning the wide readership of the early newspapers. Establishing the degree to which they reached ordinary people is difficult even though it is easy to document how rapidly newspaper publishing spread. Assumptions about how 'popular' taste continued to be satisfied by the more sensational treatments of 'news' in the published separates also may be difficult to support. See our further discussion below.

became an important source for many newspapers throughout northern Europe. For instance, most of the reports published in the first – German-language – newspapers in Copenhagen were simply reprints of material from Hamburg.[49] Verbatim translations from Hamburg papers – or their Copenhagen 'daughters' – were made for the official Swedish newspaper published in Stockholm (Ries 2001: 244). By the end of the seventeenth century, Hamburg and nearby Altona had altogether eight newspapers, and there is evidence that papers from Amsterdam, Utrecht, and Haarlem also were read regularly (Böning 2002: 53). Altogether, around 1700 there were some 60 newspapers in the German-language territories, and 100 in 1750 (Böning 2008a: 169).

The print runs of the early German newspapers, which can only be estimated, varied hugely, ranging from a couple of hundred in small cities to about 1,500 copies in Hamburg – the center of the early German press – already in the 1620s. For the most part, though, average print runs in these years ranged from 250 to 400.[50] While such print runs can seem quite small, if we compare them with the ones of the nineteenth or twentieth century, it was still an increase of some 2,500–15,000 per cent, as compared to the quantity of manuscript newspapers a copyist would have produced per week, where estimates range from ten to twenty (Fitzler 1937: 66).

Initially the news was published weekly. Starting in the 1630s, some papers began to appear twice or three times a week. The first *daily* newspaper (issued by Timotheus Ritzsch, six days a week) appeared in Leipzig, in 1650. However, it had a comparatively short life: according to Hillgärtner, "Ritzsch's experiment with a daily press lasted only six years (1650–1655)."[51] The time was apparently not yet ripe for a daily paper, given the fact that the mail supplying the sources from most places arrived only once a week. Martin Welke (1976: 162) estimates that the German papers in the second half of the seventeenth century were regularly read by up to 250,000 individuals.[52] In Hamburg, there is reason to believe that about 10% of the citizens were newspaper readers by the middle of the seventeenth century. In the 1680s, the readership was not only the elite

49. Ries 1977: 228; Böning 2002: 51. A pilot study at Deutsche Presseforschung showed that 270 news items in the Copenhagen paper of 1668 were verbatim copies from the Hamburg *Nordischer Mercurius*; another 49 items were shortened in the 'Danish' paper.

50. Weber 2002: 16. About print runs for the German papers see Welke 1976: 156–160. According to him, during the 1630s Johann Meyer's paper in Hamburg – which apparently was produced on two printing presses – reached a circulation of about 1,500–2,000 copies (ibid.: 158 n. 224).

51. Hillgärtner (2021: 7), his opinion apparently based on the discovery of more issues beyond what had been known in 1963. Else Hauff (=Bogel) – who showed that this anonymous paper was launched by Ritzsch in Leipzig – had stated that it could have appeared at best from 1 July 1650 to mid-June 1652 (Hauff 2002: 161).

52. Welke's estimate (accepted by Schröder 2001: 123) is based on the assumption that one issue was read by about ten readers. Weber (2006: 399) thinks Welke is being 'particularly generous'; however, we are not aware of any competing statistics. Whatever the presumed numbers of readers and print runs, evaluating the significance of these figures can be problematic. Droste (2021: 26) hypothesizes that the presumed weekly edition (20,000–25,000) of newspapers printed in the empire around 1700 "could not have been adequate to meet even the needs of the empire's functional elites" and that the print run of Hamburg papers (1,500) could hardly have met the needs of its rising bourgeoisie.

but had begun to extend into the middle classes, even if a more significant broadening would not occur until the next century.[53]

An emphasis on serious political reporting was a characteristic feature of the newspapers throughout the seventeenth century. Holger Böning (2008b) emphasizes that newspapers, in providing serious coverage of political events and devoting in fact very little space to preternatural events and sensations, thereby paved the way for the emergence of rational and critical public engagement starting well before the eighteenth century. Another of the specialists on the early history of German newspapers, Johannes Weber, insists that even more important than the newspapers in the creation of a 'public sphere' were the more substantial historico-political journals of the last decades of the seventeenth century that included commentary and not just dry reportage. However, the newspaper's *indirect* role can hardly be overstated, since "it brought, for the first time and at an affordable price, reports about world political events before a rapidly growing and socially unrestricted public. This was a development with unprecedented consequences in cultural and educational terms" (Weber 2006**:** 408).

Despite the apparent lack of concern for stimulating the interest of the broad public in the way that pamphlets and broadsides did, the newspapers became a success. The newspapers did not inform most readers about things that really mattered for them personally, as Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen (2019: 88–89**)** have concluded:

> Much of the news they contained, the battles and sieges, princely weddings and riots in far-away cities, had no likely impact on the lives of their readers. Conversely much of the news that citizens had to know, such as changes in tax rates, the decisions of the States of Holland or the municipality, did not appear in the newspapers at all. What then are newspapers? Part recreation, part contemporary history, part an essential manual of instruction for those who would be well equipped for the conversation of polite society; but certainly insufficient in themselves as a news service for those involved at almost any level in public affairs [...].

Certainly the printed papers had a great advantage over the manuscript ones, which led to the latters' eclipse. The size of the print runs made it possible to reach many more readers, and news became much more affordable: print newspapers were from four to ten times less expensive than their manuscript counterparts.[54] Throughout much of the seventeenth century, publishers of newspapers maintained that they were largely just publishing the essence of what was in the manuscript newsletters – whether or not this always was true. Holger Böning (2011: 32–34) argues that any advantage the handwritten newsletters may have had in providing insider information diminished as the sev-

53. Böning 2002: 127–131. The statistics about broadening readership underlie arguments that have been made about how the early periodical press may have played a key role in the development of the 'public sphere', a concept articulated by the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas, who had failed to look seriously into the history of the press. For a discussion and critiques, see, e.g., Böning 2002: 186–187; Gestrich 2006; Rospocher and Salzberg 2012; Rospocher 2012; Droste 2021: 18–28.

54. About purchase prices see Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 126 and 200, Table 1 (only manuscript papers); Welke 2008: 86 (Carolus' manuscript paper in Strassburg); cf. also Droste 2011a: 19; 2021: 114–115.

enteenth century progressed. One of the important advantages of the printed press was the predictable regularity with which most newspapers appeared. Bound by a tight production schedule, their publishers placed a premium on printing news while it was still fresh and could meet the expectations of an increasingly news-oriented public (Popkin 2005**:** 21).

The consumers of the news eventually came to see the printed papers as offering equal value in their content. This fact can be illustrated by the fiasco of the famous composer Georg Philipp Telemann's newsletters, which he compiled twice a week for the Court of Eisenach – a task he had taken over in 1725 from a deceased colleague (Böning 2011: 46–52). This job was seemingly well paid: he was to receive 100 thalers per year, the same amount as for his other job (*Kapellmeister*). Soon he realized that the task of getting exclusive news was an expensive one, so when he had paid his correspondents, only a trifling part of the salary was left to feed his children. His employers were relentlessly dissatisfied: his style (language) was not good enough; they found that his letters contained news that had already been printed in the regular press, etc. Telemann regularly defended himself against the harsh criticism, emphasizing the high costs for news and the huge amount of time it would take if he also would work a lot with the *style* of the incoming letters, because already now 'nothing remains to me for so much work.' Nonetheless, in 1730, after five years of dissatisfaction with Telemann's newsletters, the court dismissed him. To compete with a published newspaper – which could sell hundreds, or by that time even thousands of copies – had become virtually impossible: a newspaper publisher could easily pay half a dozen or more correspondents in different countries (and possibly even do some work with the style of his paper), whereas this was impossible for a compiler of a written paper.[55]

2.5.2. Early newspapers in the Netherlands

Along with the German papers, newspapers from the Netherlands, especially from the Dutch Republic, were the main sources for the printed news received and translated in Moscow (see a typical issue FIG. 2.2).[56] The (presumably) earliest Dutch newspaper, *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* (*CID*), is documented beginning in June 1618; at least from February 1619, but possibly already from 1618, the Dutch commercial center already had two competing weekly newspapers, *CID* and the paper that later – from 1629 – had the title *Tijdingen uyt verscheyde Quartieren* (*TVQ*).[57] Outside Amsterdam,

55. Kaspar Stieler maintains in his monograph about newspapers that the printed papers often contain more information than the regular private newsletters; the latter report what has already been published (Stieler 1969: 74).

56. Our main source is the new, most impressive work by Arthur der Weduwen (2017), in two volumes with consecutive pagination, containing both a bibliography of all known issues of the seventeenth century and several research articles; see also the pioneerng but now dated bibliography for the period 1618–1650 compiled by Folke Dahl (1946).

57. Weduwen (2017: 18) considers it possible that *TVQ* was founded before *CID*, although the earliest extant issues of the former date from 1619.

newspapers were published in Arnhem (1619 – ca. 1636), Delft (1620–1643, pirating news from the two Amsterdam papers), and – for a very short period – in Utrecht.[58] After the middle of the century and the decline of the Amsterdam newspapers, new titles appeared in The Hague (from 1652), Haarlem (1656), Utrecht once more (1658), and some other places.[59] Also the Southern (Habsburg) Netherlands was early to publish newspapers (Antwerp about 1620, in Flemish; Brussels 1621, in French) (Weduwen 2017: 48–52). France and other countries lagged behind Germany and the Netherlands – for example Paris 1631, Lisbon 1645, Stockholm 1645.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.

VVt Roomen, den 15 May. 1621.

ALs de Vierschop tot Napels dooz die Stadt was rijdende / heeft dat Volck gheroepen Vive den nieuwen Coninck Philippus den vierden / daer op oock dat gheschiedt is los gheschoten worden.

De Coninck van Spanjen heeft die 72. dupsent Cronen inconitens van die Cauer-goederen / die de verstoruene Coninck den Hertoghe van Lerma gheschoncken heeft / synen Broeder Don Carlo torge-eygent / oock den Hertoge van Ossuno alle syne Schrifften nemen / ende eenige van den synen ghevangen setten laten. Beuelens Don Ferdinando Carlito / den Regenten Curbo ende Don Luis Salzedo tot Rechteren gedruttereert / oock de Graue Benevento tot Oppersse Hof-Meester / den Marcgrave van Burgau tot Capiteyn over die Duytsche Guarde / den Marckgrave van Velara tot Oppersse Jaghermeester / ende den Hertoch van Bastrano tot Oppersse Generael over dat Coninckrijck van Portugal, gecoren.

De genoemde Coninck heeft dooz dese Refozmatie veel Millionen gout becomen / t'welck hy alle tot den Nederlantschen Crijch employeren wil.

VVt Venetien, den 31. dito. 1621.

Die Catholijcke Switsers / hebben den Oppersten Berlinghser verboden / den Gouverneur van Mijlanen ghren volck meer / tegen die Grijsons te voeren / dewijle oock de Coninck van Spanien op aenhouden des Franchoysschen Ambaffadeurs dat Veltolina te restitueren bewilligt heeft / doch wat die Heylige aengaet / den Paus overghegeven over sulcx syn die Evangelische Switsers seer qualijck te vreden.

Van Constantinopel werdt ghescheuen / dat Betlem Gabozs / Coninckx van Bohemen / Slesische / Moravische ende Hungersche Ghesanten van daer vertrocken waren / van hare verrechten wiste men noch niet seckers / men wilde seggben dat die Jonghe Coninck van Persen / den Oozloge tegen den Grooten Turck aenveerden wil / daeromme men presumeert / dat die prparatien teghen Polen wel mochte steecken blijven / ende wzede gemaeckt werden.

VVt VVeenen, den 22. dito.

De Graue van Bucquoy ligt met dat Keysserlicke Crijchsvolck noch tot Schiltnaw / 6. Mylen onder Pressurg / den Heere Stanislaw Thurzo toe behoozende / die Marckdorchen aldaer heeft sich geentailliert voor gegeven / maer dat Casteel / t'welck redelijck sterck is / heeft sich tot noch toe ghehouden / hoewel men / soo wel uyt die Fozteresse Neuhausel dooz goede Correspondentie / het sy met gelt / oft met ghewelt haest hoopt te verouderen / insonderheyt dewijle gheene ontset dooz handen is / ende de Heere Betlehy Geozg / den Betlem Gabozs / die sich tot Caselaw bevint / dan Fijrsch uyt / noch sterck volck ende ophoudt.

Binnen wepnigh dagen sal men alle dat Keysserlijcke Crijchsvolck uit Generael twee Maenden Soudije / eer die gene dewelcke by den Slach dooz Pzage geweest syn / den derden van hier int Legher sepnden / ende daerby eene Generaele Monsteringe houden laten.

Dooz dzy dagen is der tot Pzage ghebangene Directeurs oozdeel alhier ghesonden / ende van hare Key. Maj. gheerssolveert worden / daeroy soude aldaer haest die Executie volgen.

Dese dagben is dat Cassatoz deeret der afgesenden Agenten vant Keyserlijcke Hof van der Kayer Hof Cancelreye alhier weder afghedaen worden / maer hebben hare Key. Maj. onder den selven Jan Leeuwen / Jan Sternbergher / ende Georg Tahn / dewijle sy hun alhier ghepzesenteert / ende sich van wegben hare absentie ontschuldicht hebben / van sulcken deeret Genadicht weder gheabsolveert ende gerestitueert / alsso dat sy hare Genadighe Pozsten ende Heeren pzincipalen soecken / ghelijck te vozen alsoo oock dooz saen by hare Maj. Hof afwachten / ende verrichten sullen ende mogen.

Des Keysers Repse naer Regensburg / is van wegen des Crijchs wesens tot Kijcke tot op 6. weecken uitgestelt worden.

Men wil seggen / dat sich der Budiani / op des Heeren Graven Colalto ghegeven Perdon oock begeb heeft / ende Keyserlijcke May. belooft getrout te syn / eb dat sone Dngeren by den Colalto aenconen waren / dewelcke sich tot den Grave van Bucquoy begeben sal.

Francfoort, den 30. dito.

Van Pzage hebben wp dooy dese repse anders niet dan dat die Executie over die ghevangene jene metten eersten ghelchieden soude / daer van met ten naesten Post die particulariteyt verwachte wert.

Wt den Oppezpalts wert geschzeben / dat sich de Graue van Mansuelt aldaer noch sterck versamelde / nam. een volck noch daghelijcks seer toe / dooy dien stet Crijghsvolck t'welck van eenighe Gheuniecrde Pozsten was afgedanckt / van den ghenoemden Graeve weder aen ghenomen wierden / so dat hy nu by de 20 dupsent Mannen starck syn soude.

Van Breslau wpt der Slesien hebben wp seker pedingen / dat sich de Marckgraue van Jagerendozp noch inder Slesien met zyn volck bevondt / hadde noch over de 10 dupsent Mannen by den anderen / verwachtende noch meerder hulpe / so datmen dooz seecker hout / dat den oozloghe op andere plaetsen sal hernomen werden / t'welck eene groote veranderinghe causeren mochte.

Wt Ceulen, den 1. Iunij.

Dat Keyserlijck ende Coninckliick Crijghsvolck ligt noch hier ende daer inde Guarnisoenen t'Cilc / men segbt / dat de Marquis Spinola binnen wepnich dazghen te velde treecken soude. Ondertusschen comen alhier dagelijcks veel van der Geunteerden Pozsten volc aen / die in Duytslant afgedanckt syn / die soecken eenen nieuwen Heere / den eenen treckt hier / den anderen daer.

Dooz dzy daghen is de Hertoghe van Nieuwburg tot Dusseldozp ghearriveerdt / alwaer oock Ghesanten van den Churioozst van Saxen comen souden / men segt / dat die ghenoemde Chur-

FIG. 2.2. A typical early Dutch newspaper: Caspar van Hilten's *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.*, published 5 June 1621, p. [1].

By 1645 Amsterdam had emerged as one of the major news capitals in Europe: at that time, ten weekly newspaper issues were published there by six different enterprises.[60] However, in 1649 the number of weekly issues had diminished to four, and in 1654 the Amsterdam magistrates forced upon the publishers a 'regulation', which meant that only two weekly issues were allowed to appear; each one of the four remaining publishers was to publish one issue every other week (ibid.: 28). This new situation offered better opportunities to entrepreneurs in other cities to publish newspapers.

Folke Dahl estimated that the print runs of the early Amsterdam papers was 400 copies, and he established that at least from 1632, one of the early Amsterdam papers – the one published by Jan van Hilten – was printed on two presses, to speed the production (Dahl 1946: 22–23). Quite recently Der Weduwen (2015: 25) showed that Broer Jansz' paper was produced in the same way, the earliest documentable issue – that is, preserved in two different editions – being *TVQ* 1635/40. The two major Amsterdam papers circulated in at least 1,000 copies per issue by 1650, and in 1,600 copies by 1675, approximately triple the print runs of the Flemish ones.[61] While most newspapers

58. Ibid.: 26–27, 315–317, 418–422. For some time in the 1620s, possibly 1623–1624, there was also an early newspaper in Utrecht (only one copy has survived, of 5 January 1623; ibid.: 423–425).

59. Ibid.: 586–637, 645–669, 1051–1071.

60. Weduwen (2018: 246) presents a convenient tabulation, year-by-year, of the newspaper issues published in six Dutch cities and towns from 1645 to 1670.

61. Weduwen 2017: 74. The recent monograph. Pettegree and Weduwen (2019: 81), gives a slightly higher estimate for the print runs in the second half of the century: between 700 and 2,000 copies per

used only one press, both the Amsterdam and the Haarlem paper were printed on two presses.[62]

Der Weduwen (2017: 121) also has shown that different newspapers – at least in the Netherlands – diverged considerably regarding the geographical origin of the news, and that there were differences even between two papers printed in one and the same city. His tabulation of the provenance of the news reports (in Dutch and Flemish newspapers) is based on more than 240,000 news items in 16,232 surviving copies. The reports came from more than 3,400 locations in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, although nearly half of the news was collected and written down in ten cities: The Hague, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Vienna, Brussels, Cologne, Hamburg, Venice, and Rome.[63]

Information from more distant places perforce would be quite dated by the time it arrived, whereas news collected locally might be printed on the same day.[64] News in the early Dutch papers was usually presented chronologically, which meant that items from distant places like Constantinople might open an issue, followed by not so far-away places such as Venice, Genoa, Poland, German cities, England, France. At the very end, there could be an item under the headline 'Amsterdam', containing news gathered in Amsterdam about events from the whole known world, or one or more advertisements.[65] Real local news was more or less confined to the marketplace, the inn, and the church pulpit. An example of how the final section of the Dutch papers might include brief reports of last-minute news is this entry compiled in The Hague, in 1656, containing nine sentences about events in almost as many different countries:

> From Danzig there is word of an engagement in which the Swedes have suffered many casualties, baggage, and a cannon. Smilinski has proposed to bring 100,000 men to the Swedish cause, promising that they will be content with plunder rather than wages. The prince of Transylvania has offered the same. In Königsberg the city walls are being reinforced. There are no tidings regarding the state of Livonia. The plague is spreading rapidly through upper Poland. A Turkish ambassador has arrived in Stettin. 600 Englishmen have arrived in Stade. The Imperial army is marching out of Silesia to support the Poles, and all farmers' horses there have been confiscated to pull the cannons.[66]

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issue. Théophraste Renaudot claimed that his Paris newspaper circulated in 1,200 copies every week (Weduwen 2017: 74 n. 103).

62. Estimates for the circulation in the mid-eighteenth century – not so relevant for our study – are 4,000–6,000 copies for the *Amsterdamsche Courant* and 4,000–5,000 for the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (ibid.: 73).

63. Compare for German papers the most extensive such listing to date by Jan Hillgärtner (2021): Appendix A, 197–256, covering the period 1609–1650.

64. For more on the speed with which news could be obtained (and the time elapsed between an event and reports about it being published), see our Sec. 3.3 and passim.

65. Dutch papers had advertisements from a very early stage (documented since 1621); during the first decades, the advertised objects were almost exclusively printed items (Weduwen 2018: 239). Advertisements in German papers became widespread only many decades later.

66. *Haegsche Weeckelijcke Mercurius, vervattende alle gedenckweerdigste advysen van geheel Europa*, No. 72, printed 18 August 1656: 496 (consecutive pagination for the year in the original); the quote from Der Weduwen's translation (2017: 76). We have substituted Livonia for his 'Latvia'; the

The impressive range of sources evidenced in the early Dutch press helps us to understand how Abraham Casteleyn's *Haerlemse Courant* (*OHC*) (beginning in 1656) quickly became one of the most widely read newspapers in Europe. Casteleyn was very successful in establishing a network of correspondents, who often could provide insider information. As Jason Peacey (2016b) has shown, a wide range of individuals in England obtained Casteleyn's paper regularly; copies were available in many coffee houses, where they might be read aloud to the illiterate. The dissemination of Dutch news was often viewed askance by government officials. Casteleyn frequently would print information deemed threatening to the Restoration monarchy; what was considered to be an anti-English bias was sometimes noted by English representatives abroad. Even in far-off Stockholm, the English agent Thomas Thynne would sometimes complain that Casteleyn's paper was his only regular source of news, one that he distrusted on account of what he saw as its bias in reporting English affairs (Fraser 1956: 68–69). As we shall see, *OHC* became one of the most important sources for the news translations being made for the Russian government.[67] The Scottish mercenary in Russian service, Patrick Gordon, is known to have seen reports based on the Haarlem newspaper and, like Thomas Thynne, would complain about the bias of Dutch reporting on English affairs (Waugh 2014: 111).

Nonetheless, the quality of the foreign news in *OHC* and other Dutch papers was frequently praised. Peacey (2016b: 425) notes that "Casteleyn's newspaper was read enthusiastically by English diplomats in the Low Countries. During the 1660s and 1670s, therefore, stories from 'the Harlomer' were frequently cited by Sir George Downing and Roger Meredith, the latter of whom often referred to being able to relay little more than what had appeared in local gazettes, and to being particularly reliant upon Casteleyn's material." Diplomats frequently would enclose print copies of newspapers with their handwritten reports, rather than summarize what was in the newspapers. Joseph Williamson, the undersecretary (later secretary) of state, who played a key role in obtaining for the government intelligence and managing the news that was published in the *London Gazette*, was regularly supplied with Casteleyn's paper from the mid-1660s to nearly

original has 'Lyflant'. An analogous example from an Amsterdam newspaper a decade earlier (*Europische Dingsdaegs Covrant*, printed 1 May 1646) is the report 'Amsterdam 1 May', containing news from Bresil [Brazil], Livorno, the Swedish army's movements (near Kassel), and the Baltic and Norwegian fleet. (For a facsimile of this issue see V-K III: 404–405.) The most recent news, compiled just before typesetting began – or when it had already started – could also be printed underneath a horizontal line at the bottom of the second column (see the facsimile illustration in Weduwen 2017: 22). The news 'below the line', gathered from local sources, although essentially relating to events abroad, "also offered the opportunity to smuggle into the paper a fair amount of information on Dutch matters"– reports that often got them into trouble (ibid.: 21, with references to a lot of cases in n. 24).

67. Maier and Vos 2006. Further information on both the specific German and Dutch newspapers that were particularly valued in Moscow is in V-K VI/2: 77–86. We discuss in Secs. 19.1 and 19.2 those which served as the basis for *kuranty* translations in the period following the establishment of the Russian foreign post.

the end of the 1670s.[68] Not only did Williamson read the printed paper; perhaps more importantly, he carried out a correspondence with its publisher, in which each supplied the other with insider information, in addition to obtaining other manuscript news from different countries. In this way, he could select material from Casteleyn for the *London Gazette* and in turn provide news that might be published in Haarlem. In November 1663, for example, the English ambassador to the Dutch Republic, Sir George Downing, wrote that Williamson should be informed that his own manuscript newsletters were being printed verbatim in the Haarlem paper (Peacey 2016a: 438–439).

2.6. The reliability of newspaper reporting

In any era it can be difficult to assess the accuracy of what newspapers publish. To do so requires not only examining editorial principles and decisions but also considering what the sources of the reported news are, and in some way being able to check them against other evidence. In our subsequent chapters, we attempt to provide specific examples that may shed light on whether the newspapers – almost entirely German and Dutch ones – that the Kremlin received, excerpted and translated contained accurate information. Here we will lay out some of the more general assessments by scholars of the early newspapers. Much of the literature focuses on two issues: whether or not the newspaper publishers significantly edited the news they printed, and whether there was much censorship which could have affected the content. In either case, there would be at least the possibility that the printed news might not convey accurately the reports or might deliberately misrepresent their content for political or other reasons.

2.6.1. Editorial practice

There is no consensus among the newspaper historians regarding the amount of editing that was usually done by the early (seventeenth-century) newspaper publishers: whereas some maintain that there is little evidence of editing and the papers largely repeat what was in their sources, others – above all Behringer – assert that a great deal of editing was done from the outset.[69] Here we face a major methodological problem, since the printers' (or publishers') archives that would enable comparison of the incoming newsletters with the printed papers are not extant. Whereas at least 60,000 German-language issues have survived and can be studied, the manuscript source material for these papers has *not* been preserved.[70]

68. There is a large collection of bound volumes of *OHC* in TNA, SP119/56–62, 74–75 and 86, some with handwritten notes mentioning Williamson.

69. E.g., Körber 1998: 334; Weber 2006: 392–393; cf. Behringer 2003: 369–371; 2006: 355.

70. The number, 60,000, is in many publications by members of the Bremen institute Deutsche Presseforschung, for instance in Weber (2008: 42), who estimates that the 60,000 surviving issues represent about 20% of the total amount of printed issues, which thus would have been some 300,000 issues. Pettegree (2014: 185) provides a higher estimate of 70,000 surviving issues; his hypothesis that that altogether '70 million *copies*' were printed during the whole century seems quite realistic. Here a lot depends on the estimated print runs.

The very first newspaper publishers apparently did little editing. Speed was essential, and careful editing would take a lot of time. Moreover, the publishers were not necessarily more educated than the authors of the incoming newsletters (or even less educated), so it would not have been easy for them to improve the latters' style. Martin Welke has shown that the first editor of a printed paper, Johann Carolus, corrected spelling mistakes and added German synonyms to French or Latin loanwords.[71] In the preface of the first preserved year collection (1609), Carolus asks the readers to overlook all mistakes, which he is unable to correct in a paper that 'must be produced in a hurry at night.'[72] Certainly all publishers occasionally shortened news items, particularly when there was not enough space. However, that many publishers did not spend a lot of time on editing the incoming material is suggested by the hundreds of cases when we have *exactly* (verbatim) the same news item in two or three printed papers – not only in the first decades of the newspaper but also in the 1660s and 1670s. In these cases, either they all received the same newsletter (and printed it verbatim), or they pirated a printed paper (again without any editing). Presumably not all publishers – that is, possibly some 500 or 600 individuals – of all documented 200 seventeenth-century newspapers in the German-speaking territories would have used exactly the same editing principles. The degree of editing may have increased in the second half of the century, when a publisher no longer could rely upon one or two manuscript sources but had to have (and pay) correspondents in many regions.

The following example, where a paper from the Baltic area, *Particular, Post/ Hambürger vnd ReichsZeitung*, allegedly published in Danzig,[73] is compared with one from Amsterdam (*OMC*), illustrates the close relationship between articles in different newspapers and even different languages. In this case, we suppose that the German paper pirated the Dutch one – this was considerably faster and cheaper than building up a network of correspondents for this apparently new publishing enterprise.[74]

71. Welke 2008: 103 (esp. n. 381) lists examples of spelling improvements made by Carolus in the Strassburg paper of 1609, as compared to the Wolfenbüttel one. Apparently both used the same Nürnberg newsletters, so that comparisons could be made.

72 "das bey der Nacht eylend gefertigt werden muß"; quoted from the preface reproduced in Weber 1992: 264.

73. The Danzig printer Georg Rhete (1600–1647) had moved to Danzig from Stettin, where his brother David had a printer's shop until his death in 1638. At this time, Georg Rhete started printing in both cities. Kranhold (1967: 24) suggests that he lived and worked in Stettin, whereas his wife managed the shop in Danzig. Details of typography make it likely that the paper, translated in Moscow, was printed in Danzig.

74. Although so little is known about this newspaper, it is apparent that it had been founded recently, since No. 27 – which usually would have appeared in the middle of the summer – contained only September news (see the digitized copy at DP Bremen or the facsimile in V-K II: 380–387). The earliest extant issue is No. 26 from the same year. The translation into Russian (made from the German version) is in ibid.: 34–38. On the degree to which German newspapers relied on the Dutch press, see Hillgärtner 2018.

Ordinarise Middel-weeckse Courante
1643/37

Met Passagiers te water/ dat de Commissarisen vant Parlement in Schotland ghesonden/ met de Standen aldaer ghe-accordeert zijn/ dat de Schotten/ sonder eenigh dilay/ 15000 man te voet ende te paerdt tot adsistentie vant Parlement senden sullen/ ware von d'eene helft by het Parlement ende d'andere by de Schotten/ alle maenden precijs sal betaelt worden. De Coninghsche hebben voor Glochester/ wel 2000 mannen laten sitten/ sullen het belegh apparentelijcken moeten quiteren/ also den Grave van Essex aent marcheren is.

Particular, Post/ Hambürger vnd ReichsZtg.
1643/27
Amsterdam vom 15. Dito.

Passagirs zu Waßer bringen mit das die Commissari vom Parlament nach Schottland gesandt/ vnd sollen mit den Ständen veraccordiert sein/ vnd die Schotten ohne verzug 15000. Mann zur Assistentz senden wollen/ wovon die eine helffte vom Perlament/ die andere aber von den Schotten Monatlich precise soll gezhalet warden. Die Königischn haben vor Glocester in 2000. Man sitzen lassen/ werden allem ansehen nach die Belagerung quitiren müßen/ weil der Graff von Eßex im anmarschieren ist.

Although we do not have an outright *proof* for the fact that the Dutch paper has been pirated, this seems very likely. In many other cases, when we have virtually identical news items in two or more newspapers, we can presume that both publishers had received identical (or very similar) manuscript sources from the same news agent. In this specific case, however, this is unlikely; there presumably was no newsletter sent from England, the report having come from 'passengers on the water' (apparently, travelers from England), most probably in oral form, and it was written down in Amsterdam. The Dutch paper contains two more news items – an enormous one from London (4 Sept.), and one from Cologne (10 Sept.) – that are also in the 'Baltic' paper (both slightly shortened). Our strongest argument for pirating is that the German version says "Amsterdam vom 15. Dito [=Sept.]," whereas the last-minute item from England (placed at the very end of the Dutch paper) has no date. The date in the German version was undoubtedly taken from the colophon of the Dutch paper: "Ghedruckt tot Amsterdam, Voor Francoys Lieshout [...] den 15 September Anno 1643." Thus the German publisher (ostensibly Georg Rhete) appears to have made the correct assumption about the date for the news from England, since Dutch papers were often printed on the very day when such 'local items' at the end had been composed.

In another example we have identical texts in two different issues of the same newspaper, the *Einkommende Zeitungen* from Leipzig – the world's first daily newspaper. In No. 1650/17, printed on 29 July N.S., we read towards the end of the last news item: "Ein anders vom vorigen dito" (which here means Cologne, 24 July): "Auß Lysabona hat man/ welcher massen daselbst Zeitung einkommen/ daß der grosse König in China zur Dancksagung seiner gegen der [!] Tartarn erlangten Victori, den Christlichen Glauben mit allen den Seinigen angenommen" ('We hear from Lisbon that news has come in there about the fact that the big king in China, in order to thank for his victory against the Tatars, has embraced the Christian belief, together with all his close people'). The same news appeared verbatim in this newspaper three days later (No. 19, printed on

1 August N.S.), but this time at the very end of a long item headed "Amsterdam vom 23. dito [July]." The publisher not only made no changes in the incoming letters, but it seems that he did not even *read* them, otherwise he would have realized that he had read exactly the same item 2–3 days previously. While there might have been publishers who did a lot of editorial work with their paper, clearly not *all* of them did so.

Our last example may illustrate where some conscious editing would have been justified. The *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant* 1666/8 mentions twice the English conquest of the island St. Eustatius (in the Caribbean). The paper opened under the caption 'AMERICA' with a single item "Christoffel den 2. December, 1665" that included other news of the Caribbean as well. A shorter item on the paper's verso page, "Middelburgh den 17 February," also refers to a newsletter from St. Christoffel (same date) but contains somewhat less Caribbean news and adds information on movements of the Dutch fleet outside Oostende.[75] Although the place and the date of the original reports from America coincide, it is possible that the newspapermen – in Haarlem and in Middelburg – had not received exactly the same newsletter: the two printed versions feature some important differences. We assume that the repetition of the information in one and the same issue was unintended and was due to lack of editorial attention. If the two reports have gone through some editing in Haarlem, this was probably not very thorough – hardly surprisingly, because speed was still a leading principle.

2.6.2. Possible bias and censorship

Johannes Weber (2004: 56–57) has stated that modern perceptions about early newspaper bias or inaccuracy have been shaped in part by the fact that all early German newspaper theoreticians – including the otherwise quite 'modern' and liberal Kaspar Stieler – explicitly wrote about such distortions and the way they might affect policy.[76] Stieler, who was a strong advocate of the value of the press, suggested that readers should pay attention to where a newspaper was published, in order to understand its possible biases, and if newspaper reports might be detrimental to the state or public interest, some censorship might be necessary. That such opinions were apparently widespread causes us to wonder why. Were newspapers from their beginnings – at least in the German lands – inaccurate in their reporting or, if not from the very start but later, did the veracity of their reporting change?

Both Weber (1999, 2004) and Böning (2019) insist that for the most part, throughout the century, the focus of the German press was on precise, if pithy, presentation of the

75. This example has already been mentioned in V-K VI/2: 50 (the whole newspaper issue is in the appendix in facsimile, see ibid.: 682–683).

76. For an insightful summary in English of Stieler's book *Zeitungs Lust und Nutz* ('The pleasure and utility of newspapers', first published in 1695), see Popkin 2005: 7–12. To facilitate reading of newspapers for people not yet used to them, Stieler added to his book a dictionary of special terms often used in newspapers, and listings of heads of state, ambassadors, other prominent individuals, coats of arms; see Stieler 1969: 173–238 for the dictionary, and pp. 239–270 for the list of famous persons etc.

facts – that is, to borrow the phrase from the *New York Times*' masthead, they presented 'all the news that was fit to print'. Böning laid out in detail that the reporting on the events leading up to the outbreak of the Thirty Years War and then at least during its first decade or so provided news, often based on insider information and with a conscious attempt to offer the views of all sides, leaving it up to the reader to draw conclusions. The basis for such factual political reporting had been established in the development of newsletter networks such as those which informed the Fuggers prior to Carolus' publication of the first newspaper (Böning 2019: 131–133). Reports of military actions throughout the war often clearly distinguished 'our' from 'their', friend from enemy.[77] However, 'our' reports were not necessarily one-sided propaganda that simply glossed over failures or misdeeds of the reporting side. A regular reader of the news would undoubtedly have been able to distinguish which side was reporting; for the most part it seems the publishers understood that their clientele expected news was to be printed faithfully, without editorial intervention by the publisher (Böning 2019: 433–434).

Given the reliance of the early newspapers on networks of regular correspondents based in certain cities, coverage might not necessarily be even across all regions where significant events were occurring; there could be some blind spots due simply to the fact that there were few reports from certain areas (Weber 1999: 29). Newspapers in a particular part of Europe might logically concentrate on reporting news that was deemed most relevant to their core readership. Thus, as we shall see, news published closer to the Russian borders, above all in Königsberg, was more likely to contain detailed reports directly related to Russian foreign-policy concerns (for instance, about the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) than a newspaper from the Dutch Republic and in any event probably would be received faster than the latter.[78] These considerations explain why newspapers from the eastern German-speaking regions – Berlin, Danzig, Königsberg – were so popular in Moscow (besides those from Hamburg and the Dutch Republic), and were among the most important sources for the *kuranty* translations.

The example most frequently cited to demonstrate how the impartial reporting of the first decade or so of the German press subsequently was abandoned in favor of one-sided partisanship involves one of the most accomplished news entrepreneurs, the Protestant Johann von den Birghden.[79] During the 1620s, he was the imperial postmaster and the publisher of a newspaper in Frankfurt. In 1627 though, when Emperor Ferdinand com-

77. Weber 1999: 29–30. As Lamal (2020) emphasizes, a significant component of the news about military affairs was coming from regular reporting by the participants, which thus might provide precise information about battles. Even if such reports in the first instance might have been intended for the rulers and their advisers, clearly many were printed in their entirety or excerpted in both the periodical newspapers and in published pamphlets.

78. For a concrete example – a letter by the Hetman's brother Hryhorii Doroshenko from the military camp near Bar – see V-K VI/2: 50–51. The report was published in fuller form in the Königsberg paper than in the Haarlem one, although both were apparently based on the same letter from Ukraine.

79. On Von den Birghden's career, Kremer 2005. Much of our discussion here is based on the summary treatment in Boning 2019: 437–443.

plained about Von den Birghden's alleged bias against the interests of the empire, he was fired, to be replaced by a Catholic. In fact, there is little evidence that during his tenure Von den Birghden had in fact skewed the news. He may simply have been too neutral and insufficiently pro-Catholic.[80]

The Swedish forces led by King Gustavus Adolphus entered the war against the Habsburg imperial forces in June 1630, proceeded to inflict serious losses on them and secured Swedish control over large areas of northern Germany, even after the king's death in battle in 1632. Conscious of the value of propaganda and secure communications, the king supported the extension of Swedish control over the postal network. One result was Von den Birghen's return to Frankfurt as postmaster and newsmonger in 1632, at which point at least his newspapers largely ceased to be sources of objective reporting. In the period between 1632 and 1635, Von den Birghen's papers never presented a Catholic viewpoint, gloated over Protestant successes, and embodied the worst of what we might characterize as war propaganda (Böning 2019: 439). The confessional bias of reporting in other newspapers increased as the war progressed (ibid.: 443). Even if not consciously organs of the political authorities, newspapers published in areas under Catholic Habsburg control tended to respond in kind to the one-sidedness of the Protestant-controlled press.

The differing viewpoints that resulted in exaggeration and even some falsification of the news can be seen in the contrasting ways they reported the sack of Magdeburg by the imperial forces in 1631, and subsequently the death of Gustavus Adolphus and the murder of imperial field marshal Albrecht von Wallenstein. Jan Hillgärtner (2017: 295–309) has stressed how the separates – pamphlets and broadsides – proliferated with the Swedish entrance into the war, in the first instance as means of propagandizing for Protestants the image of Gustavus Adolphus as a divinely sanctioned savior, imbued with qualities of both Biblical heroes and the gods of Classical Antiquity. This was not the still largely sober reporting of the newspapers, which, unlike the popular prints, may have had less of an impact on public opinion. As Böning too has suggested, the sensationalism of events such as the death of the king was very likely due to their being featured in pamphlets and broadsides, proclaimed from the pulpit, or conveyed in popular ballads.[81]

The confessional bias of many newspapers did not, however, mean that they were of little value for the information they contained, since the attentive reader could usually

80. Weber 1999: 449–450 note 21; 2004: 57.

81. Böning 2019: 443–446. He states (p. 444) that there were at least 47 pamphlets about the battle of Lützen (in which Gustavus Adolphus was killed) and a much larger outpouring of publications relating to Magdeburg (205 pamphlets and 41 broadsides). Hillgärtner (2017: 298–299) notes that 115 of the 271 German broadsheets known for 1631 dealt with Gustavus Adolphus and his victories; in 1632 "his popularity reached its pinnacle when 331 out of 345 broadsheets were devoted to his deeds, his triumphs and his unexpected end." These figures include only the single-sheet publications, not other, more substantial separates. One result of this proliferation of Protestant propaganda was to stimulate at least some anti-Protestant production of analogous prints, though it did not reach the same scale.

find in them facts about events that no amount of coloring could conceal. Moreover, there still were exceptions to the politicization of German newspapers, for instance those published in Hamburg – important sources (often indirectly) for some of the news that made it to Moscow. The Hamburg publishers had to maintain some impartiality in their reporting, in order not to compromise the city's attempt to remain neutral and prosper during the war (Böning 2002: 35).

Some of the seventeenth-century newspaper theoreticians asserted that the now allegedly partisan slant of the press made a significant contribution to military success or failure and was the equivalent of several regiments of soldiers. However, decisions by field commanders undoubtedly were based on intelligence received more rapidly than a newspaper report that would already be ten days or more old (Böning 2019: 441). To the degree that the news reported on both sides reiterated in often excruciating detail the horrors inflicted by the almost continuous military campaigns and exactions, the most important contribution of the intensive news coverage of the war was to convince all parties that they could endure no more. This provided some impetus to ensuring a successful outcome of the drawn-out negotiations for peace that were followed closely by the newspapers (Weber 1999: 45).

To a considerable degree, perceptions about the supposed bias and inaccuracy of early newspaper reporting have been unduly influenced by instances in which formal protests were lodged by governments about press coverage. As we shall see, a number of such cases involved what some have felt was an excessive concern in Moscow about foreign reporting on Russian affairs. In fact Russia was not exceptional in a world when, as Jan Hennings (2018) has underlined, honor and the prestige of one's ruler were staples of diplomatic concern and conduct. For the history of the early press these incidents raise questions about whether or not there was censorship of the news.

On various occasions throughout the first century of the printed newspaper, political authorities submitted formal protests about what they claimed was insufficient respect for a certain ruler. The world's first publisher of a printed paper, Johann Carolus, was accused of having diminished the emperor's honor, because in a news item from Prague published by him it was said that there was not enough money at the emperor's court to pay the 5,000 thalers necessary to get rid of a Turkish embassy. Would the city council now stop his newspaper and ruin the printer? Carolus hastened to mollify his critics: he explained that he had not added anything to the news item but printed it exactly as it had come to him in manuscript. However, in the future he would be more observant so that similar incidents would not occur. This early example of 'post-print censorship' in connection with newspapers shows us that there was no preventative censorship, at least in this case – otherwise the censor would have been accused as well. Apparently, Carolus was able to publish the next issue of his weekly paper without any interruption and did not experience any other conflict with the authorities over three decades.[82]

82. The incident is described in great detail in Welke (2008: 107–110), with lengthy quotations

Technically, preventative censorship existed in most German cities; however, usually it was not a serious issue, as Holger Böning shows for the Hamburg papers.[83] The most important thing was to avoid all conflicts with the Habsburg imperial authorities, as well as rulers in other countries. In this context Böning mentions an admonition by the Hamburg city council from 1675, directed to 'correspondents, authors of newsletters, and *Neue Zeitungen*' to talk about 'big rulers, kings, princes, and gentlemen in no other manner than with true respect.' These authors were also told not to copy any lies from other newspapers. In case of protests by foreign potentates, the publisher would usually show the incoming newsletters and thus 'prove' that he had not made up the incriminating news item (Böning 2002: 166–167).

Johannes Weber (2004: 59) stresses that fewer than three dozen 'censorship conflicts' are known from the whole century, which is not a high number if we keep in mind that at least a quarter of a million newspaper issues appeared during that period. Among his examples is the following: In 1639, the imperial Hamburg newspaper *Kayserlich Privilegirte Postzeitung* had printed a long news item, criticizing the Swedes and claiming, among other things, that they are not seriously concerned to attain peace. The Swedish resident in Hamburg (between 1631 and 1650), Johann Adler Salvius, promptly protested against this 'anti-Swedish propaganda' and insisted, 'in the name of my queen and the Crown Sweden,' that the offending copies 'be confiscated, burned, and the author be seriously punished.'[84] However, no measures against the newspaper are documented (ibid.: 62). All in all, Weber concludes, there is very little evidence of explicit political 'post-print' censorship of seventeenth-century German newspapers. Self-censorship by the publishers is another matter – if they wanted to keep their licenses – as shown by the Strassburg example from 1609. Although some contemporary critics of the newspapers insisted they were a threat to political stability, in fact there seems to have been little basis for such concerns.

What may have been true regarding censorship and the German press did not necessarily hold for other countries. Although preventative censorship was even more serious in the Habsburg Netherlands (where the names of the ecclesiastical censors could be indicated on the printed issues), there was no such censorship of newspapers in the Dutch Republic. On the other hand, many more Dutch newspapermen were fined or suspended (Weduwen 2017: 56). At least 19 out of the 49 documented newspapers and serials from the Netherlands are known to have been pursued or banned at some point

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of the incriminating news item as well as the two protocols from the meetings of the city council in Strassburg.

83. About preventative censorship, Böning 2002: 163–177. This was not limited to the printed papers; also *Geschriebene Zeitungen* were targets for political censorship (ibid.: 105–106, 168; Behringer 2003: 421). The most restrictive city in the German empire was Nürnberg, where printed newspapers were altogether prohibited until 1673 (Sporhan-Krempel 1968: 123, 139). Manuscript papers also started to appear there later than, for instance, in Augsburg, and they were submitted to serious censorship (ibid.: 70–71, 124).

84. A long quotation from the newspaper article and Salvius' protest are in Weber 2004: 61–62.

by the authorities (ibid.: 86). For instance, in April 1658 the courantier Gerard Lodewijk van der Macht was banned from the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland for ten years, and when he had established himself as a newspaperman in Utrecht, on 22 December 1669 he was banned again, this time for life, from Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht (ibid.: 617–618, 1053). Reporting of domestic news seems to have been a lesser concern than was publication of offending news about foreign rulers, where Dutch commercial interests could be at stake. In the Dutch Republic political persecutions were not even the most serious problem. "Ultimately the greatest impact of the state on the production of newspapers was financial" – taxes, ever-growing amounts newsmen had to pay for their privileges. Thus, "[f]inancial pressure, rather than political repression, was the true power of the state over the press" (ibid.: 87).

It seems clear that governments recognized the potential value of the press for propagandizing official versions of events, an awareness that developed in Moscow as the authorities there encountered what the Kremlin considered to be reporting offensive to the tsar. While the matter needs further study, there certainly is evidence that governments sought to place official accounts in the newspapers or publish them as pamphlet separates. However, examples of official, government sponsored *newspapers* are few and largely irrelevant to our study. France was certainly a special case, where the government and its authorized agent, Théophraste Renaudot, essentially had a monopoly on news publication at least up to the time of the Fronde in mid-century (Vittu 2001). Once the government had put down the rebellion, strict controls again were imposed. However, the importation of French-language newspapers from the Netherlands was not only permitted, but the French government itself apparently subscribed to the imported papers and studied them carefully, at least from 1691 to 1761 (Enaux and Rétat 1993). The first Swedish newspaper was an official government organ (Ries 2001), thus similar to the situation in France. In England, periods of serious government efforts to control and censor news alternated with periods of relative press freedom throughout the seventeenth century. Manuscript news and oral transmission were particularly important (Baron 2001). However, the *London Gazette* (from 1665), controlled by Joseph Williamson, is an excellent comparative example of how sources of foreign news were assiduously collected by government and – unlike in the Russian case – selectively published.

2.6.3. Erroneous reports and the challenge of detecting them

Determining the accuracy of the news reports is extremely challenging, since often there are no alternative sources about such things as the daily movements of an ambassador, nuntius, military commander, vessel etc., reported in the newspapers. It is difficult even for modern scholars – in spite of all available books, maps, Internet resources – to find out how exact and reliable the news reports were in the seventeenth century. So, how could a contemporary publisher verify whether events reported in the incoming newsletters from Rome, Venice, Amsterdam, London, or – still worse – from Moscow and

the New World were correct? If he could not trust his foreign sources, he would have to find another job. We have an illustrative example in a letter by the Hamburg Senate of 17 February 1702 to Tsar Peter I, who had sent a protest to Hamburg because of alleged biased reporting about Russia. It is most difficult, wrote the Senate, for an editor in a foreign country to distinguish truth from untruth; would they only print incontestable news, 'inevitably all printed newspapers would have to be prohibited and brought to an end.'[85]

It is hard to produce a newspaper that does not contain any mistakes, but as Daniel Hartnack, one of the seventeenth-century newspaper theoreticians, says, mistakes also occur in historical works, and even merchants sometimes sell deficient products if that is what had been delivered to them. It is therefore self-evident that newspapers cannot be an exception from this rule.[86]

If there was reason to suspect that some news item was 'fake news', the publisher or editor could delay in reporting it until there was confirmation in the next newsletter. But he could not do this all the time, since speed was so essential in the news business, and the other publishers would print their news much faster. So either print the news immediately, risking that the news might prove to be erroneous, or wait for a confirmation – risking that all other newspapers would be faster in their reporting. Our impression is that most publishers would vote for the first option, speed, rather than waiting for a confirmation (or a disclaimer) in the next mail. To give an example: In March 1670 at least five German and Dutch newspapers reported – untimely! – that Francisco Albici had been chosen as successor to Pope Clemens IX, information that later would prove to be incorrect.[87] The information was based on rumor, and rumors "arise when information is scarce" (Kapferer 1992: 54), which was certainly the case when it came to a conclave in Rome. It was common for reports to be qualified by a note indicating that confirmation

85. Böning 2002: 166. What provoked the tsar's complaint in 1702 is not clear, but Russian concern about what was seen as offensive Hamburg printing did not stop. In 1705, after the publication in multiple editions of a vicious pasquil written by Martin Neugebauer (who had been expelled from Russia after some service as a tutor to Tsarevich Aleksei Petrovich), the tsar prepared a new demand that printers in Hamburg be punished, although it is not clear whether Neugebauer's pasquil had been published there. Heinrich von Huyssen, who had been hired by Peter in part to be his agent for arranging pro-Russian publicity in the West, published a detailed refutation of Neugebauer's pamphlet in Dorpat, 1705; another refutation appeared the next year in Altona. For details and additional information on von Huyssen's activity, see Pekarskii 1862, 1: 64–107. See also *Pis'ma i bumagi* 1887–1893, 3: 350–351, for what was apparently a follow-up communication to the Hamburg authorities, dated 31 May 1705, demanding that they punish those who spread insulting information about Russia. The editors suggest in their annotation (p. 834) that the Neugebauer pasquil was the real target of the complaint.

86. Hartnack 1688: 81–82, 92; cf. Wilke 2015: 175, 181–182.

87. This news item was also translated in Moscow. Not in March, but only on 21 April was a new pope chosen (Emilio Altieri, as Clemens X). For a detailed discussion, with transcriptions from the five newspapers (printed in Königsberg, Berlin, Hamburg, and Haarlem), see V-K VI/2: 47–49. It was the same news, absolutely identical in two papers, shorter in the other three. It is likely, but cannot be confirmed for want of surviving copies, that this erroneous report about the papal election would have appeared in a number of other newspapers.

or details would have to wait for the receipt of additional news. Such notes presumably in most cases were not inserted by the editors but rather by the writers of the newsletters whose reports the newspapers were publishing. Georg Greflinger – historian, poet, novelist, translator, and a really professional journalist with a university education (as a jurist) – was the first to introduce a regular column with the headline 'corrections' in his newspaper, *Nordischer Mercurius* (*NM*) (Hamburg, first published in 1664): at the beginning of a new month, he would list news printed during the previous month that had not been confirmed.[88] Incidentally, upon critics' claims that newspapers are telling lies, Greflinger countered that in many cases he wished they were.[89] He was not the only newspaperman who would place corrections regularly in his newspaper; another example is Abraham Casteleyn in his *OHC* (Weduwen 2017: 70). The astute newspaper theoretician Kaspar Stieler, recognizing that not all available news sources were trustworthy, recommended that in cases when there was reason to doubt about the reliability of a specific news report, the publisher should wait for a confirmation from some other source rather than print the dubious item (Stieler 1969: 32). His advice to a newspaper *reader* was 'to doubt until a news item has been confirmed three times from different places, since how often has the Turk, the pope, emperor, or a king been declared dead in a newspaper, and peace been concluded here and there, and afterwards everything disappeared like a dream at night?' (ibid.: 127).

2.7. Conclusion

Responding to recommendations by other German authors that the newspapers be prohibited altogether, Stieler insisted: 'The newspapers are the foundation, the instruction and guidance for all wisdom, and he who does not take them into account will always and forever remain a miserable good-for-nothing and dullard in knowledge of the world and its functioning' (ibid.: 5). Within less than a century since the first one had appeared, newspapers had become an important institution with the potential to reshape European society and culture. To some this represented a danger, especially if the 'abuse' of news publishing might threaten the political order. The important point was that the newspapers provided a knowledge of contemporary events, essential for almost anyone who aspired to function in at least the urban societies of the time. Statesmen absolutely should know about current events, and so should merchants and ordinary burghers. Even women arguably should be encouraged to read newspapers. Keeping up with the news was part of a process of education about geography, learning some rudiments of foreign languages, becoming familiar with the identity of personages mentioned in the news and the like. Pettegree and Der Weduwen (2019: 80) summarize: "The newspaper

88. See also his extremely interesting travel book, *Des Nordischen Mercurii Verbaesserter Wegweiser, Von Zehen Haupt-Reisen aus der Stadt Hamburg*. N.p. [Hamburg], 1674 (VD17 18:723477N), containing, among other things, information about ten postal connections from Hamburg (pp. 89–92).

89. *NM* 1669: 5–6 (the newspaper has continuous pagination for the entire year). See also Böning (2002: 50), who cites the whole fragment.

provided a weekly briefing of what an informed and judicious editor had determined it was important for you to know."

Indeed, as the evidence of significant collections of Dutch and German papers in the British and Swedish archives attest, government officials subscribed to newspapers and, judging from correspondence with their diplomats and agents abroad, were regularly informed of what was in the printed news. It seems that everybody who needed foreign news in order to make decisions was reading the newspapers. The improvements in the speed of communication of news, thanks to the development of the European postal networks, the subject of our next chapter, meant that reports in newspapers (and manuscript newsletters) might contribute significantly to government decision making. However, as studies of the information networks of European rulers and statesmen suggest, officials who diligently followed the printed news never relied on it alone. The Habsburg diplomat Baron von Mayerberg (n.d.: 38) observed in his book about his disappointing mission to Moscow in 1661–1662 that the Russians naively seemed to consider the information in newspapers to be as authoritative as the pronouncements of the Oracle of Delphi. That rather sarcastic comment, as we shall see, may tell us more about his pique than it does about the realities of the way his Russian interlocutors followed and cited the news. As the Russian examples will show, there is in fact distressingly little *direct* evidence that the newspapers translated in Muscovy figured in decision making, even if the officials responsible for foreign policy were anxious to obtain them. There is, however, ample evidence that other sources such as intelligence reports from border commanders were regularly collected, weighed, and cited. Whether the Russian case is an exception remains to be proven.

CHAPTER 3

On the Wings of Mercury: The European Postal Networks and the Speed of the News

Effective transmission of the news has always depended on the speed with which it can travel and thus on the development of a communications infrastructure. There seems to be a consensus that overland communication in premodern times was faster and more reliable than that by sea and, if on horseback and on a well-supported network of roads and way stations, the speed of travel could be impressive. Depending on geography, some routes might over part of their extent perforce involve water transport, generally slower and subject to interruption by adverse weather. A review of literature on such communication networks that developed even more than two millennia ago shows that in the first instance they were created and maintained by governments, even if they might as well have served broader segments of the population.[1] Gradual and uneven expansion of the networks can be documented, and their continuing effectiveness depended on political stability. It was important for empires controlling large territories to be able to communicate effectively with distant provinces, but warfare and consequent political disruption might destroy the infrastructure needed for rapid exchange of information.

While there are some noteworthy differences in the developments in early modern Europe, many of these same considerations apply to the history of the postal networks which are the focus of this chapter. Between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century,

1. See, for example, Silverstein (2010), who summarizes the developments in the Middle East under the Achaemenids and the Romans prior to the rise of Islam and concludes with an extensive treatment of the Mongol Empire postal relay system (*yam*). An important corrective to some of the generalizations that have been made about the Mongol system is Shim (2014), who emphasizes its gradual evolution and regional differences. The Mongol system, with which the Russian principalities under Mongol rule would have been familiar, likely was the inspiration for the creation of the early modern Russian system of horse relays (*iamskaia gon'ba*), and as such figures in the history of the evolution of the Muscovite international post. While his discussion focuses on the sixteenth century and on the Mediterranean world, the analysis of communication by sea in Braudel (1975: 355–369) is still applicable to any discussion of the speed and exigencies affecting maritime routes. News about events in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere in the Mediterranean world, as reported in the seventeenth-century newspapers, commonly arrived in Europe first via ship, before it could be sent rapidly by the overland posts to the north. Venice was one of the important nodes for dissemination of such information.

the speed of communication was enhanced dramatically thanks to the relay stations put in place and improvements of the roads. Private initiative and commercial interests often played an important role, but government funding and support was critical for developing and maintaining the networks. We shall first examine the creation of the Habsburg imperial post, then the development of regional networks, and finally examine evidence about the actual speed of news reporting and publication which so depended on the posts.[2] Our emphasis is on northern and northeastern Europe, since the extension there of the posts practically up to the borders of the Muscovite state was a prerequisite for the creation of the Russian international post, and the initial organization of the latter in many ways parallels how such institutions were developed in the West. The Russian international post, which transformed the ability of the government to acquire foreign news on a regular basis, will be the subject of our Chapter 18.

3.1. The Habsburg imperial post

Much of the attention devoted to the establishment of the postal system in Europe has understandably focused on the imperial post that connected the far-flung territories of the Holy Roman Empire under the Habsburgs. In his magisterial treatment of its history, Wolfgang Behringer (2003) argues that the communications revolution – of which the post was an essential component – preceded both the scientific and industrial revolutions and laid the foundations for the emergence of the modern world.[3] The post was responsible for dramatic changes in the conceptions of space and time and stimulated other innovations, such as the development of news and trade networks. The path it paved has led down through other communications media to today's Internet. Behringer insists that modern criticisms of the early modern post for being slow and irregular miss the mark and fail to take into account how its contemporaries felt about the system. It is certainly possible that he overstates the case that the post was the key institutional development on the road to modernity. However, there is no doubt that the post made an important contribution.

2. An earlier version of this chapter appeared in Russian as part of Waugh [Uo] 2016b: 395–406. The other part of that article is now revised in our Ch. 18 about the Russian post.

3. Most of what follows here about the imperial post (as opposed to some of the regional networks) relies heavily on Behringer 2003. A condensed summary of his argument, in English, is Behringer 2006. For a detailed review of Behringer's book, see Kümin 2004, and for a critique of his argument about a 'communications revolution' brought about by the establishment of the imperial post, see Seggern 2007. Seggern's main point is that, prior to the development of the imperial post, there is ample evidence that equally rapid communication by courier networks frequently can be documented. So, in a sense, the creation of the imperial network hardly represented anything fundamentally new. Droste (2021: 69–77) questions whether the establishment of the postal networks was the key development in infrastructure leading to the modern world. For a recent overview of the emergence of the early modern European postal networks in various countries, see Schobesberger et al. 2016, which, however, does not cover the development of posts in northeastern Europe. The article is useful for its mapping of various routes. The authors recognize that projected schedules did not always correspond to the real departures and deliveries. Even though they emphasize the importance of the postal infrastructure for the emergence of newspapers and the rapid transmission of news, in conclusion the authors state that "a full picture of the *actual flows* of news is not yet possible" (ibid.: 63).

The organization and regularization of the Habsburg imperial post began near the end of the fifteenth century, and throughout the period that concerns us it was managed by the Tassis family (later ennobled as Thurn und Taxis), Italians whose earlier generations had been involved in less ambitious postal networks connecting northern Italy with Austria. The key institutional change which the emperors demanded and the Tassis introduced was to run the post on a predictable, regular schedule, along routes with regularly-spaced postal stations which could supply post riders with accommodations and fresh mounts. This regular system not only provided more reliable communications than the previous one, involving irregular couriers, but it also proved to be less expensive. While initially restricted for the business of state, in 1534 the post was opened to the public for general use. The key portion of the postal route was that which connected Augsburg and Brussels. In 1506, there had been only 15 post stations along the route. By 1562, the number had more than doubled, to 33, and thereafter remained constant down into the eighteenth century (Behringer 2003: 91). Another measure of the regularization of the institutional framework, to ensure rapid delivery, is the distance between stations: in 1490, it was 37.5 km; in 1505, 30 km.; in 1587, 22.5 km. The postal regulations of 1628 affirmed that henceforth the norm was to be 15 km between stations (ibid.: 92). That is, 'one post' was the equivalent of two German miles, a distance to be traversed in two hours. This created the situation in which for some parts of the population time came to be measured as 'postal time', marked by the speed and regularity of postal deliveries. Those who traveled on the postal routes, many of which by the seventeenth century began to offer passenger coach service, often recorded the distance of their journeys by the number of posts they had traversed.[4] As early as 1551, a post rider traveling on the route from Rome through Augsburg to Brussels could average 93 km/day and make the journey of nearly 1700 km in 18 days (ibid.: 103–104, 109, 125–126).

Ironically, the development of the postal network, intended to consolidate and reinforce imperial power, occurred at the same time that for various reasons imperial power and the unity of the empire were in decline. The initial development of the imperial post had focused on a few routes connecting the most important cities. For the post to be able to serve more than imperial political needs, it was going to be necessary to develop a network that would include many lesser cities and remoter regions (ibid.: 177–205). One of the main obstacles to the regularization of the post had always been the fact that individual states and cities within the empire had their own privileges and courier services, which they were unwilling to yield to a central system controlled from Brussels. New postal regulations designed to enforce a postal monopoly under the Tassis family were issued in 1596 and did have the effect of helping to expand the network in what is now Germany. On the eve of the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618, most of the scattered imperial territories were connected into an efficient system.

4. On the establishment and significance of the mail coaches, see Beyrer 2006, which distills his more detailed studies.

The war itself put a premium on rapid communications, at the same time that it engendered the first major competition for the imperial post beginning in 1630, following Swedish military successes under King Gustavus Adolphus (ibid.: 205, 210). The Peace of Westphalia ending the war in 1648 affirmed the rights of the regional states to manage their internal affairs without central imperial interference. So, despite the efforts of the Tassis postmasters to assert monopoly rights over the post throughout imperial territories, regional networks under local control developed. One of the most important would be that of Brandenburg-Prussia.

3.2. Postal networks in the Baltic region

The development of postal networks in northeastern Europe, which is our main focus here, had lagged behind the establishment of the institutional framework in the heart of the Habsburg lands. However, by the last third of the seventeenth century, essential parts of a postal network connecting the Baltic region with the rest of Europe were in place.

Going well back into the Middle Ages, there were important courier networks operating in the Baltic region. We can document such communications by the orders of crusading knights which established their control in the regions south of the Baltic; the Hanseatic cities had their own networks. While it is rare to find such evidence, we have a substantial amount of correspondence of a Lübeck merchant, Hildebrand Veckinchusen, between 1398 and 1428, when he was based in Bruges: nearly 100 letters from his family back in Lübeck and dozens of others from Danzig, Riga, Reval, and Dorpat (North 1991: 8–10). His Baltic correspondence totals somewhat less than half of his extant correspondence with his brother in Cologne but is nonetheless significant. He also had contacts in Venice. It is clear that in this early period, at least as far as the Baltic towns were concerned, he was not using any kind of regular courier service, since communications ran on demand, and the letters often took quite different routes before reaching their final destination. The time in transit could be relatively fast – two to three weeks, somewhat faster in summer, somewhat slower in winter, between Lübeck and Bruges – or substantially slower (39 days summer, 74 winter, Bruges to Riga).

Hamburg was arguably the most important communications and commercial center in northern Europe. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the city administration began actively to expand what until that time had been an irregularly functioning system of couriers. In 1570, a regular courier service had been negotiated with Antwerp (the headquarters of the Habsburg imperial post); a year later, an agreement with Leipzig included forwarding of messages on to Breslau (Wrocław), Prague, and Vienna. Also in 1571, attempting to improve on the 18–20 days it had been taking to send messages to Amsterdam, the Hamburg authorities put in place five couriers to travel between the two cities. It was partly under pressure from Amsterdam that the previously irregular courier service to Danzig was replaced by a regular one in 1593 (formalized in an agreement in 1597), since there was an interest on the part of the Amsterdam merchants in having

communications even beyond to Riga and Königsberg (Kaliningrad). The route east was still excruciatingly slow, since it was a foot post, the couriers being required to make the round trip in 29 days in summer (about 40 km/day) and 36 days in winter (32 km/day). Only in 1625 was a horse post introduced on the Hamburg to Danzig route, the initiative coming from Danzig. The Hamburg burghers in fact fought hard to retain their monopoly on the route and resisted what was in fact a substantial improvement in the service.

In keeping with its traditions as an independent city governed by its own laws, Hamburg was especially diligent in resisting attempts by the imperial postmasters and then the Swedes to incorporate the courier routes into their own postal systems or even to locate a post office within the bounds of the city. The extensive city-run courier network thus continued to compete with these other postal services well down into the seventeenth century. The ordinance regulating the courier services issued in 1641 shows that the city's posts ran weekly to Emden, Lüneburg, Danzig, Leipzig, and Copenhagen, twice weekly to Amsterdam, and daily to Lübeck.[5] The Amsterdam route took six days in summer, seven in winter, that to Lübeck only a day, but to Danzig 12–13 days. Thus, if it had taken letters from Lübeck to Bruges two to three weeks back in the early fifteenth century, now they could reach Antwerp (which had replaced Bruges as the major commercial center) in only eight days in summer and ten in winter (North 1991: 12).[6] However, this was possible in the first instance thanks to the Tassis imperial horse post, which, beginning in 1616, provided the fastest connection between Hamburg, Cologne and Antwerp (Hamburg to Cologne took just over four days). In trying to defend their control over the city's postal connections, the burghers of Hamburg had shortsightedly continued to run the courier services as a foot post. Given that fact, the travel times to Amsterdam established by the Hamburg regulation of 1641 seem impossibly fast; several decades later, the fastest connection between the two cities would take about five days (Waugh and Maier 2009: 33), and that surely using the horse post. At the initiative of the imperial Tassis postmaster Ambrogio Somigliano, in conjunction with the Polish postmaster Antonio de Gratta, a horse post for the length of the Danzig route was instituted (in 1648), despite the objections of Hamburg's own postmaster (Gallitsch 1937: 104–105). Characteristically, it was pressure from Amsterdam merchants which led to the establishment of a horse post on the Amsterdam route in 1650, with an extension to Lübeck in 1652.[7] Hamburg's effort to maintain control of its own post, even at the expense of improvements in postal efficiency, was typical of the pattern we see in the other rivalries over the postal networks in the region.

5. Teubner 1926: 217; Ahrens 1962: 34; North 1991: 12.

6. In fact, one would think the transit time from Lübeck to Antwerp might even have been a day faster, for surely the speed on the 'main line' from Cologne to Antwerp would have been no slower than on the leg from Hamburg to Cologne.

7. Presumably some kind of horse post between Amsterdam and Hamburg had been established much earlier, given the indication in the 1641 schedule that it took only six days on the route, a speed of over 60 km/day. For a loaded messenger on foot to cover more than 40–45 km/day seems unlikely.

Danzig, the most important port between Hamburg and Riga and the main outlet on the Baltic for traffic from Poland, was another of the key cities in the commercial and postal networks.[8] As part of the Hanse communications network, starting as early as the fourteenth century, it was serviced by a horse and wagon post connecting Bruges in the west with Riga in the east. But the wagons traveled at best about 35 km/day, which meant that faster communication for a long time depended on irregularly dispatched couriers. 1597 saw some improvements in Danzig's communications, with the establishment of routes to Breslau (confirmed in a treaty of 1604) and – at the initiative of Hamburg – a weekly service connecting it to Danzig, where the speed of travel was set at 46 km/day (ca. 13 days' travel time). In 1616, the Brandenburg postmaster in Königsberg established a courier service to Danzig, from which messages could then be handed over to the post which ran on to Berlin. The establishment of the horse post connecting Danzig with Stettin (halfway to Hamburg) in 1625 increased the speed of communication between Danzig and Hamburg to an average of 64 km/day (ca. nine days' travel time). In conjunction with this improvement in service, a postmaster in Danzig was now to supervise the traffic on the all-important route to Hamburg. What was involved here in the first instance was an effort on the part of Danzig to guarantee its share of control over the route rather than leave the management in the hands of Hamburg. The Polish conflict with Sweden in the late 1620s for a time disrupted the Danzig posts. The city's postal history in the next three decades was to involve complicated negotiations balancing Swedish, Polish, and Brandenburg interests, where the city itself tried to play one off against the other in order to maintain some control over its communications. As we shall discuss later (Sec. 14.2), there are data about the *actual* transit times for news to travel on the route from Danzig through Stettin and on to Hamburg which indicate that the projected speed along the route had not been achieved by 1648. Even with some improvement in 1649, postal deliveries were still taking twice as long as had been promised in 1625.

Even though commerce and military activity across the Baltic had already stimulated the exchange of news between Stockholm and points south and west, the first regular Swedish courier service to the south was that established to Hamburg in 1619 as part of a plan by King Gustavus Adolphus to develop a Swedish postal network. The first Swedish postal official in Hamburg was a Dutchman, Lennart van Sorgen, appointed in

8. The most convenient summary of Danzig's postal history is Schüler (1956), although he treats in only cursory fashion the confusing period of the 1630s–1650s. For additional detail, see Gallitsch 1936, 1937, 1939, who dwells at length on key negotiations at the expense, however, of saying much about the realities of how well the posts functioned. The recent doctoral dissertation by Michał Salomonik (2017: 135–190), based to a considerable degree on the Thurn and Taxis and Hamburg archives (the Danzig archives perished in World War II), fills in a lot on the protracted struggle between the Polish-Lithuanian crown, Brandenburg, the Danzig municipality and the imperial post to determine who would control the Danzig post. Subsequent to the Peace of Oliwa in 1660 and until nearly the end of the seventeenth century, it became part of the imperial network. Salomonik's work is useful for its detailed summaries of the correspondence between the De Gratta family, who aspired to and became the postmasters in Danzig, and the Tassis postmasters, in which a fair amount of news relating to the affairs of the Polish court was being transmitted.

1620 to be the Swedish resident there; he helped organize a weekly post to Stockholm that was to take five days en route.[9] It is worth noting that his original plan had been to use peasant farmers as the mail carriers, but when the system was first implemented, the government decided instead to employ special couriers. It was only under a subsequent reorganization and extension of the Swedish post in the 1630s that the use of peasant farmers came to be the norm. Here we can see some analogies to the decisions made later in Muscovy, though there the first foreign post was carried by special couriers hired by the Dutch postmaster, and only subsequently was the infrastructure for carrying the mail shifted to the *iamshchiki*, Russian peasants who had long been part of an internal communications network under separate administration.

In order to strengthen Swedish administration in its Baltic possessions, another post office was established in Riga (in 1625), connected to the home office either by a winter land route which ran via Dorpat (Tartu) and Reval (Tallinn) through Finland, and then via the Åland Islands (on the ice) – or, in summer, by a maritime route to Finland, overland to Åbo, and through the Åland Sea to Stockholm.[10] This service was restricted to government messages and, it seems, did not run on a regular schedule. So, in 1632, Jacob Becker, the founder of the first printing office in Dorpat, proposed for commercial use a private service from Riga. His ambitious intention was to establish three routes primarily for merchant correspondence: one north to Reval, one west via Hamburg to Amsterdam, and one with various branches to European locations, that to the south ending in Venice. For a long time, it seems that his principal accomplishment was to maintain connections between Riga and Königsberg (Küng 2011: 102). Since his task, after all, was to create a regional network, not a European-wide one, the success of Becker's venture very much depended on his ability to negotiate with the administrators of the connecting postal networks. A plan such as his might take years to implement if in fact it was at all feasible. Key to his whole scheme was Sweden's successes in the early phases of the country's invasion of the German lands.[11]

The rapid advance of Swedish armies from 1630–1632 made possible the establishment of a Swedish postal network throughout much of northern Germany, extending as

9. There is a large literature on the Swedish postal system, the first comprehensive study being the multivolume work by Teodor Holm (1906–1929), covering the period 1620–1718. In his analytical and comparative study Örjan Simonson (2011) heavily leans on Holm's information-packed books, as well as on the second classical work on the history of the Swedish post, the one by Nils Forsell (1936). About the postal history in the Baltic region (not the focus of Behringer 2003) see, for instance, Pētersone 1997, 1999, 2003; Küng 2009, 2011, 2012; Droste 2006, 2011b.

10. Depending on the season and political considerations, mail might also be routed around the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland (through Viborg) and by the very roundabout overland route north around the Gulf of Bothnia. See the map in Simonson 2011: 73. He discusses the question of the speed and reliability of sea and land routes, using in part data from the eighteenth century and later (ibid.: 70–93).

11. For the early history of the Riga post, see esp. Pētersone 1997: 201–205, where she gives the impression that Becker's rather grandiose scheme, about which she provides some detail, may have come close to being realized. On Becker's printing office in Dorpat, which published his proposed postal schedule in 1632, see Jaanson 1998: 875–876.

far as Frankfurt am Main, which was home to the main postal office under one of the most important of the seventeenth-century postal entrepreneurs, Johann von den Birghden (Kremer 2005). As Behringer (2003: 212) puts it, Birghden 'organized the Swedish postal service with a rationality which had heretofore not been seen in Germany.' Between 1632 and 1635, he established some 122 postal stations, connecting many important cities, among them Frankfurt, Leipzig, Hamburg, Cologne, Nürnberg, Regensburg, and Augsburg. Birghden's network subsequently became the model for the development not only of the Swedish post but at least indirectly for some of the regional postal networks among the other Protestant states in northern Europe. From Frankfurt, there were twice-weekly deliveries to Hamburg, Leipzig and Strassburg; there were weekly connections to Venice and Naples, and through Berlin and Stettin to Danzig. Birghden promised deliveries in sixteen days to Stockholm, ten to London, nine to Hamburg, eight to Venice, six to Amsterdam, five to Paris, and three to Leipzig (Kremer 2005: 347–350). The Swedish withdrawal from much of central Germany beginning in 1634 threw this system into disarray. Beginning in the late 1630s, still in control of Pomerania, the Swedes tried, but failed in an attempt to eliminate the competition from the postal authorities in Stettin, the key intermediary point on the route between Danzig and Hamburg.

At the same time, the Swedish government gained full control over all postal activity in Livonia under a decree issued in 1639, the date normally taken to mark the real start of what might be seen as a modern postal system there with regularly scheduled deliveries. Jacob Becker was appointed to be in charge. The service ran weekly from Dorpat to Riga in four and a half days (circa 233 km, the average being some 52 km/day) and weekly from Dorpat to Narva, where it connected to Stockholm. In 1641, he added regularly scheduled deliveries from Riga via Pernau (Pärnu) to Reval, the transit time to take just under three days, a very respectable speed of nearly 95 km/day. Having been forced to abandon most of his more grandiose plan in 1632, Becker revived it again in 1646, attracting the support of merchants in Danzig and Lübeck with his promise to cut the delivery time between the two cities nearly in half, from eleven or twelve days to six (probably optimistically fast). Becker was also proposing to cut the travel time between Königsberg and Danzig from ten to seven days (which still seems very slow), a plan which initially attracted the support of the elector of Brandenburg – who then, however, had his own postmaster organize a twice-weekly rapid service on the route from Memel (Klaipėda) to Danzig. Becker had only somewhat more success in the Swedish-controlled territories between Stettin and Bremen, where he was given but an indirect role in the development of the Swedish post. One of the most important Swedish accomplishments of some years later in the 1660s was to negotiate with the duke of Courland a treaty that arranged regular postal connections between Memel and Riga, a route that was to be important for Muscovy's postal connections west of its borders.

Apart from Sweden, the other critical political actor in developing the Baltic posts was Brandenburg-Prussia, for this is the period when the foundations of Prussian pow-

er were being built and the way paved for uniting the East Prussian lands with those around the capital in Berlin. Some of the older literature on the north German posts gives perhaps unjustified credit to the Great Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm (r. 1640–1688), for the regularization of postal services in the region.[12] The peace negotiations to end the Thirty Years War dragged on at Münster and Osnabrück, cities not yet well served by any posts; this very fact stimulated the expansion of postal services, since the negotiating parties insisted on having their own secure communications. Despite the continuing insistence on the part of the Holy Roman Emperor that there could be only a single imperial monopoly on the post within the empire, the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 in fact recognized the rights of the individual states to manage their own affairs, a concession that was not necessarily going to promote postal efficiency.[13] Brandenburg became one of the first to fight the imperial postal monopoly, encouraged by the fact that its territorial gains made possible a plan by the Brandenburg postmaster in Königsberg to establish a line, controlled entirely by his government, from there via Memel, Danzig, Berlin, and Kleve (Gallitsch 1937, 1939). Part of the plan was to close down the competing Danzig city post to Hamburg via Stettin, something which Danzig vigorously opposed. In fact none of the other interested parties – Hamburg, Sweden, or Poland – welcomed this heavy-handed attempt by Brandenburg. The line from Königsberg to Kleve was up and running by 1650, taking six days for the post between Kleve and Berlin (something over 80 km/day) and allegedly only another four from there to Königsberg (a speed of around 160 km/day). Ultimately, Danzig was forced to allow the establishment of a Brandenburg post office there in 1654, effectively ceding the control of Danzig's communications to it. This did not end the efforts of the Danzig postmaster to resist Brandenburg, in collaboration with his counterpart in Warsaw. In any event, Brandenburg's victory was short-lived: the war involving Poland in alliance with Brandenburg against Sweden in the late 1650s again interrupted postal services, and by the terms of the Treaty of Oliwa in 1660 Brandenburg was forced to turn over its Danzig post office to the Poles. This meant that uninterrupted Brandenburg control over a postal route from its East Prussian territories to Berlin, which had lasted all of six years, was now broken and would not be reestablished until 1686.

Overall, however, the extension of the Brandenburg posts under the Great Elector was impressive. Among other achievements he established his own twice-weekly line to compete with the imperial post on the route from Kleve to Utrecht and Amsterdam; he stood up to Emperor Leopold I's attempt to reaffirm the imperial monopoly when the latter ascended the throne in 1658. By the end of Friedrich Wilhelm's reign, the Brandenburg-Prussian post had a network of 70 stations, with some ten lines branching out from Berlin. It was a profitable state monopoly which expanded even more impres-

12. Stephan 1928; cf. Behringer 2003: 230–231, 244–253.

13. For example, the English state secretary Joseph Williamson's correspondent in Hamburg, Samuel Missenden, wrote on 13 August 1669 about the interruption of the posts from Amsterdam due to a dispute between the prince-bishop of Münster and the imperial postmaster (TNA, SP 82/11, fol. 167).

sively during the eighteenth century. Centered as it was on Berlin as a hub, it did not always provide connecting service for clients who wanted more direct routes than those which connected only via the Prussian capital (Behringer 2003: 251).

Brandenburg's success inspired other German principalities to follow suit in developing their own regional postal monopolies. An example is Saxony, which began building its own postal network in the 1650s with its center not in the political capital, Dresden, but in the most important commercial city, Leipzig. Connections to Hamburg, Frankfurt, and Nürnberg all used the services of the imperial post. On many of the routes, though, the rate of travel was still very slow – only in the 1690s could service between Hamburg and Vienna, running through the Saxon lands, deliver the mail in one week (ibid.: 258).

Certainly by the 1660s, governments and private entrepreneurs in northeastern Europe were familiar with the functioning of a postal network that could promise more or less regular and rapid communications between key cities, and even far beyond the immediate region. It is not surprising then that Muscovy's connection with this system drew on that European experience. The initiative of governments which wished to control their own postal networks was a key to success, although they might hire entrepreneurial foreign 'experts', who would expect to turn postal management into a profitable business. That rapid postal service made possible rapid communication of news was also a well-established fact by the middle of the seventeenth century. The European networks served commercial interests in that they could transmit the latest information about prices, and governments came to rely on them for political and military decision making. In Behringer's argument, the institutional rationalization embodied in the new postal networks reflected the ideals of the early Enlightenment cameralist thinkers and left an imprint on a wide range of other political and social institutions, facilitated intellectual exchange, and changed perceptions of space and time. Yet the example of the Russian posts will remind us that institutional change might occur quite unevenly, depending on how well the ground had been prepared for it to happen. Traditional institutions might not simply be replaced, and the impact of change be mitigated by the persistence of old ways. Natural conditions and population density might vary considerably from region to region and have an impact on the possibilities for rapid change. In this regard, Muscovy was surely not an exception, and its example might even inspire some reconsideration of the degree to which the emergence of the new Western postal networks embodied Europe's inexorable march into the modern world.

3.3. The speed of the news

In the analysis of our subsequent chapters, it will be important to look closely at what we can learn about the transmission time of news about particular events if we want to assess the possible impact of the news on policy making. However, some general considerations of methodology and what has been written about the speed by which news in Europe was acquired are important for background to the specific examples. As we have noted in the discussion of manuscript news, there has been work illustrated by specific

reports on single events, where the transit times are known. However, there have been few attempts to produce more comprehensive data for reports in the newspapers. It is tempting to use as the measure for the speed of news reporting and dissemination what is known about the announced schedules for the posts, even if on any given route there can be disruption of those schedules. The analysis of newspaper reports generally will take as the starting point the known date of the event, or when a local report about it was recorded – the two may differ, depending on the proximity of the event to the place where the report was written. Although there can be some uncertainties, depending on the newspaper – Dutch ones indicating the date of publication, German ones not, though possible to extrapolate – we can establish the transit time. With enough reports from the same location and enough newspapers reproducing them under specific datelines, it is possible to provide average transmission times with some degree of confidence. However, for analysis of reporting on specific events, to fall back on averages is not very helpful.

There are other considerations when it comes to determining the degree to which reported news was as recent as the postal schedules might make us think. Joop Koopmans (2005b: 193–194) makes this clear in one of the first attempts to compile some detailed statistics relating to the Dutch press. Although his focus is mainly to examine whether the speed of transmission and printing of news increased significantly during the eighteenth century (by and large, it seems from his examples, it did not), he provides statistics for the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*, one of the most important papers which we will be discussing for its having been received regularly in Russia. Koopmans' data reveal some differences between the three issues of the paper in any given week, a fact explained by whether the post arrived in time for its information to make the earliest print deadline.[14] A distant event might not become known from the press until months after it happened.[15] The episodic data from an analysis of the Haarlem paper for 1675 cited by Koopmans suggest that there was no substantial difference from the more detailed figures he has produced for 1700: transmission times for London dispatches, nine days in 1675, six to eight in 1700; Cadiz, 31 and 30–33; Moscow, 40 and 35–37.

A further complication concerns the calendar differences in different parts of Europe in the seventeenth century, an issue we have touched on earlier. It is well known which

14. To give an example: the average time lapse for news from Brussels was four days for the Saturday issue but six days for the Tuesday issue (the Thursday issue is in between, five days). Apparently, the mail from Brussels arrived on Thursday or Friday, and since the distance from Brussels is quite short, we get a 50% difference between the two main issues of the newspaper. However, when there is a difference of *eleven* days between the Tuesday and Thursday issue for news from Constantinople, other factors must have been relevant; perhaps Constantinople news – which, in any event, was not very fresh when it arrived – was used as 'fillers' in the newspaper. If the scholar's sample was small (and news from Constantinople rare), the huge difference of 11 days could also reflect the fact that transportation on water was less predictable than transportation over land.

15. A somewhat extreme example is in Woolf 2001: 86 (referring to Samuel Pepys' diary): A big earthquake that had happened in Lima, Peru, on 20 October 1687 appeared in a *London Gazette* report on 24 May 1688. See also Aram 2012 on the impact the time it took news to travel between the New World and Europe.

calendar – the Gregorian or Julian (the dates ten days apart in the seventeenth century) – was employed, for instance, in Berlin, Danzig, Paris, Warsaw, etc. However, often we cannot be as certain about the dating of a reported event. The datelines in published reports (and in their manuscript sources) rarely specify which calendar was used. Thus dates on most news reports may be those for the calendar used where the news originated, with the potential that calculations of transmission times for individual news items can be off by ten days.

A final general consideration here about transit times is to raise the unanswerable question of how much difference it made to contemporaries if a news report was dated by the time it was received. What is true for readers of the news today, even if not always admitted by them, was certainly the case in earlier centuries. Koopmans (ibid.: 198) concludes: "To early modern newspaper readers it was self evident that they could never be knowledgeable about the latest developments elsewhere in the world. Readers were used to newspapers that carried both news articles that dated back only a few days and articles that dated back several months." Although printed 'news' was already history, it is important to remember that – as we know from the Dutch papers – the final items, collected locally right up to the time of publication, might contain information about events that had occurred very recently. All those who relied on the foreign news for decision making had to deal with slow transit times. This helps us to understand why for the crucial decisions about foreign policy the Kremlin was so reliant on news and intelligence obtained by its border officials from immediately neighboring countries, a fact which will emerge from our subsequent analysis. Reports on those same events, if published in a German or Dutch newspaper, generally could not be read and translated faster. In both cases, of course, verification of the accuracy of such reportage was essential.

II. THE NEWS IN THE RECORD OF MOSCOW'S DIPLOMACY

At the death of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1676, his Privy Chancery was shuttered and its archive inventoried. The tsar had created the Privy Chancery over two decades earlier, when he was about to set off as the head of the Russian armies doing battle with Poland-Lithuania.[1] He wanted to ensure that there would be an agency which could coordinate policy decisions in his absence from Moscow and provide him with a direct means of controlling the affairs that he deemed particularly important. Over time he brought under its purview such diverse tasks as exploratory mining for sources of precious metals, management of his personal estates, the writing of official history, and the establishment of the foreign post. Arguably its archive, to which the tsar presumably had direct and regular access, was in effect Aleksei Mikhailovich's personal library and thus provides significant insights into what the tsar may have known, and certainly into the subjects that interested him.[2] The inventories compiled first in 1676 and again in 1683 are of particular interest for our study of news in early modern Russia.[3] The purpose of the inventories was to determine which files belonged in the purview of the other, regular government departments, to which those files were to be returned. Significantly, the opening section of the 1676 inventory brought together a listing of the files that were to be delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery (also known as the Diplomatic Chancery, the *Posol'skii prikaz*).[4]

Many entries in this listing pertain to files of news, including interrogation reports (*rassprosnye rechi*), collections of *vesti* (news reports, probably manuscript, at least some explicitly translated), and long runs of the *kuranty*, the translated news compilations, derived in the first instance, we might assume, from Western newspapers and pamphlets. The files specified as *kuranty* embrace every year from 1661/62 through 1669/70. In other words, they encompass the time just prior to the establishment of the

1. On the institution's history, Gurliand 1902 and Zaozerskii 1937.

2. For the archive as the tsar's library, Waugh 1986.

3. The inventories and other documents from the chancery are published in *RIB*, vols. 21–23 (vol. 21 is particularly relevant here).

4. Scattered through later sections of the inventories are many other files pertaining to foreign affairs, including some ambassadorial reports. The inventory compiled in 1683 (*RIB* 21, starting at col. 622) repeats verbatim much of what is in the earlier inventory of documents pertaining to the Ambassadorial Chancery.

foreign post and the first years of its existence on into the period when its management was transferred from the Privy Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Significantly, one separate group of the *kuranty* files listed in the 1676 inventory is for the years 1663/64–1665/66 and included the contract of Jan van Sweeden, the entrepreneur hired through the Privy Chancery to establish the first regular international postal connection (on the route going from Moscow to Riga).[5] The specific purpose of the post was to ensure the supply of international news on a regular basis.

Another significant portion of the Privy Chancery files designated for transfer to the Ambassadorial Chancery related to the various negotiations spearheaded by Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin, the main arbiter of Russian foreign policy in the 1660s. Included here were files concerning negotiations with Sweden on border issues and the negotiations and followup on the Truce of Andrusovo of 1667, which ended the long war with Poland-Lithuania. Clearly these were matters of the highest priority requiring the personal attention of the tsar.

Even though the wars of Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign directly pitted Muscovite Russia against its immediate neighbours, Sweden and Poland-Lithuania, the conflicts perforce involved directly or indirectly other parties and at very least were the catalyst for a flurry of diplomatic activity. The broader record of Muscovite diplomacy in this period also forms a significant part of the Privy Chancery archive, which contained selective copies of diplomatic files going back even to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Clearly the *kuranty* were only part of a much larger collection of information that related to foreign affairs and presumably was deemed essential for the making of foreign policy. While we shall test this proposition in other parts of our book, we might at least hypothesize that the diplomatic documents were, if not just equal in importance to the *kuranty*, in fact even more important to provide news and intelligence needed by the decision makers in the Kremlin.

The purpose of the next two chapters is to introduce the ways in which diplomatic exchange provided essential information and how over time the flow of information via diplomatic channels might have varied. By examining in some detail material found in envoys' reports, the second of these chapters offers insights into the question of what the Ambassadorial Chancery and the tsar may actually have been able to learn from the diplomats. The focus here is on the diplomats who went abroad, although to a degree we also discuss what was learned during negotiations with the foreign envoys who came to Moscow.

5. In the 1683 inventory, in addition to listing the file that contains Van Sweeden's contract (No. 15), there are two files of *kuranty* which were specified as having been turned in by him, covering the years 6174–6178 (1665/66–1669/70). See *RIB* 21: 631, Nos. 17–18, obviously containing an error, as Van Sweeden died in 1668. The record of the payment and a summary of the contract are in the Privy Chancery's log of communication and payments, dated 18 May 1665 (Russian year 7173; ibid.: 1065).

CHAPTER 4

The Institutional Framework for Russian Diplomacy

The institutions of early modern Russian diplomacy have been examined in a number of important studies and need but briefly to be reviewed here, before we turn to a closer look at evidence in the diplomatic records.[1] Regularization of administrative procedures in Moscow over a broad range of governmental functions is generally dated to the reign of Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505), necessitated by the expansion and consolidation of his control over a large area of northeastern Europe. This is the period from which we start to get long series of administrative records whose form was beginning to be standardized. It was also a period when diplomatic relations with various states became much more frequent; the diplomatic records are in fact amongst the earliest to achieve regular form. However, the development of both institutions and record keeping was an ongoing process. While it is possible to trace back to the time of Ivan III some degree of specialization of personnel involved in foreign diplomacy, the creation of a separate administrative department charged with the management of foreign affairs (the Ambassadorial Chancery, *Posol'skii prikaz*) occurred only in the middle of the sixteenth century (the currently accepted date is 1549). It was then that the forms of diplomatic documentation – which were to persist more or less unchanged down through the time of Peter the Great – came to be fully elaborated.

4.1. Some general characteristics of Russian diplomatic exchange

Of particular concern for our discussion are the procedures by which envoys and negotiations produced information relevant to the making of foreign policy. Most Russian embassies to other countries were short-term, focused on a particular problem or negotiation.[2] The only apparent exception dating from as early as the late fifteenth century was representation at the court of the Crimean khans, where there was the almost continuous presence of a Russian envoy (see our Sec. 4.6). However, as Robert Croskey

1. For the beginnings, under Grand Prince Ivan III, see Croskey 1987. Older scholarship, which is still valuable, includes Belokurov 1906 and Savva 1917, 1983, the former covering the history of the Ambassadorial Chancery down through the seventeenth century, the latter focusing on the sixteenth century. Recent summaries by the current authority on the institution are Rogozhin 1999, 2001; the monograph Rogozhin 2003 focuses on its history in the seventeenth century. There is abundant additional detail for the seventeenth century in Beliakov 2017 (the printed version of his candidate dissertation from 2001) and Liseitsev 2003. See also Hennings 2018: 69–109 for a good overview of the institutional framework and the Russian government's diplomatic practice.

2. This situation is little different from that which prevailed in Antiquity (see Ager 2017: 293–296).

(1987: 172–174) has pointed out, the status of those envoys was not that of the permanent ambassadors who began to be put in place in the Renaissance West, individuals who were granted broad authorization by their governments to negotiate, sign agreements and the like.[3] As in the case with the Crimea, when the Russian government finally established a long-term foreign resident envoy in Poland-Lithuania following the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667, the same limitation on the representative's powers seems to have applied (Floria 2016a: 65). Only in the eighteenth century did Russia have its first ambassadors abroad, whose status and powers followed the by then common European practice of diplomatic representation.

Professionalization of diplomatic service seems to have been slow in coming.[4] While there are many examples of individuals sent on diplomatic missions repeatedly, there also are numerous cases in which members of embassies seem to have had no prior or subsequent international experience. Presumably one explanation for this was that the functions of emissaries were so rigidly defined, leaving them no room for independent decision making. The Kremlin's ambassadors were envoys but not plenipotentiaries; the preference of the Russian government was that the conclusion of any serious diplomatic agreement take place in Moscow. Envoys sent abroad, depending on their rank, might serve merely as messengers, and for the most part only laid the groundwork for subsequent negotiations, in which the other country was expected to send a reciprocal mission to Moscow. Treaties could be drafted in the foreign capital, but the Russian missions had little leeway to depart from their instructions about content. All too often, negotiations foundered on questions of protocol, where it did not take previous experience for the Russian representatives to know what was required of them to defend the tsar's honor.[5]

A full fledged, high-level Russian embassy would include at its head an official selected frequently because of his high rank and close connection to the court rather than diplo-

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3. For the emergence of modern diplomacy in the Renaissance, the classic study is Mattingly 1971. Developments in the Habsburg empire are treated in Carter 1964 and Carter 1971, esp. Chs. 1 and 2. For England, see Lachs 1965. Distinctions in the rank and functions of envoys clearly were articulated much earlier, for example in the 2000-year-old *Arthashastra* of ancient India (Canepa 2017: 257).

4. See the short treatment by Zonova 2001, in which she provides at least a sense of the comparative context. Of greater substance, on the question of the expertise of the key figures in the chancery in the middle of the seventeenth century, is Kobzareva 2001; for full listings of the personnel, see the references in note 1, above.

5. The importance of protocol and the defense of the sovereign's honor was widespread in early modern Europe. Russian diplomacy was certainly not unique in this regard. See Hennings (2018, esp. Ch. 3), who illustrates the point with detailed examples, among them exchanges between Russia and England. He concludes (pp. 110–111) that if Muscovy seemed at times to be 'inherently ceremonious' in its diplomacy, it did not mean it really was more rigid. Norms in this regard were changing everywhere, with the written procedures preserved in Moscow and used to guide ambassadors by the officials of the Ambassadorial Chancery tending to lag behind what was happening in actual practice.

matic experience.[6] Commonly a second lead emissary (but of lower rank) would also be part of the mission. In addition, there would be a professional bureaucrat – a secretary (*d'iak*) or undersecretary (*pod'iachii*) – whose main function was to keep a paper record of what the embassy did. There was no guarantee that the head of the embassy would have the requisite functional literacy. Among the other staff assigned to an embassy, the most important position would be that of the translator or interpreter. In the Muscovite bureaucracy, translators generally had a higher linguistic competence and could deal with written documents, whereas interpreters dealt with oral communication and might not have written literacy. The linguistic capacity of the embassy could well have an impact on its ability to succeed in its mission.

En route to its destination and on entering the host country, an embassy would be met by an escort or minder (the Russian term is *pristav*), who, depending on the location and the concerns of the host country, might be a lower-level functionary or, on the contrary, an experienced, higher-level official, possibly even one who had been involved in dealings with the Muscovite state previously and thus might know something about its culture, politics, and language. In England and the Netherlands, for example, the escorts might well be from amongst the merchant families who had Russian dealings. When the Russian embassy arrived in Venice in 1657, its escort there was the Venetian official who two years earlier had gone to Moscow. Once settled in at the host country's capital, the embassy generally would interface with the same individual during the duration of its stay, though other officials might also be involved. In the unusual case of the Russian embassies in the Crimea, the functionary assigned to the mission over many years was a leading member of one of the Crimean clans who presumably was well versed in Russian ways, had the requisite language skills, and in fact was among the members of the Crimean elite who received substantial 'gifts' that each embassy brought. He was perceived, at least by the Russians, as representing a pro-Moscow group within the Crimean elite.

A Russian mission might enjoy considerable freedom of movement in the host country or might in certain circumstances be confined in effect to house arrest. The head of the embassy generally would limit any excursions outside the mission's residence until he had officially been received by the ruler to whom he was accredited; most commonly it was the lower ranking members of the ambassadorial party who circulated and were thus in a position to gather information about the host country. Providing that the embassy was not deliberately being prevented from having outside contact, it could and did receive visitors: members of other diplomatic missions, merchants who had some connection or interest in Russia, Russians who had been taken into captivity but then escaped their captors, Orthodox clerics and others.

Apart from whatever information might be communicated during a negotiation, there

6. On the various ranks of officials who might be sent on diplomatic missions and how then they would be received, see Hennings 2018: 102–106.

generally were numerous opportunities for an embassy to acquire information about the host country, its international relations, and other news that might be relevant to Muscovite diplomacy. Where embassies were not in permanent residence, was it possible for them to be as effective in their intelligence gathering as might be the case where long-term residence might facilitate the creation of a network of reliable informants? Should one necessarily assume that permanent embassies had an advantage in the acquisition of diplomatic intelligence? Russian decision makers seem to have been well aware of the possible value of long-term resident ambassadors and kept track of who had them in which countries, even if that knowledge apparently did not inspire imitation.[7] As the following material will demonstrate, while the picture certainly changed over time and the developments were uneven, it is reasonable to suggest that Moscow's diplomats were quite effective in fulfilling what was clearly considered to be one of their most important functions, the gathering of intelligence.[8] Whether that intelligence then had 'operative value' for the policy makers in the Kremlin would depend in part on whether it could be communicated rapidly.

On the surface the experience of foreign embassies to Moscow would seem to be analogous to that of the Russians sent abroad. However, it is safe to suggest that Russians who might interact with a foreign embassy (in the capacity of escort, *pristav*) were less forthcoming with information when asked, since they generally operated under strict instructions not to divulge much. Furthermore, when in residence in Moscow, most foreign embassies were not free to roam around the city and in effect remained under house arrest, given the fear on the part of the host government that they might learn something they should not or infect Russians with their foreign manners. However, at the same time, especially starting around the middle of the seventeenth century, foreign commercial residents in Muscovy (who were not formally charged with diplomatic tasks) were able over lengthy periods to send intelligence information back to their home countries. The Russian government's experience of having similar residents abroad was far more limited.

In actual diplomatic negotiations, a great deal of information that might not previously have been known to the other party could be transmitted. Diplomatic officials in Moscow were regularly offered such news; Russian embassies abroad not infrequently were told about events involving Russia that had occurred after the embassy had left Moscow and had not been communicated to them by the Kremlin. Of course any such communication was suspect if it could not be verified; it was in the interest of negotiators to gain an advantage by misleading their counterparts. As Sheila Ager (2017: 293) reminds us:

7. See the report of Zhdan Ivanovich Kvashnin, who was sent to the Holy Roman Empire in 1577 (published in *PDS* 1: 753–764, where the list of long-term ambassadors in different countries is in col. 761).

8. Again, there are similarities here with the situation in Antiquity, when intelligence gathering was an important function of diplomatic missions. However, as Sheila Ager (2017: 294) cautions, intelligence gathering back then was not always effective.

> [T]he popular interpretation [of communication] tends to be the functional one: that it involves a transfer or exchange of information. But diplomacy as a form of communication often has quite different purposes. It can be about lying, misleading, delaying, and posturing, or competition, aggression, ambiguity, obfuscation and so forth; all of these are, of course, still forms of 'communication' in their own way [...]

The earliest foreign accounts of Muscovy which became widely known in the West in published form were for the most part based on information transmitted via those involved in diplomatic exchange. Examples include: Paolo Giovio's book published in 1525, drawn from materials communicated by the Muscovite ambassador, the translator Dmitrii Gerasimov; the hugely influential account by Sigismund von Herberstein, who twice was in Moscow representing the Holy Roman Empire; Giles Fletcher's systematic description of Muscovy that was a kind of veiled commentary as well on Elizabethan England; and the detailed seventeenth-century description by Adam Olearius, who had been secretary to an embassy from Holstein. There is no equivalent contemporary *published* account of a foreign country by a Russian diplomat, but, as we shall see, a great deal of descriptive and analytical information about other countries is in the Russian diplomatic files.

4.2. The forms of diplomatic documentation

Although perforce we must rely on written documentation for any assessment of what the makers of Russian foreign policy knew, we must also recognize that, even after the development of an elaborate system of record keeping, oral communication was important. An ambassador sent to Poland in 1533 was told to 'learn accurately (*pytati podlinno*) about the affairs there, and having returned, tell (*skazati*) the Grand Prince'; an identical instruction for oral reporting was issued a few years later, in 1537, at the same time that a different mission, instructed to inquire secretly, not openly, for accurate information, was 'to write down that information in a list (*spisok*), and then bring that list to the Grand Prince' (*SIRIO* 59: 10, 138, 116). It is not out of place at least to hypothesize about the kinds of knowledge that may have been transmitted orally, even if it left few traces in the written record, especially since the written record itself can be problematic, where it adhered too rigidly to formulaic expressions that allowed for little nuance or explanation.

We are dealing, after all, with what in effect was a new challenge: to devise written forms for purposes which largely had not previously required written documentation. In the process, as with the creation of any new genres of writing, one instinct would be to try to place the new wine in old bottles – that is, use the old and familiar forms of writing, even if they may not have been entirely suited for the new requirement. Thus we find only a gradual liberation of descriptive prose from the straitjacket of cliché, the incorporation of descriptive forms used for inventories of churches and monasteries, the adoption of chronological narrative akin to that of medieval chronicles, or the adap-

tation of the form of accounts about religious pilgrimage to describe diplomatic travel.[9] In a perhaps curious twist, once the standard forms for recording diplomatic exchange had been elaborated, Muscovite authors wishing to create texts for some unrelated purpose – such as documenting a family's service, polemical commentary on some politically sensitive issue, or merely for entertainment – began to use the forms of the diplomatic reports as a kind of 'documentary belles lettres'.[10] Failure to understand the importance of such developments can distort our appreciation of what the diplomatic records do and do not tell us.

Of particular importance here are the instructions (*nakazy*) given the officials, especially those regarding the gathering of intelligence, and the reports sent back to Moscow (*otpiski*) or submitted at the end of an embassy (*stateinye spiski*). In both cases, by the middle of the sixteenth century, if not earlier, standard forms were developed. As was the case with much of the form of diplomatic documents, there was a conscious effort to follow precedent, one of the main reasons why the keeping of diplomatic records had become regularized as early as it did. While ongoing communication in Muscovy might still be recorded in scrolls, the selection and organization of diplomatic documentation into quires that could be bound as separate thematic books made for ready reference and became the norm by early in the sixteenth century. Such books might cover a period of years in relations with a particular polity or – if there was a great deal of material pertaining to a single embassy or set of negotiations – might focus on it. Generally all the key instructions to officials would be included along with copies of essential documents, such as letters of credence and official missives sent by or to the tsar. The books would include transcripts of negotiations if in Moscow, and the equivalent reports submitted by the Russians sent abroad. Apart from leafing through these often voluminous books, where a search might take some time, the officials also copied out excerpts. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery had more than one such compilation, including a collection of copies of ten agreements negotiated with Poland between 1502/03 and 1601/02, excerpts about protocol for the receipt of ambassadors in 1624/25 and 1633/34, and a compilation of examples illustrating how Aleksei Mikhailovich would write to other states (*RIB* 21: 1–3, 4, 11–12).

Concerns over titulature and protocol loomed large in the instructions for any embassy: it was not unusual for the *nakazy* to include quotations from earlier documentation. Since the proper form of address for foreign rulers might not be known in advance or might simply have changed since an earlier embassy, ambassadors were diligent in eliciting from their hosts examples of what was correct. Hosts often were more than happy to comply with such requests. However, when Ivan Chemodanov's embassy in 1657 bribed the secretary who was dealing with it in Venice and tried surreptitiously to have

9. On the application of traditional literary 'etiquette', see the astute remarks in Rogozhin 1999: 361–362.

10. See, e.g., Kagan 1955, the subject later developed further in her unpublished candidate dissertation.

him show them some archival documents in order that they copy out the titulature of foreign exchanges with the Republic, the Venetian official apologetically responded that such documents were locked under seal in the treasury, which required that two or more officials be present to open it (*PDS* 10: 1065–66). The Russian envoys who were in Florence in 1660 quizzed the translator they had hired about how other rulers addressed the Medici duke (ibid.: 665–666). Given the fact that there had been serious confrontations with the Venetians about protocol in official receptions during earlier missions, Ivan Volkov's mission to Venice in 1687 to negotiate a treaty against the Turks was supplied with excerpts about the dispute from earlier end-of-mission reports by Ivan Chemodanov and Aleksei Posnikov (1656), Thomas Kellermann and Prokofii Voznitsyn (1666) as well as Paul Menzies (Lat. Menesius) and Mikhail Tarasov (1673) (ibid.: 1278–81). In preparations for Tsar Peter the Great's foreign embassy in February 1697, the Ambassadorial Chancery put together reference material on the formalities of exchanges with various heads of state. Peter wanted to know how the English, Danish and Swedish kings addressed the pope, and he instructed the Ambassadorial Chancery to check in Latin and German printed books for the information. In response, the translators Nikolai Spafarii (Milescu), Semen Lavretskii, Petr Vul'f and Petr Shafirov admitted that when they looked in the reference books, they could not find the information Peter wanted. There were plenty of books (written by Lutherans and Calvinists) in which the pope was called by nasty epithets, such as Antichrist, but the chancery had no books which indicated the proper forms of polite address from Protestant monarchs (*PDS* 8: 632–633).

It was especially important at the inauguration of relations with a polity that previously had not been involved in diplomatic exchange with Muscovy to establish the base-line rules which the Kremlin felt should be followed. We can see this in the first exchanges with Brandenburg-Prussia in the middle of the seventeenth century, when there was a contentious argument about the proper procedure for receiving the Russian ambassadors in Berlin. Interestingly, in this case as in others, where Moscow was insisting that the host ruler stand and doff his hat while receiving the Russian ambassador, to prove this was the norm, the Russians cited not only precedent observed by several Christian rulers but also claimed that the Ottomans and Safavids likewise followed suit.[11] Protocol for the receipt of the Brandenburg embassies to Moscow was also important. The Ambassadorial Chancery took the list of the gifts that the first Prussian emissary had brought in 1650 and asked the Treasury and the Chancery of Equine Affairs (*Koniushennyi prikaz*) to evaluate each item with a ruble price, the total coming to 480

11. *Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013: 129. It seems that initially, ill-informed about where Brandenburg-Prussia stood in the ordering of European states, Moscow assumed that the Prussians could be treated on the same basis as some of the nomad and Caucasus polities, which it considered had entered into relations with Moscow as vassals seeking Muscovite protection. See, for example, ibid.: 357. The Great Elector Friedrich Wilhelm was quick to set Moscow straight. For a summary of the evidence about Russo-Prussian relations in the middle of the seventeenth century, see the essay by Petr Prudovskii in ibid.: 449–517, and especially for Muscovy's previous knowledge of Prussia, pp. 455–456.

rubles (*Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013: 58–61). Then the clerks checked the records to see the valuation of gifts brought by earlier foreign embassies and what the tsar had given in return. The review included a mission from King James I of England in 1621, ones from the ruler of Moldavia in 1641/42 and 1645/46, an exchange with Wallachia, another with the Muslim khan of Shemakha in the Caucasus, and exchanges with England in 1646/47–1649/50. After this review, the officials decided that the proper level of gifting for the Brandenburg embassy should be approximately what was done for the English (the other instances recorded much lower amounts).[12]

Even though there are some major gaps in the series of diplomatic files for Muscovy and much of this documentation has yet to be published, there is a representative enough body of printed files that has long been mined by scholars wishing to determine how well informed the Muscovite government was concerning the wider world.[13] The problem with such assessments to date is that they often try to generalize too broadly, either by looking at only a particular type of documentation or by viewing the material through the lens of expecting a steady progression and improvement in information reporting as one aspect of Russia's 'modernization' or 'westernization'. Although there is a substantial difference between the picture for the early sixteenth century and that for the last third of the seventeenth century, this is hardly a matter of steady progress and improvement. Knud Rasmussen (1978) reached a rather skeptical conclusion about how well the Ambassadorial Chancery was informed in the sixteenth century; he based his conclusion mainly on an analysis of the instructions regarding intelligence gathering. At the opposite interpretative pole is Mikhail Alpatov's essay (1966) addressing the same question but for the seventeenth century, where his evidence is mainly from the end-of-mission reports, some of which indeed are impressive for their detail. The current doyen of experts on the Muscovite diplomatic files and the Ambassadorial Chancery, Nikolai Rogozhin, has concluded that by the end of the sixteenth century, if not before, Muscovite diplomacy was well supplied with intelligence about other countries and their affairs (Rogozhin 1999: 368), but a closer look at case studies undoubtedly reveals that this was by no means uniformly true even decades later.[14] The mechanisms for obtaining

12. As much as anything, such calculations seem to reflect a penny-pinching (*altyn*-pinching?) mentality on the part of the Muscovite officials, as they did the same kind of comparative calculation with reference to the earlier records when deciding on compensation to be paid to Russian envoys going abroad (ibid.: 216–219). Granted, in the case of their own envoys, the Russians sometimes were responding to petitions from them that they receive higher compensation.

13. Apart from secondary analyses such as those cited in note 1 above, we have examined a wide, if not exhaustive selection of the published original documents for what follows. Among them are files on relations with the Crimea and nomadic groups in the south, files pertaining to relations with Poland-Lithuania, the extensive series of publications from the files on relations with the Holy Roman Empire, selective reports on relations with Georgian princes, documents on Anglo-Russian relations, and ambassadorial reports for missions sent to Spain, France and Italian states. A convenient selection of interesting ambassadorial reports is *Puteshestviia* 1954, ones which illustrate some of the richer (but not necessarily most typical) end-of-mission reports.

14. Note in particular Kobzareva 1988, where she demonstrates that Muscovite understanding of English politics and their implication for foreign relations was flawed and not really corrected until

news may have been adequate to the task, but did not always operate efficiently, and – importantly – those who might have received the information may not always have clearly understood its strengths and weaknesses. Even if the intelligence was adequate for whatever the purposes were in devising foreign policy, there is good reason to believe it was not always acted upon. However, that kind of situation was not peculiar either to Muscovy or to contemporary governments in the West any more than it is in modern times, when there can be few excuses for gaps in information.

4.3. What did the Russian government want to know? The evidence of the *nakazy*

Almost from the time when we first have a regular documentary record of Muscovite diplomacy, we find copies of the instructions given to envoys that include sections specifying what intelligence they should gather. For extended periods, those drawing up the instructions might simply copy the texts from earlier files, but at the same time, depending on the particular mission, there could be considerable variation in what an embassy was supposed to learn. Where exchanges were with a country that previously had not been in regular contact with Muscovy, if for no reason other than the fact that its location was rather far from Russian territory, an embassy might be charged with reporting basic facts about geography, political and economic life. In cases where the destination country was familiar, perhaps long central to the foreign policy concerns of the Kremlin, such general descriptive information seems to have been deemed unnecessary. In those cases, instructions might contain generalized and standard questions about the country's foreign relations along with much more specific queries relating to recent events or ongoing concerns.

The files on relations with Lithuania and Poland for the period from the late fifteenth down into the seventeenth centuries illustrate these points. Ambassadors who were to visit Konrad III, duke of Mazovia, in 1493 in response to his having sent an embassy to Moscow, not only were to determine what were his relations with Polish King Kazimir and with the master of the Livonian Order, but also to establish exactly what his political status was compared with other rulers, how extensive his lands were, what were his relations with his brothers.[15] Two years later, another embassy was charged with learning more about what routes of communication might be available for exchanges with other polities in the West, since it seems Russian knowledge about the Baltic littoral was limited (*SIRIO* 35: 176). In this period, when diplomatic exchange with the 'West' was still in its relatively early stages, there is an impressive amount of information accumulated by the officials in the Kremlin about subjects such as the rather confusing structure of the

after the middle of the seventeenth century. This may seem somewhat surprising, given the long presence of English merchants and the exchange of several embassies earlier. However, the explanation in part lies in the fact that, considering traditional Muscovite political perceptions about the power of the ruler, the execution of King Charles I, the events of the Protectorate, and the position of the English Parliament were difficult to fathom.

15. *SIRIO* 35: 97; an English translation is in Croskey 1987: 294 (Appendix I).

Holy Roman Empire and the territorial possessions of the Ottoman Empire.[16] Some of this information came from quizzing the foreign ambassadors who arrived in Moscow; other intelligence was obtained by the Russians sent on missions abroad.

Ivan III's communication with his daughter Elena, married to Grand Duke of Lithuania Alexander, is something of a special case in that she could serve as a resident intelligence agent – albeit needing to exercise great caution in that communications were far from secure and matters of concern were often very sensitive. At one point Ivan asked her to find out what she could about possible marriageable princesses. Elena's response was conveyed to Ivan orally when his messenger to Lithuania returned to Moscow little more than two months after he had been sent. She had obtained information about daughters of rulers in Serbia, Bavaria, France, Denmark and one or two others, and even was able to comment on their appearance and health (*PDS* 1: 434, 452–453). Of course how accurate all this was, and what exactly Ivan's use for the information would have been, are matters that need to be explored.

Generally envoys were instructed to obtain their information from 'suitable' persons and, commonly, to do so clandestinely and to write down and keep secret the responses until they could bring the information back to Moscow. Over time, instructions might specify whom to ask (or whom to avoid asking): in some instances, the escorts assigned to an embassy could be quizzed, but in situations where relations with the host country were fraught, the instruction was to avoid asking them or other individuals who showed up at the ambassadors' door and instead to try to establish contacts with merchants who might have good information. At the time of the exchanges with Elena, it was as yet relatively rare that we would have a written response to the intelligence queries. However, recording intelligence in writing (the papers to be carefully hidden from prying eyes) quickly came to be the norm, even if the envoy was to deliver not only the written text but an oral report directly to the grand prince on return to Moscow. Oral reports to the ruler and to his foreign policy advisers were undoubtedly the norm, whether or not reports also were committed to paper.[17]

While most embassies could not file their reports until they had returned to Moscow,

16. E.g., *PDS* 1: 13–14, 93–94, 129–131, 151, 365–368. One of the better-known examples of a descriptive report about Europe was communicated, it seems, in Novgorod, by the imperial ambassador Georg von Thurn, who was passing through in 1490 on his way to – and from – Moscow. He provided a brief description of the territorial possessions of the king of Spain and also detailed information about the Inquisition – for instance, tortures employed and the number of executions (Kazakova 1980: 125–126). Nataliia Kazakova speculates on the possibility that by oral communication of such information, broader segments of Russian society might have learned about the West, and not just in this specific case (ibid.: 126).

17. It is an interesting question as to whether envoys may have read from written instructions when speaking with their counterparts abroad. Given the substantial detail in most instructions, anticipating almost any exigency and with the expectation that the envoy would say no more or less, it is reasonable to assume not everything was memorized. Sheila Ager (2017: 300) posits that envoys in Antiquity probably read their speeches from written texts. A task for future study of the Muscovite material might well attempt to determine whether there were mnemonic techniques that would have enabled ambassadors to memorize complicated diplomatic texts.

which then might mean any intelligence would be so old as possibly to be of little value, it seems that the Kremlin understood clearly the importance of receiving reports without significant delay. So some instructions specified that if a mission was being dispatched by the host government to Moscow, the Russian embassy use the occasion to have a reliable member of its own staff accompany that mission and carry an interim report back to the Kremlin. As we shall see below, to be able to communicate news even this rapidly probably was exceptional prior to the establishment of regular foreign postal connections over a century later.

The Kremlin's most pressing priority for the shaping of foreign policy was to know who was allied with whom and which countries were exchanging embassies that might alter the balance of power. As Nikolai Rogozhin (1986; 1999: 360) has outlined, a standard set of questions was developed, encompassing, in the first instance, relations among Poland, Lithuania, the Crimea, the Ottoman Turks, Wallachia, the Holy Roman Empire, Sweden, and the Prussian and Livonian Orders in the Baltic as well as in some instances the 'Italian states'. Over half a century or more (into the second half of the sixteenth century), these questions provided the basic framework for the instructions to envoys sent to Poland and Lithuania. An analogous set of questions was used over a long period in dealings with the Holy Roman Empire.

However, a careful comparison of the various instructions reveals how sections of text quoted from earlier ones were frequently interspliced with new questions that clearly were a response to recent developments or pressing concerns of the moment. Thus, for example, when Grand Prince Vasilii III sent an embassy to Poland in late November 1522 (it would return the following May), the instructions about intelligence gathering began with the standard: 'What are now [the relations] between the king and the Crimea, and the Turk, and the Wallachian, and the Hungarian, and the Germans, that is with the Livonians and Swedes and Prussians?' Then, however, reflecting the most recent events in the Ottoman offensive in Europe, the envoys were to determine 'what is reported [*slukh*, lit. 'rumor'] about Turkish relations with the Hungarian, and regarding the taking of Belgrade, and is it in fact under their control, and what is their situation with the Turk, for it is said that supposedly they have taken Rhodes, but is that report true, that they have taken Rhodes?'[18] Indeed, Belgrade had fallen to Sultan Suleiman I's armies in June 1521. At the time Vasilii's envoy left Moscow in late November 1522, the Turkish siege of Rhodes had already lasted several months and the crusader defenders were at the point of surrender, finalized in an agreement by which they turned over the control of the island at the start of 1523.

Confirmation of the fall of Rhodes came to Moscow in the form of what appears to have been a genuine letter written by Sultan Suleiman I to Venice, known from a copy in a manuscript containing a number of works by Maksim the Greek. This learned monk

18. *SIRIO* 35: 650. In April 1523, a Muscovite ambassador to the Ottomans was given an analogous instruction to learn whether Rhodes had been taken (Kazakova 1980: 147).

had arrived in Moscow from Mt. Athos in 1518 in order to work on translations of church texts; prior to that he had spent time in Italy, including in Venice. For that reason, Boris Kloss hypothesizes that Maksim might have been called on to translate the letter, if the copy that had been received in Moscow was in Italian.[19] The same manuscript contains the account attributed to Enea Silvio Piccolomini (Pope Pius II) about the Ottoman taking of Constantinople in 1453, with the explicit indication in its title that it was translated from Latin by Maksim. A third translated text, entitled 'The Tale about the Struggle of the Venetians against the Turkish Emperor' (*Skazanie o brani venetsian protivu turetskogo tsaria*), is primarily a short chronology of Ottoman history up through Sultan Selim I (d. 1520). Assuming it was compiled and then rendered into Russian in the 1520s, this is the earliest surviving systematic – albeit very brief (the whole text consists of four handwritten folios) – survey of Ottoman history in Russian, one that rather garbles many of the proper names. Appended at the end is an astrological prophecy that the Turks soon would conquer Russia and then proceed to overrun Italy, France, Spain, and Germany, but that ultimately the Christian world would triumph.[20]

All of this suggests there was some focused interest in Muscovy about obtaining information regarding the Turks, even if not all of it might have current news value. Yet, Kazakova's assertions notwithstanding (1980: 147), there is no evidence to suggest that Suleiman's letter about Rhodes or the chronicle about the early Ottomans became any more widely known than did any other translations of Western pamphlets in Muscovy during the sixteenth century. She surmises on the basis of some West-Russian linguistic features that the *Skazanie o brani* might have been composed (perhaps excerpted from a longer work) by someone from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in order to try to prod the Muscovite government to go to war against the Turks (idem 1975: 70). None of these texts appear to have been mentioned in surviving Russian diplomatic documents, even though in theory they should have been of interest to the makers of foreign policy in the 1520s.

An indication of how the Muscovite government might react to the receipt of recent

19. Kloss (1975: 56) quotes only the *intitulatio* of the letter, but that much suggests it likely is a genuine one. There seems to be no indication as to exactly when it was received or whether it would have come into the hands of government officials in Moscow. The full text apparently has yet to be published. The siege and taking of Rhodes clearly attracted much attention in Europe, the pamphlet literature including both letters from the defenders and then later reports after the fortress had surrendered. For example, a German pamphlet contains a chronicle of the siege and its conclusion: *Ain Sendbrief, Wie sych der Turckisch kayßer So grausamlich für die stat Rodis belegert vnd gewonnen hat* […] [Augsburg], 1523 (VD16 S 5722).

20. Kazakova (1975) analyzed and published the text from its lone known copy, MS RNB Q.IV.412, whose date, judging from handwriting, is probably around the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century. She cites some watermark evidence (and gives credit among others to Waugh for having examined the MS and affirmed the estimated date; ibid.: 66), but it probably comes from a different and distinctly separate quire, not the one with the text of interest here. In the astrological prophecy near the end of the text are two dates, 1523 and 1578; it is entirely possible that the text, if it originated in the 1520s, was updated later in the century to make it relevant to different circumstances in the Ottoman wars.

news and thus formulate very specific instructions for departing envoys can be seen in those given Luk'ian Ivanovich Miasnoi and Fedor Posnikov at the end of June 1616: 'In the news from near Smolensk and from Pskov and from many other places is written, and arriving individuals and informants relate that King Sigismund of Poland has died [...].' So it was imperative that, as they were on the road, the envoys learn whether this was really true and, if so, what did he die of and when. If the king was dead, had the event been followed by unrest in Poland, and who was now the most likely candidate to assume the Polish throne (*PDS* 3: 1230–31)? In fact, King Sigismund III would not die until 1632.

Concerns about the Ottoman Turks were ongoing but not necessarily the most pressing issues in Muscovite foreign relations during much of the sixteenth century. As immediate neighbors with whom there had already been direct conflict, Poland and Lithuania were more important, especially once the Livonian War for control of the Baltic littoral began in the late 1550s, a conflict that soon would draw in most of the states of northeastern Europe. The tensions between the Lithuanian and Polish elites, which would soon be papered over by the Union of Lublin that formally united the two states in 1569, had to be of central concern to the Kremlin, given the fact that as Orthodox Christians, many of the Lithuanians were at least sympathetic to Moscow, if not outright supporters of its interests. When the elective Polish throne became vacant at the beginning of the 1570s (and again during subsequent vacancies), invariably there was discussion concerning the candidacy of the tsar or of one of his sons.

In 1542 and again in 1549, embassies sent to Lithuania were given the standard list of foreign intelligence instructions, and they responded in separate 'lists of news', that is, with point-by-point answers (*SIRIO* 59: 202–203, 330–331). The detailed information they provided, especially in the report of 1549, as relations with Kazan had become increasingly critical, concerned the Tatars and Turks. As for the rest, the information obtained was cryptic in the extreme: 'And with the emperor and with the kings of Hungary, the Czechs and Germans, the king is at peace, and it is said that their ambassadors have visited the king during this year. And the Turkish sultan has concluded a truce with the emperor and with the kings of the Hungarians and the Czechs, but is at war with the Persian. And the king is at peace with the Wallachian [...]' (ibid.: 330–331). Yet already in the next year (1550), in addition to wanting to learn about Polish and Lithuanian foreign affairs, the tsar was asking for information about the relations between the king of Poland and the Lithuanian nobles (*pany*), with whom there was reported friction (ibid.: 344). There must have been a growing atmosphere of intrigue and suspicions of Polish intentions, as the same ambassador was instructed to keep careful track of who at the Polish court was trying to pry out of him information about Muscovite affairs. Almost identical instructions were issued to another embassy in 1554 (ibid.: 451–452).

With the start of hostilities against Livonia, the instructions to Roman Vasil'evich Ol'fer'ev, the envoy sent from Moscow in February 1558, included a new clause, specifically eliciting intelligence about what Polish intentions were with regard to the Livonian

Germans and inquiring about recent conflicts between the king and the Lithuanian elite (ibid.: 544). On his return to Moscow at the beginning of May, Ol'fer'ev delivered an oral report to the tsar, briefly summarizing his meetings in Poland and providing the requested intelligence, including a great deal on Polish relations with the Crimea. He was careful to name his sources, including one Grishka Zhukov, who seems to have been his main informant with regard to more distant foreign news. According to his report, the sultan had concluded a two-year truce with Persia and was now preparing to attack (once again) Vienna. The Polish king was at peace with the master of the Prussian Order. We might wonder what the Kremlin could possibly have made of Zhukov's report that the king of France had defeated the king of England (*anglinskogo*), son of the emperor, and the emperor himself had collected an army, defeated the king of France and seized Paris (!). There is more in this vein, in part perhaps due to confusing England with Anjou (?), but even then… At very least we may appreciate from this episode that the more distant from Muscovy was a country, even one of great importance in Europe, the less likely it was that the Kremlin could hope to have a real understanding of what was going on there. On the other hand, it undoubtedly could count on knowing a lot about what was going on in the territories of its immediate neighbors.

4.4. The acquisition of news via diplomatic exchange

Even if communication might be unpredictable and often spotty, there are periods of rather intense accumulation of foreign news reports by the Kremlin, starting in the time of Grand Prince Ivan III. Of considerable interest are instances where, even prior to the era of the *kuranty* in the seventeenth century, the source of news might include published pamphlets. Here we will review selectively some of this evidence, before turning to a closer analysis of the contents of the more detailed ambassadorial reports.

Between late June and late August in 1492, Moscow received at least three reports from an embassy it had sent to the Holy Roman Empire via the Baltic region.[21] On its way West, the ambassadors obtained news of the conflict between the Holy Roman Empire and France, information about a truce concluded between the emperor and the Czech King Vladyslav, and news about the Turkish siege of Belgrade. An imperial embassy on the way to Moscow wrote to the Russians while they were in Lübeck; they were able to translate there a letter written in Italian and, after swearing him to secrecy, got the printer Bartholomäus Ghotan to translate another one into German, both of which they forwarded to Moscow on 25 August.[22]

In response to the imperial mission to Moscow headed by Sigismund von Herberstein the previous year, the Russian envoys sent to Vienna in 1518 reported that in one of their meetings, where Herberstein was leading the negotiations with them, the Habsburg official largely summarized the information that covered many of the foreign intelligence

21. For a discussion of this embassy in the context of the Russian diplomatic exchanges with the Habsburgs at the time, see Kazakova 1980: 73–91.

22. On Ghotan's translation, Wimmer 2005: 112–113.

questions the Russians were instructed to pose (*PDS* 1: 351–352):

> His Imperial Majesty has concluded peace with the pope and with the king of France for five years, and has established peace with many other rulers, and the pope has brokered peace between the kings of France and England. And all these rulers are at peace with one another, except for the Venetians; but our sovereign has no serious issues with the Venetians. And our sovereign, the emperor, and all Christian rulers and kings and princes stand united against the Turk. And for that reason our sovereign wished to make peace between your sovereign and the king of Poland, so that your sovereign and the king would stand as one against the unbelievers.

Pressing to get the Russians to settle their conflict with Poland and enlist in the battle against the Turks, the emperor immediately sent another embassy to Moscow. In his audience with the grand prince, the Habsburg ambassador Francisco di Colla provided an overview of the history of Ottoman expansion under Sultan Selim I, who had defeated the Safavids and conquered Egypt. Ottoman territories now encompassed a long list of places (all specified by name) in Europe, Asia and Africa, most of which surely would have been unfamiliar to the Russians. To paint the picture of the Ottoman threat in terms the Russians might better appreciate, the ambassador then spoke about how four of the Eastern Christian patriarchates – Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Constantinople; that is, the 'seat of Joseph' in Cairo, the tomb of David in Aleppo, the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem along with all the other Christian sites in the Holy Land – were now under Ottoman rule. All of Christian Europe would be next on the list (ibid.: 365–367).

While the Habsburg embassy was still in Moscow, another imperial envoy arrived, bearing updates on the news. The Persians and Arabs in some of the territories conquered by Selim were now pushing back, news which may have been given an optimistic coloring in order to emphasize that this was an opportunity for a Christian alliance against the Ottomans to succeed (ibid.: 414–419). At the same time, the new messages warned about a plot engineered by some cardinals to undermine the emperor; so, if a 'traitorous monk' representing the plotters were to show up in Moscow, claiming to represent the emperor, he should not be believed.

Already by the time of these negotiations with the Habsburgs, the Muscovite officials were keeping a detailed diary of each meeting, be it those involving the ambassadors sent abroad or the ones taking place when the imperial ambassadors came to Moscow. In the latter case, much of what was recorded pertained to the central issues around the effort to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Russia and Poland. The emphasis on the news about the Ottomans was really somewhat peripheral to the task at hand, even if from the Habsburg standpoint, creating a coalition against the Turks had high priority. With the recording of such negotiations, we already have the core of what is to be found in all the subsequent end-of-mission reports, the *stateinye spiski*.[23]

23. See D. S. Likhachev's essay in *Puteshestviia* 1954: 326. The Russian ambassador Vladimir Plemiannikov's report on his mission to the emperor in 1518 is considered to be the first full-fledged *stateinyi spisok*.

We have rather detailed records of Muscovite negotiations in the last third of the sixteenth century, when the papacy was mediating a peaceful settlement of the Livonian War, and the Habsburgs again were pressing for the creation of a coalition against the Turks.[24] For the most part, the *nakazy* about intelligence gathering show little variation from one embassy to the next.[25] The escorts sent to meet the imperial ambassadors on the way to Moscow were given similar instructions about quizzing them regarding foreign events.[26] Even where instructions were simply copied from one mission to the next, it is clear that the government was tailoring its inquiries to address ongoing foreign policy concerns. As will be seen below, the intelligence which ambassadors brought back often is quite precise and also reflects to a degree a rather broad interest beyond merely recording international alignments and conflicts.

The missions sent in return to Moscow communicated a great deal of foreign 'news', and even brought with them copies of published books and pamphlets, not necessarily objective in content. For example, when the Jesuit Antonio Possevino went to Moscow as the papal mediator between Tsar Ivan IV and the king of Poland, Stefan Bathory, his main purpose really was to effect a union of the churches, which meant bringing Orthodox Muscovy into the Catholic fold. Clearly much of what Possevino communicated to the Muscovites was Catholic anti-Orthodox propaganda.[27] The pope sent with him a published book in Greek on the Council of Ferrara-Florence, 1437–1439, presumably in support of the decision it had arrived at to reunite the churches.[28] Possibly this was a pro-Uniate composition attributed to Gennadios Scholarios, who became patriarch in Constantinople following the conclusion of the council. At very least, we can assume the book Possevino brought would have presented an interpretation of the council at odds with what Russian participants had reported, some of whose accounts had circulated in many manuscript copies in Muscovy (Kazakova 1980: 8–67).

24. A good overview of the rich diplomatic documentation on relations with the Habsburgs in this period is Kazakova 1980: 167–195, who emphasizes the relationship of the exchanges to Muscovite policies vis-à-vis Poland-Lithuania. Specifically on the efforts in this period to create an anti-Turkish league, see the detailed monograph by Inessa Magilina (2012, esp. Chs. 3–5).

25. Compare, for example, the instructions for Zhdan Kvashnin of September 1579 with those for Afanasii Rezanov, sent to Emperor Rudolph II, Pope Gregory XII, and Venice in 1580, and for the ambassadors sent again to Rudolph and the pope in March 1582 (*PDS* 1: 734–738; 811–812; 858–860; *PDS* 10: 379–381). The instructions given to Rezanov when he was again sent to the emperor in January 1588 copied a lot of the earlier ones but also included specific questions he was to answer pertaining to the Polish interregnum. On his way to Vienna, while it was still possible to send messages back to Moscow, he was to send reports to the tsar (*PDS* 1: 1028–31, 1043–45).

26. Ibid.: 1260–61. How useful were some of the rather cryptic and stereotyped responses to such interrogation might be questioned; see the documents concerning the arrival of papal legate Alexander Columeus in 1597 (*PDS* 10: 448, 453, 459–460, 466–467, 470–473, 495–498).

27. For Possevino's mission, see Hugh Graham's introduction and translation of the Jesuit's account in Possevino 1977, with references to the very extensive literature.

28. The pope, in his letter to Tsar Ivan IV, mentions sending the book; in a return embassy to Rome, Ivan acknowledges its receipt (see *PDS* 10: 83–84, 354: 'knigu soboru Florentinskogo pechatnuiu grecheskim pismom').

Although presumably selected to serve the diplomatic purposes of the missions, the news pamphlets brought by imperial envoys regarding the Turkish wars likely were less polemic and more in the line of reportage, even if from an imperial Christian perspective. In February 1594, an imperial courier, preceding the ambassador on his way to Moscow, arrived at the border in Pskov, where he related some of the latest news of the Turkish wars and handed over to the Russian escort on 'a sheet [of paper] a writing [*pismo*] with a drawing and a quire with a depiction [*so znamen'em*], on how the Imperial men fought a battle with the Turks.' Appended in the diplomatic file are translations of both texts.[29] Although more exact equivalents still need to be identified, the first seems to be one of the many printed accounts about a Habsburg victory over the Turks at Sisseg in Croatia in June of 1593, and the second another *Warhafftige Zeittung* on a battle in November in the vicinity of the fortress of Villeg.[30] Even in this time prior to the beginning of the regular publication of newspapers (the first known dates from 1605), Europe was flooded with war news in pamphlet separates, which on occasion now found their way to Moscow fairly soon after their publication.

The flurry of diplomatic exchange in 1594 brought another imperial courier to Moscow in August, this one arriving via Ukraine. When interviewed by the Russian officials, he recounted the latest news on the alliances and war against the Turks, including information on the involvement of the Crimean Tatars. He then turned over to the Russians an accounting in German script (*rospis' nemetskim pismom*) which they translated (*PDS* 2: 5–15). It contained a lengthy, sequential narrative of the imperial capture of towns and fortresses between October and December 1593, with another section taking the story to January 25 and including the taking of Villeg. Apparently this text was one which had been printed (*a to esmia veleli, podlinno rospisav, pechatat'*) even if the copy brought to Moscow may not have been a printed one. The imperial ambassador Niklas von Warkotsch und Nobschütz arrived in Moscow in November 1594, bearing Emperor Rudolph's message to the tsar in which there was news of recent battles.[31] While Warkotsch was in Moscow, he received many messages with additional news about the war against the Turks which he turned over to the Russian negotiators. Among them were a report by one of the Habsburg generals sent from Raab to the imperial court from the front on 12 September and a copy of a letter written by one of the Turkish commanders to his Habsburg counterpart (ibid.: 87–89, 119–120).

29. *PDS* 1: 1440–45 (the cited fragment is on col. 1440).

30. For the first, see, e.g., *Newe Zeitung, Kurtze, jedoch gründtliche und wahrhaffte Beschreibung* [...] (printed in Gräz/Graz 1593 and listed in Göllner 1968, vol 2: 473, No. 1900); an English version is catalogued in ibid.: 482, No. 1917. For the second, ibid.: 490, No. 1938. The 'znamia' mentioned in the Russian report probably refers to the double-headed eagle on the coat of arms depicted on the title page. The edition cited was originally published in Prague, but probably was reprinted in other imperial cities.

31. *PDS* 2: 68–77. Warkotsch was sent to Moscow three times – in 1589, 1593, and 1594. For a Russian translation of his reports from the first two missions and references to the publications of the originals, see Lapteva 1978.

The ready availability of printed news in the 1590s is underscored by the report submitted on his return to Moscow by the Russian envoy Afanasii Vlas'ev, who had been sent to the imperial court in Prague at the end of June 1599. He brought back a news pamphlet (*vestovaia tetrat'*) that had first been printed in Nürnberg in 1599, a translation of which into Russian is appended to his report. There are several datelined items in the pamphlet, much of it taken up with what proved to be an abortive attempt at negotiating peace with the Turks, who, as it turned out, were demanding far more territorial concessions than they could reasonably expect. The events preceding the negotiations were reported as having involved an exchange of threatening letters, which may well in fact have been the apocryphal correspondence between the sultan and his Christian enemies that was widespread in other publications and in the seventeenth century would circulate in Russian translations from various European imprints. There was also a short item from Venice with unsettling news about a recent Turkish conquest, and then a final item from Pilsen, October 11, about the arrival of the Russian embassy and its reception on October 10 by the emperor.[32] The account listed in detail the gifts the Muscovites had brought. One has to think this report may have been one of the main reasons why the Russians had acquired the pamphlet, since the government was always diligent about keeping track of Western reports concerning Russia. It is likely that publishing the report on the embassy was arranged by the imperial officials, who presumably would have had to supply the list of gifts. To be able to present the Russians with a copy during the negotiations would have been a strategic move to flatter them and encourage Moscow to join in the coalition against the Turks.[33]

4.5. A case study: Ivan Fomin's mission of 1614–1617

The report submitted by Ivan Fomin at the end of his mission (accompanied by undersecretary Pervoi Mikhailov) to the Holy Roman Empire in 1614–1617 shows the impres-

32. As the ambassadors were approaching Prague, their hosts informed them that the emperor was at Pilsen, where he had gone to escape an outbreak of the plague (*povetree*) currently raging in Prague (*PDS* 2: 690).

33.The translation is in *PDS* 2: 748–752. While we have not undertaken a word-by-word comparison, it seems clear that the text represents an almost complete, if somewhat free but smooth, translation of the text in a pamphlet listed by Göllner 1961–1978, vol. 2: 716–717 (No. 2436), a complete copy of which (in the British Library) is available online: *Gar Newe Vngerische Zeittungen, von der Frides Handlung zwischen dem Römischen vnd Türckischen Keyser, so den 7. Octobris vnfruchtbar abgangen. Von der Moschowiterischen Botschafft an die Keyserl. Mayt. so zu Pilsen, am 10. Octobris gehöret vnd ihre werbung, sampt den Verehrungen, abgelegt. Aus Venedig, vom 2. Octobris.* Gedrucket Anno M.D.XCIX. 3. Nouembris. (The end of the Russian version, corresponding to the last 12–13 lines of the German pamphlet, is lost.) However, there must have been another edition, since the heading in the translation specifies it was made from an imprint copied from another that was printed in Nürnberg (*PDS* 2: 748), an indication which is lacking in the British Library copy. The Russian files do not reveal where the translation was made – during the embassy or back in Moscow. It is simply appended to the ambassadors' report in the same way that other news reports obtained abroad now tended to be appended. The translator who is mentioned by name in the ambassadorial report is Iakov Zaborovskii (see ibid.: 715), but it is uncertain whether he produced the translation we have, or rather it was made in Moscow.

sive results of intelligence gathering by a diplomat fluent in the language(s) of the countries through which he traveled and presumably well versed in the way news was already being reported in print and newsletters in the West. Fomin (probably Hans Helmesen or John Helmes), apparently a native speaker of German, enjoyed an extraordinarily long career as a translator in Muscovite service (see below Sec. 7.1.1). His mission to Prague and Vienna in this instance as a courier (*gonets*) was ostensibly a simple one, to lodge a complaint that the official missive brought back by a previous envoy lacked the proper heading. In fact, this was an extremely important matter, since the Habsburg emperor thereby was indicating he did not recognize Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich as the legitimate ruler of Russia.[34] Fomin received rather detailed instructions about what to relate of Muscovite affairs if asked; his intelligence gathering was to focus on the relations among the Habsburgs, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire. Not knowing when he would receive the necessary permission from the imperial authorities to head home (in fact, he was held under house arrest for much of his time in the empire), he managed to send one news report back to Moscow via Archangel (in mid-June 1616); this report was brought to Moscow on 8 August by a musketeer (*strelets*).[35] Fomin's return indeed was substantially delayed: he left Prague on his way home on 26 October 1616, arrived in Dresden on New Year's Day, and left for Leipzig the following day. But on reaching Hamburg, he had to wait until the navigation season to get a boat to Archangel. He was on his way by mid-May and presumably arrived back in Moscow by late summer 1617.

The 'appendix' to his end-of-mission report is a long scroll identified as a *vestovoi spisok* ('news list', in which each item is dated). It indicates where he heard the news and specifies the source of the information.[36] The initial date on this chronicle of news is 15 February 1615, the final one 14 May 1617; all told there are 79 dated entries. Fomin's informants frequently are the imperial officials with whom he interacted, for instance, the escort (*pristav*) or a translator, sometimes an individual involved in negotiations of another diplomatic mission. So some of the news collected by Fomin included information he had learned from a Turkish embassy that had been sent to the emperor. Fomin also cites unspecified 'Germans', a Dutch merchant in Prague, and – in many instances – simply states that 'there was news' (*byli vesti*), which probably transmits what one or another of his contacts had been learning via regular newsletters. He was in Prague for over a year between autumn 1615 and the following autumn, which presumably gave him ample opportunity to learn about the factions at the imperial court and also take

34. For the troubled Muscovite relations with the empire in this period, see Floria 1986, esp. 20–33. The most important study for the Habsburg perspective on relations between the empire and Muscovy is Leitsch 1960, whom Floria cites extensively.

35. *PDS* 2: 1141–42. This appears to be the cover letter for what may have been a longer news list, but if there was such a list it either has been folded into the final report or has been lost.

36. Ibid.: 1188–1212. Fomin's instruction begins on col. 1114; the specific section on intelligence gathering is on cols. 1128–29. The end-of-mission report begins on col. 1144 (its first pages are damaged). Another Muscovite embassy to the empire crossed paths with Fomin while he was still there; he responded to the Russian envoys' requests for news (ibid.: 1281–84).

advantage of its ability to tap the full array of regular news sources that might already have included the early published German newspapers.

The news Fomin reported touched on a wide range of subjects, from political events in the Baltic region to military action in the Balkans. There is a great deal pertaining to Poland, including reports on military action by Muscovite forces or their allies. There are reports on Ottoman-Safavid relations and on possible initiatives by the Persian shah to arrange a royal marriage with one of the European ruling houses. Events in Hungary and Wallachia involving the Habsburgs naturally receive attention; of particular importance was what Fomin could learn about the attitude of the imperial government toward Poland and Russia. One of his reports indicates that the Poles had obtained military support from the emperor, as subsequent information would confirm had indeed been the case (Floria 1986: 32). He arrived in Hamburg and wrote his first report there on 12 January 1617. The Hamburg reports understandably begin to focus more on northern Europe and maritime news, but he also specifies that certain news had been sent to Hamburg from Prague, some of it containing information that had originated in Istanbul about the Ottomans. Fomin's penultimate report transmits what he was told on board ship by a Hamburg merchant.

He concludes with somewhat curious, if ominous, information. First, he heard in Hamburg talk about how the wife of Hans Flörich (the tsar's translator Ants Arpov, who had defected to Sweden) had been taken to Swedish-held Novgorod, to Field Marshal Jacob Pontusson De La Gardie's people, disguised in men's dress, and now the Flörichs are all living in Sweden. Fomin also heard that Archangel was poorly defended and could easily be seized by a small force. And then he reported that the imperial ambassador who had recently returned to Prague from Moscow had said that Fomin was going to be in serious trouble and probably be executed on his return home, since he had exceeded his instructions in what he said to the emperor, making it up, and that this had been printed in a book and distributed widely (*PDS* 2: 1210–11). Apparently the Muscovite authorities were looking into this, for the end of the news report contains what might be a note subsequent to Fomin's having been interrogated: 'And he Ivan brought that book back with him from abroad, but it was left in Archangel because he was traveling overland on wagons and he, Ivan, could not bring the book with him' (ibid.: 1211–12). It is hard to know what to make of this. However, we do know that Fomin's career did not come to an abrupt end but rather extended on into the middle of the seventeenth century.

Despite the lengthy delay before Fomin's earliest intelligence reports would make it back to Moscow, they were extremely valuable, and their contents would be confirmed by information coming from other sources (Floria 1986, Ch. 1). That the Russian government in many respects really was becoming well informed about foreign affairs reflects its growing awareness of the sources of news that were becoming more readily available elsewhere in Europe and which it could acquire. However, getting the news back to Moscow in timely fashion was another matter, a subject to which we now turn.

4.6. The challenges of premodern communications

Fomin's experience emphasizes how most diplomatic missions were away from Moscow as a minimum for several months, and for more distant and complicated itineraries might not return for two or three years. Thus there was a likelihood that any intelligence they would bring might be obsolete. Of course, most governments in the premodern period faced the same problem. In assessing the Russian material, we might well keep in mind the caution expressed by Sheila Ager (2017: 292) with regard to the effectiveness of diplomacy in Antiquity, "a world with no concept of instantaneous messaging or of overnight travel from one side of the globe to the other, and therefore with no reason to feel the lack of either [...] [D]iplomacy was conducted with the expectation that it would be a protracted process."

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there had come to be an obsession with speed, embodied in the development of postal networks and accurate timepieces, which anticipates our modern outlook on communications (see our Ch. 3). Yet even in the best of circumstances in this premodern European context, interactions moved at a stately pace. The decision makers in Moscow certainly were aware of the importance of rapid communications and, when there was a sense of urgency, had little choice but to use special couriers for almost any missions involving the east and south. Until the extension of the European postal network into Eastern Europe toward the middle of the seventeenth century and the Russian connection with it in the 1660s, communication with Eastern and Central Europe also would require the use of couriers. In the first instance, the couriers were individuals attached to the embassy itself, but it was not out of the question to commission other travelers (merchants, clerics, etc.) to carry messages, especially if a host government was blocking the embassy from sending its own personnel. Many embassies had few personnel and simply were not staffed with individuals who at a moment's notice could be sent off as couriers. Fomin's, which we have just examined, is an example; that he was able to send one interim report presumably reflects simply that he understood how to use the European postal network to get a message into the hands of a trusted agent in Hamburg, who could then send it on to Archangel.

An early example of a mission that could employ a courier is that of Vasilii Grigor'evich Morozov, who was sent to Poland in June 1542. His instructions about gathering intelligence specified that he record it in writing and bring that back to Moscow to the grand prince (the young Ivan IV, who in fact was not much involved in the decision making at the time; *SIRIO* 59: 179). The embassy spent 12–26 August in negotiations in Kraków and then headed home. They stopped at the border with Lithuania at a town called Novyi dvor, where it was necessary to negotiate an escort and supplies. On 10 September the envoys sent on ahead via Vilna one of their staff, the 'boyar son' (*syn boiarskii*) Ivan Golokhvastov, who rode his own horse and carried a letter to the grand prince with an appended intelligence report. Since the grand prince was not in Moscow at the time but off at the Trinity Monastery, engaged in religious devotions, the message

from the embassy (which arrived in Moscow on September 24) was first read to the de facto head of the regency council, the boyar Dmitrii Fedorovich Belskoi, and the other boyars before it was forwarded to Grand Prince Ivan with the same messenger who had brought it from Lithuania and had reported that the envoys were soon to arrive in Muscovite territory in Smolensk (ibid.: 200–203). The message included a compact summary of the negotiations in Kraków and an appended 'copy of Lithuanian news'. The news contained a report on a Crimean embassy that had come to Kraków, information on Polish-Livonian tensions, and details about Ottoman involvement in Hungary. The Russian envoys finally returned to Moscow on 15 October, only to discover that the grand prince was not yet back. He returned on the 17th, and on the 19th Morozov was finally received and could deliver his documents. So, whether or not the intelligence gathered in Poland was of critical importance for any decisions in Moscow, thanks to its being sent by courier, it arrived approximately three weeks earlier than would otherwise have been the case. Presumably it had been gathered prior to the departure from Kraków on 26 August, which meant it was only slightly less than a month old by the time it reached Moscow. The contents of the report do not indicate the dates of the events it relates.

After an interval involving other diplomatic exchanges, an embassy to Poland left Moscow in July 1549 on an important mission to inform the king about Ivan's coronation as tsar, to ensure that the Poles now would respect his titular claims, and to obtain the guarantee that they would observe the truce which had been concluded between the two governments. The outcome of these negotiations was deemed so important, that the envoys were to request the king allow them to send on ahead of their own departure from Kraków a messenger who would report to the tsar (*SIRIO* 59: 320). At the same time, the intelligence report was to be written down and the written copy brought back with them. The envoys did in fact send a courier, one of the five 'boyar sons' who had been attached to the mission. He arrived in Moscow on 9 November with a report on the mission and an appended intelligence report, two of its items dated 20 and 24 September, right at the beginning of the mission's stay in Kraków (ibid.: 330–331). The focus was on the hostilities between the Crimea and Poland, a subject that obviously would have been of great interest in Moscow at a time when a campaign against Tatar Kazan was being mounted. There were some notes on Ottoman relations with the Poles, cryptic summaries indicating Poland was at peace with its other European neighbors, and news that the Ottoman Empire also had a truce with its traditional enemies in Europe but was at war with Persia. Since the Russian embassy did not itself return to Moscow until the first week of December, by sending the messenger from Kraków, it ensured that the news arrived a month earlier.

4.7. An early example of a Muscovite resident ambassador? Afanasii Nagoi in the Crimea in 1563-1572

Given the long-standing importance of Muscovite relations with the Crimea and, by extension, the Kremlin's interest in the Ottoman Empire, embassies to the Crimea were so

frequent as to approximate having a permanent residency there. With the Russian conquest of Kazan in 1552, Astrakhan in 1556, and the establishment of a Russian presence in the north Caucasus, interaction with the Crimea and the Ottomans entered a particularly tense period, which compounded the challenges to Muscovite foreign policy now that its attention had shifted to the Baltic with the onset of the Livonian war. What the Russian ambassadors learned in the Crimea and how they communicated it to Moscow tells us a great deal about the process of obtaining foreign intelligence.

Of particular interest here is the decade between 1563 and 1572, when, blocked from returning home, the Russian ambassador Afanasii Nagoi was in residence at the Crimean court.[37] The protocols regulating Muscovite-Crimean diplomatic exchanges in this period dictated that exchanges of envoys take place on a reciprocal basis, with the formal permission of the host government necessary if an envoy and his suite were to be able to return home. In fact then, part of the diplomatic 'game' which was being played might include holding a mission hostage until certain demands be met. Nagoi (soon joined by Fedor Pisemskii), and their Crimean counterpart then in Russia, were just such hostages. During his prolonged residency, Nagoi kept a detailed diary of his interactions with the Crimean officials and a record of whatever intelligence he could obtain. Since the Crimean officials were restricting his communications with Moscow, with rare exceptions the only times he could communicate this information to the Kremlin were when there was an exchange of messengers between the two capitals.[38] Short of sending full-scale embassies, such exchanges did continue on a fairly regular basis. They were bearing letters of the rulers or assigned to send regular payments – tribute, if you wish – which the Crimean elite traditionally received from Moscow. Between October 1562 and October 1573, there were thirteen exchanges of messages between Tsar Ivan IV and Crimean Khan Devlet Girey. Ivan was also able to send messages to Nagoi on thirteen occasions, and on twelve occasions Nagoi could send a report to Moscow, with eleven of those reports including his diary (*stateinyi spisok*). It is of some interest to see what dates the reports covered and when they were received in Moscow (Table 14.1).[39]

37. For the history of Muscovite-Crimean relations from the 1550s through the second half of the 1570s, see the excellent, detailed monograph by Aleksandr Vinogradov (2007); also for a short overview of the mission of Afanasii Nagoi in the Crimea, Vinogradov 2001. Oreshkova (2022: Chs. 7–11) reprints many of the most relevant documents and provides an extensive discussion contextualizing them.

38. When all else failed, Nagoi would attempt to hire anyone who might be deemed reliable and who could take a message to Moscow. For example, on 26 February 1570, he sent his interpreters to Kafa with the instruction that they 'find a Tatar or a captive or a Cossack who could be sent to the Sovereign with news' (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 245). They seem to have succeeded, although it is not clear whether the people they located actually went to Moscow or delivered there the ambassador's messages (ibid.: 346).

39. Vinogradov (2007, vol. 2: 311–322) has conveniently tabulated these exchanges. In the summary table presented here, the published text of the *posol'skaia kniga* has been used to correct two mistakes in the dates of Vinogradov's Appendix 3.

TABLE 4.1: Speed of news from The Crimea to Moscow, 1563–1571

Report received in Moscow	Dates covered in diary	Time elapsed since earliest report (months)	Time elapsed since latest report (months)
Sept. 1563	Apr.–July 1563	5	2
Feb. 1564	Oct.–Dec. 1563	4	2
Aug. 1564	[only a letter to Ivan, not the diary]		
June 1565	May 1564–May 1565	13	1
Mar. 1566	July–Dec. 1565	8	3
Sept. 1566	Jan.–July 1566	8	2
Jan. 1567	Aug. 1566–Jan. 1567	5	0
Nov. 1567	Dec. 1566–Apr. 1567	11	7
Nov. 1567	Apr.–Oct. 1567	7	1
Dec. 1568	Nov. 1567–Oct. 1568	13	2
Nov. 1570	Mar. 1569–Aug. 1570	20	3
?	Dec. 1570–Apr. 1571		

If we use these 'rounded' dates (that is, ignoring which specific days of the months may be involved), we can arrive at some generalized statistics for how new or old information might have been by the time it arrived in Moscow and what the gaps in coverage may have been. In only one instance did news arrive in the same month in which it was collected. It was normal for two to three months to elapse for receipt of the most recent news, but in one case it took seven months. The oldest news on a minimum was four to five months out of date, but in three cases it took 11–13 months, and in one exceptional instance 20 months. Over the period from April 1563 through April 1571 (some 97 months), no more than twelve months are *not* covered in any of Nagoi's records – presumably even fewer, if we include the letter to Ivan in August 1564. Possibly the gaps reflect that parts of his diaries have not been preserved, rather than the absence of reports.

Now the point here is that while we seem to have almost continuous coverage of events as recorded in the Crimea for nearly a decade, and while in many instances arguably a delay of even three or four months in Nagoi's ability to inform Moscow might not seem excessive, at the same time a lot of the news he sent was much older by the time it arrived. And arguably, given the speed with which something like Crimean military campaigns might be mounted and ended, even the most rapidly arriving news could well have been of little value for the immediate concerns over Muscovite security. Of course, the information from Nagoi was not the sum and substance of what the Russian government could learn about important events affecting its southern frontiers. Reports from other diplomatic missions to nomads (for example, the Nogais) and reports from border commanders could easily have filled gaps and might well have arrived in more timely fashion.

Nagoi's reports provide a clear idea of the kinds of intelligence sources he tapped. Among the most important were members of the Crimean elite with whom he might have quite regular interaction. The key individual was Sulesh (Suleiman-ishan), a titled member of an important Crimean clan, son of a Crimean diplomat who had been sent to Moscow two decades earlier, and a member of Khan Devlet Girey's *divan* or advisory council. Since Sulesh was the primary conduit through whom the Muscovite 'gifts' to other members of the Crimean elite passed, he was sometimes at odds with them when they thought he was personally benefitting from too close a relationship with the Russians.[40] The Russian mission had several interpreters attached to it who, judging from their names, all must have been of Tatar or other Turkic heritage.[41] Often they were the ones who provided Nagoi with information, since they seem to have been able, in normal circumstances, to travel to various locations in the Crimea, and they generally were tasked with the regular communications with the khan's officials. 'And the interpreters gathered intelligence (*rozvedyvali*) about the khan's war from the higher and middle people, which was confirmed in the whole country from military men' (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 86). The interpreters might report on events at the khan's court, meetings of his divan, on the arrival of foreign envoys, on news from Istanbul. Often they were able to obtain copies of missives sent by the sultan to the khan or received by the latter from other foreign rulers.

On a number of occasions, the interpreters traveled to Kafa, the main port on the Black Sea where ships might stop on the way from Azov or from Istanbul. As a significant commercial center, Kafa was home to merchants of various nationalities, among them Armenian Christians who could be tapped for intelligence (ibid.: 174). The Russian envoys on occasion had to borrow money or make purchases from Jewish merchants, who were another source of intelligence (ibid.: 234–235). On one occasion, an informant in Kafa named Mustofa Isakov syn Zhidovinov reported he had been up north on the borders with Muscovy, where he had heard how certain 'service Tatars' had told one of the khan's sons that the border was currently undefended and that they knew where the fords across the Oka River were (over which a Tatar raid might pass into the heart of Muscovite territory). This was particularly disturbing information, on the receipt of which Nagoi immediately ordered his interpreters to go and see if they could learn the names of the treacherous individuals who were divulging military secrets (ibid.: 251–252). The service Tatars in question could not be located.

Other important sources of information were Russian or Ukrainian captives, for example one Stepanko Ol'ferov syn Koryshev, a Cossack who, along with many others,

40. On Sulesh, see *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 357, 360–361.

41. For example, Petr Ibakov, Devletkozia, Sobania Riazanovy and Nagai Siuundiukov (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 77). They also were referred to as 'stanichnye golovy', a term used to designate members of Cossack detachments that were stationed along communications routes in the south (ibid.: 95). Other interpreters connected with the mission were Baikesh Temeev (ibid.: 102), Uraz Useinov (ibid.: 163), and Bigildei Razgozin (ibid.: 245).

had been seized by Tatars near Astrakhan and then sold into slavery in the Crimea.[42] On hearing his report, some of which included information about the Ottomans obtained from a galley slave who had earned his freedom after some 15 years on Turkish ships, Nagoi sent his interpreters out to confirm the intelligence regarding the Turks. Best known now amongst these captives who provided intelligence is Semen Maltsov, whose report will be discussed below.

A good case study of the effectiveness of having Nagoi ensconced in the Crimea, where he could mine a range of intelligence sources, involves the campaign the Ottomans mounted against Astrakhan in 1569.[43] It was a major military undertaking which ended up failing in part because the Crimeans only begrudgingly provided any support and, probably more significantly, because the Ottoman commanders had badly misjudged the logistics of what would be needed to cross inhospitable stretches of steppe. Crimean and Ottoman unhappiness with Muscovite expansion down the Volga had been festering, but the considerations behind mounting the campaign were more complex, involving, among other things, Ottoman plans for renewing its wars against Safavid Iran. Crimean concerns may have been less over Astrakhan itself and more with regard to the Russian advances in the North Caucasus. The situation was complicated by competing interests amongst the steppe nomads, clan politics in the Crimea, and the relations amongst the Ottomans, Crimeans, and Poland-Lithuania.

The first news Nagoi had of preparations for a possible major Ottoman campaign against Astrakhan was an unconfirmed report he received on 29 May 1567, obtained from a former captive of the Turks. However, on inquiring further about this, Nagoi's staff reported that there was no evidence such a campaign was underway (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 109). This report, sent off to Moscow only in October and arriving there at the end of November, apparently caused no concern. The instructions Tsar Ivan IV was able to send back to the Crimea with another envoy made no mention of that news, even though there were specific directives to learn about Ottoman campaigns against the Holy Roman Empire and about whether there were tensions between the Ottomans and the Crimeans.

42. *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 109. Former captives – generally ones who had been sold into slavery to the Turks – were frequent sources for information. The Russian envoys sent to the emperor in 1616 encountered in Lübeck a former captive of the Turks, a Grishka Kharlamov, who had managed to travel north via Prague; they quizzed him for news (*PDS* 2: 1261–62). In Prague they encountered another one, Danilko Osipoov syn Amonev, from whom they also recorded information (ibid.: 1337–38). Presumably those who managed to escape the Turkish galleys often would end up in Venice, from which there was a direct route up to Prague.

43. There is a substantial literature on this campaign. For an analysis, see Vinogradov 2007, vol. 2, Ch. 4; Oreshkova 2022: 404–425. For the primary sources, see Nagoi's reports for 1567 to 1572 (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016), the important report by the Russian ambassador to the Ottomans, Ivan Novosil'tsev, which contains a lot concerning the campaign (albeit written down after the fact) (*Puteshestviia* 1954: 63–99), and several additional documents in Oreshkova's appendix to her Ch. 11, pp. 426–458.

As Aleksandr Vinogradov points out, Nagoi did not begin to receive any concrete information on the preparations for the campaign before April 1568, and his report did not arrive back in Moscow until December.[44] Nagoi's report covered almost a full year, from 21 November 1567 to 21 October 1568; in it he has 14 dated diary entries, many of which contain information on the Ottoman preparations to launch the campaign in spring 1569, and in particular focus on the reluctance of the Crimean khan to participate. The courier who brought the diary to Moscow, Istoma Osor'in, left the Crimean capital on 24 October in the company of a Crimean envoy. On arriving in Moscow, Osor'in submitted his own report both in writing and in an oral deposition. Russian negotiations with the Crimean envoy then ensued; of course, the Astrakhan campaign came up in the discussions. Clearly there was enough reason for concern so that the tsar could order the strengthening of the southern border defenses against a possible direct Turkish and Tatar attack. However, we might suppose that the magnitude of the Turkish preparations and confirmation of the direction the campaign could take were still uncertain.

The Crimean envoy left Moscow on 25 February, accompanied by a Muscovite courier, Ivan Rataev syn Chebukov (alt. Chebutov, Chabukov), with messages for the khan. For the most part the tsar focused on countering Crimean claims regarding the injustice of the Russians' having taken Kazan and Astrakhan. Ivan IV expressed some bewilderment about the news of a Turkish campaign, insisting that Muscovite relations with the Ottomans were peaceful (*Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 201). He also sent a letter to Nagoi and Pisemskii, instructing them to discourage the khan from participating in any Turkish campaign against Astrakhan, and to learn precise intelligence about the size of the Turkish force and its strategy 'in order that we not be without news' (*chtob my nebezvestny byli*; ibid.: 209). They were to send their report with Chebukov when he was allowed to leave the Crimea and return to Moscow. Chebukov likewise was given detailed instructions on intelligence gathering about events in the Ottoman Empire and the preparations for the Astrakhan campaign (ibid.: 217).

However, Chebukov did not return to Moscow until December 1570, long after the Turkish campaign had failed.[45] He brought back with him a long report from Nagoi, covering the period from March 1569 through August 1570. It contained more than 60 entries, although with a gap for the crucial period of July to September 1569, when the Russians had been confined to quarters in a Crimean fort where they had no access to news. Nagoi's report included a detailed account of the Astrakhan campaign told him by an escaped Russian captive Semen Maltsov, who had been sent by Moscow as an envoy to the Nogais but had been captured and ended up in Kafa, where he was a first-hand witness to the Turkish preparations for the Astrakhan campaign and was forced to accompany the Turkish expedition. His long report provided eyewitness detail of the failed Turkish campaign (ibid.: 253–262). Among others, he crossed paths with Andrzej

44. Vinogradov 2007, vol. 2: 125–130; *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 158, 164, 171–176.

45. Vinogradov 2007, vol. 2: 137; *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 224–262.

Taranowski, a Polish emissary who, separately, would also write an important description of the campaign. Of course, accounts such as Maltsov's and much of the other material the Russian envoys had been collecting had little value as 'operative intelligence', since it was obsolete by the time it could reach Moscow.

If the diplomats in the Crimea thus were unable to provide timely intelligence, was there an alternative? In fact, there was no direct Muscovite contact between Moscow and the Ottoman government in this period; it was only after the conclusion of the Astrakhan campaign and in consequence of it that Tsar Ivan IV sent a mission to Istanbul in January 1570.[46] When the envoy, Ivan Novosil'tsev, attempted to send a preliminary report from Azov before going on to the Ottoman capital, he made what turned out to be a mistake, sending it to Nagoi in the Crimea, who was blocked from forwarding it (Vinogradov 2007, vol. 2: 172). So Novosil'tsev's report had to wait until the end of his mission to Istanbul, when he was on his way home; he presumably did not turn it in until sometime in 1571. It contained a great deal of intelligence, some of it inaccurate, and a long and interesting report on the Astrakhan campaign, taken down from the words of one of the Turkish participants. However, this all was retrospective information which could not have helped the Kremlin anticipate the Turkish attack. Of course fortuitously, whatever the Muscovite preparations might have been, the campaign seems to have been doomed to failure by incompetent planning on the part of the Turks and the lack of meaningful support from the Crimea. Since the reports the Kremlin had already received at least speculated on the likelihood there would be a resumption of a Turkish campaign the following year and anticipated some Tatar raids, there is reason to believe that the Muscovite government took measures to strengthen the southern border defenses.

At the same time, too little was done to prevent the major Tatar raid that reached the outskirts of Moscow and burned the suburbs in May 1571. There is a gap in the intelligence diary of Nagoi from August to December 1570, and the record he kept for December through April 1571 is not only very thin, due to Tatar measures to block his obtaining information, but also did not arrive back in Moscow before late autumn in 1571 (ibid.: 190–191). The situation was compounded by new developments in the war for the Baltic and what Vinogradov argues was a serious mistake in diplomatic strategy (ibid.: 165–167). By sending Novosil'tsev to Istanbul, the tsar seems to have hoped peace with the Turks could be agreed upon, and this in turn would lead to a reduction in the Tatar threat. But part of that calculation was based on the erroneous belief that the Nogais had been pacified successfully and would not participate in any campaign against Moscow. The Muscovite forces seem to have been caught unprepared to counter the Tatar raid in May 1571, even though one might think better intelligence could have prevented that from happening.[47] For the subsequent two years, there was no useful intelligence coming

46. On Russian-Turkish relations in this period, see Smirnov 1946, vol. 1: 91–122.

47. The Crimean Ambassadorial Book No. 13, which encompasses the period from before the Turkish campaign to Astrakhan and through the Tatar burning of Moscow in 1571, seems to have a curious gap right before its record of the 1571 raid. The final report from Nagoi, which falls in that period, has

from the Russian representatives in the Crimea; Moscow had to rely primarily on what Tatar envoys told them about the khan's intentions – hardly what could be considered a reliable body of information (ibid.: 208–209).

4.8. The challenges of diplomatic communication in the seventeenth century: the Russians way off in Italy

If having in effect a resident ambassador in the Crimea in the sixteenth century proved at times to be less than effective for timely communication of intelligence, does the picture change in the next century, when ostensibly there were much better possibilities for regular and fast communication? We have already seen how that apparently was not the case for Fomin's embassy in 1614–1617, even if his ability to obtain information undoubtedly was enhanced by the then flourishing news networks. But it is risky to generalize from that experience (or ones from decades later that shed further light on the way communications networks functioned) and the degree to which Russian diplomats could access them.

The mission led by Ivan Chemodanov (FIG. 4.1) to Italy in 1656–1658 involved traveling by boat all the way around Europe, a voyage that took the envoys twelve weeks before arriving in Livorno (Brückner 1887a). Since the ship never landed during the voyage, they were totally cut off from news relating directly or indirectly to Muscovy. As the envoys quickly learned, the Italians seem to have been very well informed, one of their sources for news being printed or handwritten newspapers which the Russians in their records of the embassy termed *kurandy* (alt.: *kuranty*), the word that had only fairly recently come into use in Moscow to designate, in the first place, foreign (handwritten or printed) newspapers (later also their translations into Russian). In one of their first exchanges, the envoys told their hosts what they had been instructed to say about the cause of the conflict between Poland and Muscovy and indicated that they simply did not know the outcome of peace negotiations that had been underway when they left from Archangel (*PDS* 10: 953). At a subsequent banquet, the local merchants who were involved in hosting the Russians informed them they had heard that the two sides were meeting in Vilna, at the same time that the king of Poland was making overtures to get imperial support. A few days later, on December 8, the host officials informed the Russians that they had just received

FIG. 4.1. Ivan Chemodanov. Portrait by an unknown Italian artist, now in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

been copied at the beginning of Book No. 14. See *Posol'skaia kniga* 2016: 324; Vinogradov 2007, vol. 2: 315. Book 14 has been published, but we have not yet obtained a copy.

> a newspaper (*kuranda*) sent from England to them in Livorno, and in that newspaper was written that the Polish king had defeated 30,000 troops of the Swedish king at Königsberg, and that the Polish king's army was now at the capital of the Swedish king [*sic*!] where he lives, six miles, that is, 30 *versta*, from Brandenburg. And it was reported that the tsar had made peace with the king of Poland, keeping those cities currently in his possession for twelve years, at the end of which a new treaty would be negotiated [...]

The hosts continued with the information that war between Spain and France was anticipated because the Spanish had previously provided the emperor with military assistance against the French (ibid.: 967–968).

Clearly the availability of regular news must have made an impression on Chemodanov. Some ten days later he recorded in his account book a payment (ibid.: 1184):

> The Livorno city registrar (*pisar'*) Basmian, who receives travel passes and newspapers from all states, brought to the envoys a newspaper; and having taken that newspaper from him, they ordered that it be copied and pasted into a scroll, and told him that henceforth when he received newspapers, in which there would be information regarding the Sovereign's affairs, that he make such newspapers known to the envoys. For this he was given a pair of sables valued at three rubles and a half.

We read nothing further in Chemodanov's reports about his acquiring news from newspapers until he was on his way home. In Innsbruck, the envoys sat at a table with the local prince who asked them whether they had any news about where the tsar currently was. The envoys replied that at the time they had left home, he had set out on campaign, but then, since they had been out of touch while traveling and thus had not had any couriers from home, they had no further news (ibid.: 1113–14).

> 'And should you most honored prince have any news (*kuranty*) and a [news]letter, and if you would be so gracious, would you make known to us the news about the tsar's long-lived health?' And the prince said, 'Not long ago, I received newspapers, and in those newspapers was written that your Great Sovereign, His Tsarish Majesty, is on the Lithuanian border and God willing is in good health. But it is said that your Great Sovereign has not yet concluded peace with the Swedish king, and the Poles are expecting from his Tsarish Majesty help, and the Hungarian Prince Rákóczi wants to march against the Poles, and the Turkish emperor and Wallachian prince want to help that prince.'

Undoubtedly reports such as these, when read back in Moscow, had an impact on the eventual decision there to establish the regular post and thus ensure an unbroken supply of foreign news. Only two years after Chemodanov returned, the Muscovite embassy sent this time explicitly to Florence arrived in Livorno after an equally harrowing non-stop ocean voyage from Archangel. The Russian envoys Vasilii Likhachev and Ivan Fomin were astonished that the Medici duke of Florence, anticipating their arrival, had already traveled part way to meet them. How, they wondered, could he have known? Their escorts responded (ibid.: 534):

> Our prince learned this because all the time (*po vsia dni*) newsletters (*vestovye gramotki*) arrive from Amsterdam in Holland, and in those letters it was written that you, His Tsarish

> Majesty's envoys, had set out on ships from Archangel to our prince, and our prince, having learned of your departure, came to Pisa from Florence and has been waiting there for the arrival of your Tsarish Majesty's envoys four weeks.

Of course the Russians could not have known that the Medici, even in this period when the importance of Florence in European affairs was fading, had one of the best news networks anywhere in Europe.[48]

Likhachev and Fomin then headed off to Florence, along the way quizzing their escort about the foreign relations of the duke. On 17 January 1660, in a private audience Duke Ferdinand de Medici related news he had heard (*PDS* 10: 582–583):

> 'When your Great Sovereign His Tsarish Majesty waged war against the king of Sweden and was at Riga, supposedly he [the tsar] had with him 10,000 imperial mercenaries, so I learned from a newspaper [sent] from the king of Denmark.' And Prince Ferdinand asked the envoys: 'How many months was your Great Sovereign besieging Riga, and why did he retreat, not having taken the city?' And the envoys said to the prince: 'Our Great Sovereign, His Tsarish Majesty, marched against the Polish and Swedish kings on account of their many injustices with his own numerous forces of the Muscovite State, and there were no foreign mercenaries, and what was written in the newspaper was false. And [he] [...] invested Riga for a little more than a month, and in battle many informants were captured during sallies from the city, and in interrogations they said that in Riga due to the siege and close confinement, pestilence had spread amongst the population, and on account of that pestilence Our Great Sovereign, His Tsarish Majesty, ordered the troops to stop fighting and to leave Riga.' And Prince Ferdinand told the envoys: 'I know that at that time in Riga there was great pestilence.'

Whatever the truth of the news reports, the envoys' response is of interest where they seem to have felt the information demeaned the tsar and his forces. However, even if they may have entertained doubts about the accuracy of newspaper information, as had Chemodanov, on the way home from Italy, the Russian envoys had to learn from such sources the latest news. At 'Karmarzei' (?Germersheim) near Heidelberg on March 16, the local governor called on them and inquired whether they had heard the news that Swedish King Karl X Gustav had died. No, the envoys responded, they hadn't; so they wanted to know, had this happened long ago, and who was to succeed him? Well, the news had come in a newspaper about a week ago from Frankfurt, indicating he had died some time back and had left a seven- or eight-year-old son under a regency council. In addition there was now news that the king of Poland, in alliance with the emperor and the Elector of Brandenburg, was preparing to go to war against Sweden (ibid.: 643). Indeed, King Karl X Gustav died on 13 February 1660, when his son, Karl XI, was barely six years old. The other news may have been accurate enough, even if the alliance against Sweden in fact was not new, and the Swedes had been losing most of their conquests in northern Germany. Indeed, with the death of Karl Gustav, the Swedes would within

48. See Dooley 2010a. His focus is the earlier developments of the Medici network, but clearly it continued to operate effectively in the seventeenth century.

months be satisfied to conclude peace. The news of the settlements first arrived in Moscow via a report in a Dutch newsletter (*vestovyi list*), and copies of the treaties also were received and translated.[49]

In April 1663, the subsequent Russian embassy to Florence headed by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii was pressing Duke Ferdinand as to why he had not reciprocated the earlier Muscovite overtures by sending his own ambassador to Moscow (ibid.: 725–727). Probably fishing for a polite excuse to cover up the fact that it was simply not important for him to do so, the Medici prince responded that, first of all, it would not be safe, as the route lay through Poland and the Muscovite-Polish war was still going on. Also, he indicated, he was really too busy at the minute with preparations for his son's wedding. The Russians expressed optimism that there might soon be peace negotiations, but then asked whether Duke Ferdinand had had recent news about an exchange of embassies between Moscow and Poland. The duke confessed he couldn't remember, but he would check and let them know and also check about possible reports on Cossack activity in Ukraine.

What is important to emphasize here is the degree to which Russian embassies, especially if far from home, either had no communication with Moscow while away or at best unpredictable opportunities to send reports or receive news. While this may have made little difference for the success or their missions, given the degree to which their hands were tied by rigid instructions issued before they left home, to be trying to function so cut off from effective communication with their government and liable at any time to be confronted with unanticipated news about changes in the international situation must have left them in a very uncomfortable position.[50] Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the news sources their interlocutors regularly tapped, the Muscovite abroad had no alternative to them; their awareness of the importance of the regular news networks is something they communicated in their end-of-mission reports.

4.9. Anticipating the impact of joining the European postal network

The connection of Muscovy with the European postal networks, which followed by a few years after Likhachev and Fomin returned, would change all this. For in the first years of the Muscovite international post, we can already see it being used by Russian envoys while abroad and by foreign residents and envoys in Moscow, some of whom earlier had

49. For the translation of the Dutch news, see V-K VI/1: 82–83, No. 4.69–70; also a subsequent report from a German newsletter, p. 87, No. 5.328. Since several parties were involved in the negotiations with Sweden, there was more than one treaty; apparently all of the texts were obtained and translations kept in the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery (Rogozhin 1990: 129). See also Floria 2010: 553–555.

50. In this regard, even though the English resident in Stockholm, Thomas Thynne, in the 1660s had access to the regular post and could at least obtain sources such as Dutch newspapers, he would complain to his employer, Joseph Williamson in London, that Williamson too often failed to send him the news from England which, if nothing else, could be traded with others in Stockholm in order to receive good intelligence from them. See, e.g., Thomas Thynne to Joseph Williamson, Stockholm, 27 February 1667 (TNA, SP 95/6, fol. 145).

relied on couriers to communicate across the borders on something like a regular basis. The translator Christoph Bousch (Vasilii Baush), on his way to Berlin, was able to send a report back to Moscow from Courland via the Riga post on 15 July 1667; it arrived on 6 August (*Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013: 243–244). Later, when in Danzig, Bousch delivered to Daniel Brandes a Russian payment for Brandes to supply news to Moscow on a regular basis; Brandes signed a contract obliging him to do so (ibid.: 312). When the Scot Paul Menzies was sent as Moscow's envoy to Rome in 1673, he was instructed to report 'through the established postal service' (*PDS* 4: 770). On an embassy to Vienna in 1679, Ivan Vasil'evich Buturlin reported via Poland and the Vilna postal route at least nine times between 20 May and 7 August, clearly trying to send a message on a weekly basis.[51]

By the time Kuz'ma Nikitich Nefimonov was sent to Vienna on what would turn out to be a lengthy mission in December 1695, the instructions about using the mails had become quite elaborate. He was expected to report every week. While the normal route was to be via Warsaw, where the Russian resident would then send the mail on to Moscow through Vilna, part way into the mission, given some uncertainty about the reliability of the Vilna route, a second copy of his reports was to be sent via Riga. Between the beginning of January 1696 and mid-February 1697, Nefimov sent at least 34 reports to Moscow (not counting several cases where he sent duplicates via the Riga postal route). The reports began while he was still en route to Vienna, although most of them were written after he had arrived. He did not manage to keep to a regular weekly schedule; however, in many cases the reports in fact went out a week apart. In normal conditions they took a little over a month to reach Moscow. While on his mission, Nefimonov received at least 18 messages from Moscow.[52] As the most recent discussion of Nefimonov's mission reminds us though, for one of his messages to reach Tsar Peter I (who was off on campaign at Azov), and for the ambassador to receive the tsar's reply, sent via Moscow, could take from 3 to 3.5 months and only a month less once Peter had returned to his capital (Gus'kov et al. 2022: 331).

It seems clear that by the end of the seventeenth century, Muscovite diplomats were in touch with their government nearly as well as the various British residents scattered across Europe were with Whitehall. As early as the 1660s, at the latest, British agents in Stockholm and Hamburg were sending reports to London at least on a weekly basis, summarizing whatever news and intelligence had come their way. In similar fashion, the Swedish merchant and news agent in Moscow, Christoff Koch (ennobled von Kochen), was able to use the new international postal connections that ran via Novgorod to get his weekly reports to the Baltic, where they were copied and sent on to Stockholm and other places (Maier and Droste 2018).

51. *PDS* 5: 730–733, 747–748, 970–971.

52. These statistics have been compiled from the documents on the Nefimonov mission, published in *PDS* 7 and 8, passim. Gus'kov et al. (2022: 332) note that the concerns over the security of the Vilna route within the Commonwealth may have been unwarranted, where the disappearance of one of the mails was the result of a robbery by 'bandits' in Russia, not far from Mozhaisk.

CHAPTER 5

Envoys' Reports: a Closer Look at the *Otpiski* and *Stateinye Spiski*

The generic term for reports by Muscovite officials is *otpiski*, which might be sent back to Moscow by envoys prior to the conclusion of the mission, providing there was a secure means of doing so. At the end of a mission, full reports (*stateinye spiski*) covering its entirety would be filed in writing. As a literal translation of the term ('a list of articles') suggests, an envoy was reporting on a number of individual matters (*stat'i*), the report thus taking them up sequentially, to indicate how faithfully the instructions regarding them had been followed and what the result was. On the face of it, this genre could be rather restrictive and formalistic. Even as individual ambassadors over time might write more expansively about one or another topic, the *stateinye spiski* retained their primary purpose as reports on the official functions of the embassy. This then could mean that a lot which the members of the embassy saw or did might not be written down, and what was recorded might be rather cryptically phrased in standard terminology that concealed more than it revealed. In what follows, we examine evidence from both *otpiski* and *stateinye spiski* in order to see how informative they are and how that may have changed over time. One valuable record whose genre does not follow the rules of the formal reports also will be considered.

There seems to have been some variation in the procedures for compiling these reports, but the details they contain suggest that in most cases an embassy was keeping a careful diary of its official activities as it proceeded to its destination, once there, and on its way home, even if the final composition of the report occurred only near the end of the mission.[1] While the authors of the reports surely filled a lot of the space simply by cutting and splicing verbiage from their written instructions and previous such reports, it is extremely unlikely that all the abundant detail could have been recorded from memory, especially if days after the event.

The reports included a travel diary and a careful record of diplomatic reception and negotiation, with details about who was present, ceremonial and venue. There might also be descriptive material not directly related to diplomacy. However, the inclusion of such material was uneven, and in the cases where we can check against sources from the host country, we know that often some important aspects of what the diplomats did

1. For discussions of the nature of the *stateinye spiski* and the procedures involved in their compilation, see *Puteshestviia* 1954: 326–329; Novosel'skii 1961; Rogozhin 1994: 101–109; 1999: 365–369.

were not reported. Furthermore, the content of these reports seems to have been governed in part by which member of the embassy was really responsible for writing them. There are documented cases where members of an embassy squabbled with each other, and on the return to Moscow, one member denounced another for malfeasance or undiplomatic conduct.[2] One consequence might be to raise questions in the Ambassadorial Chancery as to whether the report submitted was accurate. The disruptions of the Time of Troubles at the beginning of the seventeenth century may have made it difficult to staff embassies with enough participants who had what by then was considered requisite diplomatic experience. Members of one mission to the Holy Roman Empire in 1616 cited inexperience in trying to explain after the fact why they had failed to insist on protocols that were important in upholding the tsar's honor; this explanation mitigated the punishment they would otherwise have received.[3] In at least one instance, there are two different versions of the report on an embassy, where the writer of one complains about having been left out of discussions in which the other member of the same embassy took part.[4] In short then, as we read the end-of-mission reports, we should always do so with a very critical eye regarding their limitations for illustrating 'what the Ambassadorial Chancery really knew'.

5.1. Geography in the ambassadorial reports

Apart from what they wrote down, ambassadors surely observed a lot else, leaving us to wonder about the principles for deciding what to include or exclude beyond the formal reporting requirements. The information in the *stateinye spiski* surely broadened the horizon of what Muscovite officials might know about geography. In the 'travel diary' parts of the report, as a minimum there would be the names of towns and an indication of the date of arrival or departure. Such summary notes differ little from analogous travel diaries in earlier pilgrimage accounts that circulated in Muscovy. An exceptional report, submitted by Istoma Shevrigin on return from his mission to Rome in 1581, appends a 'list of roads' (*rospis' dorog*) which resembles the texts appended to some Muscovite maps or other 'geographical guides' that have been preserved in Russia from the seventeenth century.[5] Shevrigin's listing, specifying whether the travel was by water or

2. See *PDS* 2: 1060–88 (its ending somewhat damaged and fragmentary), the record of the interrogation following the return of Stepan Mikhailovich Ushakov and Semen Zaborovskii from the Holy Roman Empire in 1613; for another example, see Alpatov 1973: 326–328.

3. '[…] It was not something to which they were accustomed: Lukian is a serviceman who has never previously been involved in an embassy in any other state or involved in ambassadorial affairs in Moscow, and the undersecretary has not been involved in such matters' (*PDS* 2: 1352).

4. There are 'competing' versions of *stateinye spiski* for the Russian mission to Imeretia (Georgia in the Caucasus) in 1650–1652, the texts published first and analyzed by Mikhail Polievktov 1926 and reprinted with new commentary entirely in Georgian in *Stateinyi spisok* 1969 and 1970. One seems to have been written by the head of the embassy, Mikifor Matveevich Tolochanov, the other by the secretary assigned to it, Aleksei Ivleev.

5. *PDS* 10: 30–35. Regarding seventeenth-century geographic 'reference works', see Petrov 1950 and our Sec. 19.6.3.

overland, contains dozens of names for his route along the Baltic and then down through Central Europe to Venice before eventually reaching Rome. The main part of Shevrigin's account is also unusual in that it contains a description of St. Peter's (emphasizing the holy relics housed there), an indication of which Italian states were under papal jurisdiction, and a description of the famous shrine to the Virgin Mary at Loreto.[6] We cannot be certain how readily accessible Shevrigin's geographical listing might have been later, at the time when the secretaries would gloss unfamiliar towns mentioned in the *kuranty* translations. However, they could have drawn on such information to supplement Western atlases that became part of the reference library in the chancery.[7]

For most embassies, the main function of the travel section was to chronicle how the tsar's officials were received by the local hosts. Some reports though would indicate distances travelled and add some descriptive text, even if it was little more than a few clichés that could describe almost any town. For example, on his mission to England in 1582, Fedor Pisemskii wrote: 'And the castle (*gorod*) of Scarborough is stone, not large; it is on the seashore; and the residential area (*posad*) outside the castle is also small: in the castle is a single court for the commandant [...] And the castle of Hull is stone and there are many houses in it; and the houses are all of stone; and it is located on a bay' (*Puteshestviia* 1954: 105). Of course the observation about construction in stone is not trivial, as presumably the Muscovites are implicitly contrasting what they saw with the prevalence of wooden construction in Russian towns. In citing such an example, Ol'ga Klautova (1996: 431–432) astutely comments: 'Here the idea of a city is presented, the concept of city obtained by singling out its most essential features, which, in principle, could apply to any other city.' A city such as Venice, which is so striking even today to a first-time visitor, could draw special attention from Russians who had never previously been on the seashore. The Russians sent to the papacy in 1593 provided a concise but accurate description of the city's geography, the regular alternation of high and low tides, and the fact that it was a city of canals with the Grand Canal being a 'large river' through its center (*PDS* 10: 876). Yet the glories of Venice's architecture were passed over in silence.

Infrequent as were embassies to Italy, it is not surprising perhaps that Muscovite officials even in the second half of the seventeenth century may not have had a very clear notion about the best routes to get there and some of the geography (political and phys-

6. *PDS* 10: 23–26. On Shevrigin's embassy, see Kazakova 1980: 192–195. In 1673, Paul Menzies, a Scot in Russian service and presumably a Catholic, visited the shrine at Loreto, as did Boris Petrovich Sheremetev, a devout Orthodox Russian sent on a semi-official mission to Italy in 1697 as an observer and intelligence agent. He would become one of Peter the Great's most important generals but expressed the wish in his old age to retire to a monastery. For Menzies' visit, see *PDS* 4: 1031–32; for Sheremetev's, see *Puteshestvie* 2013: 51, where he notes dallying in the city for a full day in order to see everything.

7. For an overview of Russian knowledge of geography in the seventeenth century, see Lebedev 1949; on the glossing of names in the *kuranty*, Shamin 2004.

ical) along the way.[8] The Ottoman war against Venice for control of Crete prompted the sending of a Venetian embassy to Moscow in 1655, the response to which was the mission of Ivan Ivanovich Chemodanov and Aleksei Posnikov the following year. Since a route via the Baltic and down through Central Europe was blocked by the hostilities between Russia and Poland, Chemodanov was forced to travel to Archangel on the White Sea. The Russians arranged through the English entrepreneur John Hebdon passage by sea all the way around Europe without stopping until the ship arrived at Livorno, having barely survived major storms and escaped from Muslim pirates. Hebdon had warned that the ship could take them only as far as Livorno on the west coast of Italy, and that from there they either would have to find another ship or, more likely, travel overland across the mountains to get to Venice. Clearly not aware of the implications of this, on arrival in Livorno, Chemodanov found himself in the care of the Medici dukes of Florence and ended up visiting their capital before they facilitated his travel on to Venice. Even though it had been given no instructions about dealing with Florence, the Russian embassy was well received there.

Given the interest the duke expressed in a possible trade agreement with Muscovy, less than a year after Chemodanov returned, a Muscovite mission was dispatched specifically to Florence, headed by Vasilii Likhachev and Ivan Fomin, which, like Chemodanov's, also took the long sea route around Europe and barely survived serious storms. Both accounts of these embassies describe in some vivid detail the voyages, albeit with a somewhat garbled sense of the geography based on what the envoys understood from the sailors.[9] While in Italy, the ambassadors were more than happy to describe the adventure in getting there to their hosts, who perhaps were somewhat surprised at the decision to take the long and dangerous sea route (*PDS* 10: 552).

The sea route around Europe from Archangel was also used a few years later when Petr Potemkin set out for Spain and France, together with *d'iak* Semen Rumiantsev. At the end of his report on the mission to Spain Potemkin explicitly raised this issue of what route best be used for any future embassies. That via Riga on Dutch ships to Amsterdam and then on through the English Channel was much to be preferred for safety and directness, in contrast to the much more dangerous northern sea route (which he described in

8. For an overview of the contents of the reports on the embassies to Italy in the middle of the seventeenth century, see Kazakova 1988a. In his pioneering study of the *stateinye spiski* as a source for what they tell us about the 'westernization' of Muscovy in the pre-Petrine era, Brückner (1878) focused on the reports of missions to Italy in the second half of the seventeenth century. Lebedev (1949: 184–191) summarizes information from those reports.

9. For Chemodanov, see *PDS* 10: 938–944, where we read (col. 940): 'and having rounded the Northern Cape, according to what the sailors told us, we passed the lands of the Danish king, leaving on our left the island of Fir [the Faeroes] and on the right his island of Iceland, and his Ledianoi [Frozen/Arctic (Ocean)], and of the English king the island of Gitlan [Gotland?], and the Hamburg and Bremen land, and the island Leus [Lewis] of Scotland, and all of the Scottish land, and the Dutch and past Ireland, which is out in the sea beyond other lands beyond the possessions of the king of England and beyond it the French land, which abuts with the Spanish land, and all these states were passed on the left [...].'

terms similar to those in the reports by the earlier envoys to Italy; see *DRV* 4: 454–456).

On his way back from Venice, Chemodanov was able to travel up through the papal states of northern Italy and via the imperial cities of Innsbruck, Augsburg, and Frankfurt. This route, like the several others which one might use for travel north from the Mediterranean through Europe, undoubtedly followed a well-established postal connection, where it was predictable that wagon transport could be had, and then a boat could be obtained to go on down the Rhine. In his main report, Chemodanov says practically nothing about the geography along the way, except to expound on a fantastic tale he was told about how below Mainz a stone feature (probably basalt columns) was the location where the three Magi had stopped on their way to bring their gifts to the infant Jesus. This remarkable bit of information seems to have been related to the translator and secretary of the embassy when they stopped in Cologne further downstream to present their credentials. There they were told that the remains of the Magi were now interred in the cathedral, having been brought first by Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, from Constantinople to Milan, and from there in the time of Emperor Charles V had been sent on to Cologne. Once finally in the Netherlands, Chemodanov was able to get a ship back to Archangel, with the help of the Dutch merchants who were active in the Russian trade. He made it back to Moscow in late summer, more than two years after he had left.

On reading through the main part of Chemodanov's report, we are struck by how little he offers in the way of descriptive geography. However, he also composed (or dictated) a kind of appendix, a descriptive listing (*rospis'*), perhaps in imitation of the one attached to Shevrigin's report of the much earlier embassy to Rome.[10] In Chemodanov's case, this appended text contains rather extensive descriptions of Livorno, brief characterizations of the cities between it and Florence – most are 'stone' and they are either large or small – and quite a bit of detail on Florence, if somewhat oddly selective (see below). Traveling between Florence and Venice, he notes in compressed fashion the major towns, with occasional comments on buildings and details such as a suspension bridge. But there is not much to be learned from the fact that between Chosa and Venice 'stand fortresses and many private stone castles and earthen walls and high stone watch towers.' His description of Venice, however, contains a number of interesting observations: on the canals, the bridges, including the Rialto Bridge with its shops, on gondolas and the fancier barges, and on the glass production of the Island of Murano. The Orthodox church of SS. Nicholas and George is mentioned, probably because – as we know from Chemodanov's

10. *PDS* 10: 1151–76. Klautova (1996: 434) suggests that Chemodanov's *rospis'* marks a distinct new development in the form of *stateinye spiski* in the seventeenth century, an observation we would somewhat qualify in that decades earlier the *vestovye spiski*, albeit less expansive in content than Chemodanov's report, had already been 'detached' from the main body of such reports. Her point is that the descriptive substance of what Russian envoys now were beginning to provide enters a new phase here, reflecting the introduction of 'Baroque' literary conventions in Russian letters at the time. Here we are moving away from the largely practical and official treatment of what envoys saw that characterizes the earlier reports.

longer report – he visited it and was surprised that non-Orthodox were free to enter it. But there is nothing here on San Marco or any real sense of the extraordinary architecture that lines the canals. Perhaps some of the architecture in the Moscow Kremlin, which has Northern Italianesque features, might have made it familiar enough so as not to merit special comment.

Chemodanov's *rospis'* then hastens on to his return journey, where he notes fortifications in a number of the cities through which he travels, and the mountainous terrain of the Alps. He obviously found a mountain tunnel and some kind of elevator or cable car worth special mention. At Augsburg, he was told about its having been founded by Augustus Caesar, a bronze statue of whom stands in the main square. The city had its fortifications and moat and was noteworthy for various metal crafts. He notes passing near the battlefield where, he indicated, Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus had been killed in 1632 (although he does not name the actual location, Lützen, near Leipzig).[11] Later he mentions several cities which the Swedish armies had captured 'not many years earlier.'

In short, what we have here is a kind of textbook political geography of Chemodanov's travels, even if he seems to have had a rather limited ability to describe what he saw in terms that would really distinguish one town from another.[12] We have to assume, in the absence of any explicit instruction to do so, that the chancery procedures in Moscow now included the expectation that there be distinct separate parts to ambassadorial reports, where something like this text would have been easier to reference for planning future missions or identifying locations that might crop up in foreign news.

It is of some interest that when in Florence in January 1660, the Russian envoys Likhachev and Fomin were invited to sit in armchairs at a table, where Duke Ferdinand III Medici laid out a map on which he pointed out both land and sea routes connecting Florence most easily with other places (*PDS* 10: 596). A separate narrative about their experiences (not the official report) indicated that they also referred to a map of Siberia while they were describing to their host the wonderful fur-bearing animals which lived there.[13]

11. It appears he actually passed near Nördlingen, where the Catholic forces had decisively defeated the Protestant army on 6 September 1634 (Brückner 1878: 71). We might suppose Chemodanov would not have known the history (even though news of Gustavus Adolphus' death had been widely circulated in Muscovy at the time); so the misinformation probably came from Chemodanov's local informants.

12. We are reminded here of some of the descriptions of cities in China by Marco Polo in the late thirteenth century, where his standard formulations have contributed to skepticism about what he actually saw. Of course the genres of Polo's account and that by Chemodanov are rather different, and Polo's observations were heavily influenced by the ministrations of the writer of romances, Rusticello, who created the narrative that has come down to us. For an astute analysis of what Polo writes about geography, often in formulaic terms, see Olschki 1960, esp. pp. 131–133.

13. *DRV* 4: 351–352. This text, published from an eighteenth-century copy by Nikolai Novikov, is something of an anomaly, which Liudmila Starikova (1993) has persuasively argued cannot be considered a part of the formal end-of-mission report on the embassy, even if it has generally been cited as such. However, it surely is based on observations by a participant in the mission, possibly a lace-making specialist Fedor Kornil'ev, who had been sent to Italy with his apprentices to purchase various fineries. The document is of considerable value as a supplement to the *stateinyi spisok*, since it includes observations not found in the latter and thus adds to our knowledge of what Russian missions

The envoys asked that the duke have a geographic guide compiled for them (*rospisat' na rospis'*) describing the various routes in and out of Florence, which states they passed through, and what the distances were between cities (*PDS* 10: 596). On another day, in touring some of the duke's treasure rooms, the envoys were shown both terrestrial and celestial globes (FIG. 5.1).[14] In preparation for the envoys' departure, the duke again sat down with them and explained that, after lengthy consultation with his brothers, he decided it was best for them not to take a ship to Marseille and travel through France. The sea route was dangerous on account of Turkish pirates, and in France the court would be absorbed in preparations for the wedding of Louis XIV with the Spanish infanta. In the throng of foreign dignitaries invited to the wedding, the Russians might not be given due

Fig. 5.1. The scientific wonders of Florence: Armillary sphere by Antonio Santucci, 1588–1593, and (inset) terrestrial globe by Willem Jansz. Blaeu, ca. 1630. Collection of the Galileo Science Museum.

could have seen and done and how they described the experiences. Thus we shall draw on it here along with the formal report from the mission.

14. The *stateinyi spisok* describes one that apparently combined both terrestrial and celestial depictions and had been placed on a wheel made of 'Indian wood', presumably a rotating stand (*PDS* 10: col. 589): 'da v polate zhe postroeno koleso iz dreeva indeiskogo, i na kolese iabloko napisano vsekh gosudarstv zemli, da na tom zhe iabloke napisano nebesnyia begi, i lunnoe techenie i zvezdy.' This then was not the two-meter diameter terrestrial globe made in the 16th century by Egnazio Danti, moved in modern times into the ducal wardrobe room that is paneled in maps copied from contemporary atlases and displayed there today. Brückner (1878: 72–73) notes from the description in the report that this probably was the first time the envoys had seen such globes (which they termed *iabloki* 'apples'). It is likely that at least small-scale globes may have been brought by foreigners to Moscow by the time of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. A presumably schematic three-dimensional globe decorated the roof of the new building erected for the Ambassadorial Chancery in the Kremlin (Raikov 1947: 113), and a silver globe was presented to the tsar by the Danish resident in 1675 (Lebedev 1949: 189). The nearly two-meter diameter globe, produced in the middle of the seventeenth century by the famous cartographer Joan Blaeu, which can be seen today in the State Historical Museum in Moscow, had been commissioned by Queen Christina of Sweden, who never paid to collect it. Peter the Great then acquired it during the 'Great Embassy' in Amsterdam. See: http://nav.shm.ru/exhibits/686/.

respect. So, instead, they should travel via the papal dominions to Modena and Parma, then go on to Milan, from there to Switzerland, through Basle, and on down the Rhine (ibid.: 603–604).

We can assume that the requested route descriptions to and from Florence did come back to Moscow with Potemkin and Fomin. When yet another Muscovite embassy, led by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii and Ivan Davydov, was sent to Italy in 1662, it first stopped in England. On preparing to leave there in February 1663, the envoys were advised by the English not to think of traveling by sea in winter storms, not to mention possible piracy; rather, they should go through France (*PDS* 10: 672–673). So their route took them from Gravesend to Calais and then on to Paris, Lyons, Arles, Marseilles, and finally Genoa. In other words, presumably they were following precisely the route which Ferdinand de Medici had considered but then rejected as the best way for the earlier Russian mission to return home from his court.

Given the wide coverage of the diplomatic documentation accumulated by Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in his Privy Chancery, there is no reason to think that the accounts about the missions to Italy attracted his attention more than those of many other embassies. However, he definitely had copies of Likhachev and Fomin's report about their mission to Florence in 1659–1660.[15] Apparently he also had a copy of all the documentation about the embassy of Zheliabuzhskii to Florence and Venice, had an excerpt (*vypiska*) from the earlier report by Chemodanov and Posnikov and, separately, copies of the two letters by the pretender Timofei Akundinov (Ankundinov), which had been given them by a Greek cleric while in Venice (*RIB* 21: 5, 339, 870, 954). A separate copy of Chemodanov and Posnikov's report apparently was owned at one point by 'Grand Prince Petr Alekseevich' (the future Tsar Peter I).[16] Presumably the tsar had various possibilities to obtain geographic information other than just the ambassadorial reports.

We know that in June 1666, the tsar had requested a copy of the end-of-mission report by Arsenii Sukhanov – about his mission to the Orthodox in the Middle East that ul-

15. The tsar's copy, as listed in the inventories compiled immediately after his death, was undoubtedly that of the official *stateinyi spisok*, not the supplementary descriptive text which contains a much fuller account of some of the interesting cultural events. As Starikova (1993: 21) has noted, the current archival deposit containing the papers that remain from the Privy Chancery has a copy of that document whose text corresponds to that published later by Novikov (RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 142). Given what she says about the eighteenth-century date of the manuscript, it cannot have been in the archive in the time of Aleksei Mikhailovich but must have been included in the current deposit by a later archivist.

16. Nikolai Novikov published the report from that copy; see *DRV* 4: 339. Assuming he published the entire text of the manuscript, it contained only the main report, without the appended shorter summary and the financial accounting which both are in the primary archival copy. There is a second copy of the report in the archive in larger format (see Rogozhin 2003: 174), which we may suppose was made for Peter to take along with him on his 'Great Embassy' in 1697. The more than three dozen copies of the *stateinye spiski* specifically made for the embassy's reference use included the reports on the missions of Chemodanov, Likhachev, and Zheliabuzhskii (*PDS* 8: 701). See Rogozhin (2003: 174–175, 217) for a reconstruction of the complete corpus of the diplomatic books containing the materials for the embassies to Venice and Tuscany.

timately took him to Jerusalem – be sent from the Privy Chancery to the royal chambers in the Kremlin (*RIB* 21: 1210). We can assume this was related to the tsar's interest in the church council, whose participants included two of the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs and which would officially depose Patriarch Nikon. On another occasion, in November 1668, the Ambassadorial Chancery requisitioned a copy of Ivan Zheliabuzhskii's end-of-mission report from his recently completed mission to the Holy Roman Empire, a fact which raises the interesting possibility that copies of the reports kept in the Privy Chancery were being collected for easy reference in the library of the Ambassadorial Chancery (ibid.: 1434). Apart from those reports, the Privy Chancery had other works we might classify as addressing interests in geography (even if there was no concept of it as a separate 'discipline'). The Privy Chancery archive apparently did not contain copies of the translations of broad cosmographies which were being produced in Moscow. However, it had a collection of maps, many dealing with the south – the Volga, Don, Caspian and Black Seas – but some apparently with a broader area including perhaps the eastern Mediterranean.[17] There is nothing here on the scale and, presumably, the informed precision of the accumulation of geographic information by the Medici dukes, who in the late sixteenth century had commissioned that one room in the old palace in Florence have all the cabinet doors around its walls decorated with detailed maps of the world as it was then known, with an effort to ensure that those maps contain the latest and most accurate information.[18] The Russian envoys apparently did not visit this room, which by the time they were in Florence was being used for the wardrobe in the duke's private chambers.

5.2. Political intelligence

Apart from 'geography', diplomatic reports contained a huge amount of political intelligence that might have current relevance for the making of Russian foreign policy. It is of some interest to move beyond the focus above on how it was obtained and transmitted, and ask whether the information being accumulated by the Ambassadorial Chancery included enough of the historical and geopolitical context so that the current news could be properly understood. Here the picture is quite varied and changes as diplomatic relations developed with polities that previously had not been on the radar screen of the world as viewed from Moscow. We have already mentioned the case of Mazovia in the early phases of regular interaction between Moscow and Poland-Lithuania.

The complexities of the Holy Roman Empire might have been baffling, but at least the basic structure of the electoral system was outlined very early on in a memo that appar-

17. There was a copy of the translation made from the Jesuit Martini's description of the Manchu Dynasty's early years in China. For the maps, see RIB 21: 490–491, 861, 956. One map listed on col. 490 depicted 'East and West, North and South and the Persian cities with captioning.' The entry on fol. 861 leaves some room for guessing about actual content: 'Maps of the Greek church, the Archangel Sea, where alabaster stone is quarried, cities and lands according to the alphabet, in the Caspian Sea, and Astrakhan and the Terek and Persia.'

18. See Cecci and Pacetti 2008, and Pacetti 2014 for a short introduction in English.

ently had arrived with the mission of Nicholas Poppel in 1488.[19] However, as Boris Floria (1986: 76–77) points out, there seems to have been little interest in learning much about the internal politics of the Habsburg lands before the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the Muscovite conflict with Poland and Habsburg support for the Poles were a catalyst for identifying possible allies within the Empire who might be opposed to the emperor. With the Reformation, the religious alignment of the various states within the empire would be very important information if Moscow was to understand the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. There was a compact summary of which lands within the empire were Protestant and which Catholic in a report written by Stepan Mikhailovich Ushakov and Semen Zaborovskii about their mission to the Empire in 1613 (*PDS* 2: 1054). Ivan Fomin's extensive intelligence reports cited earlier contained important indications of the impending conflict. Broadening the scope of inquiries to include Habsburg dynastic marriages, the Russian envoys Luk'ian Ivanovich Miasnoi and Fedor Posnikov quizzed their escort about the dynastic ties between the Habsburgs and the king of Poland, a subject of considerable interest, given the reluctance of the Habsburgs even to recognize the legitimacy of Mikhail Fedorovich as tsar on account of their support for Muscovy's hostile neighbor. The response was a detailed explanation of the relevant genealogies, which, had they so chosen, they could have diagrammed.[20] The issue of dynastic ties also extended to those between France and Spain, especially since the information obtained by Muscovite intelligence indicated the Spanish were helping the Poles hire troops from the Habsburg dominions. While some of that intelligence was one-sided, on the eve of the conflict which erupted in the Czech lands in 1618 it seems that Moscow was acquiring a very good understanding both of the internal politics of the empire and of the broader patterns of European relations which affected Russia's immediate interests in the conflict with Poland. It would become imperative with the outbreak of war for the Kremlin to learn more about which elector was taking which side and why.[21]

Successes in diplomatic intelligence were not confined to the Habsburg case, although sometimes even in circumstances where one would think the Kremlin could have had a good understanding of unfolding events, it was in fact caught unawares. The Russian embassy to Sweden headed by Ivan Mikhailovich Vorontsov in 1567 is a good example, arriving in Stockholm as it did right in the middle of the upheaval that resulted in the deposition of King Erik XIV in favor of Johan III.[22] Kept isolated from meaningful contact with either side in the events, the envoys only occasionally could receive secret mes-

19. *PDS* 1: 13–14. See the discussion of Muscovite knowledge about the empire by Roll 2002.

20. *PDS* 2: 1327–28; Floria 1986: 33–34.

21. See *PDS* 2: 1362–65, for a mission in which the main goal in sending the Englishman, Ivan Rodionov, as an envoy was to gather intelligence on possible foreign marriage prospects for Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich. Since Rodionov was to travel widely in the German principalities, presumably he could provide a great deal of information in answer to the questions about the alignments in the developing conflict that would soon consume much of Europe.

22. The *stateinyi spisok* has been published in *Puteshestviia* 1954: 7–62 (with helpful notes by Iakov Solomonovich Lur'e on pp. 358–369).

sages from Erik; the upshot of the events was abrogation of the treaty, which they were supposed to confirm to maintain good relations between the two countries. The record in Vorontsov's report about the events in Sweden takes us beyond the usual short notices of foreign news ambassadors generally would obtain, since he was in the middle of the events as they unfolded and provides an interesting perspective on what was happening.

Certainly of less consequence for the Russians, since it did not have a direct impact on Muscovite policy, was the information acquired by Grigorii Ivanovich Mikulin while in England in 1601.[23] That he was so well informed in part may reflect his innate curiosity (about which we can but speculate), but it did not hurt that his escorts in England were two Russia specialists, John Merrick and Francis Cherry. Mikulin seems to have brought to his task many of the right questions, and in fact had extensive conversations in which he and his English counterparts exchanged international news. On the English side, the quality of the information was undoubtedly quite good, given the fact that under Queen Elizabeth English intelligence about foreign countries was highly developed. What Mikulin related to the English, for example about Muscovite relations with the nomads, was somewhat disingenuous. He met with representatives from Scotland, who took pains to inform him that some of his standardized questions to ask about foreign relations simply were not relevant to the Scottish case. Presumably up to this point, Moscow had been quite ignorant of Scottish affairs. Muscovite stubbornness about protocol led him to refuse an invitation to dine with the Lord Mayor of London, but unlike some Russian envoys who would avoid attending a non-Orthodox church service, Mikulin reported on what he witnessed in one. And while he saw the preliminaries for the celebration of Twelfth Night on 6 January, he did not attend the premiere of Shakespeare's play (Jensen et al. 2021: 26).

The most interesting part of Mikulin's report is his account about the rebellion of the Earl of Essex against the policies of the state secretary Robert Cecil, which took place while the Russian was in London. On 8 February 1602, there was a lockdown in the city. Mikulin asked his escorts what was going on, and they provided a long account of the events. For the most part, this coincides with the English record of the events, though, as Lur'e points out in his notes, the empathetic tone toward Essex which is evident in Mikulin's report probably reflects not his actual attitude about what went on, but rather the biases of his informants. Clearly there is a parallel here with the situation in which Vorontsov had found himself in Stockholm, where, caught in the midst of unfolding political turmoil, it might be hard to know exactly what was happening and who was on what side.

Diplomatic contacts with England were quite frequent in subsequent decades, and in theory the Russians were well positioned to understand English politics. However, it seems that when the rebellion broke out against King Charles I which would lead to his deposition and execution and the establishment of Cromwell's protectorate, Moscow

23. For his *stateinyi spisok*, ibid.: 156–205 (and the commentaries on pp. 402–417, also by Lur'e).

was ill equipped to understand what was going on.[24] Presumably in part this reflects the political biases of the tsar's government in favor of monarchical power and legitimacy, which prevented there being a clear understanding of the role of parliament. In fact the execution of the king was deemed such an unjustifiable and egregious attack on monarchy that the government in Moscow immediately curbed English trading privileges. Only later in the seventeenth century would Muscovite information and understanding about English politics attain a high level of accuracy. This is not the only example where the tsar's government seems to have been hindered in its understanding of political systems other than the one it maintained at home and failed to appreciate how even the power of hereditary rulers might be limited.[25]

5.3. Limited horizons on account of religious belief

Religion was one of the key factors that had the potential to affect the Russian government's ability to understand international political alignments and conflicts or circumscribe the ability of its envoys to report accurately on the foreign cultures they encountered. Orthodox Christianity was an essential component of Muscovite identity. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Moscow was the center of the one true faith, and in a sense the highest priority for its ruler was to defend true Christianity as practiced there. Religious views and practices at odds with the official church were generally condemned and their adherents treated harshly. Tracts condemning other religions circulated, and most references to other faiths (or other Christian denominations) invoked condemnatory epithets. While there were various levels of knowledge about what adherents of other faiths actually believed, there was little inquisitiveness that might have led to a really nuanced understanding. Thus, for example, Protestants were 'Lutherans' even if they might have been Calvinists or some other denomination. Most of what was available in writing about Islam was ill-informed anti-Islamic rhetoric; amongst the most popular of polemical works (usually translated) relating to Islam were the exchanges of letters purporting to be between the sultan and his Christian opponents, in which each side threatened to desecrate the place of worship of the other, ravish their women, etc.

24. See the discussion of the evidence by Kobzareva 1988, who uses this example to illustrate what the limits were on 'what the Ambassadorial Chancery knew' about foreign affairs and how that picture changed over time during the seventeenth century. King Charles' declaration that was published one year prior to his execution and a description of the execution itself were translated in Moscow (about the former see Maier and Mikhaylov 2009; see also Alekseev 1948). A valuable discussion of diplomatic negotiations between Russia and England is Hennings (2018, Ch. 3, esp. 115–127), who sheds light on how the norms of diplomatic ceremonial operated in the situation where Russia was unwilling to recognize the authority of the Protectorate. For the broader context and citations of the substantial body of literature on early Anglo-Russian relations, see Dukes et al. 2009, esp. Chs. 1–4.

25. Boris Floria (1986: 50) notes the evident lack of understanding in Moscow for a good many years about what the Netherlands having become an independent republic really meant for political power there. The various complaints Moscow would issue over the years about foreign publications it deemed offensive assumed that the political authorities in the countries in question should have prevented that from happening and could punish those responsible, even though generally they met with refusal.

However, within this framework of apparently fanatical religious views and bombast, on the level of practical relations religious differences could be put aside, as has been the case many times in history, and there is even evidence of respect for the others' beliefs. Muscovy certainly was able to trade with Muslims and engage in diplomatic relations with them, in the process respecting indigenous custom and honoring the fact that in oath taking, while a Christian might swear on a Bible or on the Cross, a Muslim would expect to swear on the Qur'an. In one remarkable incident, a Muscovite mission in the Caucasus was detained on its way back from Christian Georgia by the local Muslim ruler in Shemakha, where among the contentious issues was the apparent conversion to Islam of two members of the ambassadorial suite. In a stormy confrontation, the Muslim potentate demanded that the Russians take off the crosses around their necks and stomp on them. The Russians' response was, only if you take your Qur'ans and stomp on them, an act, as they well knew, which would desecrate the holy text and could never be tolerated. It was a standoff, where the Muslim ruler had to back down.[26]

Even though Moscow touted itself as the champion of the one true faith, it generally put its own political interests ahead of any commitment to join in an anti-Turkish crusade, however much it might be pressed to do so by the Orthodox under Turkish rule or the Christian powers in Europe (notably the Habsburgs). In trying to understand the way in which religious factors might contribute to international or civil conflict elsewhere, the Kremlin sought or otherwise acquired considerable information about the religious affiliations of different states and regions and tried to align itself accordingly.[27] That said, it could be difficult to decide whether comments about religion are evidence about any interest in it per se, or whether the inclusion of such information was just a sidebar to a discussion of politics. Moreover, some descriptions of phenomena we might term 'religious' fall into the category of the 'paranormal' or sensational, where their interest may have had little to do with stylized verbiage relating them to divine dispensation.

5.4. Experiencing and describing European court culture

These caveats notwithstanding, it can be fruitful to try to understand how Orthodox convictions might have influenced the way in which Muscovite diplomats responded to the cultures they encountered. A great deal has been said in discussions of the *stateinye spiski* about the information they transmit concerning what we might term the 'entertainments' experienced by the Russian envoys. Much of what they reported seems to have been restricted to a limited range of activities. They see various rooms in one or more palaces, and sit or stand through countless receptions and meetings, the descriptions of most of which are quite detailed so as to convey the elegance of the furnishings and the dress of those present, all marks of the respect paid to the Muscovite emissaries. The hosts invite them to go on a tour of the city, visit gardens, the zoo if there is one,

26. See Polievktov 1928: 174 for the ambassadorial report describing this incident.

27. See, for example, Kazakova 1980: 128–129, 171–173, 213–215; Floria 1986 (passim); for later in the seventeenth century, Shamin 2011a: 234–263 (his analysis based on the *kuranty*).

the armory, the treasury, all that was emblematic of the wealth and prestige of the local ruler. Zoos and exotic animals had been a staple of royal display down through the centuries in various cultures. Gardens and their fountains were central to the physical environment of royalty – and, probably as a result of some of what Russian envoys reported back home, began to be introduced at the royal residences in and around Moscow. The male-dominated ruling elites of Europe expressed their identities in martial terms (and more often than not were engaged in wars), and the accumulation of lavish displays of wealth in treasuries begged for being displayed to impress foreign visitors. This was all part of the performance of international diplomacy at the time. So its description, while it may vary in detail, is to a considerable degree merely a conventional part of reporting on how an embassy was treated, and whether it was treated in a way compatible with the tsar's dignity.

In Florence the Medici Duke Ferdinand III was deeply invested in scientific investigations and showed envoys Vasilii Likhachev and Ivan Fomin some of his wonders – silk and paper treated with a substance so that they would not burn, and a barometer (he had created an impressive variety of them which can still be seen today in Florence) which he boasted would let him know what the four seasons would bring in Russia and what the harvest there would be (*DRV* 4: 347). The duke's scientific interests were serious, but this was an era when the 'performance' of science as 'natural magic' was very popular. Indeed, the Russians viewed all this as magic. Yet their descriptions are but passing comments, with no indication of whether they made any effort to learn how it was done.

The Russians in Italy did express an interest in the mechanisms of fountains, perhaps knowing that such matters were among the preoccupations of the tsar. Significantly, the term used to describe the pools (and presumably adjoining terraces) in the gardens was 'Iordan' (ibid.: 346). In the Muscovite context in the first instance this referred to the place created outside the Kremlin for the Epiphany celebration in January of Christ's baptism – which had taken place on the River Jordan – with the cutting of a hole in the ice of the river and erection of a platform for the blessing of the water.[28] At one point in his narrative, at a loss for words to explain what he saw, the author of the anonymous report on the Likhachev mission wrote: 'but one cannot know how to describe [it], because if a person has not seen something, he cannot grasp it with his mind.'[29]

The same author's description of the natural environment of Florence and the botanical fecundity there, including the cultivation of lemons, was more than just an expression of wonder: exotic fruits, vegetables and spices were imported into Muscovy, and the tsar was assiduously trying to get some of them to grow there, often without success in the inhospitable climate of the north. Russian embassies to Italy did seriously discuss the possibilities of Italian trade via the route to Archangel, where in fact the Russians had

28. On the Epiphany celebration in Moscow and its origins see Bushkovitch 1990.

29. *DRV 4*: 353. Klautova (1996: 428) cites this passage to make the important point about how prior knowledge and an observer's own cultural background might constrain what the person would write upon encountering, for example, art produced in another culture.

products that could be sent in exchange. Their ability to get a ship all the way to Livorno was due to the fact that Armenian merchants were sending Volga River caviar to Italy.

We know that at least some Russian envoys were entertained in ways that were less familiar or less common in the experience of Muscovite diplomats abroad. However, too often we learn of this not from their own accounts but rather from the accounts by those who hosted or interacted with them. Of particular interest is attendance at certain kinds of public spectacles and at theatrical performances, as current research on the origins of the tsar's court theater has demonstrated.[30] In Florence, the spectacles included the local version of 'rugby' in the square in front of the Church of Santa Croce. There is no indication that the Russians were made aware of its important library or the fact that it was the parish church of Dante, Machiavelli, Michelangelo and Galileo. Another kind of spectacle involved competition in the military arts.

The introduction of Western theater into Russia in the late years of Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign has long fascinated scholars, since it seems to be such clear evidence of the intensification of 'westernization' under the father of Peter the Great. Such 'secular' entertainment at the time may have seemed to be a radical break with what was acceptable in Orthodox culture, especially at a time when the ruler was so demonstrably devout and there was a great concern over the correctness of observance in Orthodoxy. Many details about the first theatrical performances and their inspiration only recently have been unraveled. There is as yet no explicit evidence about the role that may have been played by reports from the Russian envoys who visited theaters abroad. However, there is enough circumstantial evidence to suggest there must have been some connection between what they saw and described (if only orally) and what then was developed in the 1670s, in the first instance under the supervision of the Ambassadorial Chancery so that the tsar and his court would have the opportunity to spend a few nights (scattered over several years) at the theater.

Chemodanov's mission to Florence and Venice was undoubtedly one of the first that could have served as a catalyst for creation of western-style theater in Moscow, even if on earlier missions Muscovite envoys certainly were exposed to court entertainments. His own reports fail to give a sense of how frequently he was entertained with music, dancing and theatrical performance. The Italian sources tell us that these were an integral part of what he experienced: the Russians at very least were enthralled by the visual aspects of theatrical presentations, even if they did not respond as explicitly to the accompanying music. What was important was the spectacle and wizardry of the staging, about which the word surely came back to Moscow. It probably was no accident that when sent abroad as the tsar's agent for acquiring various things right after Chemodanov's return to Russia, John Hebdon was supposed to hire those who could stage comedies.

30. This section draws heavily on Jensen et al. 2021: 61–83, which analyzes in detail what the Russian missions to Italy witnessed and reported in the 1650s and early 1660s. For an earlier discussion of the origins of the Muscovite court theater, see also Jensen [Dzhensen] and Maier 2016 (an expanded translation and revision of Jensen and Maier 2013, 2015).

When Likhachev and Fomin made the next Russian visit to Florence (in 1660), they happened to be there at the time of pre-Lenten Carnival, when there were numerous entertainments, including much in the theaters. Their official mission report is silent about most of this, but the author of the anonymous discursive narrative about the embassy recounted the theatrical performance they witnessed, with an act-by-act description of the stage effects (*DRV* 4: 350–351).

Even though the visiting Russians were clearly much taken by these entertainments, we might wonder why they did not write more about them. Ingrained musical tastes, of course, may be rather inflexible – perhaps they simply did not appreciate the orchestral music and singing they heard and had no words to describe it. Visual spectacle might be entirely different. Judging simply from the anonymous account, the Russians were not at loss for words to describe the magic of stage events. However, the writers give little indication that they understood much of the actual content or subject matter. This then makes it difficult to establish which, exactly, were the plays, operas or other theatrical spectacles they witnessed. Even today to appreciate the often-convoluted plots and Classical references of Baroque productions is a challenge for the uninitiated, whether or not they can read descriptions in their native language (thank heaven for supratitles!). How much more difficult it would have been for the Russians, who had no Renaissance education in the Classics and had to communicate with the assistance of translators who may have been less than competent.[31] A telling detail in Chemodanov's report is his description of the tapestries in the ducal palace, where the only specific identifications of subject matter are scenes from the Biblical books of Genesis and Exodus (*PDS* 10: 1159). Arguably, the thematic content of what was on the stage was probably irrelevant. Moreover, we would suppose they were reserved in what they wrote down because of the fact that enjoying the sorts of Western entertainment they were witnessing might have been deemed inappropriate for the tsar's official representatives and in fact somehow a sinful indulgence for a good Orthodox Muscovite. After all, even in our own day conservative religious groups have strictures about music, dancing, and other kinds of entertainment. This consideration could explain why the fullest descriptions of such entertainments were relegated to the unofficial narratives with their more abundant geographic descriptions and emphasis on matters other than just diplomatic routine. However, these accounts at least suggest what might have come back to Moscow and been related orally by the others who were present, even if never recorded in the official records.

Such considerations could certainly help explain the way the Russians responded to the churches they surely saw if not always visited. Often in fact what strikes us is not a description of a church but the failure to describe one that, we might think, should have

31. A reminder of how different were prescriptions for education of the elites in Muscovy and in Renaissance Italy can be found in comparison of two important 'manuals' for household management, the sixteenth-century *Domostroi* and Leon Battista Alberti's fifteenth-century *De la famiglia*. The former emphasized Orthodox piety and obedience, the latter the importance of a thorough grounding in the texts of Classical Antiquity.

been mentioned. Even if not always explicitly instructed to do so, Muscovite ambassadors undertook to seek out and report on Orthodox churches, their relics and decoration, and even on their rituals. The missions to Christian Georgia in the Caucasus are exceptional in this regard, as one of the stated primary goals was to determine whether the Georgians (whose adoption of Christianity in fact antedated by centuries the conversion of Rus') were true Orthodox.[32] It seems that the Russian missions to Georgia included a cleric; he may have contributed to the writing of the final reports, given the extensive detail devoted in them to relics, icons and murals, and to a minute description of liturgical performance. Clearly the writer would have had an intimate acquaintance with iconography. As Orthodox Christians, the Russian envoys would in any event have attended church services at every opportunity.

Muscovite awareness of Orthodoxy in Italy surely has to have been heightened by Chemodanov's report. After having been at sea for such a long period before arriving there, naturally, he would have wanted to attend an Orthodox service where that was possible. In multiconfessional Livorno he did attend the Greek service, and in Venice – which had a larger Orthodox presence – he interacted with the Orthodox clerics on more than one occasion.[33] Not only did he attend services, but just prior to his departure, they presented him with two copies of a book in Greek for him to take back to Moscow, containing the plea that the Russians intervene to help Venice against the Ottomans in the ongoing war and to liberate Orthodox Christians from Ottoman rule.[34] Furthermore, the Greek churchmen turned over to Chemodanov two letters that they had received from the pretender Timofei Akundinov, whom the Russian authorities were anxious to apprehend.[35]

Subsequent Russian envoys to Italy also attended Orthodox services. The reports of these missions indicate they were surprised to find non-Orthodox Christians in the churches, which would have been unacceptable in Moscow. But their Italian interlocutors explained this was normal, and there was nothing done to prevent it, for to ask them to leave would be insulting (*PDS* 10: 772). The descriptions in the reports often would mention particular relics or icons and – in the case of Venice – comment at least briefly about ritual. After mentioning the Orthodox churches in Livorno and Venice, the

32. For the texts, see Polievktov 1926, 1928, and the reprints of the Russian reports in *Stateinyi spisok* 1969, 1970. Since Moscow still had little information about the Georgian kingdoms, apart from religion, the envoys were tasked with providing extensive information on geography, history, politics, and the economy. The report by Tolochanov on his embassy in 1650–1652 is especially interesting for its broad range of information. For the earlier history of relations with Georgia, see Belokurov 1889.

33. For Livorno, see *PDS* 10: 964–965, 1154–55; for Venice, 1053–57 (the plea for the tsar's intervention against the Turks), 1165.

34. See Waugh 1979a. While they accepted the books written in Greek, they pointedly indicated that they could not translate them to know exactly the content. If indeed our identification is correct, the text was composed by the leading Greek Orthodox prelate in Venice, Gerasimos Vlachos; it contained several prophecies about the liberation of Constantinople from the Turks.

35. Akundinov's exploits were widely known in Europe. There is an extended section on him in Olearius' description of Muscovy; see Olearius 1967: 191–195.

author of the anonymous account about the Likhachev mission, who was familiar with Chemodanov's report, summarized perhaps somewhat ruefully, 'and other than those [two], from Rome to the Kola fort nowhere is there piety (*blagochestiia*)' (*DRV* 4: 344). When Zheliabuzhskii and Davydov were in Venice in 1663, they asked the Greek Metropolitan whether Orthodox people were persecuted there and how many Orthodox there were. The Metropolitan replied that there was only the one Orthodox church in the city but that there were others in Dalmatia which were included in his jurisdiction (*PDS* 10: 764–765).

The infrequent and quite cryptic remarks about Catholic churches thus should not surprise us. In their tour around Florence, the Russians noted that there were many tall towers, but never specified that one of them might have been the imposing bell tower of the Florence Duomo. 'And the churches or mosques [!] are very well-proportioned (*stroiny*), some taking twenty years to build and even another twenty, and the jasper stone is all polished with a file' (*DRV* 4: 347). Probably this is an astute observation about the colorful veined marble cladding for which Florentine churches are famous.

The next Russians to visit Florence, Ivan Zheliabuzhskii and Ivan Davydov, were taken to the Church of S. Lorenzo, where the elaborate burial chapel of the Medici, long under construction, still was not complete. There they must have seen Michelangelo's sculptures, but confined themselves to noting the time it was taking to clad the interior in decorative stonework, including some types allegedly imported from India (possibly jade): 'And they paint on the walls in the church, and there are various sculptures, and they create pictures in stone in many reliefs.' The *stateinyi spisok* sandwiches this into a description of the exotica they saw at the zoo, which seems to have been of greater import for them.[36] It is not clear whether they saw the inside of the older, adjoining cathedral, one of the masterpieces of early Renaissance Italian architecture designed by Brunelleschi. On another occasion, they mention being taken to see the 'large cathedral' (surely the Duomo?) and to visit the famous hospital of Santa Maria Nuova:

> And the ambassadors looked in the cathedral and were in the hospital; and the hospital courtyard is large and built around with many chambers, and there are many beds and mattresses in the chambers – each patient has his own bed and plenty of food, and people are assigned to care for them, and for those who need medicine, in that complex is a large apothecary, and doctors treat those who are ill and give food and drink to all for free, and when a foreigner takes ill, he also is tended and cured in that same house for free [...].[37]

Obviously the hospital – which also had been described by another Russian visitor back in the middle of the fifteenth century – gets lots of attention, the cathedral none.

We search in vain in these reports for any explicit indication that they took note of Brunelleschi's dome that caps the Florence Duomo, dominates the city skyline and re-

36. Brückner (1878: 89) pointedly remarks: "Unsre Reisenden waren keine Kunstkenner," although we might wonder why the reader would have expected them to be.

37. *PDS* 10: 729. Compare the description in the anonymous fifteenth-century Russian narrative about the Council of Ferrara-Florence (Kazakova 1970: 67).

mains one of the architectural wonders of the world. Chemodanov and Posnikov certainly would have seen it, but the only concrete details they provide about one of the Catholic churches in the city come when they were being driven past what apparently was the Church of Santissima Annunziata, and the duke's brother escorting them explained:

> 'That is the church dedicated to the Annunciation of the Most Blessed Mother of God, an old building, and in it was the Eighth Council.' And the envoys asked him: 'That Eighth Council of which you speak, did it complete its business here?' And the duke's brother told the envoys: 'It completed its business in the city of Ferrara, in the territory of the Roman pope.'[38]

In fact, did not the Medici duke get his facts reversed? For what we know as the Council of Ferrara-Florence finished its main work in Florence, where the decree on the union of the Orthodox and Catholic churches was issued in 1439. Members of the Chemodanov embassy surely must have heard of the Council, since the Russian church had declared itself independent of the Patriarchate in Constantinople in reaction to its decision.

Among other texts relating to this pivotal event for Russian Orthodoxy (and Russian identity) is a long and very interesting eyewitness narrative of a journey to Ferrara and Florence by a Russian churchman who sat in one of the sessions of the council.[39] Although in form it is similar, in many ways this text – which dates from about the middle of the fifteenth century – is more impressive for its detail than are most of the narratives in the *stateinye spiski*, and it includes quite an interesting long paragraph describing the city and its natural setting. Even if not clearly articulating the appearance of the dome (at the time completed but for the 'lantern' that now caps it), the author describes accurately the exterior of the great Duomo and its campanile. He provides one interesting detail: the number of steps in the stairs that lead to the top of the latter, a figure very close to that given in guidebooks today. He comments about the building's interior and makes it clear that the mass celebrating the conclusion of the Council was held there, attended by a dazzling array of clerics and having attracted such a huge crowd that the authorities had to hold it at bay and try to keep some semblance of order.

When he passed through Venice, the author of this text devoted some attention to a description of the main cathedral of San Marco, including a mention of the famous quadriga of gilded bronze horses that decorate its façade. Chemodanov in Venice was shown in the treasury some of the relic-trophies the Venetians had seized after the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople, but he fails to mention the church. However, he showed interest in the miracle-working icons in the treasury. The fifteenth-century author says nothing about the fact the quadriga was one of the trophies. Probably neither author knew anything about that earlier history, and even if they did, it was not important. Unlike the *stateinye spiski*, this very interesting narrative, which probably first introduced

38. *PDS* 10: 996. Later, when passing through Ferrara, they mention again the Eighth Council as having taken place there.

39. The earliest version of the text has been published by Kazakova 1970; see her discussion of it and the other works she calls the 'Florentine Cycle' in Kazakova 1980, Ch. 1.

Florence to Russians, is known in a dozen and a half manuscripts, most of which antedate the end of the seventeenth century (Kazakova 1976: 74–86).

On the occasions when Russian envoys were inside a church, whether it was Orthodox or Catholic, the first priority seems to have been to describe any holy relics it contained and its religious paintings (icons, murals). Yet such features as statuary (which, of course, was not normally found in Russian Orthodox churches) might be given short shrift, even if it was the work – as we know – of a great master such as Michelangelo – whose name probably would have meant nothing to the envoys. The descriptions of church interiors for the most part read like the standard inventories for Russian monasteries, which would include all the buildings, the books, the relics, the icons, and the vestments. Identifying the subject matter of icons in many cases may not have been difficult, in that they followed standard pictorial conventions. However, in the longer and more elaborate lists (such as those in the ambassadorial reports from Georgia) some expertise from clergy probably was essential. We cannot assume that any identifying inscriptions would have been visible, even if those that were present might be in the Greek alphabet and probably could be deciphered by an individual who could read Cyrillic. As Ol'ga Klautova points out, by the end of the seventeenth century, when Petr Tolstoi, a middle-aged courtier, was sent abroad by Tsar Peter I to learn shipbuilding, even though he demonstrates a marked interest in visiting holy sites and seeing their relics, he is capable of the kind of nuanced and detailed description of Western art which largely had escaped his predecessors when they were abroad.[40]

Obviously there was an important transition underway prior to Tolstoi's travels in the late 1690s. Even if ostensibly traditional representatives of the Muscovite elite, envoys now began to display a lively interest in what their hosts showed them. They might or might not always write about what they saw, but they were developing the language of descriptive prose which, if they so chose, could take them beyond the ritualized 'officialese' that until recently had been *de rigueur* for the *stateinye spiski*. It is worth noting that this evolution of descriptive prose in Muscovy was not confined to diplomatic reports. In fact, even traditional genres of religious texts reflect the development of an ability of the writers to describe such things as the natural environment in often realistic detail (see Dmitriev 1973, esp. Pt. II). A similar kind of evolution was occurring in icon painting, where it seems likely that an acquaintance with Western art was responsible for much of the elaboration of detail of architecture and landscape, granted in often quite fantastic ways removed from reality (Briusova 1984).

We might fully expect that the Muscovite envoys who were foreign born or first-generation members of immigrant families, when sent abroad, would note and understand a lot which native Russians might not, if for no reason other than the fact

40. Klautova 1996: 436–439. Tolstoi's account of his travels has been translated and annotated by Max Okenfuss (1987). For the Russian text, see Ol'shevskaia and Travnikov 1992. The recent article by Barykina (2002) reviews Tolstoi's account as an example of the early 'Petrine era' travel literature and its differences from that in the earlier tradition of *stateinye spiski*.

that they knew some foreign language and probably had at least a degree of European education that set them apart from their Muscovite colleagues. Yet familiarity with what they saw might have the unexpected result that they would describe very little of it. An example is the *stateinyi spisok* produced by the translator Andrei Vinius at the end of his important (and unsuccessful) diplomatic mission in the early 1670s to England, France, and Spain.[41] Even though Nataliia Kazakova (1985) has made a case for the interest of his descriptions, in fact we have found its content disappointing compared some of the other end-of-mission reports. Undoubtedly Vinius was entertained, but we learn few details from him.

Were we to have only the official record of the mission reports, we likewise might have little evidence about the entertainments witnessed by Petr Ivanovich Potemkin (FIG. 5.2), sent to Spain and France in 1667–1668, to Vienna in 1674, and again to Spain and France in 1680–1682. However, in the case of this representative of the Russian elite, who seems in fact to have had a lively curiosity, the silences in what he wrote about what he saw can be filled in by descriptions written in the host countries. Potemkin does record some interesting detail about the kinds of officially sponsored tourism and entertainment provided by his hosts, even if he does not tell us about his many visits to the theater. In fact in 1667–1678, both in Spain, and especially in Paris, he witnessed a lot of musical entertainments and plays, and, as the observers of the Russians noted, seems to have been enthralled by what he saw.[42] Yet he clearly operated under the constraints of the Muscovite rules of diplomatic etiquette. When in Seville, for example, before arriving in Madrid, he refused an invitation to tour the great cathedral, since, as he told his

FIG. 5.2. Petr Ivanovich Potemkin, engraving after portrait by Godfrey Kneller. Collection of the State Historical Museum (Moscow).

41. The yet unpublished text is in RGADA, f. 35, op. 1, No. 16. We thank Andrei Gus'kov for providing us with a copy.

42. Potemkin's *stateinyi spisok* for Spain was first published in *DRV* 4: 360–457, now superseded by a modern edition containing as well other documents relating to the mission, some drawn from the Spanish archives (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018). For his report on his mission to France, see *DRV* 4: 457–564 and the modern edition in *Puteshestviia* 1954: 227–299. Our comments here are based in part on Jensen et al. 2021: 89–92, and on Jensen and Powell 1999, where there is detailed analysis of the non-Russian sources about Potemkin and a presentation of the evidence about what productions he witnessed.

hosts, he had not yet had his initial audience with the king. However, he did allow his son and others from the embassy staff to take the tour, and presumably the information about it in Potemkin's *stateinyi spisok* derives from what they reported. Potemkin was one of several Muscovite envoys who managed to include their sons on the staff of the mission, thus presumably contributing to the education of the generation of 'fledglings of Peter's nest' who supported the tsar's reforms. After Potemkin had concluded his official business, on the way to his next assignment in France, he was comfortable with taking the trip his hosts urged upon him to visit the royal mausoleum in the Escorial.

That Potemkin or one of his staff could write a coherent, focused description of a foreign country can be seen in the text appended to his formal report. Since Spain was to a considerable degree still *terra incognita* to Russians, the account provides an overview of the geography, the economy, the history, and some of the noteworthy monuments such as the royal mausoleum. Much of the material was based on what Potemkin learned by quizzing the Spanish escort who interfaced with him during his visit. Potemkin must have known how to ask a lot of the right questions, and he did have an eye for detail that might take a reader beyond the formal observations about diplomatic etiquette, should that reader wish to learn something about the country.

Potemkin's mission to Vienna in 1674 was part of a flurry of Muscovite diplomatic activity aimed at creating a coalition to fight the Turks, who were seriously threatening Poland and Ukraine.[43] By and large, these initiatives failed, since the other powers had more important preoccupations, but the failure presumably cannot be attributed to the ignorance or incompetence of the Russian diplomats. That another of the missions, led by Paul Menzies to Rome, reached an impasse when Menzies refused to kiss the pope's foot is but an indication of how Muscovite insistence on protocol might distract, but there is no reason to think the papacy was not in principle interested in fighting the Muslim Ottomans.[44]

In Vienna, Potemkin also had to be concerned about protocol, as we learn from his report about a visit to the theater (*PDS* 4: 1190–92). He describes how, not yet having had his audience with the emperor, he was invited to the theater but was uncertain as to whether he could attend. His hosts were very persuasive about the importance and great interest of the production he would witness and even showed him printed copies of the play ahead of time. They assured him he would be seated in a box whose enclosure would conceal him from prying eyes, since the standard protocol was that he remain in seclusion until that first ceremonial audience, to which he would process with great pomp.

43. Potemkin's instructions covered as usual the task of obtaining intelligence; he was provided with the resources (sable pelts) to use as appropriate to pay for obtaining it (see *PDS* 4: 1140). He wrote a remarkably detailed account of the alleged plot against Emperor Leopold I by Václav Eusebius František, Prince of Lobkowicz, who had been head of the Imperial War Council. Lobkowicz was arrested as a result. See ibid.: 1319–38 for Potemkin's full news report. On the wars against the Turks in this period, Floria 2001.

44. For this incident in Menzies' mission, *PDS* 4: 1039–40. For more on Menzies and his mission, see Charykov 1900a, 1900b.

Later in his stay, Potemkin took some of the standard tours, including a visit to the zoo, built over the location where the Turks had besieged the city in 1529 (the great siege of 1683 lay ahead …). In visiting the imperial treasury, he displayed the traditional interest of a good Orthodox Russian regarding the holy relics (ibid.: 1241–44).

5.5. Conclusion

This review of Muscovite diplomatic sources of foreign news, which perforce has been very selective, suggests several conclusions about their value for addressing broadly the question of what was news in Muscovy and, more specifically, where in particular the translations of the *kuranty* fit into the spectrum of news. As many scholars have previously argued, the diplomatic files are full of information about foreign countries. However, it certainly would be risky to generalize sweepingly from those documents about how much Muscovite diplomatic personnel and the tsar may have known at any particular moment. There certainly was improvement over time in the gathering and transmission of information through diplomatic exchange, but what was reported might well be inaccurate or biased. Informants might deliberately or unwittingly provide misleading information. The Russians who received it would filter it through their own understanding of the world and other cultures and might thus misinterpret what they heard or read. Even if every attempt was made to ensure that competent translators could assist officials who did not command an appropriate language for diplomatic exchange, it was impossible to guarantee that a lot might not be lost in translation (on these challenges, see our Ch. 9). The diplomatic reports on which decision makers (and modern scholars) have tended to rely are documents constrained by formal rules emphasizing the observance of proper protocol. Clearly some of what transpired and may or may not have been communicated only orally never made it into these reports. Whether information – good or bad – could be transmitted rapidly enough to be of any use was a perpetual problem, and, where it was essential to be able to consult earlier records, the secretaries had to be able to locate them. To know about a development was one thing, to act on that knowledge effectively might be another matter.

It would be a huge mistake though to emphasize only the limitations of this material. For in fact, it is a treasure house of information that has yet to be adequately analyzed and published to assist us in understanding the full scope of what the Muscovite officials knew. The growth in the size and depth of news reports brought back to Moscow by diplomats and acquired in negotiations is truly impressive. Much was being learned by the late sixteenth century from the newsletters and publications that were the source for news increasingly in the West. And as the experience and horizons of Russian diplomats expanded, their ability to observe and report accurately grew. Moscow's connection to the international postal network in the 1660s meant that reports could be received on a regular and rapid basis when a mission was abroad. Not having permanent diplomatic representation in foreign capitals (with one or two exceptions) was probably not a real handicap for the Ambassadorial Chancery to function effectively.

We began this section with a review of how Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich collected in his Privy Chancery many copies of diplomatic reports, arguably because he needed their information for his active involvement in decisions about foreign policy. When his son, Petr Alekseevich (Tsar Peter I, the future Peter the Great), set out for Europe on the first-ever 'grand tour' of any Russian monarch to the West in 1697, he made elaborate preparations to ensure that his embassy could function effectively in the world of international diplomacy. The preparations involved taking along copies of essential documents that could be consulted for precedent and, presumably, for information about geography, geopolitics, history, economies and culture of countries he might visit, and also some that were not on his itinerary. It is impressive that Peter ordered bound into books to take along with him 33 *stateinye spiski*, the end-of-mission reports submitted by Russian envoys returning from abroad (*PDS* 8: 699–702, for the complete list). Among them were reports on missions to the papacy, starting with that by Istoma Shevrigin in 1580–1581 and ending with Paul Menzies' report on his mission to Rome in 1673. The missions to Florence and Venice discussed in some detail above were on his list, the envoys including Chemodanov, Likhachev, Zheliabuzhskii, and, on a later mission to Venice, Ivan Volkov. Reports on embassies to England, Denmark, Prussia, and Holland were included, along with at least some material from the extensive files of relations with the Habsburg empire. That the material even from back in the sixteenth century could be located reinforces our impression that the systematization of the archive in the Ambassadorial Chancery had in fact been quite effective in making it possible to check precedent, as frequently the Muscovite diplomatic functionaries needed to do. This is the more remarkable, given the fact that there had been at least one disastrous fire in 1626 which had destroyed part of the material. In the eyes of the tsar, it seems, the diplomatic files were important sources of information. And this was a tsar who was regularly kept informed of the news arriving in Moscow via the post, news that was being selected and translated for the *kuranty*. While abroad, Peter's staff was obtaining newspapers and pamphlets and even translating them on the spot before sending the originals and translations back to the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow. Peter's Russia indeed had arrived in the European age of information.

That said, we must be very cautious in assessing how widespread in Russia the international news might have been. Too often the studies of the diplomatic materials and translation activities connected with Muscovite diplomacy have ventured the opinion that what indeed were the most interesting reports on events of great consequence in the outside world were intended for, or even reached a broad readership, although all we have is one or two manuscript copies and no evidence that the files in the government chanceries were used to make additional copies. The preponderance of this material was for internal government use and for access only by the selected elite. Our examination of the exceptions to that rule will be found later in this book. Muscovy may have entered the information age for international news, but with one important caveat – this was not yet for the Russians an age of mass dissemination of such material in cheap imprints.

III. TRANSLATORS AND TRANSLATION IN EARLY MODERN RUSSIA

No analysis of the Muscovite acquisition of foreign news would be complete without examining the mechanisms for translation and the individuals involved in the process. In our previous discussion of the evolution in the forms of diplomatic exchange and reporting, we left for further analysis the challenges of effective communication across the linguistic boundaries. The discussion in the next chapters demonstrates how the traditional belief that early modern Russia was handicapped in its ability to deal with other languages needs to be modified. As diplomatic exchange between the Muscovite state and other polities expanded beginning in the late fifteenth century, it became necessary to devise practical solutions for effective communication. There is much to be learned from a close examination of the personnel involved, their responsibilities, and the translations which were produced. With the increasingly regular acquisition of foreign newsletters and newspapers in the seventeenth century (the sources for the *Vesti-Kuranty*), it was essential to be able to translate or digest their reports rapidly and accurately. Once we have examined how that was done, in later chapters we will look closely at the contents of those translations in order to see where they fit into the larger context of the acquisition of foreign news.

CHAPTER 6
Translators in Muscovy: Translation Resources Over Time

The growth in Muscovite knowledge of the outside world was directly related to the changing patterns of foreign relations and the creation and staffing of institutions with regularized procedures for the conduct of foreign affairs. We see pragmatic responses to developing needs, rather than the careful implementation of some preconceived plan. At the same time, perceptions of Muscovy's place in the world undoubtedly had a bearing on decisions about the necessity for establishing certain foreign contacts and the need to develop the ability to cultivate those contacts effectively. There was bound to be a time of transition in which real needs were in fact not being met by the responses. A case in point is the degree to which the Muscovite government provided itself with translators.[1] The translators of the Ambassadorial Chancery were employed mainly to translate diplomatic documents and foreign news or pamphlets, although increasingly in the seventeenth century, the duties also extended to the translation of whole books.[2] While the interpreters handled routine oral communication with foreign embassies, the presumably more expert translators often were assigned to audiences or key negotiations; it was not uncommon for them to be sent abroad on diplomatic missions. Apart from the Ambassadorial Chancery, translators were employed in the Apothecary Chancery, the Chancery for Foreigners (*Inozemnyi prikaz*), and some other departments.

6.1. The early period: late fifteenth to early seventeenth century

We begin our review of this development in the reign of Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505). Precisely in that period we find some of the first important evidence concerning

1. We are using the word *translator*, on the one hand, in the general meaning 'a person working with translation (both oral and written)'; on the other hand, when a distinction is being made between written and oral translation (cf. the Russian distinction *perevodchik* vs. *tolmach*), the word *translator* is used for a person dealing with the translation of written documents, whereas *interpreter* designates a specialist in oral translation. There is a great deal of recent work which is expanding our knowledge of the translators. The new biographical dictionary (Beliakov et al.) is a valuable guide for information about careers and archival sources, although needing to be supplemented with detailed case studies such as those in this section of our book. Three recent conferences whose proceedings have been published (*Perevodchiki* 2019, 2021, 2023) include such studies, which will be cited along with many essays on staffing and translators which are not our main focus.

2. On this 'publishing activity' see, for instance, Kudriavtsev 1963. It was intensified starting from 1672, during Artamon Matveev's time as a head of the Ambassadorial Chancery (ibid.: 182).

the shaping of what would become characteristic administrative institutions. This was the time when the issue of relations with Europe emerged as a significant part of Russian foreign policy. Foreign technical specialists entered Muscovite service, employed in minting coins and building fortresses and churches. Ivan III's Italian contacts were significant, and there were the first direct interactions between Russia and the Holy Roman Empire. Translators who would serve in diplomatic affairs were also involved in some of the well-documented translation activities of the circle under Novgorod's Archbishop Gennadii, undertaken at the initiative of Moscow, which resulted in the production of the first more or less complete East Slavonic Bible.[3]

Whereas in an earlier period the Hanseatic cities had sent a few individuals to Novgorod to learn Russian, the first evidence we have of Russian residents having studied other languages abroad is from Gennadii's circle. The best known of these students are Gerasim Popovka (probably from Pskov) and his younger brother Dmitrii Gerasimov, who learned Latin and German in Livonia.[4] Gennadii's circle also included a certain Vlas (Ignat'ev), a Croatian Catholic Veniamin, who knew Latin, and the German Nicolaus Bülow from Lübeck (who later was to become a medical doctor).[5] Sil'vestr Malyi (Siluester Minor) from Novgorod and one 'Georgius Polman' from Pskov were university students in Rostock, possibly sent there by Gennadii in order to acquire the training necessary to translate for the archbishop.[6] It is significant that after Gennadii's removal, in 1504, the translation activity in Novgorod ceased, and the grand prince's vicegerents in the city had to forward to Moscow letters probably written in Latin from the emperor and the king of Spain, since no one left in Novgorod could translate them (*PDS* 1: 125).

Vlas, Gerasimov, and Bülow all went on to serve Ivan III's son and successor Vasilii III (1505–1533).[7] Bülow's primary position was that of the grand prince's personal physician, but he also had been involved in some diplomatic translation and undoubtedly was the translator of the first medical tract in Russian, a Low German herbal which had been printed in Lübeck in 1492.[8] According to Norbert Angermann (1998: 229), Bülow was

3. On the Gennadii circle, see Wimmer 2005, where there is a good bibliography of the earlier literature up to ca. 2000.

4. For the Pskov hypothesis, see Wimmer 2005: 76–77. On Gerasim Popovka, ibid.: 66–67; on Dmitrii Gerasimov, ibid.: 72–93**,** Kazakova 1988b, and the recent dissertation by Bodnarchuk (2014). Cf. Sobolevskii (1903: 43), who claims with linguistic arguments that Popovka originated from the Moscow region and Dmitrii Gerasimov from the Novgorod region.

5. For Vlas – who possibly originated from West-Russian ('Belorussian') territories – see Wimmer 2005: 67–72; for Veniamin, Sobolevskii 1903: 257–258; for Bülow, Zimin 1961, Bulanin 1988, Angermann 1998: 229, Wimmer 2005: 101–110, Dumschat 2006: 580–581**.** Bülow was presumably not yet involved in any major translations during his time in Novgorod (Wimmer 2005: 103)**.**

6. For Sil'vestr, see Raab 1955/56: 359; for Georgius, ibid.: 360 n. 183, Angermann 1966: 39 and 1994: 206. Cf. Berkov 1962: 358–361 for the assumption that Sil'vestr was a 'judaizer' fleeing to Germany from Gennadii's persecution, not a potential collaborator. Sil'vestr was matriculated at Rostock University on 19 June 1593, Georgius Polman on 25 April 1496 (see http://matrikel.uni-rostock.de/).

7. Gerasim Popovka had died in 1503 (Wimmer 2005: 66).

8. On the herbal, see Isachenko 2009: 128–182 (with many inaccuracies). Johan Muskala, Uppsala University, is working on a doctoral dissertation about the Russian translation; see also Muskala 2012.

the only German-born translator during the reign of Vasilii III. Vlas was active in diplomatic negotiations, among other things acting as interpreter during the first embassy of Sigismund von Herberstein.[9] Gerasimov was assigned to an embassy to Prussia in 1518, and later both he and Vlas worked with Maksim the Greek, who had been brought to Russia from Mt. Athos because no one in Moscow could translate from Greek the scriptures and related commentaries.[10]

While to a certain degree our lack of information may reflect merely the vagaries of source preservation, we get the distinct impression that translation in the Muscovy of the first half of the sixteenth century was not a pressing priority. That Maksim the Greek would be indicted for making serious mistakes in his translations should hardly come as a surprise when we see how this learned Renaissance man, who had previously been employed in the famous Venetian printing house of Aldo Manuzio, had to operate until he had acquired a sufficient knowledge of Russian and Church Slavonic. As Gerasimov wrote around the year 1519 (in a letter to the clerk Misiur' Munekhin in Pskov): 'Now, Sir, he [Maksim] is translating the Psalter and commentaries from Greek for the grand prince. Vlas and I sit next to him, taking turns. He tells [us] in Latin and we tell the scribes in Russian.'[11] In fact, of course, there was one more step in the process, since the scribes presumably had to turn the spoken Russian into written Slavonic. This process – translating from one language (here Greek) to another (Russian) via a third language (Latin) – has been termed 'relay translation'. In the Ambassadorial Chancery this method was called *perevod cherez iazyk* ('translation through another language' – Liseitsev 2003: 172). This was apparently a necessary stopgap solution in the early times of translation in Muscovy, when the resources for translation still were very limited.

Similar cases are reported from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. So, for instance, we read in the report written by a Russian official about a reception of an envoy from the Vatican in April 1597: 'And he [the envoy] did not ask me any questions, but the interpreter Antsa asked questions *cherez iazyk*, because Antsa cannot speak the Roman language [Italian].'[12] This presupposes that somebody in the visiting company could speak German. Another example of 'relay translation', *perevod cherez iazyk*, is an early seventeenth-century case mentioned by Dmitrii Liseitsev (2003: 172) about a translator employed at the Ambassadorial Chancery, one Ondrei (Andrei) Petrov from Sweden. Petrov apparently knew Swedish and German but could neither write nor speak Rus-

9. *PDS* 1: 131, 139, 195–197; see also Wimmer 2005: 69.

10. A good overview of Maksim's career and knowledge is Haney 1973, although there has been important subsequent publication about his activity in Russia, his trial and his manuscript legacy. Our knowledge of Maksim's early biography is based on the detective work of Élie Denissoff (1943). See also Sinitsyna 1972, 2006: 9–18, 2008; Bulanin 1989, 2017; and about Maksim's translation technique, MacRobert 2018 and Verner 2018.

11. Quoted by Wimmer 2005: 61 n. 137.

12. *PDS* 10: 448. The interpreter mentioned here is apparently the German Antsa Arpov (Hans Flörich); see Beliakov et. al.: 50. Flörich later changed sides and became a translator for Russian in Sweden (1610–1632), where he translated Luther's Small Catechism into Russian and Church Slavonic (in 1625–1626, printed at Stockholm, 1628). For details about Flörich, see Maier and Droste 2010.

sian. So another translator, one Elisei Pavlov, who did not know any Swedish, described his translation work in a petition (from 1617) in the following way: '[...] Ondrei Petrov can neither write nor speak Russian, and I do not speak and write Swedish. So Ondrei retells for me the content of a written Swedish document in German, and I write down what he says [in Russian].' This situation is very similar to the manner in which Maksim the Greek and the Russian translators Vlas Ignat'ev and Dmitrii Gerasimov made translations from Greek into Russian about a century earlier, with Latin as a relay language.[13] It is quite remarkable that a person who did not know any Russian could be employed as a foreign-language specialist at the Ambassadorial Chancery as late as in the second decade of the seventeenth century.

Elisei Pavlov, whose only foreign language was German, was frequently used for assignments involving Scandinavia (ibid.: 362–363). Apparently a good knowledge of German was quite sufficient for most interactions with Sweden. This may explain why the Muscovite government had such slender resources for Swedish, which we might assume should have been a priority in 1617, the year negotiations with Sweden were concluded at Stolbovo. At that time the Russians claimed only one translator competent in Swedish, Ul'f/Vul'f Iakovlev (Wolf Jakob Wyborch), who had entered Muscovy as a prisoner of war and enjoyed a long career in the Ambassadorial Chancery.[14]

The situation was quite similar for English and French, although at least in the case of England, there seem to have been good options for adequately staffing exchanges in the late sixteenth century (see Sec. 6.1.2). When Ivan Fomin – the only English-language specialist employed by the Ambassadorial Chancery during the first half of the seventeenth century – was away in the German Empire in 1615, the Russian government had to request that the English ambassador John Merrick submit his letters in German translation, since there was no one in the chancery who could read them in English (Liseitsev 2003: 173).

From a comparative point of view, the situation regarding professional translators in Muscovy contrasts to that in a number of other contemporary states. Venice, known as the pioneer in the development of diplomatic and intelligence services in the Renaissance, may have had a translation bureau.[15] The Ottoman Empire developed resources

13. Relay translation continued to be important in the seventeenth century in cases where there were no resources to provide direct translation. This has been documented in examples where Georgian had to be translated first into Greek and then into Russian and vice versa (Oborneva 2019: 47, 91). In another case, in 1628–1629, when a Russian mission in Constantinople had no translator for letters it had received written in Latin, they were first translated into Greek by none other than the Orthodox Patriarch Cyril Loukaris, and then the Greek was translated into Russian by the mission's translator, the Greek Anastas Selunskii (ibid.: 49).

14. Amburger 1953: 318; Liseitsev 2003: 367–368; Beliakov et al.: 81–83.

15. Pederin 1999: 179, but cf. Sadovski-Kornprobst 2021: 223–224, who questions whether there is sufficient evidence. In any event, it may be that any such bureau was connected only with local administration in Venetian-held territories, in this case Dalmatia. Beyond commenting on what the contemporary theorists wrote about qualifications for the ideal ambassador in the Renaissance, Mattingly (1971: 217) says nothing about how foreign languages were dealt with in Venice and in other states where the modern practices of diplomacy were emerging. In the sixteenth-century Mediterranean

for regular translation and diplomatic communication in several languages, and as the sixteenth century progressed, the staff of secretaries specializing each in a particular foreign language (for instance, in Wallachia and Moldavia) grew apace.[16] In all of these cases, of course, the needs and the level of institutional development differed from those in Muscovy. It is important to remember that the formally structured administrative institutions of the Muscovite state only gradually emerged after the consolidation under Grand Prince Ivan III. What some forget in focusing on the personality of the tsar is that even in the time of his grandson, Ivan IV ('The Terrible', r. 1533–1584), the development of government institutions was still a long way from completion.[17]

It is clear that under Ivan IV perceptions of Muscovy's distinctive place as the center of the one true faith and thus the empire *par excellence* grew with concomitant suppression of those who might have alternative religious or cultural views. Nonetheless, Tsar Ivan's government continued the policy of his grandfather in seeking foreign technical assistance. There is no particular reason to associate the sending of a Russian Obriuta Grekov to Constantinople in 1551 to learn Greek with the establishment of the Ambassadorial Chancery as a formal institution perhaps two years before. All we know is that in 1557, in a letter to the Patriarch in Constantinople, the tsar requested Grekov be sent home, where at least by 1562 he was serving as an interpreter (Savva 1917: 151–153). That there was a continuing interest in having a few Greek specialists in Moscow is evidenced when two more individuals were sent to Constantinople in 1580 (their subsequent fate is unknown) and yet another in the 1590s, who returned to be employed in the Ambassadorial Chancery alongside two or three other translators for Greek.[18] More-

world, Italian was probably the most important vernacular, widely used in cross-cultural exchange.

16. Cazacu 1999: 104–108, 115; Beldiceanu-Steinherr and Beldiceanu 1999: 151–153, 169–170. The Phanariote Greeks in the Ottoman capital were frequently employed by the Turks and foreign diplomats as translators and, along with clerics and merchants, were involved in communicating news from the Ottoman Empire to Russia. See, e.g., Floria 1992. There is a large literature on the interactions between the Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire and the Russians, one of the still basic studies being Kapterev 1914. Oborneva (2019, passim) chronicles all the most important exchanges during the first half of the seventeenth century. Among the many relevant studies by Vera Chentsova, see her overview (2000) of archival materials, with a range of specific examples.

17. For a still very solid overview of institutional change under Tsar Ivan IV in the late 1540s and 1550s, see Zimin 1960.

18. See Savva 1917: 154–155, 160; Liseitsev 2015: 204–205. In his discussion of the translators and interpreters for Greek in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Liseitsev emphasizes how important the language was for interactions with Greek clerics and others who came to Moscow from the territories of the Ottoman Empire. On Taras Elizar'ev, the one sent in the 1590s who returned, see also below Sec. 6.1.2. There is a great deal of scholarship on the relevance of modern Greek in Muscovy and the translators who could handle it in the seventeenth century. For the first half of the century, see the recent study by Oborneva 2019, who discusses, inter alia, the use of Greek in diplomacy with Georgia. There was a colony of Greek merchants in Moscow from which additional translation resources could be found. In 1681, the translator Petr Andrianovich Tatarinov was appointed to be its escort (*pristav*) for interactions with the government and recorded oral testimony from the members of the colony, that document now published by Shakhova 2015. On Tatarinov, see ibid.: 591 and Beliakov et al.: 190–191. While his languages officially were recorded as Tatar and Turkish (relevant to relations with the Ottoman Empire), likely he would have known some Greek in order to deal with his assignment.

over, when two Swedish interpreters, Russian-language specialists, were in Moscow in the suite of Bishop Paul Juusten's mission in 1569, Tsar Ivan kept them on to teach two Russian boys Swedish, despite the insistence of the Swedish king that they be allowed to return home.[19] One of the two, Lasse Bertilsson, died while in Moscow; the other one, Engelbrekt Nilsson, was eventually sent home, after several years. There were undoubtedly other opportunities, albeit limited, for Russians to learn languages from foreigners resident in Moscow, although such interests apparently had to be pursued clandestinely (ibid.: 161–162).

Savva (ibid.: 160–161) also reports one case of a Russian, Petrushka Luk'ianov from Kola who, on his own initiative, first went to Antwerp, then to Denmark to learn foreign languages in 1583. The exchange between the Muscovite and Danish governments concerning Luk'ianov's stay in Denmark suggests that there might have been additional interest on the part of Russians in going abroad to learn languages, and that for Danes to come to northern Russia for similar reasons was considered normal. At the same time, there is no concrete evidence of any Russians having become translators for Western languages in Moscow during the reign of Ivan IV. The documents mention a few translators for German, but all of them were foreigners (quite often from Livonia), none of them born in Russia.[20] In a pattern that we find repeated later in the seventeenth century, one Kaspar Hopper (Höpper) from Löwenberg in Silesia (Polish: Lwówek Śląski) worked for Tsar Ivan's government from 1564 to 1578 and made his residency in Muscovy permanent by converting to Orthodoxy. He was educated at Wittenberg University and thus could translate from Latin as well as German.[21] Hopper was certainly the most qualified translator during the time of Tsar Ivan IV. Several other German speakers are documented. Norbert Angermann mentions Jakob Edelmann from Austria, Andreas Werner from Braunsberg in Prussia (today's Braniewo in Poland), a certain Clas from Wenden in Livonia (Klaus von Bergen?), and another Livonian, Wilhelm Poppler (Fedor Filippov), who also embraced Orthodoxy. However, how competent they were is a good question, and presumably they were all in Moscow for reasons other than their language ability (for instance, Werner and Clas were the tsar's jewelers). Apart from Hopper, who at that time was away, the others were characterized by two members of an imperial embassy in 1575–1576, Daniel Brintz and Hans Kobenzl, as 'very unskilled and worthless people' (Angermann 1998**:** 233–234).

19. Savva (1917: 156–159) cites documents published in *SIRIO* 129**:** 249, 252, 257, 259, 263. See also Maier 2008b: 195–196.

20. According to Angermann (1998: 233), the reason why during the reign of Tsar Ivan IV certain efforts were made in order to teach Russian citizens Swedish and Greek, but not German, might have been the never-ending supply of Russian-German bilinguals from Livonia.

21. Angermann 1998: 231–232. The designation 'Kaspar from Wittenberg' sometimes used in documents does not refer to his origin, but to the fact that he had studied at that university.

6.1.1. The Kremlin's capacity for communication in English in the late sixteenth century: a special case?

Following the English 'discovery' of Russia and the establishment of the English Muscovy Company that began actively to trade there in the second half of the sixteenth century, there was a flurry of diplomatic exchange between the two countries.[22] The English 'Muscovy hands' seem to have been able to supply London with Russian-speaking translators (an example is Daniel Silvester, who also was sent to Russia as an envoy in the 1570s).[23] Queen Elizabeth I had translators for letters the tsar sent, although it is not clear whether they were always available at the time Russian envoys were in London. The Russians also drew on the linguistic abilities of those engaged in the Muscovy Company trade. Jerome Horsey is probably the most prominent example. He spent more than a decade in Russia starting in the 1570s in the service of the Company. He was twice sent by the Russian government to England as an emissary.[24]

While we do not know all the details, the documents about the Russian embassy to England in 1582–1583, headed by Fedor Pisemskii, and the subsequent exchanges around the embassy to Russia headed by Jerome Bowes suggest that there was no difficulty in securing interpreters for English.[25] Whether or not they were regular employees of the Ambassadorial Chancery is another matter. The Pisemskii embassy employed two interpreters (*tolmachi*). One of them, identified only as Elizar, was with the mission at the time of its departure from Archangel on an English ship (*Puteshestviia* 1954: 101). The other, who we know for certain was a Livonian German in Russian service, Reinhold (Robert, Roman) Beckmann, probably had been appointed in Moscow to accompany Pisemskii. Nonetheless, his name appears only occasionally in the end-of-mission report and only after the embassy was already in England (ibid.: 107 and passim); most of the

22. There is a large literature on early Anglo-Russian relations. For an excellent overview, placing them in the broader context of the international politics of the time, see Lur'e 1961; see also Jansson and Rogozhin 1994: 8–71, which provides the background to the Russian embassy to England in 1613–1614. In addition to the narrative texts first published in the sixteenth century by Richard Hakluyt and often reprinted, the key collections of published archival documents are Tolstoi 1875 and *SIRIO* 38.

23. On Silvester, see Malygina 2022.

24. Horsey's own account about his involvement in Russia, which is readily available in various editions, is a problematic source, full of inaccuracies. See the text in Berry and Crummey 1968: 249–369; for an analysis of the complexities of its composition, Croskey 1978. For a quick overview of how the Company's officials, on account of their language and in-country expertise, were often involved in diplomatic matters, see Dukes et al. 2009: 10–11.

25. For the documents about these missions, see *SIRIO* 38: 3–246; Tolstoi 1875: 189–285. Included are the end-of-mission reports by Pisemskii and the interpreter Reinhold Beckmann, and the Russian documents about the reception and negotiations with Jeremy Bowes. Pisemskii's end-of-mission report has also been republished with notes and commentary in *Puteshestviia* 1954: 100–155, 386–402. What we can characterize as an *ad hoc* approach to hiring translators or interpreters as needed, exemplified in the case of dealings with England, can also be seen in other examples. A case in point are the arrangements made during the ill-fated visit of a Danish prince in 1602, when several local residents involved in the Baltic trade were employed (see Selin 2023).

important interactions between the Russians and their English counterparts were carried out using Elizar as the intermediary.[26]

Elizar was one Giles Crow(e), whom Queen Elizabeth in one of her letters relating to this embassy termed 'our' translator.[27] As Christopher Burrough's diary of the Muscovy Company trading mission to Persia in 1579–1581 indicates, Crow was one of the company factors. In April 1581, he was involved in loading the Persian wares into boats in Astrakhan for transport up the Volga and on to Archangel. On 30 May, while the rest of the convoy proceeded further north, he was sent from Kazan to Moscow with letters (presumably to the company's factors there).[28] He is not mentioned among those who departed Archangel for England in July and August. It is possible that he remained in Russia, where he could have gone to Archangel in connection with the next navigation season in 1582 and thus been hired at the northern port by the Pisemskii mission. He accompanied them when they sailed for England.

When Pisemskii returned to Russia at the end of his mission in 1583, Elizar came with him, as did the newly appointed English ambassador to Russia, Jerome Bowes. The sources are somewhat opaque on the matter, but it seems as though Bowes considered Elizar to be 'his' (that is, the official English) translator for the mission (*SIRIO* 38: 158). In any event, during the negotiations in Moscow, Elizar seems to have been accepted by the Russians as the main interpreter during the negotiations so long as Ivan IV was alive (Bowes' final audience was with his successor, Fedor Ivanovich). However, we know from Reinhold Beckmann's own testimony that he had been assigned as the escort to accompany the Bowes mission in Russia. By the end of his stay, Bowes had managed to offend his hosts and claimed that they had offended him.[29] One of his specific complaints was that, as he was preparing to leave, they had forbidden him to use the services of Elizar and insisted that Beckmann be the only authorized interpreter. As Beckmann

26. It is possible that one reason for preferring Elizar was that he could produce formal written translation, although he is never termed *perevodchik* in the sources.

27. Tolstoi 1875: 223 ("interpres noster Egidius Crow"), where Egidius is the formal Latin equivalent for Giles. This letter to the tsar, dated 8 June 1583, is explicitly a response to the tsar's confidential letter, which the queen indicates Crow had been instructed to deliver to her. Indeed, in the records of the Pisemskii embassy, it was the interpreter Elizar who had been entrusted with that task. Elizar was the name used by the Russians as the equivalent of Giles, as we know from the fact that Ivan IV's personal physician, Robert Jacob, the son of a certain Giles, was known in the Russian sources as Roman Elizar'ev (Dumschat 2006: 635). Horsey mentions Crow among those who had been involved in exchanges with Russia (Berry and Crummey 1968: 340); the editors' annotation to that passage (note 13) states that Crow was Pisemskii's translator but does not cite a source for that information. That Crow was on the queen's payroll seems to be confirmed by the fact that during their first audience with the queen, the gifts from the tsar (sables) were presented by the two lead envoys and by the interpreter Beckmann, but not by Elizar, who was, however, translating (*Puteshestviia* 1954: 116). In other words, Elizar may not have been considered a formal member of the mission.

28. Morgan and Coote 1900: 472–473. We thank Alla Malygina for bringing this evidence to our attention.

29. There is more than one version of the English report on the Bowes' embassy, requiring that claims (or omissions), which cannot be substantiated from the Russian records, need to be analyzed critically (Croskey 1983).

would later explain to the English in London, presumably disingenuously, only the Russians' own interpreters could translate for a meeting with the tsar, not the interpreters on the staff of the foreign embassy (ibid.: 159). Once Elizar had requested to be released from Russian service, Bowes had no choice but to use Beckmann during his final audience. When the Bowes embassy departed, Elizar (termed the *angliiskii tolmach*) had been given permission to go with them back to England (ibid.: 140).

Unlike Elizar, Reinhold Beckmann seems to have had a longer career as a translator for the Russians. Subsequent to Bowes' mission, in 1585 Beckmann was sent to London as a messenger (*gonets*), bearing the tsar's letter complaining about Bowes' conduct. On his arrival in England, Beckmann was greeted by representatives of the Muscovy Company, one of whom then wrote to the company directors concerning the arrangements for Beckmann's accommodations. The conclusion of this letter, which presumably is well informed, states: "[T]his Beckman was here with the Russe ambassador xij yeres past, and was one of his interpreters and cane speake god englishe, he was borne in Lefelande, and served the [Russia] companye in Russia iij or iiij yeres, and well knowen here by the companys seruants [...]" (Tolstoi 1875: 241). That earlier embassy seems to have been the Russian mission to England headed by Andrei Sovin in 1569–1570, although it is possible there is some confusion about the date and the reference is to Beckmann's participation in the Pisemskii mission.[30]

As Beckmann himself would report regarding his mission in 1585, in one of his meetings with the English officials (including Francis Walsingham, the state secretary), they said to him, 'You are not from there, not a born Russian. How is it you live in Russia?' And he responded, 'I am a servant of the sovereign Orthodox tsar and was born in the sovereign's patrimony, in the Livonian land, and they took me from the Livonian land to the sovereign to live there' (*SIRIO* 38: 157). Beckmann then went on to assert that Bowes' complaint was baseless, since Beckmann had in fact been appointed as his escort, had been the interpreter during the audience with the tsar, and thus had seen and heard exactly what happened. That Beckmann would have been fluent in English should not surprise us, if he had a history of employment by the Muscovy Company. The company was involved in significant Baltic trade all the way to Narva, so presumably Livonian Germans would have been valuable employees.

Following his mission to London in 1585, during which the English deliberately detained Beckmann, delaying his return to Russia, he was sent once more with a letter to Queen Elizabeth, in 1588. Obviously there are gaps in his history, but his employment seems to have extended over a period of a decade and a half. We might suppose he had arrived in Moscow with captives from the Russian military campaigns in Livonia in the 1560s. He could well have found employment by the English merchants, even if he

30. In the cases of both Elizar/Crow and Beckmann, there is no evidence that they were on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery. The documents on the Sovin mission apparently do not mention Beckmann's involvement; the indication here is simply inferred from the later reference in the one English document.

also was hired by the government in connection with Anglo-Russian diplomacy. That he is always termed a *tolmach* (interpreter), rather than a *perevodchik* (translator), may confirm the observation we made earlier about the Russian government's not deeming it important to have an in-house English-language specialist prior to the seventeenth century. At very least, it might suggest that his language skills were limited to oral, not written translation.

Yet the Kremlin had the capacity to provide an embassy to England with an English translation of the tsar's letters. When Pisemskii presented Elizabeth with his letter of credence, the queen took it, looked at the seal, and handed it to Francis Walsingham. She then turned to Pisemskii, told him that she did not know Russian, and asked whether he could provide a copy of the letter in English. The Russians had prepared for this. Pisemskii turned to Elizar, who handed him a copy of the letter translated into English, and this in turn was handed to the queen.[31] As its interactions with other countries expanded during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Muscovite government increasingly would prepare for just such exigencies by supplying embassies with translated copies of the official letters.[32] Whether in this case the translation had been made in Moscow or was produced once the embassy had arrived in England is unknown.[33]

6.1.2. Early unsuccessful attempts to improve the language capacities of the Russian government

For this period we can document at least one interpreter and later translator for Polish and Latin, Iakov Zaborovskii, originally from Poland-Lithuania. He worked at the Ambassadorial Chancery for more than thirty years, 1582–1613, and he was the chancery's best-paid translator for Latin around 1613.[34] At the end of this period, during the Polish occupation of Moscow in the Time of Troubles, he seems to have been valued enough for his knowledge of Polish, although at that time, he must have been at a very advanced age (in his eighties).[35] Although Zaborovskii was sent to the German empire several times

31. *Puteshestviia* 1954: 115–116. The translated text is the one published by Tolstoi 1875: 189–190.

32. Although there is no information about who translated the letters or where, earlier in Anglo-Russian relations letters from the tsar to Queen Elizabeth were delivered in Russian and in Latin, Italian, and even (it seems) in German translations so that they could be read in London. See Morgan and Coote 1900: 287 (1570, "in the Romayne tongue and in the Italian"), 302 (1571, "in high Duch").

33. During the negotiations in London, Crow/Elizar was producing translations into Russian from documents the Russians had given him in English (see *Puteshestviia* 1954: 131). As was common in the Russian diplomatic negotiations abroad, there was some back-and-forth regarding the titulature in the English documents which required interpretation and translation. The final version of one of the queen's letters was handed to the Russians at the moment their ship was about to depart, which left no time for the text to be checked. Elizar had to apologize then for not having been able to translate it, as the ship was now at sea in a storm. So his comments about problems in the translation came too late to demand yet another revision from the English (ibid.: 147).

34. Angermann 1998: 233; Liseitsev 2003: 161, 165, 166, 356; Beliakov et al.: 116; Erusalimskii 2021: 56–57.

35. He must have been born around 1530 since he was said to be almost 70 years old in 1599 (Angermann 1998: 233 n. 58).

between 1582 and 1599, he did not know German but used Latin in his diplomatic contacts (Angermann 1998: 233 n. 58).

There are some documents, such as the imperial envoys' report from 1575–1576, attesting that most of the early interpreters did not reach a high professional level (ibid.: 231–232). Generally speaking, we probably should be careful not to rely too heavily upon Western authors' critical remarks about Muscovite translators, since their own knowledge of Russian usually was not good enough to assess the interpreters' proficiency. Moreover, they might well try to blame the translators for their unsuccessful negotiations with the Russian tsars. On the other hand, there are a lot of examples showing that at least the written translations made from West-European languages steadily were getting better during the seventeenth century. Regular procedures were developed in Moscow to examine individuals who applied to work as translators. They would be tested in their capacity for oral and written translation; it was not unusual that a candidate might be deemed competent for oral interpretation but incapable of handling written documents.[36]

It is somewhat ironic that Tsar Boris Godunov, himself possibly illiterate, understood the value of sending young Russians abroad to be educated, thus anticipating Peter the Great by a century.[37] In 1603, altogether about fifteen boys were sent to England, France, and Germany in order to learn the national languages and Latin. Nothing is known about the fate of the six students sent to France. Of the four sent to England, one became an Anglican clergyman, "two had joined the East India Company and were eventually to die fighting the Dutch in the Company's interest, and the other was in Ireland, where the English authorities appear to have lost track of him."[38] Best documented are the five sent to Lübeck, the only group from which at least two eventually would serve the country that had sent them abroad: Dmitrii Mikolaev beginning in 1610 and Ignatii Kuchin in 1619, both after some years of service as interpreters for Russian in Sweden.[39] Many years had passed since 1603. However, when Mikolaev and Kuchin finally returned home, they could serve as translators for both German and Swedish at the Ambassadorial Chancery (Liseitsev 2003: 363–364, 369, and passim.). During the first decades of the seventeenth century, these 'Godunov students' were two of the very

36. On the procedures for examining the capabilities of future translators, see Kunenkov 2007: 151–152, 161–164; for discussion of several cases (her focus is Greek, not other European languages), see Oborneva 2019: 61–70.

37. The common perception is that Godunov was illiterate; however, cf. Iuzefovich (2007: 276), who says it is not accurate.

38. Cleminson 1987: 400 n. 11. Cf. Brückner (1878: 3) and Savich (1982: 37–38), who reports – based on archival documents in RGADA – that two of them had died from a contagious disease (*sopa*). When Aleksei Ivanovich Ziuzin and Aleksei Vitovtov were sent on an embassy to London in 1613, they were to insist that the English send back the four Russians (Jansson and Rogozhin 1994: 130–133). The failure of the English to comply with this impossible request continued to be a sore point in Anglo-Russian relations (Cleminson 1987: 400–401).

39. Zverev 2006; Maier 2008b**:** 197–202; Maier 2009. At least Kuchin had been taken prisoner by the Swedes – allegedly in one of the Swedish territories on the Baltic littoral – and sent to Sweden.

few translators of the chancery who were born in Russia of Russian parents. Another example is Taras Elizar'ev, apparently Mikolaev's brother or cousin, who had been sent to Constantinople in 1594, together with a Russian envoy to the Turkish sultan, in order to learn Greek.[40] Until that time, nearly all translators for European languages apparently were real foreigners, that is people born and brought up outside Russia; some, like Hans Flörich and Hans Brakel, were raised in Russia but had foreign parents.

6.2. Translators in the seventeenth century: numbers may not reveal the whole story

The increasing documentation for the Ambassadorial Chancery in the seventeenth century and systematic recent studies of that material by Russian scholars provide us with a much more complete picture of the translating staff than we have for the previous century.[41] However, there is some disparity in the statistics cited in various studies, and by themselves, statistics reveal little about the actual capacity of the chancery to deal with translation. As we have already seen for the sixteenth century, ad hoc arrangements that did not involve salaried translator staff might well suffice to cover certain needs. For what they are worth, the statistics suggest that overall the staffing seems to have increased as the century progressed, at least until its final two decades. Between the end of Boris Godunov's reign and a high point in 1613–1615, the number of translators grew from 8 to 29 and interpreters from 23 to 30, but over the next decades, the numbers fluctuate: in 1622, 16 translators and 21 interpreters; in the 1630s and early 1640s, 10 to 26 and 26 to 50 respectively; 1645–1682, 19 to 31 translators, the number of interpreters peaking at 62 in 1671 but then declining to a range of 14 to 18.[42]

There are various explanations for the fluctuations. Periods of particularly active foreign diplomacy logically would have required hiring additional translators and explain why it seems the staffing numbers reach a peak in the reign of Aleksei Mikhailovich.[43] Statistics, based as they tend to be on the pay lists for the Ambassadorial Chancery,

40. Savva 1914: 160. In 1604, Dmitrii Mikolaev sent a letter from Lübeck to his 'brother' (*brat*; this could also have been a cousin) Taras Elizar'ev, 'interpreter for Greek at the Ambassadorial Chancery.' D. V. Liseitsev (2003: 151–152, 360) mentions Taras Elizar'ev as a translator (*perevodchik*) for Greek during the years 1604–1610. Mikolaev's letter – and also a letter written by the other 'Godunov student' who eventually returned to Russia, Ignatii Kuchin – are kept at RA (Sthlm), Extranea 156.1 and 158.1. For more details see the references in note 39.

41. In his pioneering study of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Belokurov (1906: 136–141) underestimates the numbers of translators. His work has now been superseded by Liseitsev 2003, Rogozhin 2003, Kunenkov 2007, Beliakov 2017, and Beliakov et al., all of whom have exhaustively mined the archival files of the Chancery for their information on staffing. See also the three recent essay collections cited above in note 1. More information is still being discovered, especially for the late seventeenth century, but the material in hand is sufficient for some confidence in generalizations.

42. For the number of interpreters, Beliakov 2017: 146–149. Beliakov's figures for the interpreters (e.g., 55 for the year 1663/64) approximate the estimate given at the time by the renegade clerk Grigorii Kotoshikhin (around 60) but suggest that Kotoshikhin exaggerated the number of translators (around 50; cf. Kotošixin 1980: 99, fol. 125v).

43. Beliakov 2017: 113–114; Gus'kov and Shamin 2021: 109.

may record only those specialists who were in Moscow at the time, but not those who either were stationed in other cities or were abroad with an embassy (Kunenkov 2007: 121–122). Moreover, for some important assignments, translators were drawn from departments other than the Ambassadorial Chancery. To explain the decline in the staffing during the last decades of the century, Beliakov emphasizes that the qualification of the translators had increased during the 1670s: there were more and more specialists who could translate from two, three, or even four languages, so that the total number could be kept down.[44] He also notes that from about 1671 the institution of the interpreters was continuously losing its importance.[45] The reason might be that translators (capable of handling written documentation) always could be used also for oral interpretation. Gus'kov and Shamin (2021: 109–110) connect the reduction of staffing with political changes – the dismissal of the 'westernizer' Artamon Matveev in July 1676 and then the coup in 1689 which brought the Naryshkin faction to power – and with fiscal considerations, where the Ambassadorial Chancery had lost significant sources of its revenue. As had been the case in earlier decades, individuals not on the regular staff could be hired for special assignments. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence that the staffing of translators then was insufficient to handle regular needs.[46]

6.3. What languages were covered? Methodological considerations

Apart from summary statistics, there are numerical breakdowns of how many translators or interpreters were available for which languages.[47] However, a number of caveats are in order here as we try to interpret the data. For one, we cannot always be certain what languages were covered, due to ambiguity in both the terminology of the sources and in the classifications adopted by modern scholars. For example, what should we understand by *shotlandskii* ('Scottish')? Even though we know that today a Scottish burr can be almost incomprehensible to someone who speaks the King's English, is a translator purporting to be competent in 'Scottish' in the early seventeenth century really to be distinguished from one competent in English? Or is there any reason to distinguish *nemetskii* ('foreign', but surely specifically 'German' when used with reference to language) from what came increasingly to be the common term in the newspaper translations, *tsesarskii* ('imperial', but similarly specifically 'German' in linguistic terms)? The adjective *nemetskii* – which was often felt to be too inexact – was gradually replaced by

44. The number of translators seems to have stabilized at 22 during the 1680s but was sharply reduced to 7 in 1689, before it increased again, gradually (Beliakov 2017: 109; Gus'kov and Shamin 2021: 109–111).

45. Beliakov 2017: 94, 112, 165.

46. See Gus'kov and Shamin 2021: 112–113. In his deposition in 1696, the long-time multilingual translator Nikolai Spafarii (Milescu) complained that the translator staff was insufficient at a level of only 15, some of whom had been sent off to Azov, compared to as many as 30 in previous years (Belokurov 1906: 143).

47. See, for example, Liseitsev 2003: 152–156; Beliakov 2017: 113–115 (the translators), and 150–151 (the interpreters).

tsesarskii.[48] We believe that there is no reason to think that a distinction was being made here between Low German and High German, as claimed by Andrei Beliakov (2017: 147). In the seventeenth century, Low German had been reduced to a spoken dialect; no periodical newspapers were ever printed in Low German, and no letters had to be translated from that 'language'. Therefore, when we try to count the languages represented at the Ambassadorial Chancery at a given time, we should be aware of the fact that two persons who knew exactly the same languages – and even the same person at different times – might have reported this fact in different ways.[49]

There are a number of related problems. Is a translator who knows *voloshskii* capable in Wallachian or Moldavian (Rumanian), or might this not in fact mean his language is Italian, which was an important international language in the Balkans at the time?[50] If competence is claimed in Arabic, does that mean the ability to read Arabic script (as opposed to the language), a rote knowledge of the Qur'an, or real knowledge of the Arabic language, which arguably was irrelevant for Muscovite government purposes?[51] Further,

48. Cf. the correlation between the alleged number of translators for *nemetskii*, as opposed to *tsesarskii*, in Beliakov's table No. 7 (pp. 150–151) and the use of these two adjectives in the translators' headlines for news compilations from German newspapers. Up to 1655 there are no translators for *tsesarskii* (and no headlines mentioning *tsesarskie kuranty*), twenty years later there are more translators for *tsesarskii* than for *nemetskii* – and many more headlines announcing translations from 'tsesarskie kuranty'; see the word indices in V-K VI/1: 698, 799–800 for the 1660s, and V-K VII: 663, 715–716 for the years 1671–72.

49. We might note here that in a document from 1689 (a list of salaries) the learned Nikolai Spafarii – at that time the senior translator – in addition to claiming Latin and 'Wallachian', was listed as a translator for *ellinskii* and *grecheskii* (Belokurov 1906: 131), which probably means, in this specific context, that he could handle ancient Greek as well as the vernacular. In most contexts it seems that the terms *ellinskii* and *grecheskii* were used as synonyms, and it also happened that the Greek language was called *ellinogrecheskii* (see, for instance, Kudriavtsev 1963: 189, 196). According to the above-mentioned document from 1689, Ivan Tiazhkogorskii was the expert with the largest number of languages: French, Hungarian, Polish, Latin, and Belorussian are mentioned in this specific list (Belokurov 1906: 131). Yet a very important one of Tiazhkogorskii's languages, German, is missing – could it be that German was not mentioned here because it was considered as his mother tongue? See the discussion in Sec. 7.1.5 about Tiazhkogorskii's origins.

50. In the case of someone like Nikolai Spafarii, a Moldavian, the answer might be obvious. When protesting the conscription of his young son for instruction in the new Italian school in Moscow in 1697, he asserted he knew Italian and could thus tutor the boy in it at home. However, Spafarii did not claim it as one of his translation languages. See Ramazanova 2019: 192–193. It is of some interest that during a mission to the court of the Moldavian Hospodar Vasilii in 1641, the formal reception was conducted in Greek, but the ruler then had the tsar's letter (in Russian) translated by his own staff into Greek, after which it was read aloud to him in 'Wallachian' (*po-valashski*; Oborneva 2019: 35).

51. Tatar and several other Turkic languages were written with the Arabic alphabet well into the twentieth century, even as Russian orientalists had developed a Cyrillic alternative to facilitate conversion to Christianity. According to Krachkovskii (1950: 30), Nikolai Spafarii had learned Arabic in Constantinople; other translators were listed in the contemporary documents as having a knowledge of the language. Keeping a Qur'an in the Kremlin for use when a Muslim had to swear an oath was, of course, one thing; translating the book quite another matter. Based on an examination of materials in the foreign affairs files for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Ii'ia Zaitsev (2021) asserts that the Tatar translators had a good understanding of Arabic. However, most of his evidence comes from formulaic exchanges where the Qur'an would be invoked or quoted or from texts translated not directly from Arabic but from Turkish. Some scholars have mistakenly assumed that there was a translation of

for the oriental languages, what was the distinction among Tatar, Turkish, Nogai, *khivinskii*, *bukharskii* etc. at the time?[52] The last two might have been Persian (Farsi), which could have been used in dealings not only with Persia but also with Central Asia and with merchants who operated in those areas.[53] Astrakhan was staffed with many interpreters who dealt with Turkic speakers such as the nomadic Nogais or with the Kalmyks, whose vernacular was a Mongolian language. In his deposition of 1696, Pavel Ivanov syn Kul'vinskii is termed 'translator for Kalmyk, Mongolian and Tangut' (*perevodchik kalmytskago i mungalskago i tanguttskago pisma* – Belokurov 1906: 147). The Kalmyk and related Mongolian were necessary languages for the Muscovite government during

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the Qur'an into Russian in the seventeenth century, but the book they cite is in fact the anti-Muslim polemic *Alkoran* published by the Ukrainian Orthodox cleric Ioannikii Galiatovs'kyi (Waugh 1979–1980: 910, 916–917). For a Russian to learn Arabic to read the Qur'an would be out of the question, unless, like Afanasii Nikitin in the fifteenth century, he apostasized. Probably Nikitin did not read it (at best he seems to have learned how to recite some prayers), but like many Muslims for whom Arabic is not their vernacular, if he learned the text it was by rote memorization. For the most recent discussion of the first Russian translation of the Qur'an (in 1716) and the identity of the translator, see Babaeva 2021. She points out (p. 9) that a proposal in 1697 to translate the book from Arabic failed because no translator could be found. As is well known, the first Russian translation of the book was later made from a popular French version. Babaeva considers the possibility that the translator was Petr Andreevich Tolstoi, who had been the Russian ambassador to the Ottoman court and is known to have translated other works. However, his knowledge of French is inadequately documented to be confident he was the translator of the Qur'an.

52. A translator for Tatar would not necessarily have been able to translate formal documents in Ottoman Turkish, which is heavily influenced both by Arabic and Persian. Competence in oral interpretation might have been a different matter. Kulmamatov (2020, 2021) provides an overview of the staffing of translators for various languages, with a focus on translation from oriental languages and comments on the processes of establishing the competence of those who were being hired. One of his examples (2020: 67) concerns the testing of an individual who was seeking to be hired for both Tatar and Turkish, but who, as it turned out, flunked the test for *spoken* Turkish, although he passed the test for Tatar. As Kulmamatov indicates, those whom the government wanted to be able to translate Arabic or Persian often were sent to the Bukhara caravansarai in Astrakhan for training in those languages, but if they were deficient in Russian, they would acquire it in Moscow. Moiseev (2021) notes that Persian could present particular challenges; so communication with the Safavids might involve the mediation of Tatars who could understand spoken Farsi if a text in it was read aloud. On the difficulty the Ambassadorial Chancery in the late seventeenth century encountered in trying to find translators for both Turkish and Persian *written* documents, see Kulmamatov 2021: 80–81. Evidence about the languages used in early diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire is fragmentary, though it seems clear that Ottoman Turkish was secondary to Tatar or Serbian at least prior to the end of the sixteenth century (see Moiseev 2023). A good sense of the linguistic range needed for effective Russian diplomatic representation in Istanbul can be found in two articles by Tat'iana Bazarova (2019b, 2021), whose focus chronologically is the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is of some interest to compare the knowledge of oriental languages in Poland in the seventeenth century, where, inter alia, Tatars and Armenians were very important as interpreters (Baranowski 1950, Chs. 15, 16).

53. It is perhaps significant that *khivinskii* was attributed (in addition to *tatarskii*) to the interpreter Petr Khivinets, but listed alongside him is another interpreter, Avram Pavlov, whose expertise was 'tatarskii i persidtskii' (Belokurov 1906: 135). In 1677 Petr Khviniets was listed as an interpreter for Persian (Kulmamatov 2020: 63). If there is a real linguistic distinction to be made here, 'khivinskii' *could* be Turkic, whereas 'bukharskii' more likely is an Iranian language, given the fact that the traditional preponderance of the population in the region of Bukhara is the linguistically Iranian peoples today known as Tajiks. The archival files on relations between Russia and the two Central Asian khanates contain evidence about how both Turkic and Persian were used (see Kulmamatov 2023).

the seventeenth century.[54] Tangut might also make sense for someone with Kul'vinskii's expertise if we assume that in fact what was meant here was Tibetan. As a translator employed in reading written documents, Kul'vinskii would have to know the vertical cursive Old Mongolian script and (if Tibetan was involved) a totally different alphabet. Given the importance of the Volga trade to Persia, in which Armenians were active, it is also significant that some of the interpreters or translators were Armenian. The Persian silk industry was managed by Armenians; at least some of the individuals employed as interpreters were Armenians. A noteworthy example is Vasilii Aleksandrovich Daudov, who had managed to escape from Safavid service with the help of a Russian embassy, achieved a rank in the tsar's court service, for a time was numbered among the translators for Turkish and Persian, and then enjoyed a long career in Russian diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire.[55]

In certain instances, we note competence in 'language pairs'. Given the similarities of Swedish and Danish – especially some centuries ago – any individual with competence in one would be able to deal with translation from the other, even if he could not *speak* both languages. Apparently not all Swedish-language specialists mentioned that they were competent in Danish as well. Olferii/Vul'f Iakovlev (Wolf Jakob Wyborch), who had ended up in Russia as a prisoner of war and then refused to be repatriated to Sweden, was the first to mention the fact that he could translate not only from Swedish, but also from Danish.[56] Arn/Arent Buk (Arendt Bock) – another of the early seventeenth-century translators who, like Iakovlev, knew German – was identified as a specialist for Swedish and Danish.[57] In the 1640s, Matvei Veiger (Matthias Weyher?) and Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden) are also documented as specialists for both Swedish and Danish (in addition to German and Latin).[58]

54. See Shastina 1958; Chimitdorzhieva 2006; and the important three-volume documentary collection, *Materialy* 1959–1996. As Chimitdorzhieva (2006: 25–27) notes, the missions to the Mongols commonly were organized by the local Siberian administrators, who could employ interpreters from among the Cossacks or Siberian natives with knowledge of Mongolian or Tatar. Early Russian missions to China also benefited if they had translators who could communicate in Mongolian.

55. V. A. Daudov is of interest in part for the biographical narrative about his life, possibly written up by one of his sons (see Gukhman 1989 for a discussion and publication of the text). Even though Daudov has frequently been termed a Persian, in fact there is convincing evidence he was from an Armenian family (Shokhin 2012: 352–353).

56. For Iakovlev, see Liseitsev 2003: 367–368; Beliakov et al.: 81–83; for the name, Amburger 1953: 318. Iakovlev's knowledge of Danish, recorded in 1614/15, surely did not represent an *expansion* of the language capacity of the Ambassadorial Chancery as Liseitsev (2003: 158) has claimed.

57. For Buk, see Liseitsev 2003: 368–369; Beliakov et al. 2021: 74–75; Tarkiainen 1969: 70–71; Kovalenko 1999: 124. Buk had started out as a Russian interpreter in Swedish service and taken part in the peace negotiations in Dederino, January–February 1616, but defected and went over to Russian service in February.

58. Beliakov 2017: 106; Beliakov et al.: 34–36, 76–77. The ability of the Russian government to cover the language needs of diplomacy with Sweden in the middle of the seventeenth century went well beyond the few translators such as Veiger and Adamov. Some interpreters (*tolmachi*), who do not figure prominently in the records, were assigned to frequent missions to Sweden in the 1650s and 1660s, obligations which presumably involved the ability to communicate in Swedish or German, even if the records do not specify what their languages were. Among them were Fedor Veiner and Timofei

Polish and Latin often appeared as a pair, not because of linguistic similarity, but since hardly anybody knew Polish without knowing Latin. However, Latin-language specialists who had been educated in other countries, such as the Germans Iurii Givner and Leontii Gross or the Moldavian Nikolai Spafarii, did not know Polish. We assume that most translators for Polish had received their education in the Commonwealth, where Latin was the most important foreign language, taught in all schools. Moreover, many of them were presumably Russian-Polish bilinguals. Thus, when the diplomatic contacts with Poland were increasing and the number of translators for Polish was growing, from one to three during the early 1650s and to eight in 1667/68, the number of Latin translators increased exactly in the same way, from two to eight (Beliakov 2017: 112).

Apparently, the Ambassadorial Chancery still did not always have language competence to deal with the English. According to Beliakov (2003: 16–17), from 1645 to 1682 there were in toto only two translators and four interpreters for English, one of the two being Fomin who died soon after that period began. Of the others, the translator Andrei Krevt (employed at the chancery from 1676/77) and the interpreter Ivan Ivanov Anglichenin (from 1663/64) were certainly of British origin.[59] In 1682, there was no interpreter in the Ambassadorial Chancery for English (*PDS* 6: 14). However, this was during the service of Andrei Krevt, who was employed as a translator (*perevodchik*), not interpreter (*tolmach*), so the chancery was not really lacking English-language competence. While understandably there could have been reluctance to send the only specialist for a particular language on long-term assignments abroad, this may not mean that the employment of foreigners resident in Moscow for diplomatic missions (even if they were not on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery) was out of necessity. Depending on who they were and the particular circumstances, to use their services probably made good sense. In this regard, as far as England went, the situation may not have been much dif-

Martynov (in 1653), Ivan Vest (in 1655), Filipp/Filat Adler (several missions, 1659–1664), Pimin Ivanov (1665), Ivan Spiridov (1668). Translators (*perevodchiki*) mentioned in the records of missions to Sweden included Andrei Gambrus/Chamber (1656), who had to be replaced by Efim Fenturov when he took ill, Martyn Frez/Fres (1662), and Iakov Gitner/Ginter (1667). See Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 170–189. On Gambrus, Fenturov, Frez, and Gitner, see Beliakov et al.: 98, 207–209, 211, 101–102. It is not clear whether Ivan Vest is the Ivan Vestov, known to have been active in the 1630s, listed in ibid.: 79. There is some confusion in the literature about Gitner, whose given name was Iakov/Jacob, not Il'ia. Il'ia was his son who, at the end of the 1680s like his father before him, was posted to Novgorod (Beliakov et al.: 100–101; cf. Kovalenko 1999: 126). It was the father, Jacob (Iakov Ivanovich) Hüttner/Hyttner, from Pomerania, who had arrived in Moscow in 1665 and converted to Orthodoxy. When the Swedish embassy which included Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld arrived in Russian in 1684, Hüttner was assigned to be one of the escorts to accompany it to Moscow, and he translated during the negotiations there. Sparwenfeld considered him to be dishonest, a traitor who had left Swedish-held Pomerania, but at the same time admitted that Hüttner had a good command of Swedish and thus, as the ambassadors requested, would better serve in the negotiations than would the feckless younger Meisner (Birgegård 2002: 69, 71, 73, 149).

59. Beliakov (2003: 17) also claims – without sufficient basis – that all the other English-language specialists were also definitely of British origin; cf., however, B. Conrad-Lütt (1988: 157), who thinks that at least one of them, Jakov Eglin, was German: "Ein Deutscher in zarischen Diensten am Gesandtschaftsamt namens Jakoško Eglin."

ferent from that for the 1580s (see Sec. 6.1.2). Thus, for example, the tsar's agent John Hebdon and the mercenary Patrick Gordon were given diplomatic assignments.[60] The little known Isak Antonov syn Tomson, a lace maker, was sent to England, Brandenburg, and Holland in 1682 (*PDS* 6: 15).

According to the same document, at that moment there were no interpreters for German, Swedish, and Danish either, which is hard to believe, since for German there were, for instance, the very accomplished translators Leontii Gross and Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, and Iurii Mikhailovich Givner (Georg Hüfner).[61] For Swedish, there was Efim Meisner (who died, however, at the end of February 1684), and his two sons, Timofei (Tobias) and Efim (Jr.), both involved in diplomatic exchange with the Swedes.[62] Whether this meant that translation from Swedish was in good hands is another matter. While there is some uncertainty in the sources as to which Meisner was involved, the Danish ambassador Hildebrand von Horn complained about his honesty and accuracy in translation. Von Horn demanded in 1682 that one of his letters, incomprehensible in the translation produced by the inebriated Meisner, be retranslated by Leontii Gross (Forsten 1904: 69). At the request of Prince Vasilii Vasil'evich Golitsyn, the Swedish scholar Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld had to translate a letter from the Swedish king to the Russian tsars. Apparently, it had previously been translated by the young Meisner, but 'rather badly', because, according to Sparwenfeld, 'the young Meissner, who is used to translate Swedish documents, not only does not understand the language, but also [...] is totally biased.'[63]

The Swedish resident, Christoff von Kochen, reported in a communication from Moscow, 27 January 1688, that the Swedish king's letters had to be translated by M[onsieur] Coyet (an entrepreneur) because there was nobody at the Ambassadorial Chancery who

60. For Hebdon, Gurliand 2003; for Gordon, Dukes et al. 2009: 113–125, 138–150.

61. *PDS* 6: 14. About two other German-language specialists who also were competent in Swedish – Iakov Gitner (Jacob Hüttner/Hyttner) and at the end of the 1680s his son Il'ia – see note 58.

62. For the elder Meisner, see Beliakov et al.: 152–154. The elder Meisner was an officer in the Swedish army and had come to Russia as a mercenary in the early 1660s. He was appointed as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1662. Since there is evidence that he took ill on the way back from Novgorod in autumn 1681, and his older son Timofei signed for receipt of his father's *kormovye den'gi* (subsistence payment in kind) in April 1682, it seems likely this is the Timofei mentioned by Bantysh-Kamenskii (vol. 4: 198), termed an *inozemets*, as having been the interpreter in other negotiations with Sweden in 1682. Timofei (also named Tobias in the documents) indeed was on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow between 1683 and 1689, but then was transferred to Pskov, where he served until 1701 (Beliakov et al.: 154–155). About the date of the elder Meisner's death (in 1684), see Birgegård 2002: 69.

63. See Sparwenfeld's letter to Bengt Oxenstierna (who at that time was responsible for Sweden's foreign affairs) of 1 May 1686, published in Birgegård 2002: 352–354 (the cited fragment is on p. 353; English translation p. 341 n. 753). For Sparwenfeld's other comments on the younger Meisner, ibid.: 149, 221. The reference to Meisner here presumably is to the older of Efim Meisner's sons, Timofei, as it seems the younger son, Efim, was still some years away from having been educated and then hired to produce translations. Although we do not know exactly when, he was sent to Sweden to study Swedish and German, and then apparently was 'examined' in the Ambassadorial Chancery on his ability in one or both of these languages in 1696 (Beliakov et al.: 151–152).

could read either Swedish or Danish, and a letter from Denmark was sent together with a Latin translation, something that, according to Von Kochen, is well-liked in this country.[64] So what was the problem? At this time the elder Meisner was dead, and his son either was deemed incompetent or was away on some other assignment. Had there been a competent specialist for Swedish, this person should have been able to deal with Danish matters as well, and, of course, specialists of German would, as a rule, have been able to deal with Swedish and Danish diplomats because the latter usually could speak German.[65]

French, not yet the primary language of international diplomacy, obviously was not a priority for the Russian government. Bazhen Ivanov (Benjamin Baron) served as an interpreter for French during a very short period in the early seventeenth century but then changed sides and started working for the Swedes instead.[66] After a hiatus of about two decades, Ivan Nikolaev (Jean Nicholas) was employed to translate French from 1629 until his death in 1633. He clearly did not know Russian grammar well and must have had a noticeable accent.[67] Two years after his death, he was replaced by Dmitrii Digil'bov.[68] When he had died, in 1653, the chancery did not have a translator for French until Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, whose language competence included French, was hired in 1668 (for details, see Sec. 7.1.5). But Tiazhkogorskii was transferred to the Ukrainian

64. About Christoff Koch (ennobled in 1683 as von Kochen), see Droste and Maier 2018. The letter was addressed to Bengt Oxenstierna. See RA (Sthlm), Diplomatica Muscovitica 115 (Christoffer von Kochen's letters to the king and Counciler Bergenhielm, 1684–1690; not foliated). Given the problems he recorded regarding translation from Swedish in Moscow, Sparwenfeld specifically recommended that letters sent in Swedish be accompanied by translations into Latin, one reason being then that they would not have to pass through unreliable hands who might be happy to sell any secrets they contained (see Birgegård 2002: 341 n. 753). The Coyet mentioned by Von Kochen was undoubtedly Petr Anatol'evich, the son and heir to the founder of one of Russia's first glass factories. The younger Coyet, who grew up in Russia, was hired on as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1701. His language competence included German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish and Russian (Kovrigina 1998: 214–215; 228; Beliakov et al.: 261). Sparwenfeld mentioned him: 'Peter Antoni Coyet is a native-born Swedish nobleman and in his heart a good Swede, although he lives in Moscow most of the time due to his glassworks' (Birgegård 2002: 231).

65. It is characteristic that the Danish residents in Moscow (during the last three decades of the seventeenth century) did not write any of their reports to Copenhagen in Danish. Mogens Gjøe's reports (in Moscow 1672–1676) were usually written in French, whereas the German-born diplomats Frederik Gabel and Hildebrand von Horn mostly wrote in German, sometimes in French, very rarely in Latin, depending on the addressee. Henrik Butenant von Rosenbusch's reports are written in German (from 1679 to 1699; resident from 1684, ennobled in 1687), whereas Paul Heins' letters (1697–1705) are in French. Their correspondence is kept at RA (Cop), TKUA, Rusland, in separate files for each person (Nos. 73-38–41; 73-93–94; 73-97). Gabel and Horn were first in Moscow together from November 1676 until the end of the following year, Von Horn again in 1681 and 1682–1684. For biographical data about Von Horn, who died in 1686 at the age of 31, Lohmeier 2011.

66. About Bazhen Ivanov / Benjamin Baron, see Liseitsev 2003: 363; Beliakov et al.: 118. That Ivanov and Baron were one and the same person had been assumed for some time, without proof (see, e.g., Maier 2012: 352) but now has been convincingly demonstrated by Alexander Pereswetoff-Morath (2013: 65–66 n. 5).

67. For Nikolaev's career, Beliakov et al.: 164. Some examples from Nikolaev's supplications and translations, with many linguistic mistakes, are in Zhordaniia 1959: 458–462.

68. Beliakov et al.: 110; Zhordaniia 1959: 465.

Affairs Chancery and sent on numerous missions throughout the 1670s, which left the Ambassadorial Chancery with no French specialist. For instance, on 16 July 1676 Colonel Paul Menzies was called in to open three letters in the Ambassadorial Chancery. The one from the Danish king to Denmark's resident in Moscow Mogens Gjøe,[69] in German, did not cause any problems – the letter was translated by Leontii Gross. But the package also contained two letters in French, one to the chancery and one to Menzies ('Pavel Miniius'). Since Tiazhkogorskii was not present, Menzies had to make a version in Latin, which was translated into Russian by Semen Lavretskii and Ivan Gudanskii (Charykov 1906b: 267). Probably the fact that the package contained letters in French came as a surprise, and the problem had to be resolved ad hoc.

Although the mix of languages for which there were competent translators varied during the seventeenth century (often there were gaps in coverage if the single staff member with particular knowledge had just died or was out of town), we can be fairly certain that *most* of the time translators were available for German, Dutch, Polish, Swedish/Danish, English, Greek, Latin, 'Tatar' (which might include other Turkic languages, Nogai sometimes being listed separately). Less consistently, we find French, Italian, 'Wallachian', Ottoman Turkish, Persian (Farsi), Arabic, Kalmuck/Mongolian, Georgian, Hungarian, and one or more of the Baltic languages. ('Livonian' in the first instance may have designated Estonian.) When 'Belorussian' was listed, we suppose what was meant was either the 'prosta(ia)/rus'ka mova'[70] (a literary language based on the Ruthenian – Ukrainian and Belorussian – chancery language that had been used in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), or Ukrainian. Translations into Russian or Church Slavic were made from both, at least occasionally, from the sixteenth century (Levin 1995: 48). For example, Prince Ivan Khvorostinin came under suspicion of heretical religious views in the mid-1620s, because he owned books printed outside of Muscovy and for having at least paraphrased some texts written in Lithuania.[71] Later, deacon Feofan of the Savva-Storozhevskii Monastery translated from Ukrainian Kirill Trankvillion's *Zertsalo bogosloviia* (1674) and Ioannikii Galiatovs'kyi's *Nebo Novoe* (1677; Bulanin 2004b: 151).

It is important to remember here that translators and interpreters were not the only employees in the Ambassadorial Chancery who knew foreign languages. A number of the secretaries and undersecretaries (*d'iaki* and *pod'iachie*) also did, but they normally were not involved in written translations. A well-known example is Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin (1605–1680), head of the Ambassadorial Chancery from 1667 to 1671, who knew Latin, Polish, 'Moldavian', and German (Rogozhin 2003: 77). While the linguistic ability of his successor, Artamon Sergeevich Matveev (1625–1682), is

69. This was presumably at the time when Gjøe just had left Moscow (the last letters written by Gjøe in his 'copy book' are from June 1676; RA (Cop), TKUA, No. 73-93).

70. About the *prosta(ia) mova* see Moser 2002 (with a long list of secondary literature). In Western scholarship this language is often called Ruthenian (see e.g., Bunčić 2015: 277–280); Old Belarusian and Old Ukrainian (*starobelorusskii*, *staroukrainskii*) are terms for the same language that have been, and still are, in use, particularly in these countries (Belarus, Ukraine).

71. Bushkovitch 1992: 136–140; Bulanin and Semenova 2004: 193–194.

uncertain, we can at least hypothesize he would have known a language other than Russian.[72] He arranged for his son, Andrei Artamonovich Matveev, who became an important diplomat for Peter the Great, to receive an education – starting at an early age – that included Latin, possibly Polish, and even some Greek. The young Matveev was reported to be fluent in Latin in 1689, and he also was advised by a French diplomat (representing Poland in Moscow) that he should learn French.[73] By the time Andrei Matveev arrived in Paris in 1705 on a diplomatic mission, he had acquired at least a good knowledge of written French but still needed to work on the spoken language.[74] As Paul Bushkovitch (2000) has suggested, beginning around the middle of the seventeenth century, at least some important members of the Muscovite noble elite were acquiring some Latin and Polish. However, there is very limited reliable information about how they might have learned those languages. The rare examples for which there seems to be persuasive evidence include Princes Iurii Ivanovich Romodanovksii, Boris Andreevich Golitsyn, and Vasilii Vasil'evich Golitsyn. In 1655, Iurii Ivanovich, at the time functioning as a kind 'wine steward' at ceremonial banquets, impressed a member of the visiting Habsburg mission with his knowledge of Latin (Pentkovich 1869: 157). In addition to his

72. Matveev had been directly involved in several diplomatic negotiations with Poland and in missions to Ukrainian Cossack leaders (see Rogozhin 2002: esp. 177–191). The preponderance of the books in his library, confiscated when he was abruptly removed from his administrative offices, was in Latin, and secondarily in German (see Belokurov 1898: 69–74 for the list). Of course none of this evidence necessarily *proves* he could use the relevant languages. For Matveev's career, see Bushkovitch 2001: 55–95.

73. The evidence about the education of the young Matveev is found in a work compiled in the eighteenth century that contains what purport to be the petitions his father sent from his northern exile, supplemented by materials relating to the Matveevs' return to Moscow just prior to the *strel'tsy* revolt in 1682 when Artamon Matveev was murdered (Novikov 1785). For an extensively documented but speculative excursus on the probable authorship of this account, known under the title 'Istoriia o nevinnom zatochenii [....] Matveeva', see Baidin 2019, where the key references to the young Matveev's education are on pp. 205–206, 214. The 'Istoriia' mentions as Andrei's teacher (*uchitel'*) in Pustozersk one Ivan Lavrent'ev syn Poborskii, who was 'from the lesser Polish nobility' (*iz men'shago pol'skago shliakhetstva*). Andrei was born in 1666; before he was yet ten, according to a passing comment in one of the petitions, he had been receiving some instruction in Latin and Greek from the accomplished linguist and translator Nikolai Spafarii. Baidin argues that Poborskii probably was from Polotsk and speculates that he might have studied there under Simeon Polotskii prior to when the latter came to Moscow. In any event, there would be good reason to assume Poborskii was qualified to teach Latin and Polish. Baidin's evidence (p. 205) about Matveev's possible command of Polish is problematic: the manuscript translation of Cesare Baronio was owned by him, not translated by him (see Nikolaev 2008: 159). Matveev's ownership of a few dozen books in Polish is suggestive, but do we know he read them? In Baidin's telling, Poborskii took clerical orders after the events of 1682, was the priest assigned to accompany Tsar Peter's Great Embassy on its grand tour in 1697, maintained during his lifetime a close connection with the younger Matveev, and thus indeed could well have compiled the 'Istoriia'. If Poborskii was acting as Artamon Matveev's secretary during the Pustozersk exile, he might have been responsible for the abundance of scriptural citations in the petitions.

74. The report on Matveev's good Latin in 1689 is in the account about Muscovy composed by Foy de la Neuville, who mentions that Andrei had learned it 'from a certain Pole'. The Austrian diplomat Johann Georg von Korb later commented that Matveev knew Latin (Baidin 2019: 205). De la Neuville also stated that he encouraged the young Matveev to study French. See Sharkova and Liublinskaia (1972: 4, 10 n. 15, 18), who edited Matveev's descriptive account of France and noted that his rendering of Latin epigrams is in awkward Russian, unlike his translations from French, which are quite smooth.

knowing Latin and Polish, Vasilii Vasil'evich, who headed the Ambassadorial Chancery and played a leading role in the government of Tsarevna Sofiia Alekseevna in the 1680s, may also have known some German.[75]

Among the translators, West-European specialists were the majority, 58 out of a total of 84 translators documented by Beliakov (2017: 94, 97) for the period 1645–1682. That they tended to be more highly paid than translators for Asian languages probably reflects the difficulty in recruiting personnel competent in European languages.[76] It is no surprise that in the first decades of the century, Polish specialists constituted about a third of the translators, and though the number subsequently declined, it grew again by the late 1660s. At that time, most of the translators for Polish also knew Latin. Consistently throughout the century, Tatar specialists were by far the largest group among the interpreters, as one might expect, given the constant interaction with the Crimea and with Turkic groups in the steppe such as the Nogais.

75. Bushkovitch 2000: 103, 106–107; Rogozhin 2003: 76. For V. V. Golitsyn's biography, see Hughes 1984.

76. On wages, see Liseitsev 2003: 161–164, 175–179; Kunenkov 2007: 162–193. Oborneva (2019: 100–111) and Beliakov (2017 : 119–140, 152–165) discuss in detail not only the monetary wages but the other kinds of compensation which supplemented translators' income. Belokurov (1906: 131–132, 135) published a very revealing lists of salaries for 1689. The best paid ('top five') among the translators at that time were the West-European language specialists Nikolai Spafarii, Leontii Gross, Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, Stepan Chizhinskii, and Iurii Givner, whose salaries ranged from 157 rubles (Spafarii) to 65 (Givner), whereas all translators for oriental languages – together with some for Western languages – are in the range from 15 to 50 rubles. In the category of the interpreters, the (much lower) top salaries were paid to some oriental-language specialists (with a maximum of 35 rubles and a minimum of nine); interestingly, in this category are several men who apparently knew both Eastern and Western languages (for instance, Turkish, Greek, and Italian). The translators for Greek, commonly immigrants from the Ottoman Empire, generally also were competent in Turkish. The lower pay for translators of Asian languages also could reflect systematic bias toward non-European minorities, who came cheap and were not deemed to deserve more by the Russian authorities.

CHAPTER 7

The Translators' Ethnic Origins and Professional Careers

The question of the ethnicity and thus the origins of the translators themselves is related to the specification of languages. Can we be sure of the geographical origin of a 'Dutch interpreter' or a 'Swedish translator'? We do not share the confidence of some of the Russian historians about being able to specify the background (including education and competence) of many of the translators. The names often do not help, since they are either transcribed (usually not precisely) or Russianized ('translated').[1] We thus remain uncertain as to how many of the translators were 'foreigners' and what that term might mean. For what it is worth, Dmitrii Liseitsev, who has studied the staffing of the Ambassadorial Chancery for the period of the Time of Troubles and its immediate aftermath, concludes that 32 of 44 translators (73%) he can document for that whole period (not all serving simultaneously) were either foreigners or Tatars. Among the interpreters (*tolmachi*) – the specialists in oral translation with presumably lower formal qualifications than the translators (*perevodchiki*) since they may not have been able to read or write – the figure is 24 of 74.[2] Apparently, the promotion of an interpreter to translator was a rare phenomenon throughout the century.[3]

Boris Kunenkov (2007: 133–135) states that 34 out of the 224 translators (including interpreters) studied by him for the years 1613–1645 were Russian native speakers who had learned a foreign language while abroad, often for ten to twenty years or more, as prisoners of war (for instance, in the Crimea or Turkey).[4] Some of them had been

1. About the adaptation of foreign names into Russian, above all in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Amburger 1953.

2. Liseitsev 2003: 165, 179. His long excursus on the translators (pp. 149–183) details the languages and staffing for a number of different years during the period from 1604 to 1622.

3. Contrary to the assertion by Belokurov (1906: 55 – 'Translators were usually recruited from among the interpreters'), there is no supporting evidence in the extensive study by Beliakov (2017: 99), who underscores how the two categories, translator and interpreter, were seen to be distinctly separate by the middle of the seventeenth century. Translators often had long careers, unlike the interpreters, who generally were employed only for one to five years (ibid.: 146).

4. See Gus'kov 2023 for an overview of the translators and interpreters who had learned their foreign languages while in captivity. His essay updates the statistics regarding how many of the interpret-

taken prisoners as children or teenagers. Most of these examples concern specialists in oriental languages. In one case, the native Russian Bogdan Lykov during his captivity in Poland-Lithuania for sixteen years, from about 1621, learned Polish and even some Latin, so that he could translate, together with Ivan Dorn, Gerardus Mercator's *Cosmography* in 1637.[5] Lykov had been employed at the Ambassadorial Chancery starting in April of that year.

Whereas specialists in oriental languages usually were either 'Russian subject Tatars' (*russkopoddannye tatary*) or ethnic Russians who had been abroad as prisoners of war, the specialists for Greek and Western languages were usually native speakers of their foreign language and were either immigrants themselves or born in Russia to foreign parents (Kunenkov 2007: 138). Beliakov (2017: 97) determined that almost all the 58 translators for Western languages documented by him for the period 1645–1682 were foreigners from Western Europe, either first, second, or third generation; only four of them were ethnic Russians. As we shall discuss further below, one might well ask whether a 'second or third generation foreigner' is any longer foreign in a normal meaning of this word if he had grown up in Russia. According to Russian law, he was a foreigner until he converted to the Orthodox belief – something most translators with West-European origins seem to have done.[6] Conversion might make them more attractive for service at the Ambassadorial Chancery and bring financial rewards (Beliakov 2017: 138). However we might interpret these statistics, it is worth noting that a similar pattern of employment of 'non-natives' was to be found among the Russian-language specialists in Sweden.[7]

If in fact, as is commonly believed, the specialists in Muscovy who translated from Western languages were largely of foreign origin, we might reasonably ask how they could have become so proficient in Russian. Indeed, what can we learn about their origins and career patterns? The development of Muscovite knowledge about the outside world obtained from Western pamphlets and newspapers is closely related to the emergence of a professional staff of translators, a process which was, however, uneven in its development.

An important source of new translators were the sons of previously employed translators, thus forming 'dynasties' of translators in Russian service. That is, the translators' sons often grew into their fathers' professions in a similar way as did the sons of kings, tsars, doctors and shoemakers – and even hangmen, if we choose to trust Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's personal physician Samuel Collins (1671: 75). One of the better documented cases, where several members and generations of the same family were employed as translators at the Ambassadorial Chancery, is that of Hans Angler (also

ers were former captives and includes short biographies of many of them.

5. Kudriavtsev 1963: 233–234. For the career of Dorn, Kosheleva 2023.

6. Oparina 2007: 5–6. Foreigners born in Moscow – i.e., second, third etc. generation 'foreigners' – were generally called *moskovskie inozemtsy* (ibid.: 7).

7. Tarkiainen 1969: 104; 1972: 517–520; 2017: 218.

known as Antsa Ondreev).[8] He had come to Russia with his parents at age four, from Livonia. After he grew up, he resided for a time in the house of Lucas Pauli, another foreigner who was employed in Russian diplomatic service. Starting in 1594 Angler served as a translator for German, and he appears to have died in prison in Sweden after being arrested there for espionage during a secret diplomatic mission. At least one account offers a picturesque description of how his death was the result of excessive alcohol consumption.[9] Two sons of Hans Angler also worked as translators, both specializing in German, although one of them, Andrei, may have learned some Swedish while involved in the negotiations in Dederino and Stolbovo in 1615–1617.[10] The other son, Ivan, who also knew Dutch, seems to have incurred the displeasure of Russians in Archangel when he was serving as a translator there, since he reputedly always favored the foreign merchants.[11] As a result he was recalled to Moscow, and a native Russian was sent to Archangel instead (Beliakov 2017: 97). Andrei's son Timofei in turn was a translator for German in the Ambassadorial Chancery. As had his uncle Ivan, he served in Archangel (1664–1673). During that time he was sent on a mission to Vienna and other places; he then was transferred to Moscow. At the time of his retirement in 1689, this third-generation translator had been serving the Muscovite authorities for 25 years.[12]

Even though it is not clear whether his son ever lived to maturity (at least we have no evidence he became a translator under Peter the Great), we have interesting testimony from one of the most distinguished of the chancery translators, Nikolai Spafarii, about the option of home schooling for the boy (Ramazanova 2019: 192–193). In 1697, as will be discussed further in Sec. 7.3, Tsar Peter ordered that the Greek Likhud brothers, who had previously been the main instructors in what we know as the Slaviano-Graeco-Latin Academy in Moscow, open a new school specifically to teach Italian. The students for the most part were to be conscripted by the officials of the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*). When told his son was among those who had been chosen, Spafarii petitioned: 'He [...] is still young, only in his tenth year and ill,' and I 'Nikolai, myself know many different languages and can teach him to the degree it is possible for his age, in Slavic, in Latin, and in Greek.' By way of further explanation why he did not want to turn his ten-year-old over to the Likhuds, Spafarii added that 'it is impossible for him to give his son over to them for instruction, because of previous hostility (*nedruzhba*) with them.' Since he indicated he could also teach his son Italian, in response to his petition, the home-schooling option was allowed. Yet in 1700, probably because his father was not available on account of service obligations, the young Spafarii was enrolled in

8. For Hans Angler's career, Liseitsev 2003: 358–359; Beliakov et al.: 44. For other examples of 'translator dynasties' see, for instance, Angermann 1998: 235 (the Kerkelings); Dumschat 2006: 679 (Stellingwerff); Beliakov et al.: 56–63 (three generations of Baitsyns, translators for Tatar).

9. Petrus Petrejus in *Skazaniia* 1851: 308 (Petrejus 1620: 598). About Angler's death (in 1607) see also Almquist 1907: 109–110.

10. Liseitsev 2003: 366; Beliakov et al.: 42–43.

11. Savich 1982: 66; Beliakov et al.: 44–46.

12. Beliakov 2017: 105, 281; Beliakov et al.: 46–47.

a school located in the home of Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn where there was instruction in Latin.

7.1. Examples of translators' biographies

Some examples of translators' biographies will help us to understand how the Muscovite government staffed this important activity of the Ambassadorial Chancery, and what some of the challenges are in interpreting the evidence.[13] Of particular interest here will be those who were involved in translations from German and Dutch, the two main languages of the sources for the seventeenth-century *kuranty*, but we also include one translator with competence in English (beyond German), the earliest of them all, Ivan Fomin.

7.1.1. Ivan Fomin Almanzenov

The remarkably long career of the translator, whose full name appears in the Russian sources as Ivan Fomin syn Alma[n]zenov, seems to have extended from 1589 until 1653, that is, around 64 years.[14] Just figuring out his name is a challenge – in the foreign sources his name appears as Hans Helmes, John Elmes (Elmson, Elmston), Hans Helmson, Johan Tomasz Helm, depending on the language of the sources.[15] The transition from Hans to Ivan is not surprising, although the German name sometimes was Russianized as *Ants(a)*, *Gans* etc., especially at the end of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Cf., for instance, Hans Flörich, Hans Brakel, Hans Angler, none of whom became an Ivan. Family names were normally not translated, perhaps because their 'meaning' was often obscure. So even if a family name was transparent enough, such as Adler, Angler,

13. Apart from these examples, which have been developed using a variety of documentation, there are very short biographical notices for all of the translators and interpreters whom D. V. Liseitsev (2003: 356–387, appendix 3) has been able to document. There is an analogous list for all 222 translators and interpreters documented for the period 1613–1645 in Kunenkov (2007: 438–491), and now we have a 'biographical dictionary' of translators and interpreters from the late fifteenth century down into the beginning of the eighteenth (Beliakov et al.). This material focuses on the service records and is valuable as a guide to the archival documentation but does not attempt to cover all the possible translations attributed to a specific person or evaluate the quality of those translations. Of considerable interest are the depositions taken in 1696 from some of the translators in service then, since those documents lay out in detail the assignments they had undertaken (see Belokurov 1906: 141–152).

14. On his career and origins, see, inter alia, Leitsch 1960, passim; Volkov 1978; Belobrova 1992a; Angermann 1998: 238; Liseitsev 2003: 357–358; Liseitsev 2006; Beliakov et al.: 36–40. See Maier and Mikhaylov 2009 regarding an English-Russian translation which was surely the work of Fomin and for a detailed discussion of different evidence about his age when he was first employed at the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1589.

15. Angermann 1998: 238. Fomin has mistakenly been identified as 'Ivan Beker fon Del'den', the error apparently from Anton Friedrich Büsching's introduction to the publication of an anonymous contemporary account about the negotiations in the 1640s concerning the possible marriage of Danish Prince Waldemar to Irina Mikhailovna, the daughter of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich. See the translation from Büsching's *Magazin für die neue Historie und Geographie*, vol. 10, in *ChOIDR* 1867, bk. 4, sec. 4: 1 (2nd pagination). This mistake was repeated in many later publications: Tsvetaev 1890: 476; Golubtsov 1891: 34; Nottbeck 1900: 90, Amburger 1935: 6–7; Vainshtein 1947: 205. For the correct identification, see Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 9]: 229–230, who quotes part of Fomin's report from the archival file RGADA, f. 53, op. 1, 1640, No. 1. On Von Delden, see below Sec. 7.1.2.

Hüfner, in the chancery documentation these names were only cyrillicized, never translated.[16] Such is the case here with Fomin. Frequently the Russian documents refer to individuals only by their patronymic, in this case 'Fomin syn' ('son of Thomas').

While most scholars have considered him to be English, there is also plausible evidence he was German, possibly from Livonia.[17] When his son was a student at Cambridge University, he was registered as 'Allemanus' (Appleby 1979: 41). The most recent guide to the translators of the Ambassadorial Chancery (Beliakov et al.: 36) lists his languages as English, Scottish (however, see above, Sec. 6.3), German and Swedish. In the records, he is variously mentioned only as a translator for English or for German. The attribution of Swedish is based, apparently, on several translations he did in connection with diplomatic negotiations at the end of the Time of Troubles (ibid.: 39).[18] A mention only of English may reflect the fact that he was the only translator for this language on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery from 1589–1652, even though the Russian government could employ others on an ad hoc basis to deal with that language (see Sec. 6.1.2). In other documents, he is called a *nemetskii perevodchik*, for instance in 1600, when he first was assigned to a mission to England and then replaced by another translator (*SIRIO* 38: 300–301). At very least we can be certain he knew English and German, the latter serving him in good stead during the period from 1614–1617 when he was in the territories of the Holy Roman Empire. In negotiations with Sweden, German probably would have sufficed. There is no reason to think (*pace* Beliakov 2003: 16) that sources referring to German (*nemetskii*) could have been using the generic meaning of the term ('foreign') and thus might have implied as well English.

In any event, we do not have reliable information on how he came to Russia. If he was a German-speaking Livonian, we can only speculate how he acquired knowledge of English; on the other hand, if he had English parents, but was either born in Russia or came to Moscow as a little child, as suggested by Liseitsev (2006: 247), he would have picked up German – the *lingua franca* in the Foreign Quarter of Moscow – in the street while growing up in Moscow (something that seems perfectly realistic). Liseitsev's hypothesis would explain the fact that Ivan Fomin had an excellent, 'native' competence in Russian, whereas his command of English was very good but did not reach the same level as that of somebody born and educated in England. In some cases he misunderstood the text he was translating, as is evident from his translation in May 1648 (after almost 60 years of service in the chancery) of an 'open letter' written by the English King Charles I.[19]

16. An exception is Hans Schwerenberg, who became Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, but this probably happened before he came to Moscow (see below, Sec. 7.1.5).

17. Angermann 1998: 238. In 1622, Fomin offered one ruble and five *grivnas* for a new church building for the Moscow Lutheran congregation (Fechner 1876, 1: 197), a fact pointing to his possible German roots.

18. On the other hand, have the authors convinced themselves that these letters were written in Swedish, or might they also have been written in German? So if these letters are the only evidence we have for Fomin's competence in Swedish, there remains some reason for skepticism.

19. See Maier and Mikhaylov 2009: 298–299; 305–308.

In the time of Boris Godunov, Ivan Fomin was involved in dealings with the English in Moscow. Curiously, while he was away in 1614–1617 in the Habsburg empire, his wife petitioned that their three-year-old son (!) be allowed to go to England with the English ambassador Sir John Merrick in order that the boy learn English for possible future employment by the tsar.[20] Eventually – only in 1638 – the young Almanzenov did in fact complete his qualifications to become a medical doctor at the University of Cambridge, the first 'Russian' known to have received a medical degree.[21] However, as with the Russians sent abroad by Boris Godunov, there is no plausible evidence that he ever returned to Russia. Apparently, the young Almanzenov did not follow in the profession of his father, even though the latter remained in Muscovite service.[22] Surely there is still more that we need to learn about this remarkably long-serving Muscovite translator.

7.1.2. Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden)

Unlike with Fomin, there is much more information about Ivan Adamov's origins. His situation is also quite unusual because he did not come to Russia as a child or a very young person, as did most of the tsar's foreign-born translators, but at the mature age of about 33 years. Little has been written about his origins in Russian-language historiography, given the fact that so little is documented in Russian archives.

Johann was born into an aristocratic family in Copenhagen, allegedly around 1600.[23] To escape religious persecution, his maternal grandfather Johann von Delden had emigrated to Denmark from a place called Delden in the Netherlands near the German border. In 1580, Von Delden senior was already a distinguished burgher of Copenhagen, owning several ships and delivering large quantities of Rhine wine to the Danish court. His daughter Vendela married one Adam von Böcker; of their three sons Johann apparently was the oldest. Johann adopted both his mother's and his father's name, so that he quite naturally became Ivan Adamov (syn) Beker fon Delden during his time in Russia. Before he left Denmark, he was a very successful entrepreneur and merchant; in 1630 he was appointed councilor. However, soon afterwards, in 1632, he started having financial problems, and in 1633 he fled from Denmark to Russia, ostensibly in connection with his bankruptcy. Erik Amburger (1935: 2) found no evidence for his activity as a merchant in Moscow: "In der Kaufmannschaft hat er, so scheint es, sich nicht mehr versucht."

However, as a supplication of 1647 submitted by 'Ivashko Adamov syn Fandenden' indicates, he had been living as a merchant in Moscow for more than ten years since arriving from Denmark.[24] He was now asking to be employed as a translator in order

20. A transcription of the petition is in Liseitsev 2003: 160. The question arises why Ivan Fomin – particularly if he was originally English – could not teach this language to his son, in Moscow.

21. Appleby 1979: 41–42; Dumschat 2006: 258.

22. See Appleby 1979: 42: "What became of Dr John Helmes remains a mystery." Cf. Savich (1982: 39), who asserts that he returned to Russia to serve the tsar.

23. The most detailed study about Johann Böcker von Delden, his ancestors and scions is Amburger 1935. See also Ellersieck 1955: 61–62 n. 108. For his career in Russia, see Beliakov et al.: 34–36.

24. See above n. 15 regarding the erroneous identification of Von Delden as the translator sent to

to support himself, his wife and children: 'And nowadays, my lord, there are no translators for Latin nor Italian in your Ambassadorial Chancery, but I, a person from a foreign country, know Latin, Italian, French, German, Dutch, Danish, and Swedish' (Kudriavtsev 1963: 237). Adamov was employed in the same year, on 1 June 1647, as a translator for Latin, German, Danish, and Swedish (Beliakov et al.: 34). The other foreign languages he claimed to know – Italian, French, and Dutch – were not mentioned in his appointment record, possibly because there was no need for them at that moment.

Can we trust Ivan Adamov's claim to know all these languages? The biography of his early years gives us the answer. In Copenhagen in his childhood he could easily pick up German and Danish, and through the latter he would understand Swedish as well. Latin and French were school languages, and, moreover, Johann and his two brothers studied in Orléans in 1621. Dutch was the language of his maternal ancestors, and probably his mother and/or grandmother spoke to him in Dutch when he was a child. (His grandmother died in 1606, his mother in 1610.) Finally, he would have acquired Italian when enrolled at Padua University in 1622.[25] So Ivan Adamov was not padding his resumé! In the number of languages, he was probably surpassed only by Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, another polyglot translator at the Ambassadorial Chancery. According to Adam Olearius, Von Delden was the tsar's main ('general') translator and was even ennobled by the emperor.[26]

Von Delden served as an interpreter on several missions abroad, apparently for the first time when he was assigned to the Russian embassy to Stockholm in 1649 (to be discussed in detail in our Ch. 13). Soon after that mission, there is evidence that in his private correspondence he was receiving news from abroad which he shared with his superiors in the Ambassadorial Chancery. In one case, he turned over a letter he had

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Denmark in 1640 to explore whether Prince Waldemar might be a suitable husband for Tsarevna Irina Mikhailovna. So far there is no evidence he was hired for any translation work prior to his appointment to the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1647.

25. The source has 'Patua' (Amburger 1935: 1), which must be a mistake – there is no place with this name in Europe.

26. 'His Tsarist Majesty has an excellent person named Johann Böcker von Delden, of Copenhagen. He received a good university eduction, traveled widely, and learned many languages. A man of this sort has not before been in Moscow [in the Tsar's service]. He serves as interpreter-general and is usually sent with ambassadors on the most important missions. For example, he recently went to the court of His Imperial Majesty at Vienna, in the company of two of the Tsar's envoys, Ivan Ivanovich Baklanovskii, a nobleman, and Ivan Polikarpovich Mikhailov, a *d'iak*. In recognition of Von Delden's outstanding qualities, His Imperial Majesty, as a special favor and on his own initiative, granted him a patent of nobility, as I learned in a letter from a good friend in Vienna, who sent me a copy' (Olearius 1967: 202, translated by Samuel Baron from the 2nd, 1656 edition: 251). The date of this patent – 26 October 1654 – is in Heyer von Rosenfeld (1905: 52). The end-of-mission report of the embassy (*PDS* 3: 187–248 makes it clear that Von Delden was the senior of its two translators (the other was one Ondrei Chambrus), and as such, in the gift-giving from the Emperor to members of the mission at its end on 7 November, was rewarded on the level of the *dvoriane* who were on its staff (col. 238). However, there is no mention that Von Delden would have received the distinction of a patent of nobility. In a later passage, Olearius also wrote (1967: 239; 1656: 281): 'The above-mentioned secret translator Johann Böcker von Delden, who knows many languages, gave them [i.e., the Russians—*IM, DW*] the opportunity to read about unfamiliar things in books that he translated from Latin and French [...]'

received from from his brother-in-law Hans Jürgen Jansen (? – Ivan Iur'gen' Iansen) in Hamburg, dated 20 June (1650?), containing political news, among other things, about the withdrawal of the Spanish garrisons from Frankenthal and about Johan Adler Salvius (the former Swedish delegate at the peace negotiations in Westphalia and resident in Hamburg) returning home to Sweden, etc.[27] Another letter he turned in (on 4 February 1651), which reported an incident in the Third English Civil War, a Dutch naval victory over Portugal and other news, had been written by the 'foreigner Iagan fan Staden' from Pskov, 22 January 1651.[28]

As Olearius subsequently noted, Von Delden was the principal translator for a mission to Vienna in 1654–1655 with the envoys Ivan Ivanovich Baklanovskii and Ivan Polikarpovich Mikhailov.[29] Indeed, Von Delden's activity during that mission was impressive, as we learn from the end-of-mission report. Of course most translators and interpreters attached to embassies sent abroad played key roles in communication with local officials and in the acquisition of important intelligence. Von Delden had the primary responsibility for interactions with local officials, and apparently was involved in a lot of confidential exchanges. On the way home, when the Russian mission was passing through Hamburg on 9 December 1654, Von Delden met with the Danish Prince Waldemar (the putative husband for Irina Mikhailovna), who requested that the Russians assure the tsar that rumors he, Waldemar, wanted to join the Poles in their war against Moscow were false (*PDS* 3: 245–246). Also, while in Hamburg, the former Polish deputy chancellor Hieronim Radziejowski approached Von Delden, indicating he wished to enter Russian service.[30] Radziejowski was a figure of some notoriety, having served in important positions in Poland (including negotiations with the Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky), but involved in significant disputes with other Polish magnates. While initially a supporter of King Jan Kazimierz, Radziejowski then conspired against him and became a political fugitive, seeking foreign support to enable him to return to Poland. This explains his presence in Hamburg, where he had arrived after negotiating in Sweden on the eve of its declaration of war against Poland. Radziejowski's offer to the tsar was not new; he entertained hopes of mediating in the Russian war against Poland.

27. We are not certain about the year. The letter is on an isolated folio (RGADA, f. 96, op. 1, 1650, No. 1, fol. 321, published in V-K IV: 199, No. 52), and it cannot be excluded that fol. 321 was placed among documents from 1650 by mistake. The surrounding folios contain translations from Dutch printed newspapers from the summer of 1650; however, the final evacuation of Frankenthal by the Spanish reported in the letter from Von Delden's brother-in-law took place only in 1652 (Wilson 2009: 771).

28. The tsar's well-known Colonel Nicolaus von Staden, originally from Riga, apparently had an uncle there, whose name was Johann von Staden (Jensen et al. 2021: 131), so this Iagan might have been Johann von Staden. Also Nicolaus' brother Hermann served the Russian tsar as a colonel. However, we could not document him for the years 1650–1651. In Fechner (1876, vol. 1), his name appears regularly for the years 1667–1668. He died in 1682 (ibid.: 382).

29. For the documents on this mission, see *PDS* 3: 89–248.

30. *PDS* 3: 245–246. This news presumably would have been received in Moscow as very significant, given Radziejowski's status (see Wasilewski 1987).

So, clearly Von Delden served as a conduit for information which presumably would have been valued by his superiors in Moscow.[31]

Due to severe winter weather that froze the Baltic, the embassy, which had been told it must take a boat to Riga, had to spend the winter in Lübeck. A letter Von Delden wrote from there in January to the main secretary in the Ambassadorial Chancery, Almaz Ivanov, states he was frustrated by the head of the mission, who refused to let him set out on his own to bring the emperor's letter to Moscow without delay. As Von Delden reported, he would need to write the chancellor in Vienna to explain why no response from the tsar would be forthcoming any time soon (*PDS* 3: 177–182). This would seem to suggest Von Delden enjoyed particular trust on the part of his superiors in Moscow. A good part of the letter deals with the already famous Colonel Nicolaus Baumann, who was planning to serve the tsar and was to arrive together with Von Delden as soon as the mission would be able to return at the end of winter, when navigation reopened.[32]

No sooner had he returned to Moscow, when an embassy from Venice showed up at the Russian border in the complicated situation where the tsar was off on campaign, and the Ambassadorial Chancery had no precedent of any previous reception of a Venetian mission. The next best thing was to search the files for relations with the Netherlands; Von Delden was directed to take the result post-haste to Smolensk.[33] Near the end of their stay in Russia on 12 November, the Venetians wrote a letter in Italian to the Ambassadorial Chancery. They requested that, when the tsar produced an official response for them to take back to Venice, it be accompanied by a translation into either Latin or Italian, since no one in Venice could read it in Russian (*PDS* 10: 907–908). This Italian letter was translated, but we do not know by whom. However, the tsar's formal response to the Venetians, produced in Smolensk on 23 November in his 'traveling chancery', was accompanied by a translation into German (*napisano tsesarskim pismom*) written by Von Delden (ibid.: 925). There is no other evidence about whether Von Delden was involved in the negotiations with the Venetians.

He was attached to the Russian mission that negotiated an important truce with Sweden at Valiesar in December 1658. Prior to that assignment, he is known to have written letters directly to one of the important Swedish diplomats.[34] Such communication may

31. Although he seems not to have compromised his position working for the Russian government, Von Delden also occasionally sent newsletters to his contacts in other countries, possibly as a means of encouraging reciprocity on their part (Ellersieck 1955: 286f.). See notes 34 and 35 below.

32. The exact date of Baumann's arrival in Moscow is 14 February 1658. See the translator Christoph Bousch's unpublished diary, *Tagebuch des Krieges*, fol. 50r (a copy provided us by Oleg Rusakovskii). Baumann served the tsar until February 1671. The most up-to-date study on Baumann is Babulin et al. 2022.

33. *PDS* 10: 846–848. He left Moscow on 11 July, bearing the information on how Dutch missions had been received. One reason for sending him as the courier – perhaps the main one – was that he had returned to Russia with a Danish military officer he had met in Lübeck. The officer wished to enter Russian service and was to accompany Von Delden to Smolensk, where the tsar was to arrive. The documents sent from Moscow reached Smolensk on 13 August (ibid.: 867–868).

34. According to Ellersieck 1955: 286–287, 334 notes 98–99), the two letters, addressed to the

have been in the normal range of his obligations, although one might suppose he expected some reciprocal sharing of important news. Von Delden is also known to have written to one of the Russian-language specialists in Sweden, Jacob Renning, in early January 1661, presumably anticipating the impending negotiations to work out the final details of the Treaty of Kardis.[35] In March 1661, Von Delden was the translator for the Russian mission at those negotiations. In October he was appointed to the embassy dispatched to Stockholm to ratify the treaty. However, he died en route on 10 January 1662.[36]

Von Delden had at least two sons. 'Samoilo Fondelen' is probably the one who accompanied him in the embassy to Sweden in 1649 (Iakubov 1897: 261). He was employed as an interpreter for German during a short period, 1648/49–1650/51, but was exiled for having illegally traded in alcohol (*za korchmoe delo*; Beliakov 2017: 338) and then vanishes from our sources. While there are some uncertainties in the sources, as Amburger (1935: 4–5) posits, Von Delden had one daughter: Margaretha Böcker von Delden and another son Willem (Wilhelm), concerning whose career there is no information. The daughter married Peter Marselis junior in 1673, and after his death she married Paul Menzies in 1676. The sons of Willem (Adamov's grandsons) had military careers, most serving at one time or another in Menzies' regiment. One of them, Wilhelm, rose to occupy significant administrative positions in the first third of the eighteenth century.

7.1.3. Andrei Andreevich Vinius (Andries Winius)

Perhaps the best known of the Muscovite translators for West-European languages in the seventeenth century was Andrei Andreevich Vinius (1641–1716), whose parents, the Amsterdam merchant Andries Winius (1605–ca. 1662) and his German wife, moved to Moscow in 1627.[37] The elder Winius was involved in various enterprises, including the iron works at Tula which he played a key role in establishing. Together with his children – Andrei was about 14 years old at the time – he converted to Russian Orthodoxy in 1655. In 1664, the younger Vinius was hired as a translator for Dutch in the Ambas-

Swedish diplomat Sten Nilsson Bielke, dated Novgorod, 31 July 1658, and Jaamaküla (now in Estonia, Pärnu county), 18 August 1658, are now in RA (Sthlm), Diplomatica Muscovitica 1, Commissioners at Valiesar, Letters to the Crown, 1658.

35. In RA (Sthlm), Diplomatica Muscovitica 8; "Datum ex loco solito, den 6. Januarÿ, 1661" (cf. also Ellersieck 1955: 335 n. 102).

36. Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 179, 182–183.

37. The pioneering study of Vinius is Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 169–297, which is still essential for his career as the Muscovite postmaster. There is an unpublished dissertation on Vinius by Miliukov 2000 (for its summary [*avtoreferat*], see https://web.archive.org/web/20060311014217/http://dissertation1.narod.ru/avtoreferats1/a36.htm). The most detailed recent biography is Iurkin 2007, supplemented by Iurkin 2009. Wladimiroff (2008) focuses on Vinius' interactions with Nicolaas Witsen. The biography by Boterbloem (2013) makes a case for Vinius as a key figure in the 'modernizing' of early modern Russia. None of these books provide new evidence about Vinius' involvement with the post or looks closely at his translation activity. Careful summary treatments of Vinius's career are Tarkovskii 1992 and most recently Beliakov et al.: 86–92. See also Shamin 2019 and Gus'kov 2019. It is not clear where Andrei Andreevich was born. One document indicates that he was born in the Netherlands (*rodom zemli Batavskoi*; Iurkin 2009: 13). However, no traces of his birth or baptism have been unearthed in Holland, where the family was living before the emigration to Russia.

sadorial Chancery. In that capacity, he was assigned to the negotiations with the Dutch embassy headed by Jacob Boreel in Moscow in 1665 (Witsen 1966–1967: 109, 110, 130). It was then that Vinius made the acquaintance of Nicolaas Witsen (future mayor of the city of Amsterdam), who would chronicle the Boreel mission. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship involving the sharing of books and information that benefited both parties (Wladimiroff 2008). Vinius headed an important diplomatic mission to England, France, and Spain in 1672–1674, which was, however, unsuccessful in gaining allies for a war against the Turks (Kazakova 1985). He brought back gold and silver ore samples; this sparked his attempt to launch a private mining venture in the foothills of the Urals, for which a government charter was obtained.[38] Whether Vinius himself actually traveled to the Kama River to locate ore sources seems uncertain; in any event, the venture failed in the face of financial difficulties and competition. Despite the failure of his diplomatic mission, in 1674 Vinius was enrolled in the Moscow nobility (*byl pozhalovan vo dvoriane po moskovskomu spisku*), a distinction bestowed on several of the other important translators (Iurkin 2007: 101). Although he had been appointed as the head of the Muscovite international post in 1672 just prior to his departure for the West, he actually took over the postal administration only in late 1675 (for details, see our Sec. 18.5). In that capacity he would be responsible for the acquisition of foreign newspapers.

Although he continued to work as a translator, like many other competent or well-connected Muscovite officials, he was tasked with other responsibilities. His knowledge of foreign languages would have been relevant for his assignment to be the principal secretary of the Apothecary Chancery (under its head, Prince Nikita Odoevskii) for much of the period between the late 1670s and 1690. Yet it is difficult to find concrete evidence about what he actually did in that capacity.[39] In contrast, as head of the Siberian Chancery between 1695 and 1703, his initiatives seem to have been very important for the development of metallurgy in the Urals; he undertook an inspection tour there in 1702 (Iurkin 2007: 227–249). His access to archival information on Siberia enabled him to supply Nicolaas Witsen with important materials for his magisterial treatment of the region in *Noord en oost Tartarye* (Wladimiroff 2008). During the decade of the 1690s, Vinius was one of the closest advisers to the young Tsar Peter, apparently tutoring him in Dutch, but then they had a falling out, and in 1706 Vinius fled Russian service to the Netherlands. He returned two years later, probably having discovered he was not at home there, and served out his days in Russia as a translator. In Vinius we have a second-generation Muscovite who by virtue of his conversion to Orthodoxy in fact was

38. Iurkin 2007: 108–131. In his analysis of the petition Vinius and his partners submitted for government authorization of the enterprise, Iurkin finds elements of contemporary mercantilist theory and suggests that Vinius must have been familiar with such ideas (ibid.: 116).

39. See Iurkin 2007: 155: Vinius 'remained in the shadows. We do not find [...] a single obvious case in which he was the operative individual.' Dumschat 2006 – whose focus, granted, is on the foreign practitioners in the Apothecary – does not even mention Vinius.

no longer in Russian eyes a 'foreigner'. He would have learned his Dutch and German at home and acquired a native knowledge of Russian in the country where he grew up and spent almost his entire career.[40]

It is well known that Vinius was among the translators who were dealing with foreign newspapers. As we shall suggest later (Secs. 19.4, 19.6.1), there are reasons to hypothesize that certain emphases in the selection of news from the Dutch papers reflect his personal interests. A album (or srapbook) which he kept includes a few of the engraved broadsides that were arriving in the mails and sometimes found their way into *kuranty* translations.[41] Although most of his translations from the newspapers are anonymous, we do have some that are signed with his name (see Sec. 8.4.3). His translations are usually rather free adaptations, sometimes combining material from different sentences, condensing much, and occasionally adding his own explanatory phrases to make it easier for the tsar and the boyars to understand the news. As Shamin (2012b) has shown, in later years Vinius compiled digests further condensing the news from the *kuranty* for the impatient young tsar Peter.

Apart from translating newspapers, Vinius translated a number of other works. His interest in what we now call 'geography' is well known.[42] A collection of moralizing and religious texts is attributed to him, although it is not clear whether he did more than copy and select from them.[43] Better known is his adaptation in 1674 of a collection of fables based ultimately on Aesop. Vinius asserts he translated it from German, but there also is a recent argument that its source was a Dutch version of the text produced by the prominent Baroque poet Joost van den Vondel.[44] Vinius' Russian version seems to have

40. For an analysis of some aspects of the syntax in one of Vinius's translations, see Nenasheva 2018.

41. On the album, see Levinson 1962; Savel'eva 2000; Savel'eva and Beliaeva 2011 (a facsimile edition). Savel'eva (2008: 232–258) provides a descriptive catalogue of its illustrations.

42. Iurkin (2007: 353–378) discusses Vinius' interest in geography at some length, including a map of Siberia that Vinius is credited with having created but concerning which there remain questions about its actual authorship. Iurkin's comparison and contrast of Vinius with Witsen (398–417) is a thoughtful attempt to show how they shared interests, especially in what we can call the 'sciences'. Vinius' possible use of a Dutch atlas in compiling a geographic 'guidebook' and his likely responsibility for compiling a descriptive account of routes to East and South Asia will be taken up in a later context (Waugh 2023b, 2023c, and below Sec. 19.6.3).

43. See Tarkovskii 1992: 178; Iurkin 2007: 421–422. Collis (2012) makes a suggestive case for Vinius' interest in Western esotericism, the evidence primarily from a later period of his career. The possible relevance of this material for the translations in the *kuranty* about the false messiah Shabbetai Zvi will be discussed in our Sec. 21.1.2.

44. Most scholarship indicates that the source was German, specifically Augustus Sadeler's *Theatrum Morum*, published in 1608 (see, e.g., Tarkovskii 1969, 1992: 179–180). Mikhailova (2008) was the first to suggest that Van den Vondel's *Vorstelijcke Warande der Dieren* was the source, a view accepted by Boterbloem (2013: 88, 94 notes 58–59). However, a fuller analysis of all the relevant texts is still needed. Sadeler's text by itself (unless there was some other version) could not have been Vinius' *only* source for his adaptation, even though, judging from the fragmentary examples so far adduced, in part Vinius' text is closer to it than to Van den Vondel. It is possible Vinius had in fact both versions in front of him when he produced what all seem to agree is not a literal translation but a creative adaptation. That Vinius' version, like his original(s), is in verse is of some interest, given

become quite popular: it has been preserved in a number of manuscripts, and in 1712 a condensed version was printed in 500 copies, none of which has survived.[45] Vinius translated part of another German-language work. In 1677 he participated with Leontii Gross and Efim Meisner in translating *L'Instruction du Roy* / *Reitkunst* from a bilingual (French-German) edition, printed 1629, the book attributed to the French dressage master Antoine de Pluvinel (see Sec. 8.3.2). When Vinius returned from self-imposed exile in the Netherlands in 1708 and resumed a career as a translator, it seems most of his work focused on Dutch texts, including a treatise on artillery and another with naval regulations. Both of these translations were published (Iurkin 2007: 425–436).

Over several decades Vinius accumulated a substantial library, of which more than 350 titles have been identified, all of them in languages other than Russian.[46] The collection is impressive for early modern Russia, since few of his Moscow contemporaries had significant collections, and none with the same range of subject matter. As with any library inventories, even today, what a collection may reveal about the owner's interest is difficult to know. Just owning a book does not mean reading or understanding it or necessarily tell us that the book was deliberately acquired. With that caution in mind, we note that many of the books Vinius owned may tell us something about his religious beliefs (on this, see Collis 2012). There are works in a number of the areas of the sciences that related to his professional obligations, e.g., mining, military technology, and medicine. Of particular interest for us is the fact he had books about exploration, including the overseas activity of the Dutch. He had also acquired an almost unbroken set of the annual news compendia (*Hollandse Mercurius*) produced by Pieter Casteleyn in Haarlem. Casteleyn's brother Abraham published the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*, one of the newspapers which began to be received regularly in the 1660s and which Vinius was involved in translating for the *kuranty*. Vinius' interest in the Netherlands is evidenced from his ownership of another large set of volumes, the compilations by Lieuwe van Aitzema (1657–1671) chronicling Dutch history in the seventeenth century. An album he owned is vivid testimony to his interests in collecting engraved broadsides, views of distant places, religious imagery, and the Dutch art of the Golden Age (FIG. 7.1).

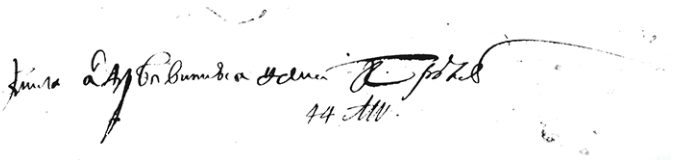

FIG. 7.1. Vinius' inscription on the flyleaf of his album (BAN 17.17.19): 'The book of Andrei Vinius. Value 20 rubles. 44 A.W.'

the fact that later he declaimed panegyric verse of his own composition to greet Peter I on the latter's triumphal return from taking Azov in 1696.

45. On the evidence about the edition of 1712, see Bykova's Appendix 2 in Bykova and Gurevich 1955: 504–514.

46. Savel'eva (2008) is a scholarly catalogue of all the books she was able to identify from Vinius' library. Of course one should not assume it includes all that he may at one time or another have owned. Dutch and German books form the largest part of the collection, but there are many in Latin and a few in other languages. Forty-six books from his collection, not listed by Savel'eva, are now in the university library in Helsinki (Havu and Lebedeva 1997: 143–151). On the album see above n. 41.

7.1.4. Leontii Gross (Georg Gottfried Groß)

In contrast to Vinius, another of his contemporaries and colleagues who seems to have been a very skilled translator and had an excellent command of Russian, Leontii Gross (originally Georg Gottfried Groß), was a 'real foreigner', from the city of Regensburg in Southern Germany.[47] He travelled to Livonia as a young man, probably around 19–20 years old, and he happened to be in Kokenhusen (Koknese) when the Russo-Swedish War broke out in May 1656. According to his own words, he was forced by the Swedes to take part in the defense of Kokenhusen. Thus he was captured and brought to Moscow as a prisoner of war, although he was not a citizen of the hostile country, Sweden. He was born into an honorable family – his father is said to have been a *derzhavets* of Regensburg, but we could not find out what the corresponding term in German or Latin might have been.[48] Georg Gottfried had certainly acquired a decent education (gymnasium) before entering Russian service. He first served his captor, the Boyar Boris Ivanovich Morozov (and later, after Boris Ivanovich's death, his widow) for eleven years, most of the time as the overseer of one of the Morozov estates. Documentation about a dispute with the peasants there notes that Gross was unable to speak Russian (Lavrent'ev 1997: 42). This may be simply a deliberate obfuscation in the judicial proceedings. However, it may also mean that he spoke with a heavy and perhaps incomprehensible German accent.[49] In any event, Gross surely would have had to use Russian during the eleven years in Morozov's service, making it likely that he had a good command of the language at the end of this period (in 1667). Gross himself would write that he was at the time busy learning Russian (ibid.), and he in fact converted to Orthodoxy in 1659. During the same year, he married a local girl from the village of Lyskovo.[50] Presumably this marriage also contributed to the fact that Gross' competence in Russian eventually became native-like, at least in writing.

When given his freedom after the death of Morozov's widow, in 1667 Gross petitioned to join the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery as a translator, where he was employed beginning in 1668 first for German and Latin, and from 1679/80, for Dutch as well.[51]

47. The most complete treatment of Gross' career is Lavrent'ev 1997; see also Lavrent'ev and Matveeva 1992, Angermann 1998, and the recent study, Gus'kov and Maier 2019a. His entry in the new biographical dictionary of Russian translators is Beliakov et al.: 103–107.

48. The word *derzhavets* appears both in the Russian translation of the emperor's letter to the tsar asking that Gross be released (RGADA, f. 210, op. 18, No. 70, fol. 6) and in Gross' own summary of his biography (ibid.: fol. 1). Lacking a Latin or German equivalent, we do not know exactly what his father's position was. A *derzhavets* could theoretically be a mayor, but no mayor with this name (or a similar one), not even a member of the city council, is documented in the administration of Regensburg during the period 1500–1650 (cf. Fees-Buchecker 1998).

49. In Gross' draft translation of the first pages of Kazimierz Siemeonowicz's book about artillery (see note 60) there are a couple of mistakes from which we can conclude that the author is a native speaker of a South German dialect (where the sound [z] does not exist), and there are many instances that corroborate a more general foreign accent (for details see Gus'kov and Maier 2019a: 51–52).

50. According to the Swedish scholar Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld's diary, she was a servant of Morozov's wife (Birgegård 2002: 164, 165, 300).

51. For archival references to this document and others cited here, see Gus'kov and Maier 2019a.

Even though Emperor Leopold I in 1668 had asked Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich to allow Gross to return home, the latter expressed no interest in leaving Russia and merely used the occasion to ask for a higher salary. Like Vinius, he became a member of the Moscow nobility (in November 1674). Already some years after his employment at the Ambassadorial Chancery, he was the second best paid of the chancery's translators, just behind the senior one, Nikolai Spafarii. During periods when the latter was absent from Moscow, Gross was considered the leading translator, who would sign petitions on behalf of the group of translators.[52] His skill in oral interpretation also was valued. This can be seen, among other things, from the fact that he was called in to assist the doctors treating Tsar Fedor Alekseevich during his illness in 1676, apparently because the translators of the Apothecary Chancery were not up to the task (Dumschat 2006: 294). As the leading translator, in an important assignment in 1680 to check the accuracy of translations from a medical report – a death certificate – in Latin and in German, he supervised the work of several colleagues in addition to providing his own translations (see Sec. 8.3.3). The last entry about Gross in the documents of the chancery dates from August 1694, within a month or so before he died in the first half of September. On 18 September the chancery allocated 20 rubles for his burial (Kudriavtsev 1963: 236). He had been serving until he died, and this was indeed quite common for most translators.[53] His sons – Leontii and Petr – did not become translators, and we are not even sure whether Gross taught them German at all, considering the fact that the home language was Russian and that there was no way of picking up any German in the villages where the Gross family was living at least until 1667.

We know for a certainty that Gross was involved in newspaper translation. In an undated document, apparently from 1669, Gross and his colleague Ivan Tiazhkogorskii complained about the activity of the Muscovite postmaster, Leonhard Marselis, asserting that the latter was exceeding his commission by marking in the incoming newspapers the articles which needed to be translated, a function the translators reserved for themselves.[54] We also have some *kuranty* translations (from 1671) which are credited to him by name and for which at least some of the original newspaper sources have been identified, making it possible to assess the quality of his work (see Sec. 8.4.2). He had mastered the chancery language to the degree that there is no immediate evidence of his foreign origins – for instance, his Russian syntax is normal, and he seems to have been less inclined to use Church Slavonic or obsolete Russian constructions than his colleague Tiazhkogorskii (see Sec. 8.3.3). However, the small sample we have of his handwriting, like that of his colleague Tiazhkogorskii, makes it clear that the author is not a

52. The contemporary author Jacob Rautenfels (Reutenfels 1680: 119; Reitenfel's 1905: 98) also mentions Gross – 'Grotius Ratisbonensis', i. e. Grotius from Regensburg – among the leading Muscovite translators, along with Vinius.

53. During the reigns of the Tsars Aleksei Mikhailovich and Fedor Alekseevich there were only five exceptions: two retired, two became monks, and one disappeared without leaving any traces (Beliakov 2017: 101–102).

54. Kozlovskii 1913, vol. 2: 40–41, No. 31; for the date, see the order sent to Marselis, p. 41.

native Russian. Not surprisingly, these foreigners' handwriting differs from that of the professional scribes, as evidenced both in drafts and in fair copies.[55]

Apart from his work on the newspapers, Gross was engaged in many of the important book-translation projects, which occupied a significant place in the activities of the Ambassadorial Chancery in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially during its last quarter. Book translation at the time was often teamwork in the sense that several translators were responsible for one part each. His participation is documented for nine books, a list which might be extended with more research.[56] We shall treat the first of these separately below (Sec. 8.3.2), the translation in 1677 of a famous equestrian manual and its engravings *L'Instruction du Roy / Reitkunst,* a work attributed to Antoine de Pluvinel. The complexity of the task involving the work of Gross and several others, as well as the detailed information about the development of the work, offer a unique example of the collaborative process and merits closer examination.

In 1685, Gross worked with Semen Lavretskii and Ivan Tiazhkogorskii (under Nikolai Spafarii's supervision) on the translation of Hiob Ludolf's *Historia aethiopica* from the Latin.[57] Ludolf was a European pioneer in the study of Ethiopia and its languages; his book long retained its value. The author sent a copy of the book with his personal dedication to Tsars Peter and Ivan Alekseevich in 1684 with Laurentius Reinhuber, born in Wintersdorf, near Lucka in Saxony, a person who is well known in Russian history because of his important contribution to the Muscovite court theater. Ludolf's present is the copy that Prince Vasilii Golitsyn arranged to have translated. The translation is known from two manuscript copies, one (according to Chernetsov 2019: 7) more of a paraphrasing of Ludolf's book, 'full of Polonisms and West Russianisms' (might one posit there Lavretskii's contribution?); the other one is a precise translation into Russian. Further study, taking into account the manuscript drafts described by Boris Morozov, obviously would be welcome.

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55. Identification of the translators' handwriting is based in the first instance on their having signed receipts for payment of their salaries. Boris Morozov (1983) cites one such document dated 1685 (RGADA, f. 159, op. 2, pt. 2, No. 3045), and the publication by Belobrova (1981: 260) contains three lines written by Gross himself (RGADA, f. 138, op. 1, 1683, No. 6, fol. 35). On this basis Morozov identified some draft translations made by Gross, e.g. a fragment of Kazimierz Siemienowicz's book about artillery (see sec. 7.1.4 and note 66). These drafts – if studied carefully and compared with the German original – would allow us to draw some deeper conclusions concerning Gross' competence in Russian than we have so far been able to do. The genealogical record (*rodoslovnaia skazka*) written by Gross in 1686 is clearly a fair copy made by a chancery clerk (RGADA, f. 210, op. 18, No. 70, fol. 1; published by Lavrent'ev 1997: 48).

56. Lavrent'ev and Matveeva (1992) mention eight books; Lavrent'ev (1997: 37 n. 2) adds one more.

57. As Sobolevskii (1903: 95–96) correctly specified, the translation was from the edition of 1681; its table of contents matches that in the Russian version (see VD17 23:230532H, with multiple key pages online). Morozov (1983: 121 n.) observed that the manuscript (RNB F.IV.105) has a date of 1683, although no such edition is known. The Russian manuscript contains a dedication to Tsars Peter and Ivan, which means that it could not have been written earlier than 1682 (ibid.). Chernetsov (2019: 5-8) clarifies exactly the history of how the book (with a dedication by the author, Ludolf, of 5 July 1683) arrived in Moscow. He also notes the existence of a second translation: RNB, Pogodin Collection, No. 1711.

Works on pyrotechnics and artillery were becoming of considerable interest; several of them now were among the translations produced in the Ambassadorial Chancery. In 1685 Gross was one of the translators for Joseph Boillot's book about fireworks and artillery from the bilingual Strassburg edition of 1603.[58] The translation was apparently made from the German text: all of the translators – Gross, Givner (Hübner), Tobias Meisner, and Tiazhkogorskii – knew German; only the last had French among his languages.

Apparently without any help, near the end of his life, Gross translated another book about fireworks: the Dutch version of a book by John Babington, originally written in English.[59] The fact that Gross had to make a translation from the Dutch probably means that Vinius was too busy at the time. The work took nearly a year and, as Gross wrote in a petition, had been a very difficult task for such an old and sick man who did not have Dutch as a native language and had been very busy with translation of newspapers as well as other documents.[60]

Gross was one of two translators responsible for the Russian version of Ernst Braun's *Novissimum Fundamentum & Praxis Artilleriae…* (Danzig 1682), a 300 page volume which, despite the opening Latin of its title, is attested only in German.[61] Braun obviously had some prominence in Danzig, where he designed and executed the fireworks

58. *Artifices Defeu, & divers Instruments de guerre. Das ist/ Künstlich Feurwerck und Kriegs Instrumenta/* […] Strassburg: Bertram, 1603 (VD17 3:312613N). For the documents concerning this translation, see Kudriavtsev 1963: 214–215. The author's name is given as 'Iosif Boilot Langrini' in the Russian translation (ibid.: 214; Bulanin and Romanova 2004: 52). However, the adjective Langrini (Latin) or Langrois (French) do not belong to the name: they designate the author's geographical origin, the city of Langres in the Eastern part of France (department Haute-Marne). Regarding the source language for the translation, see also Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 74.

59. Gross worked from the Dutch edition (*Pyrotechnia, of konstige vuur-vverken* […] Amsterdam: Baltus Boekholt, 1676), as we can see from his translation of the title page, quoted by Kudriavtsev (1963: 217). The original English version was *Pyrotechnia Or, a Discourse of Artificiall Fire-Works* […] London: Thomas Harper, 1635. The tsars had sent Gross the Dutch book to translate on 24 January 1693. Presumably it is no coincidence that in the first week of January the Scottish officer Patrick Gordon, who was closely involved with the young Peter I in military maneuvers, commissioned one of his acquaintances to try to obtain in Danzig 'the newest or latest edition of *Pyrotechnia*' and another work of similar content by Joseph Furttenbach, *Halintro-Pyrobolia* (Gordon 2009–2016, 5: 204; for copies online: VD17 23:270319A). So presumably Gordon would have seen the copy Gross was asked to translate (he specified that both books were in folio format); we know that he was involved in this period with putting on fireworks displays for celebrations in Moscow. In a letter he wrote on 21 April to his agent in Riga, Gordon expressed regrets for not yet receiving his books from Danzig, but whether that meant the given ones on pyrotechnics is not clear (ibid.: 231). A different book by Furttenbach was translated in this period, presumably because of Peter's interest in the subject (Morozov 1983: 114–115, 118–119).

60. The petition is in RGADA, f. 159, op. 1, pt. 1, 1694, No. 747, fols. 1–3, quoted in Kudriavtsev 1963: 236.

61. *Novissimum Fundamentum & Praxis Artilleriae, Oder Nach itziger besten Mannier neu vermehrter und gantz Gründlicher Unterricht : Was diese höchst-nützliche Kunst vor Fundamenta habe und erfordere/ denn auch/ was vor neue Arthen Canonen/ Feuer-Mörser und Haubitzen heutiges Tages im rechten Gebrauch sind/ und zu Felde geführet/ auch wie selbige gegossen* […] Danzig: Gräfe (VD17 23:672702E, 7:665337A, 39:126907U).

display to celebrate the coronation of King Jan Sobieski in 1676.[62] Boris Morozov's assertion that Gross was responsible only for the first half of the translation seems to be correct, whereas his hypothesis that the second half might be the work of Semen Lavretskii is questionable, given the fact that Lavretskii is known as a specialist only for Polish and Latin, and Morozov apparently did not have access to a signed sample of Lavretski's handwriting.[63] Could it be that the handwriting in the draft translation attributed to Lavretskii actually belongs to Petr Shafirov, who had been employed as a translator for German and Dutch in 1690?[64] Possibly the original intention was that Gross do the entire book; his death in September 1694 meant that someone else had to finish the work. This translation was the first book about artillery to be printed at the order of Tsar Peter I. There were editions of 1709 and 1710, and it was the only Petrine artillery publication to be reprinted – apparently because of the demand.[65]

The last of the translations for which Gross was to share responsibility (this time with Tiazhkogorskii and at least one other translator) was a book about artillery authored by a citizen of Poland-Lithuania, Kazimierz Siemienowicz (1600–1651) and first published in Amsterdam (1650), in Latin, as *Artis Magnae Artilleriae Pars Prima*.[66] The book was translated into multiple languages: French, German, Dutch, English; many copies have survived. The Russian translation, made between 1693 and 1695, was from a 1676 German edition.[67] Gross presumably never completed before his death the part he had been

62. See the broadside engraving at https://www.wilanow-palac.pl/fireworks_in_gdansk_at_the_coronation_of_jan_iii_sobieski.html.

63. The draft translation described by Morozov (1983: 114, 119) is in RGADA, f. 181, op. 3, No. 255. According to Morozov, fols. 1–73 were written by Gross and fols. 73^{v}–161 by Lavretskii; the fair copy is on fols. 162–398. Morozov may simply have assumed that the translation was from Latin and thus involved Lavretskii. For Lavretskii's biography, see Beliakov et al.: 139–144.

64. The translation is not dated. For Shafirov, see Beliakov et al.: 223–225. We have not yet compared the second half of the draft translations (fols. 73^{v}–161) with any texts that were undeniably written by Shafirov. Another possibility here might be Petr Vul'f, who was appointed in late November 1694 specifically to replace Gross, with an expertise in Latin, German and Dutch (Kudriavtsev 1963: 236–237; Beliakov et al.: 95–96).

65. Morozov 1983: 114; Cracraft 2004: 142. Cf. Bykova and Gurevich 1955: 90–92, who suggest the translation is from the 1687 edition, a conclusion they drew, apparently, from the fact that the engravings for the Russian printing of the book were based on those in the Danzig edition of 1687. They also repeated erroneous identification of the translators from the older literature, not having seen the evidence adduced by Morozov. The published version of 1709 was edited by Peter's chief 'scientific adviser' and master of artillery, James Daniel Bruce (Iakov Viliminovich Brius) and thus may not exactly reproduce the original translation (on Bruce, see Boss 1972: 15–35; Cracraft 2004: 198–204). For comments on the translation in the context of other Petrine publications about artillery, and in particular on the book's introduction of new vocabulary into Russian, see Cracraft 2004: 140–143.

66. A 'pars secunda' by the same author never appeared because he died – or was killed – before this could happen; instead, Daniel Elrich wrote some kind of a 'second part', directly in German. On Gross' role in the translation, see Gus'kov and Maier 2019a: 49–51. Five draft pages written by Gross have been preserved and studied: RGADA, f. 181, op. 3, No. 259e, fols. 1–5.

67. *Vollkommene Geschütz- Feuerwerck- Und Büchsenmeisterey-Kunst / Hiebevor In Lateinischer Sprach beschrieben und mit Fleiß zusammengetragen Von Casimiro Simienowicz, Königl. Majest. und der Cron Pohlen General-Feldzeugmeister Leutenant* [...] Frankfurt am Main: Johann David Zunner and Henrich Friese, 1676 (VD17 39:125851W; 39:125847L; 39:125842X).

assigned, perhaps managing to finish only the introduction. While a portion of the draft translation is in Tiazhkogorskii's handwriting, who was responsible for the remainder is not certain—most likely it was either Petr Shafirov or Petr Vul'f.[68] Shafirov and his brother Mikhail seem to have been involved in the editing.[69]

7.1.5. Ivan Mikhailov Tiazhkogorskii (Johann(es)/Hans Schwerenberg)

Another of the translators involved in the work on the *kuranty*, starting around the same time as Vinius and Gross, was Ivan Mikhailov Tiazhkogorskii. He is of particular interest as one of the most polyglot translators ever been employed at the Ambassadorial Chancery: his languages included German, Latin, Polish, French, Belorussian (Ruthenian), and Hungarian.[70] The examples we have studied where we can compare his translations with the originals show that he had a high level of skill, if not necessarily equal across all the languages in which he had competence. Tiazhkogoskii's biography illustrates well the challenges of trying to establish the ethnic origins and family history of the translators in Moscow.

Until recently, there was no reliable information about Tiazhkogorskii's geographical or ethnic background. According to Konstantin Kharlampovich (1914: 430–432), he belonged to the group of translators who came from Ukraine, among them Semen Lavretskii, Ivan Gudanskii, and Stepan Chizhinskii. One reason for Kharlampovich's statement might be that 'Belorussian' is listed among the translator's foreign-language competence, or because Tiazhkogorskii served for a couple of years in the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery (*Malorossiiskii prikaz*). As it turns out, while Tiazhkogorskii was in fact *recruited* to Moscow from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, he was not a native from that region. On the basis of recent scholarship, we can now rewrite the story of this translator's professional life and can leave the earlier, more speculative historiography behind.[71]

We can only approximate the year of his birth. Presumably he was born in the first half of the 1630s, a hypothesis based on certain facts about his life and career. He had some professional experience before he came to Moscow and was first employed at the

68. Our assumption here, as in the earlier example above, is that Lavretskii did not have a sufficient command of German for this task. Morozov (1983: 118) only provisionally suggested that part of the draft manusript is in Lavretskii's hand.

69. See Morozov 1983: 113, 118. Both Shafirovs spent time abroad, Petr being a member of the Great Embassy of 1697, and both worked as translators. Petr became an important official during the first third of the eighteenth century. See their biographies in Beliakov et al.: 223–225, 269; for Petr Shafirov, see also Cracraft 2004: 185–191.

70. All six languages are listed on several occasions, whereas other documents mention only some of them. A full list is given, for instance, in RGADA, f. 138, op. 1, 1680, No. 2, fol. 1 (for two more examples, see Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 70). The order of the languages varies in the different documents; there does not seem to be a 'natural order' in which they are mentioned. He might have known some Greek, which he could have learned in school; it is possible he knew some Italian, given the fact that he was called on to test an aspiring translator's knowledge of that language in 1682 (ibid.: 72–73).

71. For the most recent scholarship on Tiazhkogorskii, see Gus'kov and Maier 2019b; Maier 2019; Beliakov et al.: 199–204.

Ambassadorial Chancery in September 1668.[72] In correspondence dated 3/13 February 1699, the Brandenburg ambassador Daniel von Printz described the translator 'Fiska Gorski' (=Tiazhkogorskii) as 'Schwerenberg, an old, icy grey man.'[73] A man of 65 or 70 years would certainly have been considered as a very old person at the time. Apparently Tiazhkogorskii died in the second half of 1704: the last archival document that mentions him is from 30 June 1704.

How did Hans Schwerenberg become Ivan Tiazhkogorskii? Here is the likely answer. One archival document indicates that Tiazhkogorskii 'came [to Russia] from Lithuania, with Bogdan Nashchokin' (in 1668).[74] Yet other documents specify his origin as the Roman Empire (that is, the dominion of the Austrian Habsburgs). So we have to assume the reference to Lithuania is to the place where Nashchokin had made Tiazhkogorskii's acquaintance or at least heard about him. Had Tiazhkogorskii been born there (or in the Polish Kingdom), there is little likelihood he would have learned all his languages, above all Hungarian. Apparently he had already been living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for some eight to ten years when Nashchokin (in Minsk) recruited him, undoubtedly impressed by the man's linguistic capacities. After exchanges with Tiazhkogorskii during a negotiation in 1684, the Poznań commandant reported that the translator had been a parish priest in Minsk and was impressive for his knowledge of the geography of the Commonwealth (Kochegarov 2008: 225 n. 180). That would explain his knowledge of Polish, 'Belorussian', and even Russian. When he came to Moscow in 1668, he was already known under his new 'slavicised' name, which is documented in one occasion (in Polish) as 'Jasnogorski'. This probably was a slightly garbled form of *Schwerenberg* in Polish, which would have been *Ciężkogórski* (*schwer* 'heavy, burdensome' → *ciężki*; *Berg* 'mountain' → *gora*). That the Russian spelling 'Cheshkogorskii' is sometimes found in the documents would seem to strengthen our hypothesis that Schwerenberg first translated his name into Polish (perhaps in Minsk) and later from Polish into Russian.

Tiazhkogorskii was apparently a Catholic before he came to Russia, although the documents are somewhat contradictory in this case, too. He must have declared that he was a Lutheran (*liutorskoi very*) when he first arrived in Russia (see the document cited in

72. In his own deposition (*skazka*) from 1696, published in Belokurov 1906: 145–146, Tiazhkogorskii says that he was employed at the Ambassadorial Chancery in the year [7]179, i. e., 1670/71, but this is not consistent with other documents, for instance RGADA, f. 138, op. 1, 1679, No. 2, fol. 1, according to which he was employed at the chancery in September 1668. See also Fechner 1876, 1: 333, for more (indirect) evidence, also from the year 1668. The earliest newspaper translation signed by him is from spring 1669 (see Sec. 8.4.1).

73. Quoted in Dukmeyer 1909–1910, 1: 163. His name also appears as Johannes (or Hans) Schwerenberg in Johann Georg Korb's diary (1700) about the imperial embassy of Christoph Ignaz von Guarient to Moscow in 1698–1699 (VD17 23:317927N). In the otherwise Latin text, the German spelling is used throughout when referring to the translator Schwerenberg (e.g., pp. 41, 44 [D. Joañis Schwerenberg; genitive case], and 53).

74. RGADA, f. 138, op. 1, 1673, No. 5, fol. 37. Bogdan Ordin-Nashchokin was a cousin of the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin.

note 72). However, during his official installation as a translator at the Ambassadorial Chancery on 4 September 1668, he affirmed by oath that he was a Catholic. About a year later – the exact date is not known – together with his wife he converted to Orthodoxy, which resulted in his salary at least temporarily being doubled and with the additional reward of a number of gifts (Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 63–66).

At the time of his appointment and conversion he seems to have enjoyed particular favor in the chancery (paid better than the other translators), but with the replacement of Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin first by Artamon Matveev and then, after the latter's dismissal, by Larion Ivanov, Tiazhkogorskii's career suffered. He received assignments for several positions away from Moscow starting in the early 1670s. In a later petition he listed nine expeditions during a period of roughly ten years, 1671–1681.[75] Some assignments, for example to Novgorod and in an embassy to Poland-Lithuania, clearly drew on his professional expertise. His being sent to Olonets in the Russian north under Bogdan Nashchokin might be interpreted as a kind of internal exile, but might also be related to the employment there of foreign mining experts. We then find him on assignment in Ukraine and on the payroll of the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery, at that time under Artamon Matveev's direction. Serving under some of the Russian military commanders there would make perfect sense, since they would have need for competent translators. In the late 1670s though, when Larion Ivanov was in charge of the Ambassadorial Chancery, on more than one occasion Tiazhkogorskii's salary was cut, and the money then used to pay other translators. It was only with the death of Ivanov in the uprising of 1682 and the ascent of Vasilii Golitsyn that Tiashkogorskii's situation (and his compensation) improved.

Tiazhkogorskii's foreign-language competence poses questions about how he could have learned all these languages, the most surprising among them Hungarian. Archival documents state that he was a Hungarian nobleman and that he came from the Holy Roman Empire.[76] We have not found any translations from Hungarian, so we cannot assess Tiazhkogorskii's knowledge of this language. Analyses of the spelling mistakes in his draft translations make it perfectly clear that, like Leontii Gross, he was a native speaker of German, more exactly of a Southern variety of this language.[77] Our hypothesis is also corroborated by his original name, which sounds very German: Johannes (or Hans) Schwerenberg.

If Tiazhkogorskii was born in a bilingual German-Hungarian territory, he could have learned German and Hungarian as a child, and Latin at school; if he was lucky enough to have been born in a region where three or even four languages were spoken, he could, as a child, have learned even Polish or Slovakian. In this case he would have had at least

75. For reasonable hypotheses as to what happened in his career in the 1670s, see Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 66–69.

76. Maier 2019: 77. Even if the Kingdom of Hungary was legally not part of the Holy Roman Empire, for contemporaries one of the kingdom's subjects might be considered a subject of the emperor.

77. Maier 2019: 79–81; Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 62–63.

a passive understanding of Polish even before he was sent to Minsk, and this knowledge would certainly have been useful when he had to learn Ruthenian ('Belorussian') and Russian. He could have learned French during his school time, possibly from a private teacher, which was more common for modern languages, whereas the dead ones – Latin and Greek – could be learned at school. Incidentally, it does not seem that he knew French very well, and there is only very slight evidence in a translation made in 1697 or 1698 that he might have known some Greek.[78]

The bulk of Tiazhkogorskii's translations were apparently made from German sources. For instance, we have explicit evidence that he translated German newspapers (see Sec. 8.4.1). Clearly he was a very competent translator of complicated German-language news items. Other translations from German that most probably were made by him show that he understood the originals accurately and was able to convey their content into intelligible Russian.

Beyond newspaper translations, he also took part in a number of book translations from the German (alone or with one or more colleagues). It seems likely that he was the translator in 1670 of Antoine de Pluvinel's famous book *Maneige Royal*, on equitation and horse dressage (see below Sec. 8.3.2). His participation in the translation of Joseph Boillot's book *Artifices Defeu* […] *Künstlich Feurwerck* has already been mentioned in Sec. 7.1.4 about his co-translator Gross. Although the books were bilingual (French and German), clearly the translations were made from the German texts. Other books on pyrotechnics and artillery translated by Tiazhkogorskii in collaboration with his colleagues included Joseph Furttenbach's manual, *Büchsenmeisterey-Schul*.[79] No year is given for when the translation was made, but if it was in the 1690s, the collaborator might well have been Petr Shafirov.[80] As already discussed, along with Gross and possibly Shafirov or Vul'f, Tiazhkogorskii was involved in the translation of Kazimierz Siemienowicz's book on artillery. Boris Morozov attributed to Tiazhkogorskii another translation from German, Georg Lohmeier's book about Europe's states and principalities, but the palaeographic evidence in the manuscript fails to provide unequivocal proof.[81]

Even though the Ambassadorial Chancery had a number of other translators competent in Latin, Tiazhkogorskii's knowledge of the language was put to use. Since we

78. Maier and Rusakovskii 2019; Kuznetsova et al. 2016.

79. The original undoubtedly was *Büchsenmeisterey-Schul: Darinnen die New angehende Büchsenmeister und Feurwercker* […] *getrewlich und auffrichtig/ underwisen/ und gelehrt werden* […] Augsburg: Johann Schultes, 1643 (VD17 23:230397Z).

80. Boris Morozov (1983: 118–119) hypothesizes that Semen Lavretskii was the other translator, but that seems unlikely, given his expertise mainly in Polish and Latin.

81. Morozov 1983: 122. The original is unquestionably *Der Europäischen Reiche Und Fürstenthümer Historische und Genealogische Erläuterung In Stamm-Tafeln verfasset/ und ans Liecht gegeben* […], printed in 1695 (after the author had died) by Georg Lipper in Lüneburg (VD17 3:606964Q, with multiple key pages). Even though Morozov specifies that one manuscript of the translation – RGADA, f. 181, op. 2, No. 195 – is at least partially a draft, in our opinion it is a fair copy made by a professional scribe (during the eighteenth century). According to Morozov – and we concur – the other manuscript, No. 196, possibly seventeenth-century, is a fair copy. See also Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 74.

know that he was working on the *kuranty* early in his employment, he *might* have been the obviously very competent translator of the Polish king's Latin abdication speech of September 1668 (but there are several other candidates too). There also are some newspaper items, possibly attributable to him, which were translated from the Latin Cologne-based newspaper *Ordinariae Relationes* in 1670 and 1672.[82] We know for sure that he was one of the translators for an important Latin medical diagnosis in 1680 (see Sec. 8.3.3). As noted above, in 1685 he collaborated with Gross and Lavretskii on the translation of Hiob Ludolf's important book about Ethiopia, although it may be difficult, or impossible, to distinguish Tiazhkogorskii's contribution from that by Gross. We know that toward the end of his life he was involved (along with Nikolai Spafarii) in the translation of the diary by Johann Georg Korb; however, it is difficult to know whether one or both of them were responsible for the poor quality of that translation.[83]

Tiazhkogorskii's knowledge of French, which merits additional analysis, seems not to have approached the level of his German. Apart from a very short poem translated from the first of the Pluvinel books, *Maneige Royal* (to be discussed below, Sec. 8.3.2), in 1688 Tiazhkogorskii was responsible for a translation of Jacques Ozanam's book on trigonometric theory, accompanied by trigonometric tables.[84] After a somewhat superficial comparison of Tiazhkogorskii's draft translation with the French original, our impression is that he generally understood the French text, even if his Russian translation would most likely have been incomprehensible to anybody who could not simultaneously compare every sentence with the Freinch original. However, it would be very unfair to blame the translator for this. It seems quite optimistic to expect that a person – who is not himself a mathematician – could translate a book about trigonometry from a language which is not even his mother tongue into another non-native language, in which the necessary terminology does not yet exist! The same consideration was raised by Tiazhkogorskii and some of the other experienced translators in 1680, when they were to translate a difficult medical text in Latin (see Sec. 8.3.3).

82. The translation of the Polish king's sermon is published in V-K VI/1: 314–315; the newspapers are in ibid.: 533–534 (paper printed in 1670) and V-K VII: 247 (paper printed in 1672). For the Latin originals and a discussion of the quality of these specific translations see V-K VI/2: 635–641; V-K VII: 597–600. See also Sec. 8.1 for comments on these translations.

83. Tiazhkogorskii had also been involved as an interpreter in the negotiations with the Habsburg embassy which Korb (1700) chronicled in his diary. However, Friedrich Dukmeyer, who wrote his doctoral dissertation about Korb's diary, was very critical regarding the quality of this first Russian translation (which was never published). He shows on the basis of a concrete example that the translator had not understood the meaning of the original at all (see Dukmeyer 1909–1910, vol. 1: 11). Apparently the passage in question is one that, on the basis of the handwriting in the draft manuscript, was the work of Spafarii (see Gus'kov and Maier 2019b: 72).

84. Kudriavtsev 1963: 215; Morozov 1983: 117. The drafts of the first chapters translated by Tiazhkogorskii, identified by Morozov, are in RGADA, f. 181, op. 3, No. 259, fols. 24–31; No. 256, fols. 179–187 and 299–304. The French original was the second edition of Jacques Ozanam's *Tables des sinus, tangentes et sécantes, et des logarithmes des sinus et des tangentes* [...] *avec un traité de trigonométrie par de nouvelles démonstrations* [...] Paris: E. Michallet, 1685 (available through Google books; first edition 1670). All details about the publisher, the year, as well as the printing licence – 'Avec privilege du roi' – have been translated meticulously.

Boris Morozov has also attributed to Tiazhkogorskii some small fragments of another translation from a French book about artillery, material which has not yet been the subject of a comparative analysis. It is hard to say whether only these fragments were translated; it is also possible that other parts have been lost or preserved elsewhere.[85]

The translations made by Tiazhkogorskii, for which Morozov supposes Polish originals, were probably made from German sources. The first of these is a text about a military encounter between Polish and Swedish forces. Its most likely source is an anonymous German pamphlet which describes – almost in the form of a diary – the movements of the Polish king from 3 July to 1 August 1700, culminating in a battle against the Swedes near Thomasdorf (in Latvian: Tome), on the Southern bank of the Düna river, some 45 km southeast of Riga, on 31 July.[86] The Russian forms of geographical names and loanwords (for instance, *Tumsdorf* for *Thomasdorf*; *granat'ery* for *Granatirer*) make it likely that we are dealing with a German-language source. Morozov (1983: 121) posited that Tiazhkogorskii translated a Polish source for a *Kniga o mel'nichnom stroenii* ('Book about the functioning of mills'). The manuscript draft fragments indeed seem to be in Tiazhkogorskii's hand; the work was finished at the latest in 1691.[87] However, the original for this most probably was a German book printed in Leipzig and Altenburg in 1612.[88] The third publication in question here is described as 'The resolution ('constitution') of the Polish sejm concerning the election of Saxon Elector Stanislav August as king' in 1697 (Morozov 1983: 123). The source is most likely the official pamphlet published for the election of King August II (the Strong), the former ruler of Saxony.[89] The Kraków edition is bilingual, the first half in Latin and the second in Polish; a comparison of the texts with the Russian translation is still needed to determine

85. Morozov 1983: 119; RGADA, f. 181, op. 3, No. 256, fols. 1–4 and 18–24. The original was *Mémoires d'artillerie, recueillis par le Sr Surirey de Saint-Remy, commissaire provincial de l'artillerie* [...] Paris: Jean Anisson, 1697 (available in Google books). Morozov makes it clear in his article that in their current form the manuscripts of the various translations he discusses are in great disarray, due to the fact that various quires from both drafts and fair copies were combined carelessly into the current archival units, presumably at the end of the eighteenth century.

86. Morozov 1983: 124; the identification of the likely source is ours: *Relation, Was seither Ihrer Königl. Maj. von Pohlen [et]c. Ab-Reyse aus Warschau passiret ist. Anno 1700* (VD17 3:627650X).

87. RGADA, f. 181, op. 3, No. 259, fols. 148–155; 474–481. In 1691, the manuscript illuminator (*zolotopisets*) Karp Ivanov syn Zolotarev completed the gold letters and drawings for a fair copy of this book (see Kalishevich 1961: 404). The Ambassadorial Chancery had an in-house workshop for manuscript illumination, since formal messages sent to foreign rulers always had to be lavishly decorated. For Zolotarev's career, see Nikolaeva 2012: 93–96.

88. *Theatri Machinarum* [...] *Theill 3: Darinnen vielerley künstliche Mühlwerck/ von mancherley arten* [...] Leipzig: [Grosse], 1612 (VD17 23:289664D). Two later editions, by the same Leipzig printer, apparently are reprints of the 1612 edition (VD17 39:119246K; 23:277319F).

89. *Przywileie y Constitucie Seymowe Zà Pánowánia Iego Kroleńskiej Mći Augusta II. Roku Pánskiego M.DC.XC.VII*. Kraków: Mik. Alex. Schedel (digital copy available from the Jagellonian Library). Given the extensive documentation about the Russian acquisition of the constitutions of the Polish diets and elections, the acquisition of this book and its translation should hardly be a surprise. It is clear from the inventories of the Polish Affairs files in RGADA, f. 79, that Tsar Peter took an active interest in the outcome of the Polish election.

which (if either) of these languages was Tiazhkogorskii's source.[90] These examples fail to demonstrate that Tiazhkogorskii made translations from Polish, and we therefore cannot assess his competence in this language.

Nevertheless, there is no reason to question Tiazhkogorskii's attestations about his widely ranging language competence, even if there is no definite evidence yet regarding translations by him from Polish, and no documentation at all concerning any translation by him from 'Hungarian' or 'Belorussian'. Of course he could still have used one or more of these languages when assigned to diplomatic negotiations.

7.2. The dawn of a new era: Russians sent abroad for language training

These case studies of several competent translators illustrate well why individuals from immigrant families were so important for the work of the Ambassadorial Chancery. However, the time was approaching when training of translators by sending them abroad to study languages was becoming a priority that could more readily be addressed with the increasing integration of Russia into Europe. Even if the sons of first-generation immigrants might have learned the family language(s) at home, additional formal study might be needed to to bring their ability up to the level required for some of the tasks now expected of the Ambassadorial Chancery.

Although the initiative under Boris Godunov to send Russians abroad to learn languages proved to be disappointing, throughout the seventeenth century the Russian government did not abandon the idea of training its future diplomatic corps through foreign travel and study.[91] Further work is needed to document the practice, but here is one suggestive example. A major Russian embassy was sent to Stockholm in 1649 to settle once and for all the thorny problem of illegal migration across the borders that had been agreed on in the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617. The embassy was headed by the prominent noble Boris Ivanovich Pushkin, who had previously led another high-level mission to Sweden, and was seconded by Afanasii Osipovich Pronchishchev, who was on his way to becoming a real 'Sweden expert' for the government, and by a secretary (*d'iak*) of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Almaz Ivanov, who would become its de facto head during the 1650s. Two translators were assigned to the mission: Matvei Eliseev syn Meiger, a specialist for German, Dutch and English, who had previously been on an embassy to the

90. Morozov's indication that fols. 372–386 of the draft are in Tiazhkogorskii's hand is dubious, even if 458–465 seem to be his work. We have so far found no likely source in German for this translation, although there are many contemporary German publications relating to the activity of August II.

91. For eastern languages (Turkish, Persian, Tatar, etc.), where substantial numbers of translators and interpreters were always needed, starting around the middle of the seventeenth century there seems to have been a regular practice of sending individuals for instruction within the territories of the Muscovite state. In particular, Astrakhan, located where such languages were regularly spoken, was a destination for such instruction, although then identifying a good teacher there was not always assured. Most of those involved in this training were from families where they had acquired at least one of the languages and frequently were the sons of individuals already in Russian service. See Kulmamatov 2020: 67–69.

Netherlands, and Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden). Their systematic translations from German newspapers is discussed in our Ch. 13.

One of the tasks of the mission was to arrange for the return to Russia of Andrei Viberkh, son of the experienced translator Ul'f Iakovlev syn Viberkh (Wolf Jakob Wyborch), a Swedish officer captured by the Russians who had refused to return home in 1618. The Russian mission to Sweden in March 1646, headed by Grigorii Gavrilovich Pushkin, had negotiated an agreement that the young Viberkh would be allowed to remain in Sweden until he had learned Swedish, German and Latin, and that the Swedes would facilitate his study (Iakubov 1897: 152–153). Once he had mastered those languages, he was to return to Russia. The embassy in 1649 was to raise the question of whether he had been there long enough for the purpose, but if not, to ask for an extension. Unfortunately, the published records say nothing about the response and what his fate may have been.[92]

Apart from the information about the young Viberkh's studying in Sweden, the records of the 1649 mission are of interest for the fact that the son and a nephew of Afanasii Pronchishchev were included in its staff. The son, Ivan, became an active participant in subsequent negotiations with Sweden and, following in the family tradition, would take his own son Petr on missions to which he was assigned.[93] This inclusion of family members in the embassy, presumably so that they could gain foreign experience and perhaps learn languages, extended to both of the translators. Matvei Eliseev's brother (about whom we have no other information) was on the staff, as was the son of Ivan Adamov – presumably Samoilo (ibid.: 261). Although Samoilo at least briefly then served as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery, his career was cut short when he was exiled on account of illegal activity in the sale of alcohol.

This one example documented for 1649 suggests there were officially sanctioned precedents for arranging language training abroad, at least for members of immigrant families who were already serving as translators. Similar examples that can readily be documented for other diplomatic missions show that it was a common practice to provide sons of diplomats with a kind of 'apprenticeship' to familiarize them with protocol, other cultures and, brief as the missions might be, allow for the possibility they would acquire language skills.[94] A next step would be to arrange such 'apprenticeships' for longer periods and outside of any connection with a diplomatic mission (Okenfuss 1973b).

92. Wolf Wyborch had two other sons who were translators. Iakov Olfer'ev/Ul'fov was a translator for German in the Ambassadorial Chancery, already assigned to responsible missions in the early 1650s (Beliakov et al.: 81–83). Ol'ferii Vyberkh embarked on a military career, but then having achieved the rank of captain was sent as a translator in 1656 to Brandenburg (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 7, 305).

93. See the several entries in Rogozhin 1990 for the archival files of documents involving the Pronchishchevs. On Ivan Afanas'evich, see Korsakova 1910a.

94. An example is the Russian mission to Spain and France headed by Petr Ivanovich Potemkin in 1667–1668. His son was on the staff of the mission and, given his junior status, could go out to see the sights without being bound by protocol that restricted his father's movements.

The ground for a more systematic effort to educate Russians in languages was further prepared by the broader cultural changes in late Muscovy. Contributing factors included the influx of educated Ukrainian and Belorussian clerics, the arrival of educated Greeks, and their involvement in the organization of educational institutions. The most important of these, created in the 1680s, was the first institution of secondary education in Russia, the Greek school at the Moscow Typography which later was transformed into the Slaviano-Graeco-Latin Academy, Russia's first institution of higher education.[95] The curriculum of the Moscow academy was modeled on the widely adopted Classical curriculum which provided the foundation for further specialized study and had a considerable impact on the educational policies of the Petrine period (see Okenfuss 1973a). Development of that curriculum initially was in the hands of the Greek Likhud (Leichoudes/Λειχούδης) brothers, who subsequently ran afoul of the Orthodox Church establishment in Moscow as they moved from instruction emphasizing Greek to the full incorporation of Latin into the curriculum. This was an era when a knowledge of Latin was still essential for academic pursuits and for communication across cultural and political divides. Nonetheless, they were fired, and Latin disappeared from the curriculum for some years before being reintroduced in the academy. In the meantime, and this is relevant to our interests, the Likhuds were authorized by Tsar Peter in 1697 to start another school specifically for teaching Italian.[96]

Many of the older treatments of education in the Petrine period have focused on the tsar's rather narrow emphasis on technical training. However, even though some of Peter's initiatives emphasized training for state service primarily in the military arts, those who went abroad often applied the knowledge and skills they had learned in other areas on their return to Russia (Okenfuss 1973b, 1973c). The example we have chosen here of how in one family language skills were obtained illustrates the way in which those skills would be applied, for instance, in the translation of foreign newspapers, at least some of which served as sources for the first published Russian newspaper, the Petrine *Vedomosti*.

Career patterns varied considerably, but there is much to be learned from the example of the three sons of Ivan Mikhailovich Volkov, whose own experience surely influenced his ideas about the education of his sons.[97] Starting in the mid-1660s, he was employed as an undersecretary in Pskov, where he would have encountered regularly foreigners

95. There is a substantial literature on Russian education in the seventeenth century, with considerable disagreement amongst scholars as to what constituted a formally organized school. A classic treatment is Kapterev 1889. For an authoritative and detailed recent examination of the manuscript evidence regarding the teaching of Greek, culminating with the establishment of the Typography School and the drafting of the statute that would serve as the basis for its successor academy, see Fonkich 2009.

96. On the school, see Lukichev 1994 and the book-length study, which appends all the key documents, by Ramazanova 2019. For a summary of the Likhuds' careers and a bibliographic guide, see Belobrova 1993a.

97. For his career, see Demidova 2011: 120; Bez'ev 2015: 156–159.

traveling from the West or resident in the city. Later he worked for the arbiter of Russian foreign policy, Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin. Volkov's service in the Ambassadorial Chancery began in 1669; he was promoted to full secretary (*d'iak*) in 1684. During his long and distinguished career, he was involved in important diplomatic missions. Much of this activity was connected with Russian diplomacy involving relations with Poland and the long war against the Ottoman Empire during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Volkov was in Vienna as a member of the mission in 1686–1687, headed by Boris Petrovich Sheremetev. Its purpose was to inform the Habsburg court about the 'permanent peace' just negotiated with Poland and to coordinate the military efforts against the Turks. As Prince Vasilii Vasil'evich Golitsyn, the de facto shaper of Russian foreign policy in the 1680s, was preparing for what would turn out to be a disastrous campaign against the Crimea, Volkov was sent to Venice to inform the Venetians of these latest developments and to discuss military collaboration.[98] In Moscow, the military successes of the Venetians and their allies against the Turks in the Morea and elsewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean had been followed closely from reports in the Western press that were translated for the *kuranty*.[99]

So far, there is no evidence about whether Volkov knew foreign languages. The experienced translator Stepan Fedorovich Chizhinskii, who was also in Vienna with the Russian mission, was to accompany Volkov as his translator. The mission also included an interpreter, a 'Greek merchant' Ostaf'ii (Anastas) Ivanov, sent from Moscow.[100] In his end-of-mission report, Volkov never mentions what Ivanov did in Venice nor the fact that he, Volkov, met with the family of Ioannikii Likhud, a meeting that probably would have required Ivanov's services as an interpreter.[101] The official records of the Venice mission of 1687 are explicit that neither Volkov nor Chizhinskii knew Italian. So the hosts' Italian speeches and documents were provided to the visitors in Latin so Chizhinskii could translate them into Russian. Between 1689 and 1691 Volkov served as the Russian resident in Poland, where he regularly reported important news to Moscow (see Gus'kov 2005: 337–338). How he handled the language demands of that post is a subject that requires further study. Volkov was involved in the paperwork connected

98. For Russian documentation about his mission, see *PDS* 10: 1201–1305, 1325–1331, and 1387–1576 (the end-of-mission report). Some additional documents, kept in the Venetian archives, have been published by Iastrebov 2015b.

99. Shamin 2011b; Waugh 2008.

100. It would be interesting to learn more about Ivanov, given his connections with the Likhuds and the Greeks in Nizhen (see below). He was not recorded in the census of the Moscow Greek merchant community that was carried out in 1681 (see Shakhova 2015). His appointment to this mission is another example of the ad hoc arrangements the Ambassadorial Chancery might make to provide translation services for diplomatic missions.

101. This information comes from a petition submitted in Moscow by Ioannikii Likhud that he be allowed to take leave to deal with family problems in Venice, about which he learned from Volkov's conversations with the Likhud relatives (*PDS* 10: 1315). Likhud was given permission to go and served as a representative of the Russian government while there, delivering to the Venetian government official letters from Moscow.

with the preparations for the Great Embassy in 1697, although apparently he was not assigned to it.

The involvement of Anastas Ivanov in the Volkov mission to Venice is intriguing for what it may reveal about his connections with the Likhuds and thus Volkov's own connection with them. At the end of the Venice mission, Volkov and Ivanov returned to Moscow, arriving there presumably in late September 1687. On 26 October, Ivanov submitted a petition for reimbursement of his travel expenses, since he had not been given any funds at the time he was appointed to the embassy and had to give up his commercial activities in order to go (*PDS* 10: 1320–1322). The petition, which was successful, has an endorsement by Ivan Volkov. Less than a month later, on 19 November, the Treasury Chancery of the Moscow Patriarchate purchased from 'a Macedonian Greek, the resident (*zhitel'*) Anastas Ivanov syn Mukhov', 132 substantial books which were then turned over to the Likhuds for use in their new school, the Slaviano-Graeco-Latin Academy (Ramazanova 2015: 48–49). Many of the books were relevant for teaching the Classical curriculum, and among them were a number which had been owned, compiled or written by Gerasimos Vlachos, the learned head of the Orthodox community in Venice.[102] It seems likely that Ivanov the interpreter and the Ivanov who had collected and sold the books are one and the same person. So it is possible he went to Venice in part as an agent for the Likhuds to obtain books for their new teaching venture in Moscow. It is reasonable to assume that Ivan Volkov would have been well informed about and might have known personally the Likhuds, which would help explain his decision to enroll his eldest son in their 'Italian school' in 1697.

The Likhuds' tenure in the Moscow Academy was cut short in 1693 with the ascendance of the 'Greek party' in the Russian Church, backed by the political authorities, for whom instruction in Latin was a step too far. After a hiatus of a few years, in March of 1697, prior to the departure of the Great Embassy, Peter instructed the Likhud brothers to establish a new school and begin teaching Italian. The rationale for this seemingly odd curricular choice was never made explicit, though there are several plausible explanations for the tsar's expectation that training Russians in Italian might eventually prove useful: the decision to send Russians to Italy for apprenticeship in naval affairs, the possibility of hiring Italians to help with Russian shipbuilding (for example, at Voronezh), and the expectation that Peter was to visit Venice as part of his trip (Ramazanova 2019: 26–30). While some students for the Likhuds' school were to be drawn from those studying in the Moscow academy, many were to be conscripted from both the elite and commoners, the recruitment to be handled by the Chancery for Military Ap-

102. Vlachos would have been known in some circles in Moscow from the fact that he had written, for presentation to the tsar and patriarch, an elaborate plea for Muscovite intervention to help Venice in the war against the Ottomans, a book which was given to Ivan Chemodanov during his embassy to Venice in the mid-1650s and which subsequently was translated into Russian (see Waugh 1979a). It is likely that the Likhuds had received some of their early education under Vlachos.

pointments (*Razriadnyi prikaz*).[103] At least some of those who were recruited presumably were enrolled on the initiative of their families. Grigorii Volkov, the oldest son of Ivan, was one of the students in the new school.[104] Once Grigorii had learned Italian and enough Latin to continue his studies, his father arranged for him to go to Padua to earn a degree as a medical doctor.[105] He could have learned about the university in Padua from Sofronii Likhud, who had received a degree there and was probably the main teacher of Italian in the new school in Moscow.[106]

Over several years, Ivan Volkov submitted a series of petitions regarding his sons' education and achievements, pleading for government stipends to support their study which otherwise he could not afford and citing examples of other Russians who had been sent abroad to study and were receiving state support. In 1699, he was sent to The Hague with the embassy headed by Andrei Artamonovich Matveev. His two younger sons Boris and Petr accompanied him on the staff of the mission, in accord with an official mandate that they were 'to study in some suitable place (*gde pristoino*) Latin and German and other languages and sciences.' To pay for this, they were to receive compensation on the level received by nobles (*dvoriane*) attached to the mission. While Volkov was in The Hague, his oldest son Grigorii arrived, having completed only two years of his study in Padua, short of obtaining his medical degree. However, he could speak and write in Latin, in Italian and in French, and knew some German. By completing the course in rhetoric (the highest level of the standard Classical *secondary* curriculum), he had perfected his Latin.[107] According to his father's report, the middle son, Boris, had completed half of the standard Latin curriculum but also had learned to speak and read

103. As Ramazanova (2019: 36–42, 51–64) emphasizes, initially there was very mixed success in identifying, enrolling, and retaining students. Compulsory methods provoked some resistance; relatively few students were voluntarily enrolled by their parents.

104. See the summary of Ivan Volkov's petitions, starting with the one dated 1 October 1698, in which he requested (and received, at least for the first year) the stipend which would make possible study in Padua (Belokurov and Zertsalov 1907: 239). It seems likely that Grigorii's instruction in Latin was part of the curriculum in the Likhuds' new school emphasizing Italian. A report on student progress submitted on 18 September 1698 includes 'Ivan Volkova syn Grigorei on zhe i po latyne vyuchen' (Ramazanova 2019: 241). Ramazanova (ibid.: 71) states that the young Volkov was still listed among the students in the Italian school as late as December 1698, at which point, apparently, he left for Padua.

105. Demidova (2011: 120) cites documents that apparently err in dating Grigorii's studies with the Likhuds and then in Padua to 1688–1690 and his later appointment as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery to 1708. The discrepancy may be simply due to careless copying. Our account here is based on the evidence published by Belokurov and Zertsalov 1907: 237–241. The documents they published are excerpted from the copies in the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery made from the petitions submitted by Ivan Volkov and from the depositions of his sons when they returned from their foreign study. The chronology of events in this material makes sense and seems to be accurate. For a compact summary of the information about the Volkov sons, especially Grigorii, see Chesnokova (2010: 152–153) and Ramazanova (2019: 70–71).

106. On the Likhuds in Padua, see Iastrebov 2015a: 214–221.

107. The reference here seems explicitly to refer to the Classical curriculum. For a summary scheme of its levels and content, see Okenfuss 1973a: 110–111.

Dutch. So Ivan Volkov then borrowed money (hoping to be reimbursed by the Russian government) and on 14 February 1701 sent Grigorii and Boris off to Paris to continue their education. The youngest son Petr had learned Dutch in The Hague, but since his father could not afford to send him to Paris too, returned with him to Moscow where he was studying Dutch in the foreign suburb (*Nemetskaia sloboda*) at a cost of three-and-a-half rubles a month. The initial level of state support for the sons in Paris covered only their living expenses. Volkov thus petitioned in August 1701, when back in Moscow, for a more substantial stipend to cover the two years of instruction he had negotiated with their teachers and for a smaller stipend to cover Petr's expenses. Grigorii was studying mathematics and his brother Boris, Latin and French. Apparently, the requested stipend was approved in September.

Grigorii and Boris returned to Russia in December 1704 and reported on their foreign study. Boris 'had studied various branches of mathematics relevant for engineering: fortification, geometry, arithmetic, geography, architecture, civil mechanics, navigation etc.' and supplied two attestations from his instructors specifying what he had learned (translations of those attestations were attached to his deposition). Also he indicated he knew French and Italian and could translate accurately (*sovershenno*) those languages to and from Russian. He claimed satisfactory ability (*dovolno*) in Latin and some ability (*otchasti*) in German and English. Moreover (here the reference to the Classical curriculum): he had studied rhetoric and philosophy, the latter being part of higher education in the Classics. His brother Boris reported that he had studied in France geometry, geography, and military architecture (*arkhitektury voinskoi otchasti*). He was fluent in French and could speak a bit (*maloe chislo*) of German and Dutch.

How then did the Volkov sons apply their learning?[108] In 1705, Grigorii was employed as a translator for French and Italian in the diplomatic chancery that travelled with the Boyar Fedor Alekseevich Golovin (1650–1706) to Voronezh, Grodno, Tykotsin (Tykocin), and other Lithuanian cities. Golovin had negotiated the first Russian treaty with China at Nerchinsk in 1689, played an important role in the building of the first Russian fleet, was one of the leading participants in the Great Embassy, and then, among his several other important assignments, headed Peter's diplomatic corps. In 1705 Boris Volkov was assigned to the chancery of another of the most important Petrine officials, Aleksandr Danilovich Menshikov (1673–1729), at the time governor of St. Petersburg. In January 1706, Grigorii was appointed as a translator for Italian and French in the Ambassadorial Chancery.

A full treatment of the brothers' employment must await further work in the archives, but we know from their own statements and some fragmentary references in Bantysh-Kamenskii's guide to Russian foreign relations that Grigorii was appointed as secretary to Prince Vasilii Lukich Dolgorukii when he was sent to Denmark in 1709, and in 1711 he

108. Summary information on their professional careers is in Savich 1982: 51–52; Beliakov et al.: 256–258.

was in Saxony. He wrote to his father from Saxony that hiring a German scribe there was too expensive and in any event risky; he asked that his brother Petr, who was studying German in the Novgorod compound (*poddvor*), be sent to him. This request apparently was granted. A year later, in 1712, Grigorii was the courier assigned to take an official Russian letter to Paris. While in Paris as the 'resident of his tsarish majesty', Grigorii was to hire French gardeners and an architect to come to Russia. He is credited with having translated a French work on gardens, *Le Jardinage de Quantiny*.[109]

Petr Volkov wrote to the tsar from London in 1714 requesting that he be given the formal rank and salary of a translator, a request which was honored. In support he cited the fact that in 1711 he had been sent abroad to study foreign languages and other sciences and in that same year was employed on the staff of the German-born Russian envoy in Hanover, Hans Christoph von Schleinitz. Subsequently, he had accompanied his brother (Grigorii) to Paris and now (presumably in London) was employed on the staff of Baron Hans von Schack, who was serving as the Russian resident there from 1713–1717.

Both Petr Volkov and his brother Boris were employed as translators for the foreign newspapers being received by the Russian government in the 1720s, which were among the sources for the first published Russian newspapers, the *Vedomosti*.[110] Boris seems to have been particularly important in this work, starting at least as early as 1719 and continuing down into 1727. His primary employment was to translate for the College of Foreign Affairs, where manuscript *kuranty* continued to be produced, in the first instance so that the government could track the way news about Russia was being reported in Europe – and thus be able to try to control and direct what was being published there. He would send his translations to the Printing Office of the Holy Synod to be used as sources for the *Vedomosti*, often apologizing for tardiness on account of being overloaded with his primary obligations. It appears that he was responsible mainly for the translations from the French newspapers being obtained regularly from the Netherlands, since there were other translators competent in German.[111] To what degree his younger brother Petr actively contributed (presumably to the translation from German, which appears to have been his main foreign language) is not clear.

109. Without citing sources, Kaliazina (1996: 59) asserts that Grigorii was sent from Paris to Venice and Berlin (possibly via The Hague). According to Ramazanova (2019: 71), in June 1713 he was appointed as a secretary (presumably *pod'iachii*) in the Ambassadorial Chancery. Kaliazina (1996: 60 n. 4) mentions the translation of the book on gardens and supposes that his death was a suicide (apparently in 1717).

110. See Maier and Shamin 2011: esp. 93–94, 107 n. 23; Maier and Shamin 2018: 75–77. The evidence about the brothers' involvement in the translations derives from Pogorelov's (1903) survey of the manuscripts. He quotes many of the translators' notations, including a few that are explicitly signed by Boris Volkov; a significant number of the draft translations for the 1720s are in his hand, with an example of one of his annotations in the facsimile of Plate VI.

111. Among the translations listed by Morozov (1983: 121, 122) are excerpts from a book on horticulture and a book published in Amsterdam on Sweden in 1720, both translated by B. Volkov. A fair copy of the latter was in Peter I's library.

Although it is unlikely that the majority of the Russians sent abroad in the Petrine period to study later used actively the languages they had learned, there is ample evidence to suggest that initiatives such as the teaching of Italian in Moscow succeeded in their goals.[112] The focus of early and more advanced education even today does not necessarily correlate with career success in what may seem to be an unrelated field, and the compulsory aspects of recruitment for those who were to be educated in foreign languages and sent abroad of itself seems not to have been an obstacle to successful outcomes.

7.3. Some conclusions

The evidence laid out above and information on other Muscovite translators beginning in the late sixteenth century demonstrates that, without exception, the earliest professional specialists for Western languages in Russian service were first or second-generation foreigners. Among them were the 'Germans' Hans Angler, Hans Flörich (Ants Arpov), and Hans Brakel (Brakilev).[113] Except for the few early instances where the translators grew up in Russia as children of foreign parents, staffing was through the employment of foreign prisoners of war, like Wolf Jakob Wyborch (Ul'f Iakovlev) or Paul Sterling (Pavel Tomasov), and immigrants – at least partly deserters – from other countries who knew Russian either because they were bilinguals (for instance, from Livonia) or because they had received an education as Swedish translators for Russian, such as Arent Bock.[114] Prisoners of war remained a source for recruiting translators also during the second half of the seventeenth century, for example, Georg Groß (Leontii Gross) and Georg Hüfner (Iurii Mikhailovich Givner).[115]

Another important category, at least from the third decade of the seventeenth century, includes native speakers of Russian who had been taken abroad as prisoners by the enemy. For instance, in 1622 the son of a boyar from Orlov, Isak Andreev syn Zhidkii, who had spent twelve years in Lithuania, asked for a job at the Ambassadorial Chancery. When he had been taken prisoner, he was only nine years old, but he could already read and write in both Russian and Polish (Savich 1982: 67). Another Russian boyar son, from Kaluga, Ivan Dmitriev syn Boiarchikov, who had been a prisoner in Turkey, was employed in 1631 as an interpreter and translator for Greek and Turkish (Belia-

112. Here we take issue with the emphasis in Ramazanova (2019: 155–157; 2020), who focuses in the first instance on the compulsory aspect of recruitment, the delinquency and the monitoring of the students to make sure they attended their classes. State-directed compulsory education in this case, she argues, did not lead to success. The few instances of success, such as the Volkovs, were due to private initiative to obtain education. Of course this argument diminishes the significance of the state financial subsidies which often made such education possible. The fact that relatively few of those who studied in the Italian school of the Likhuds ended up being able to use that language is in her argument significant evidence that the enterprise was a failure.

113. For the three named here, Liseitsev 2003: 358–359, 374; Beliakov et al.: 44, 50–51. The most complete and up-to-date study of Hans Flörich is in Maier and Droste 2010.

114. For Wyborch, Sterling and Bock, see Liseitsev 2003: 360, 367–369; Beliakov et al.: 74–75, 79–81, 189–190.

115. For Gross, see above Sec. 7.1.4; for Hüfner, Beliakov et al.: 99–100.

kov et al.: 72–74). Ivan Ivanov, a Russian hired as an interpreter in 1663 or 1664, had a rather interesting life story. He had been taken prisoner by the Crimean Tatars as a child in Ukraine and sold to Turkey. There he lived for ten years in the house of a Greek and became a free man after the death of his landlord. Afterwards he spent eight years in England. When he returned to Russia from England (together with the Russian ambassador Prozorovskii) he knew Turkish, Greek, Italian, Spanish, and English. He was to become one of the most polyglot interpreters of the Ambassadorial Chancery.[116] It was common for interpreters for Asian languages to be recruited from Russians who had spent some time as prisoners in Turkey or the Crimea.

A significant source of recruits gradually came to be the translators' sons. This was especially true for the specialists in eastern languages, where there is substantial documentation about translator 'dynasties' (Kulmamatov 2020: 64–65). While such individuals might well be Muslims and not necessarily expected to convert to Orthodoxy, the situation with non-Orthodox Europeans was more complicated due to concerns the authorities had about their not corrupting the morals and beliefs of Russians. Even though the Muscovite government attempted to limit contact between foreigners and Russians, such children (regardless of whether they had been born in Russia or arrived at a very young age) not only would have learned language and a profession from their fathers, but also surely would have had ample opportunity to acquire what we today would call real native knowledge of Russian. Most of the translators we discussed above in detail had either been born in Russia or arrived there as children. Andrei Andreevich Vinius is a prime example. For families such as the Viniuses, where they had converted to Orthodoxy, there were no legal restrictions on employing Russian servants, a fact that certainly contributed to Vinius junior's competence in the Russian language. For other families the restrictions were not always enforced, and we can assume that also many children of non-Orthodox families came into contact with Russian-speaking servants (Muliukin 1912: 112–126). That there must have been a group of Moscow-born bilinguals would explain how eight 20-year-old sons of foreigners in Moscow, speaking both German and Russian, could be recruited for a medical education in Moscow (in 1653).[117] We hypothesize that such translators, raised in Moscow, perfectly competent in Russian, and with

116. Savich 1982: 69; Kulmamatov 1994: 43–44. Kulmamatov (2020: 66) quotes the reports of the several 'examiners' who tested his language ability at the time he was being hired.

117. Dumschat 2006: 355. The Kellermann dynasty is a very interesting example for its longevity in Russia and the fact that, even if not regular employees of the Ambassadorial Chancery, its members were called on to serve as translators and involved in Muscovite diplomacy. Heinrich (in Russian, Andrei) Kellermann, who came to Russia as a merchant, was called on more than once to translate for relations with England. His son Thomas, active also primarily as a merchant, was selected to head an embassy to Venice in 1668 to inform the Venetians about the Truce of Andrusovo. His son, Heinrich, spent years studying and working in Europe but then in 1686 petitioned to return to Russia, where he was employed in the Apothecary Chancery until his retirement due to old age in the early eighteenth century. In his 1686 petition he proposed to Prince Vasilii Golitsyn a scheme for a new translation of the Scriptures, for which he argued he was well qualified due to the breadth of his education and his linguistic range. However, nothing came of that proposal. See Oparina 2012: 61; Bantysh-Kamenskii, 2: 208; Dumschat 2006: 407–409; 639–641.

a very good (albeit not always perfect) knowledge of their parents' language were the ones who usually translated foreign newspapers and pamphlets. It is not unusual to find misunderstandings of certain expressions in the foreign originals – especially Latin and French loanwords and phraseology.[118] On the other hand, it is almost impossible to find the kind of mistakes that are so typical for a normal grown-up person who had learned Russian as a foreign language. Examples of the latter include Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld, Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf, and, to name a translator at the Ambassadorial Chancery who apparently came to Russia too late in his life in order to get a perfect command of the new language – Ivan Nikolaev (Jean Nicholas; see Sec. 6.3). Another foreign-language specialist who came to Russia 'late' in his life, Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden), never is mentioned in connection with *kuranty* translations. His knowledge of Russian apparently was good enough for oral interactions, but he may not have been capable of translating German or Dutch newspapers into perfect Russian. The striking fact to emphasize about the translations of Western news accounts into Russian is not the occasional mistakes but how very good in fact those translations usually were, impressively so given the time constraints under which the translators operated.

118. See Maier (2009) on the occasional difficulties with phraseology in the foreign language, with most misunderstandings taking place during the first third of the seventeenth century. Assessing the linguistic skills of the translators has become much easier through the latest editions of the *Vesti-Kuranty* (V-K VI; V-K VII), for which the surviving and identified foreign originals have been published along with the Russian texts. Unfortunately, only in rare cases can we evaluate the ability of a specific translator, since the bulk of the translations are anonymous (see the discussion in Sec. 8.4).

CHAPTER 8

Translation Techniques and Translation Quality at the Ambassadorial Chancery

We have already commented on the quality of some of the translations made in the Ambassadorial Chancery. In this chapter we will analyse some newspaper translations in their context and also some translations from other fields, which only in part were published in the *Vesti-Kuranty* edition: translations of books (about horse dressage) and of a medical certificate (Sec. 8.3). An important task here is to examine what can be found out about the competence of the translators, comparing the Russian texts with their foreign originals – especially German and Dutch, more seldom Latin and French. To date there is in fact no reliable synthesis about the translation work in Muscovy, and, as existing literature shows, generalizations are problematic, since to a considerable degree the quality of translations depended on the individual translators, the kind of translation work, and the language of the original.

Perceptions about the ability of the translators in Moscow tend to be colored by some of the negative comments made by foreigners specifically about the quality of oral interpretation. Such complaints were fairly frequent in the first decades of the seventeenth century but much rarer after that.[1] In some instances, it is difficult to know whether the issue was poor quality of translation or dissatisfaction with the individual interpreter for another reason. At the time of the negotiations with Danish Prince Waldemar about his possible marriage with the tsar's daughter in 1644, Dmitrii Franzbekov (Alfred Farensbach), a Baltic German convert to Orthodoxy who had briefly and unsuccessfully served as the Russian agent in Stockholm in the mid-1630s, was assigned to help interpret for the Danish mission in Moscow, hosting the negotiants in his own home.[2] The Danes complained about his ability as an interpreter and dismissed his venture into the substance of the theological debates, when he misinterpreted a key Greek word, perhaps with malicious intent. Apart from whether or not he really knew any Greek, the dissatisfaction with his interpreting, as much as anything, may reflect a lack of trust and not tell us anything about his linguistic competence in modern European languages.

1. For complaints in the early part of the century, see Tarkiainen 1972: 492–493 n. 8. The Swedish King Karl IX even sent letters to Moscow in Russian, because the translation resources there were so bad (ibid.). See also Liseitsev 2003: 172.

2. Golubtsov 1891: 70–72, 176, 178, 184, 207, 355.

Among the rare instances of such complaints in the last decades of the century was one involving the Danish envoy Hildebrand von Horn in 1682, for whom Timofei Meisner was assigned to translate during the official audience with the co-tsars Peter and Ivan. The Danish envoy asserted that during the official audience the 'habitual drunkard' Meisner 'either for fun or through carelessness translated my discourse in such a way that it not only did not correspond to the original, but also contained some critical remarks against the present state' (Bülck 1928: 234). So he insisted that it be retranslated by Leontii Gross, the result then 'read aloud to the whole council and subsequently by the princess herself to both tsars, who liked it very much.' Von Horn in fact seems to have known Russian quite well, since he was able to converse with the favorite and head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Vasilii Vasil'evich Golitsyn, without an interpreter (Zernack 1958: 121 n. 464). It is therefore conceivable that the Dane in fact could assess the quality of the translation. However, it is also possible that the problem was not Meisner's linguistic ability, but rather the perception that as the 'Swedish translator' he was favoring the interests of the country which at the time was Denmark's bitter rival, and Gross was possibly perceived as 'pro-Danish'.

8.1. Evidence from written translations: less frequently used languages

The existing scholarship sometimes has generalized from evidence of written texts that the Muscovite translators were not very skilled. However, such generalizations are risky, as careful examination of specific cases would suggest. The pioneering and still in some ways valuable guide to translated literature by Aleksei Ivanovich Sobolevskii (1903: 43) disparaged translations from Polish as being little more than transcriptions, resulting in a 'Russian language requiring that the reader think for a long time in order to guess what the foreign original said.' He went on to say that 'working documents in the Ambassadorial Chancery in the seventeenth century were translated in no way better than were books.' The flaw in Sobolevskii's judgment very likely reflects the fact that he seems to have looked at but few of the chancery translations of texts such as the *kuranty*, without having undertaken any kind of close examination of their foreign sources. Such a comparison would have been extremely difficult at Sobolevskii's time, when almost no originals had been identified, and the original newspapers were – and still are – scattered in a lot of different libraries and archives, whereas now, 120 years later, almost all surviving German-language newspapers from the seventeenth century are available on line, and a huge portion of the Dutch ones, too.[3] In other words, comparisons are possible in our time.

S. C. Gardiner (1963) judged that if translations were free of mistakes, although the translators were all non-Russians, this means that the drafts must have been corrected by native Russian secretaries. She went on to analyze in great detail the translation of

3. For the German-language newspapers, see https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17; for the Dutch ones, https://www.delpher.nl/.

a single letter sent to Moscow by English King Charles II, and she could show that the Russian text in fact contains numerous errors. In the case of more complex sentences it has "usually approximately the same meaning in incorrect Russian, and occasionally no meaning at all. Failure in one sentence results in serious distortion of sense, and one can imagine what important consequences such a mistake might have in foreign relations" (ibid.: 130). Of course just to rely on this example is problematic, given what we know about the difficulties the chancery had in maintaining a staff of translators competent in English.

In fact, translations from English into Russian in the seventeenth century were not numerous. One of the rare examples published in the *Vesti-Kuranty* series is the translation of an English pamphlet published in 1648 and containing a 'declaration', written by deposed King Charles I during his imprisonment. As Maier and Mikhaylov (2009) have shown in analyzing this translation from 1648, there are a few mistakes, among them one misreading of a lexeme and occasional problems in understanding complex syntax. Similar kinds of problems were determined by Gardiner (1983) in her analysis of the later translation. Overall both translations convey reasonably well the meaning of the original. Mistakes in rendering the pamphlet of 1648 were likely of no particular consequence for the making of policy, whereas those made in the translation of an official royal letter to a fellow monarch could have had serious diplomatic consequences. While Gardiner did not attempt to determine who translated the letter in 1673, Maier and Mikhaylov have been able to present a plausible case that the translator in 1648 was Ivan Fomin Almanzenov (Hans Helmes), whose biography is summarized above in Sec. 7.1.1. The reasonable hypothesis about his origins – that he may well have grown up in Russia – could explain why, even if from an English family, his knowledge of English might have been flawed, but he would have acquired good Russian. Some of the nuances in the pamphlet of 1648 could have escaped him (plus, in his old age, his eyesight might have caused him to misread some of the type), but the Russian of his text is correct. As Maier and Mikhaylov conclude, this translation from English has more mistakes than are found in the *kuranty* translations from Dutch and German, languages which the Ambassadorial Chancery was better equipped to handle and with which its staff was more familiar.

The very few news translations from Latin for which the originals have been found show a wide range of quality. It is not as though written Latin was unknown in Moscow, since even back in the sixteenth century translations to and from the language were being made for diplomatic exchange. Moreover, by the second half of the seventeenth century, there were many individuals in Moscow (among them Ukrainian or Belorussian clerics) who had acquired Latin in school. Some of these men would often be sent on diplomatic missions, where the *lingua franca* for negotiations was still Latin (not yet French). Of course, as we know (and will discuss further in Chapter 9), the foreign diplomats and officials often questioned whether the Russians with whom they negotiated

really understood Latin well; there were continual disputes over the rendering of specific titulature. The linguistic problems of the (rare) translations made from a Latin-language newspaper most likely can be explained by the fact that copies of the Latin paper arrived only sporadically.[4] Thus it was difficult to develop good translation skills for the language specific to newspaper articles. Moreover, as we shall show, news reports that in some cases were larded with Latin words clearly presented problems for translators who themselves apparently did not always know this language.[5] At the same time, the great skill with which the abdication speech of Polish King Jan II Kazimierz was translated from Latin in 1668 suggests that generalizing from the few badly done newspaper articles about the knowledge of Latin in Moscow would be misleading.[6]

8.2. The evidence from the *kuranty*: translations from German and Dutch

A few introductory words are needed about the nature of the sources in order to appreciate the degree to which analysis of their translations can be considered reliable. Even though the Russian *kuranty* texts of the early decades of the seventeenth century rarely would specify the language of the original that was being translated, it has been possible

4. See Maier 2003a for a detailed analysis of three newspaper articles translated from the Latin paper (issued in Cologne) *Ordinariae Relationes* in 1670; for a shorter analysis of the same articles see V-K VI/2: 637–641. See also V-K VII: 247 (Russian translations); ibid.: 597–600 (Latin original, and comments by Maier). There is also a translation from Latin of a very interesting pamphlet relating to Dutch politics in the early 1670s, which provides evidence of considerable skill in dealing with the Latin text and also suggests that some corrections of specific references probably were made when the result was reviewed by the experts in the Ambassadorial Chancery who regularly dealt with the *kuranty*. See Alpatov et al. 2012–2013. Translations from Polish for the *kuranty* were also very rare; for analysis of one where it has been possible to identify the Polish original, see V-K VI/2: 645–646, and Maier and Pilger 2003b. The detailed analysis demonstrates that the translation was from Polish, not from a German version of the text published in the same pamphlet. The Russian translation contains a couple of Polonisms but certainly cannot be considered merely as a kind of 'transcription', according to Sobolevskii's harsh judgment. On the whole, the result is quite satisfactory, and some lapses are possibly due to mistakes in the printed original. Occasional misunderstandings of a Polish word may reflect the fact that the translator did not have native competence in Polish, even though he knew the language well (ibid.: 33).

5. It is also possible that the Latin loan words in German often had a very specific terminological meaning, difficult to understand even for a person who has studied Latin and therefore were incomprehensible for our translators.

6. Oriental languages such as Turkish, Tatar or Persian were not uncommon ones for the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery, but we have deliberately not tried to evaluate the quality of those translations, which are not part of the *Vesti-Kuranty* corpus (and we do not know these languages). Suffice it to note the opinion of Kulmamatov (1994: 107) that the majority of the translations from those languages were done 'on a sufficiently high professional level'. We have also not attempted to review translations from Greek, even though for news pertaining to the Ottoman Empire, the Crimea and Ukraine, reports sent to Moscow in Greek were quite important (see, e.g., Chentsova 2000). For an extended set of comparative examples of translations from Greek in the first half of the seventeenth century (albeit one needing further analysis), see Oborneva 2019: Ch. 3. For analysis of translation procedures as evidenced in one translation from Greek in the late seventeenth century, see Timoshina 2019. Her evidence suggests that the results were rather free renderings of the originals, i.e., not dissimilar from what has been documented for translations in the *kuranty* of the last decades of the century.

to locate with some confidence a good portion of the newspaper originals. Later in the century, the headings to the translations commonly do specify the language of the original, which is of considerable help in searching for the possible sources. That said, the copying of news from one newspaper to another (or the editors' subscription to the same handwritten newsletters even in different countries) may make it difficult to know which one was received in Moscow (see V-K VI/2: 47–51). To the degree that different printings of the same news may not be exact copies, it can still be possible from the translation to determine the exact source. Although the preservation of the foreign newspapers generally is better for the last decades of the seventeenth century than for the first years of the periodical press, determining the sources used in Moscow may nonetheless be more difficult after the middle of the century. The increasing tendency to select and summarize material even from *several* newspaper issues complicates the search for the sources. It still may be possible, of course, if a source can be identified, to establish whether the translator understood the original well enough to summarize it accurately or whether that summary contains obvious misunderstandings. Simply to have ignored part of the original cannot of itself be evidence that the translator did a poor job.

An important consideration, if we wish to say something about the ability of the translators, is whether or not any draft translations have been preserved. The majority of the *kuranty* have survived only in the form of fair copies, the ones used when the news was read to the tsar. Drafts tended to be lost or just thrown away; we do not even know to what extent they were made.[7] Quite often, however, there exists *only* a draft copy. The fair copy might have been lost in these cases, but there is also another possibility: an editor in the chancery may have decided that a certain text was not interesting enough for the tsar, and a fair copy was never made. So, for instance, the translation of the Osnabrück Peace Treaty exists only in a draft version – more than 100 handwritten pages about all the details the German Empire and Sweden agreed upon in 1648![8] Might it be that a fair copy was never made? Fair copies may contain scribal mistakes, lots of corrections, and occasional additions by someone on the chancery staff, for instance marginal notes identifying proper names. Ideally, for an assessment of any given translation and how it was edited, we would need to work from *kuranty* that have been preserved both in draft and final copies, but there are few such examples where we have the foreign original as well.

The translations survive in written form, but it is important to remember that they were produced for oral communication to the tsar and his important noble advisers. So the texts embody at least a reasonable approximation to the spoken vernacular Russian of the court. Explicit Church Slavonicisms on the morphological and even lexical levels

7. In at least one case we found a translator's note on a German newspaper, telling us that a draft copy was not made. On *Königsberger Ordinari PostZeitung* 1670/32 (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1670, No. 2, fol. 34) on the bottom margin of the title page is a note: 'Yesterday on the 6th of April translated without a draft' (*vcharaz v 6 de(n') apreli preveden bez cherna*).

8. The translation has been published in V-K IV: 13–64, No. 1.

are rare, and on the syntactical level almost non-existent (Maier and Pilger 2001: 215). On the other hand, typical vernacular traits are frequent; e.g., on the morphological level: Genitive and Locative forms of old ∗o-stems on -y (like собору, запасу, наряду, проходу; на... острову, берегу, лесу.. .) are often used; Nominative/Accusative plural forms of masculine nouns in -á, such as лесá, судá, таборá, appear more often in the *kuranty* than in other literary relics from that time (Maier 1997: 88). On the syntactical level, we can note the rare use of subordinate clauses; frequent instances of 'preposition repetition'; the use of the Accusative after verbs like желать, ждать (ожидать, дожидать, дожидаться), искать, доступать, просить etc. From the fact that some texts contain dialectal (Belorussian) spellings we can draw the conclusion that some of the translators or scribes were of West-Russian origin.

8.2.1. Condensation of the originals

As a rough generalization, up through the 1640s, the Western newspapers received in Moscow were translated largely in their entirety. Even if occasional articles were skipped, the ones that proved to be of interest, for whatever the reason, were translated fully, if not necessarily entirely accurately. It is impossible to specify exactly when this approach to news translation changed – the process undoubtedly was gradual during the 1650s and early 1660s, a period for which too few of the *kuranty* have been preserved to provide reliable evidence. How fully a newspaper might be translated seems to have depended in part on how much news was being obtained. Where there was regular weekly access to western newspapers (as was the case when a Russian embassy was in Stockholm in 1649 – see Ch. 13), the translators might be more selective. Once the foreign post was established and the acquisition of newspapers regularized in the mid-1660s, it is quite clear that full translation of any issue of a newspaper was no longer the norm. At best only a few articles from any one issue would be selected, and even then they might be only partially translated or the contents simply summarized by the translators. There is no sharp boundary between a translation and a summary, since in any event the cases where we have a very exact translation, every word and phrase in the source language being rendered in the target language (Russian), are extremely rare. Thus, translations here are almost never exact renderings of the original, but rather condensed renderings, where some words and even whole sentences may have been left out. In some cases, the 'translation' is rather a summary – but still, the translators had to render the news item etc. in the target language. This has to be kept in mind when we will be talking about 'translations' from newspapers and pamphlets. In a concrete case, we can use the term 'summary' for a heavily condensed translation, but when we are talking more generally about translations made at the Ambassadorial Chancery, we will not repeat this fact all the time.

What tended to be omitted in such cases was what the translators must have deemed 'extraneous information'.[9] So, for example, even if the substance of a negotiation or trea-

9. The discussion here and in later sections draws heavily on the introduction to V-K VI/2: 155–158.

ty project might be carefully conveyed, details about the location of the event or speculation by the reporters on the consequences might be eliminated. The reporter (or newspaper editor) might mention that there was some question about the accuracy of the report, but such cautionary statements generally would not be translated in Moscow, leaving the readers of the Russian translation with an impression of greater certainty about the news. In one striking example, where the original news article in the reputable Dutch *OHS* (1665, No. 39) published a correction of a previous report, the Russian translator simply repeated what was now known to have been an inaccurate statement, by eliminating the information that this was a correction (V-K VI/2: 154–155, 475). Erroneous news thus appeared to be factual. Details specifying the route and time of transit of the news from its place of origin might be omitted, even if for a reader of the original such information might have been important for assessing the value of the communication.

One of the most common kinds of condensation involved the elimination of sentences or phrases which the translator either could not understand or which might have been deemed confusing to readers. In particular, there are many examples (in the German newspapers, not the Dutch ones) where the original news item would contain a lot of Latin words or phrases. A translation of a report from November 1669 about a protest by a vice-chancellor against what he regarded as illegal assertion of powers by the city of Danzig concluded with two macaronic sentences, both of which the Russian translator chose to omit, probably because they were incomprehensible.[10] Even though there were translators on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery who knew Latin, they were not always the ones responsible for newspaper translation; those who knew the modern West-European languages often lacked the formal education from which they could have acquired Latin.

Another common omission by the Moscow translators would be personal or place names that were not familiar (especially to anyone in Russia). The contemporary newspapers often contained such details which even for many of their readers in the West might have been unfamiliar, given the fact that much of the news was coming from locations far away. As we have discovered, trying to check the accuracy of news reports about localized military operations can be very difficult even with the resources we have now to identify place names. To know who exactly the commanders were of smaller military detachments or who were some of the diplomats of lower status can take a considerable amount of research with no guarantee of success. Those who would follow the published news regularly would be best positioned to understand at least the context for a report, but in far-off Moscow, where there might be substantial intervals before the next news

10. The sentences that were not translated read: “Gegen der Stadt Dantzig insolentz/ die nunmehro insupportabel wäre/ hat der Vice Cantzler publicè votiret, weil sie sich jura Majestatis & Principum arrogirte, und jus Maris fisci, caducorum, extensionem privilegiorum &c. impunè bißhero usurpiret hatte. Drumb man auff die Coercition derer Exorbitantien bedacht seyn müste” (cited from V-K VI/2: 157; see also ibid.: 399–401).

report was received (and further gaps, should some of those reports not be translated), understandably much detail could be incomprehensible or seem irrelevant. Thus, to omit some names might in fact represent an improvement of the original text, a simplification that would make it easier to understand (ibid.: 159).

A different kind of simplification can be found in the case of well-known individuals such as Charles Howard, first Earl of Carlisle, who frequently made it into news reports, given his active role in English diplomacy. He certainly was known in Moscow, where he had headed an English embassy – and managed to offend his hosts (see Hennings 2018: 139–154). But in translating at least one of the Dutch reports about him, where the original reads "Den Heere Grave van Carlisle", the Russian text has merely 'the English ambassador' (*anglinskoi posol*), omitting his title. In the case of unfamiliar place names, the translator might substitute the name of a well-known nearby city. The substitution of a familiar name, or in some cases the marginal glossing of names in the fair copies of the *kuranty*, is a reflection of the fact that the texts were intended to be read to the tsar and his councilors, where the secretary responsible for the reading could be called upon to identify or explain the proper name in the translation. By eliminating the unfamiliar (a process which generally did not distort the basic thrust of the news article), the reader of the news to the tsar could not be confronted with a question he was not equipped to answer.

News reports quite often would include numbers – of regiments, of casualties, of plague victims, of monetary payments, etc. It was not uncommon that the figures given in such reports were exaggerated or generalized; whether or not they were deemed accurate by the contemporary readers is a good question. Different newspapers might not publish identical numbers from the same event, which can, of course, reflect the fact that they had received the information from different sources. The translators in Moscow sometimes would simplify the numbers. In certain cases, if there is a disparity between the translation and the original, that may may have been the fault of an inattentive copyist. Probably for the purposes of the decision makers in the Kremlin, even had it been possible to know exact numbers from a report about some far-off battle, such a copyist error would have been of little consequence.

8.2.2. Clarification of the original

If our standard for evaluating the work of the translators is whether or not they transmitted every word and detail of the original, then of course it would be very easy to fault them. However, we have the distinct impression that at least by the middle of the seventeenth century, the goal for the news translations was to streamline them and make them comprehensible, keeping in mind which news items would be of greatest interest and 'relevance' for the government. The translators presumably were given some specific guidance on these matters, though simply through the experience of working in the Ambassadorial Chancery its staff would have had an awareness about government

priorities. Personal interests of the translators may also have governed their selection of material, as we shall discuss further (see Sec. 19.6.1). There is ample evidence to suggest that the translators were generally successful in clarifying reports, although not without occasional mistakes.

For example, successful clarifications by the translator are in a report from Warsaw published in a Dutch newspaper in 1656. The original reads (in our translation): 'Here everything is in a sad state, and all our troops are being killed by the Poles.' The translator understood correctly that the report derived from someone in the Swedish army, and thus specified who was killing whom: 'The Poles are ceaselessly killing Swedes.'[11] In a later section of the text, where the Dutch wrote 'from the city', the translator correctly specified 'from Warsaw'. In another Dutch report from 1660 stating that 'the armies' had engaged near Częstochowa, the translator, who knew something about the forces involved, specified 'the armies *of the King and Lubomirski*'. In 'clarifying' for the Russian reader dating information, there are instances where, by virtue of some omission, the result could in fact be erroneous. However, there is also an example where a date specified with reference to a saint's day ("den andern Tag nach Michaelis") has been clarified by the insertion of the correct calendar date, 30 September (V-K VI/2: 165). In a somewhat unusual instance, the news report in question originating in Moscow, where the Haarlem paper wrote that the reception of the Prince from Georgia by the tsar was yet to take place, the translator, knowing that in fact it had already occurred, changed the wording to the past tense (ibid.: 168).

As Stepan Shamin (2004) has discussed, the *kuranty* provide very interesting evidence which may be used as a kind of proxy to track how over time the geographical knowledge of the Muscovite court expanded. He bases his analysis on the marginal notes about place names in the fair copies of the texts. Common (that is, presumably familiar) names of important cities such as major capitals might not be explained in the margins, suggesting that the tsar and his advisers surely would have heard of cities like Paris, London or Vienna. However, for less well-known places, the marginal note generally would mention in which country a city was located. Instances where the translators add, sometimes within the text, not just in the margin, an explanation of a geographical name, reveals how well informed they may have been. So, for example, they specified in one report that the city of Eger was 'in the Czech land', and in another case, a report originating in Danzig, the translator specified that the city of Malbork was located in Prussia (i.e., East Prussia; today, Poland). Of course we can also document relatively rare erroneous identifications: for example, when a translator places Malamocco – located on the Lido island in the Venice lagoon – 'in the Indies', presumably confusing it with the Moluccas Islands (V-K VI/2: 165–166).

11. See V-K VI/2: 164, 447–448. The Dutch original was *OMC* 1656/19. The texts are: "Het is alhier in een ellendigen stant en werden alle onse Volckeren vande Poolen doodtgheslagen" > *polskie liudi bezprestani pobivaiut sveiskikh liudei*.

8.2.3. Challenges in rendering proper names

The foreign news sources usually showed considerable variation in the spelling of personal or geographic names. When the names were familiar to the translators, the Russian texts simply use the commonly accepted Russian orthography. In many cases unfamiliar names might just be omitted, but there also are reports where the translation would retain them, generally by transliterating what was in the foreign original. Occasionally the translator might substitute a 'best guess' for an unfamiliar place name that in fact then could be wrong. Without being able to identify and compare the foreign source for the translation, modern scholars can be mystified by a Western name that is garbled in Russian. The problem may lie in a misspelling in the original newspaper report or in some ending (for example, a case ending) that was understood in Moscow to be the basic form of the name. An example would be the different ways in which the name of one of the important commanders in the Thirty Years War, the Scot James King, was rendered. In the Russian texts we find, for instance, Кинге, Кине, Кинз, Кинч, the last two deriving from the genitive case form 'Kings' in Dutch reports (ibid.: 169–170).

For place names, the translators obviously knew Antwerpen, as this city is called in the Dutch sources, and rendered it as Антверп, or Антверпия. However, it is not clear that they always understood that Antorf(f) – the form that was most often used in the German newspapers – is the same city. Hence they simply transliterated that name from the original texts (e.g., Анторф; ibid.: 173–174). Such examples can be multiplied, the point here being that what sometimes appears as an incompetent garbling of an original often lends itself to a logical explanation, when we are lucky enough to have access to the foreign source text – even if the contemporary readers of the *kuranty* would have been left in the dark by the Russian text.

8.2.4. Problems with syntax

The commentaries to the *Vesti-Kuranty* edition describe several examples of outright mistakes in *kuranty* translations from Dutch and German where the reason was the failure on the part of the translator to understand the syntax of the original (V-K VI/2: 180–186). This evidence leads to the conclusion that the translators were probably working too fast to notice details such as grammatical endings but also suggests that they might not have had educated native fluency in those languages. Where a singular was translated as a plural (or vice versa), the explanation could be careless haste. However, some of the problems with syntax go much deeper and result in the confusion of grammatical subjects with objects or some other kind of serious distortion of the meaning. A German newspaper reported that the Cossacks submitted to the Turks who then directed the Tatars to protect them. In the infelicitous translation, the submission of the Cossacks to the Turks was so that they could obtain protection against the same Turks (ibid.: 181–183).

Another example is a report from Hamburg (published in a Königsberg newspaper) about the conclusion of the Triple Alliance and the consequent payment of a subsidy

to the Swedish representatives. In the Russian translation, the Swedes were the ones who made the payment – the translator had obviously not recognized the Dative case of the original. Other examples suggest a failure to understand the German prepositions (and the cases these prepositions require), as can be seen from mistaken translations of passages with the preposition *für*, which in the seventeenth century could mean both 'for' (as today) and 'before' (now obsolete), the first requiring the Accusative, the latter Dative or Accusative, depending on the syntax, as with today's preposition *vor* (*vor dem Haus*, position → Dative / *vor das Haus*, direction → Accusative). The sentence "Es stehet die Ukraina jetzo in grossen Furchten für unserer Armee," with the Dative case, can only be understood in one way (very literal translation): 'Ukraine is now standing in great fear in front of our army.' However, the Russian translator wrote: '*N(y)ne na Ukraine strakh velik dlia voiska nashego*,' that is 'Now in Ukraine our army is in big fear,' thus demonstrating that he did not really understand this meaning of the preposition *für*, followed by a noun in the Dative case. Such mistakes would be understandable for a second or third generation 'foreigner' in Muscovite service. Another explanation could be that a translator who was a specialist in German (maybe even a native speaker) sometimes was required to translate newspapers from Dutch, or vice versa – that is, had to work on a text that was not in his best language (ibid.: 186).

Analysis of lexical mistakes in some of the translations reinforces the conclusion that at least some of the translators most likely did not have educated native command of German or Dutch (ibid.: 186–190). There also are examples where the same translators did an excellent job of finding Russian equivalents for phraseology of the sources. On the whole, there are fewer instances of mistranslation of lexical units in the *kuranty* of the 1660s than there were in the translations from earlier decades.

8.3. Case studies: translations of specialised literature on different subjects

It would certainly be a mistake to generalize that all of the translations from the time the Western newspapers first began to appear in Moscow were full of mistakes. Even as early as 1621, when some of the earliest Dutch newspapers began to arrive in Moscow, the translators could produce an accurate Russian version of one of the fictive missives attributed to the Ottoman sultan, which is noteworthy for its rhetorical excess (see Maier 2006b). A cargo list of exotic products brought back from the Indies by Dutch fleets in 1628 was on the whole quite faithfully translated (see below, Sec. 10.3). It is instructive to look more closely at several challenging translation projects to show how well the specialists in the Ambassadorial Chancery managed their tasks.

8.3.1. The procuration for the Spanish delegates to negotiate a peace treaty with the Netherlands[12]

The text we will be discussing here is what we call the 'Spanish Proxy', that is, the Procuration for the Spanish delegates to negotiate a treaty with the Netherlands in order to

12. This subsection is based above all on Maier and Pilger 2001.

end not only practically, but also formally the war that later was to be called the Eighty Years War between the two countries. The Procuration was issued by the Spanish King Philip IV on 7 May 1646 (in Spanish); the treaty itself between Spain and the Netherlands was concluded in The Hague on 30 January 1648 and ratified in Münster on 15 May. This treaty was then reaffirmed in the Peace of Westphalia (Münster and Osnabrück) that ended the Thirty Years War. Here we have an excellent example to illustrate the capabilities of Muscovite translators who specialized in Dutch. Other examples from different fields and years provide analogous evidence to what we find in this interesting case.

The Spanish Proxy was translated into Dutch, undoubtedly from a handwritten copy of the original that had been sent to Münster with the Spanish delegates. A copy of the Dutch translation apparently ended up in a print shop in Dordrecht and may have appeared in print as early as February 1648, together with the Dutch Procuration, both procurations having been appended to the text of the peace treaty itself.[13] (The text of the Spanish Proxy takes up almost two pages in the quarto brochure.) The name of the printer – and even his address! – was indicated both in the printed pamphlet and in the Russian translation: Symon Moulaert, living in the Wine Street. This precision of the Russian translator was extremely useful in order to locate the exact imprint that was used in Moscow – a couple of other editions were published in the Netherlands, not only the one issued by Moulaert in Dordrecht. The pamphlet that was translated in Moscow probably has survived in a single copy (preserved in the University Library of Leiden). What makes this case quite special is that we not only have the exact Dutch text that made its way to Russia in 1648 and its Russian translation, but also the original *Spanish* text of the Proxy, which also has been published. Even a handwritten version has survived, although not necessarily the one that was translated into Dutch.[14] The Russian translation is thus a second-hand translation, for which we have access to all three stages – quite a unique situation.

On the whole, the Dutch version is an accurate rendering of the Spanish text, although there are some mistakes, in part due to ignoring the punctuation of the original, some omitted words, and occasional infelicities. Some of these inaccuracies can be explained by the fact that the Dutch translation probably was read aloud and written down by multiple scribes from an oral presentation. Having access to all three texts – Spanish original, Dutch translation, and Russian translation – is of extraordinary value, since it

13. The Dutch source is *Articulen en Conditien van den Eeuwigen Vrede, Geslooten tusschen de Groot-Machtigen Koninck van Hispangien, etc. ter eender, ende de Hoog-Mogende Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, ter ander zijde; onderteyckent ende bezegelt den 30. Januarij, 1648. Tot Munster. – Tot Dordrecht, Uyt de Druckery van Symon Moulaert, woonende in de Wijn-Straet, in 't Jaer 1648* (Tiele, 1: 396, No. 3262). The Russian translation is in V-K III: 161–179, No. 58. For the historical background about this peace treaty and a very short characterization of its Russian translation see Maier 1997: 41–45.

14. Maier and Pilger (2000: 70–86) publish the complete Spanish text, as well as the translations into Dutch and Russian (the latter two facing each other). This publication also contains a facsimile of the Russian manuscript pages.

enables us to see how the Russian translator sometimes was able to provide a correct rendering, even if the Dutch translation did not. That is, the translator in Moscow must have been knowledgeable about the context and the niceties of diplomatic language, although he did not have in his hands the original (Spanish) source for the Dutch text.

Here are some summary observations to show how capable the Russian translator was, at the same time that his work was not perfect (Maier and Pilger 2001: 233–234). The Dutch text is mistaken in identifying the Spanish ambassador in Germany, but the Russian translator has corrected the error. In some places, he has added some words in order to make the text more explicit and logical than the original, thereby ensuring that no misunderstandings would arise. For some of the difficult passages his solutions are both original and idiomatic Russian expressions. In one instance (and in the list of names under the treaty, which, however, is not part of the Procuration) the translator provided a full Christian (first) name, not just an initial as in the source text: *P. Coloma* (Dutch) → *Petr Koloma* (Russian). The Russian manuscript in one case faithfully reproduces the details of layout and punctuation from the Dutch source even though the printed edition (V-K III) fails to do so. There are no instances of 'blind' repetitions of Dutch syntactical constructions. The florid language of the Spanish original has a number of expressions with two or more synonyms or word pairs, some merely for rhetorical emphasis, others intended to convey a very precise meaning. In some places a vernacular term is paired with its Latin equivalent. Both the Dutch and Russian translators had some problems in finding equivalents for these expressions, though in several cases the Russian translator in fact was more successful than was his Dutch counterpart (see Maier and Pilger 2001: 230–232). He was even able to correct a misspelling in the Dutch source: where it mistakenly used the singular, *Provincie*, instead of the correct *Provincien*, the translator correctly wrote *v udelekh* (ibid.: 230), and for the strange *Borgoigien* of the pamphlet – probably a blend of the French *Bourgoigne* and Dutch *Borgondien* – the translator correctly supplied *burgunskoi*. On the other hand, presumably unfamiliar with the places, he failed to correct the Dutch misspellings *Algraven* and *Gilbralter* (which should have been *Algarven* and *Gibraltar*) and wrote *alegrafski* and *gilbralterski* (ibid.: 229). Count Peñaranda (one of the ambassadors) was Lord of Aldeaseca de la Frontera – a single place, mistakenly conveyed as three separate locations in the Dutch and Russian translations (Heer van Aldea seca de la Frontera → *g(o)s(po)d(i)na aldeiskogo sekanskogo i forteranskogo*; ibid.: 223–224).

Some of the mistakes committed by the Russian translator seem to have resulted from misunderstandings caused by lack of punctuation or use of Old Dutch blackletter typefaces in the printed brochure (where some graphemes are hard to distinguish); others are just repetitions of the Dutch translator's (or the printer's) errors, including eliminations of words and phrases, and cannot be blamed on the Russian at all. The translator likely misread blackletters in the pamphlet, which can hardly be deciphered even with modern magnifying glasses, thereby causing minor mistakes in the transcription of proper names. Misspellings in names of persons or places may be the fault of the scribe

who produced the fair copy but misread similar letters and misread in particular the superscript letters so often used in draft manuscripts.

However, it would be very strange if a text of this size would not contain any mistakes for which the translator himself bears full responsibility. The translator had some difficulties with foreign names and special terms for which there seem to have been no Russian terminological equivalents. For example, the official position of one of the Dutch negotiators, a member of a Polder Board (*Heemraedt*), was rendered as though he was a member of the *Geheimraad* (Secret Council / *tainye dumy*). The Russian translator wrote 'of the secret council' – presumably because he did not know this Dutch term relating to local administration (ibid.: 227). Of all his mistakes only one might have had serious consequences in the conduct of Russian foreign policy, where accurate titulature of reigning monarchs was so important. He made a mistake in the Spanish king's long list of titles. The original and its correct Dutch text read: [...] Rey [...] de las Indias Orientales y Occidentales, Islas y tierra firme del Mar Occeano [...] / [...] Koning [...] van de Oost en West-Indien, van de Eylanden ende 't vaste Lant van de Oceaensche Zee [...] (= 'King ... of the East and West Indies, [of the] Islands and mainland of the Oceanic Sea...'). The translator arbitrarily added the conjunction *i* ('and') in a place where it has no equivalent in the source text, producing 'korol [...] Vostochnyi i Zapadnyi Indei nad ostrovy i nad materymi zemliami *i* okiianskogo moria'. He missed that 'van de Oceaensche Zee' belongs to 'de Eylanden ende 't vaste Lant' and interpreted 'king of the Ocean' as a separate title, writing *korol ...i okiianskogo moria* (ibid.: 227–229). Such a mistake might easily be explained by the translators' usually rather strained working conditions, requiring that they work very rapidly.

Who might have been the translator of the Spanish Proxy, and of the rest of the Dutch pamphlet from 1648? According to Beliakov (2017: 113), the Ambassadorial Chancery had two translators for Dutch in the year 1648/49. One of the two was Boris Borisov, alias Barend Kögelken, a well-known translator of German and Dutch, often mentioned in scholarship.[15] Nothing is known about his origin, but judging from his name, it seems likely that he came from a region where Low German was spoken. This would explain why he could translate not only from German but also from Dutch. We do not know for sure who the second translator for Dutch in that period could have been. Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden) claimed to know Dutch, but officially he does not seem to have been employed as a translator for this language. Thus Boris Borisov is probably the 'best guess' as the author of our translation from 1648.

8.3.2 The translations of Antoine de Pluvinel's books about equitation

The Russian translations of the two books on equitation and horse dressage that appeared with Antoine de Pluvinel's name on the title page (he had died a couple of years earlier) merit a closer look here, since they shed light on how the Ambassadorial Chan-

15. See, for instance, Scheltema 1817–1819, 1: 222; Fechner 1876, 1: 199; Angermann 1998: 243; Beliakov 2017: 102, 133, 286–287; Prudovskii 2019: 116; Beliakov et al. 67–69.

cery personnel coped with a complicated task at a time when the demands on the professional staff were substantial. This analysis also highlights some of the challenges which still hinder our ability to assess the work of individual translators.

Pluvinel (1552–1620) became the dressage master to the French kings and founded a school in which dressage was one of the several courtly skills taught for the French elite. He staged equestrian 'ballets' for festive occasions. The first book published (posthumously) under the name of the big equitation master, *Maneige royal*, appeared in Paris, 1623 (only in French), but the Russian translation of 1670 was clearly made from the bilingual French and German edition printed in Braunschweig in 1626.[16] Although Pluvinel had died some years before the first book appeared, his name is mentioned as the only author on both books, probably because his prestige certainly made the book desirable. The *Maneige royal* was printed in landscape folio format and contained some of the finest engravings of the time, the work of Crispin de Passe the Younger, which were completed after Pluvinel's death (FIG 8.1). We have not found any documentation about this translation in the archives, but very likely it was produced in the Ambassadorial Chancery (see esp. Maier et al. 2021: 303–304). We can just speculate on how the original book arrived in Moscow, possibly acquired by one of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's agents, or by a Russian ambassador returning from abroad. Furthermore, there is no *explicit* information as to why or when the translation was undertaken, although one of its two manuscripts clearly was a presentation copy and contains the date 20 December 1670 – probably the date when the translation (or, maybe even more likely, the fair copy) was complete.[17]

16. Sobolevskii (1903: 114) was the first to note that the translation was from the German text, as indicated in both of the Russian manuscripts (RNB, OSRK, F.XI.1, a presentation copy, and another, made from it, Västerås City Library, Slav. Codex AD 10). The engraved title page was pasted into the translation, together with practically all engravings from the book. For some reason the year 1626 on the title page was changed (by hand) into 1653, the date that then is found in the fair copy of its translation. However, no such edition seems to have existed. The edition used in Moscow is *Maneige Royal Ou Lon Peut Remarquer Le Defaut Et La Perfection Du Chevalier, en tous les exercices decet art, digne des Princes, fait & pratiqué en l'instruction du Roy par Antoine Pluvinel* [...] *Königliche Reitschul, Da beydes der Mangel und Volkommenheit eines Reuters zu vermercken* [...] Braunschweig: Gottfried Müller, 1626 (VD17 3:315740C). About this translation, see Maier and Rusakovskii 2019; Maier et al. 2021; Maier 2022; Maier and Jansson (forthcoming).

17. The translation must have been commissioned in the last year or so of Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin's tenure as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery. It is not clear whether the translation would have been copied, illuminated, and bound before he was replaced as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery on 22 February 1671. Presumably the presentation copy was still in the chancery's library at the time when a copy from it was made for Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld in the 1680s (the copy now in Västerås; see note 16). On the possibility that the engravings in the Pluvinel book influenced the work of artists in the royal ateliers in Moscow in the 1670s, see Waugh 2024 (forthcoming).

FIG. 8.1. Crispin de Passe the Younger's Pl.27, taken from the 1626 Braunschweig edition of *Maneige royal*.

There is a plausible explanation regarding who the recipient would have been. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's son and eventual successor, Fedor, born in 1661, would have received his basic literacy education by around 1670 (Sedov 2006: 179). This meant memorization of the primer, breviary and psalter, after which more advanced reading might be undertaken and instruction begun on writing. An illuminated presentation book was offered to the tsarevich in November 1670, a tract *O dushevnom lekarstve* ('On medicine for the soul'), the copy produced in the scriptorium of the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery. At the same time, tutors for him to learn to write were being hired from among the secretaries of the Ambassadorial Chancery. Fedor Alekseevich seems to have developed a fascination with horses at an early age, not just any horses, but elegant ones, exotic breeds, and horses that could be trained to perform.[18] A dressage master (*konskogo ucheniia master*), Taras Stepanovich Rostopchin, was hired to be in charge of the tsarevich's stable, a position he held at least from 1669 to the end of Fedor's reign in 1682. The stable held more than two dozen 'entertainment horses' (*poteshnye loshadi*) as early as 1673, but what exactly that term may mean is difficult to know. In March 1676, soon after Fedor had come to the throne, members of the Dutch embassy of Kunraad von Klenck were invited to visit the royal stables, where Rostopchin impressed them with the

18. This section concerning Fedor Alekseevich's interest in horses is based on Sedov 2006: 273–276. Sedov does not connect this with the translation of *Maneige royal*, and in discussing the translation of 1677 he is not very exact. See also Shapiro (2017), who pulls together a wider range of material relating to Fedor Alekseevich's interest in horses. However, even if, as she writes (ibid:. 14), the heads of the Horse Chancery under Aleksei Mikhailovich were involved in training horses, there is no evidence that such things as formal dressage or entertainment were included. Her summary information here about the translation of Pluvinel is dated and mispresents the facts as we now know them (ibid.: 11–12).

horseflesh and had several of the horses perform both what might be characterized as courtly dressage maneuvers and what might better be termed 'circus acts' (Coyett 1900: 460–462). So there is good reason to think that the Pluvinel book would have been of considerable interest both for Rostopchin and for his young royal patron. Even if Fedor Alekseevich would not yet have been up to reading the translated text in 1670, he would have been captivated by the wonderful engravings that were removed from the printed book and pasted into the manuscript translation.

The translation of *Maneige royal* in 1670 is anonymous. We have not found any archival documents mentioning the name(s) of the translator(s), and no draft translation has yet been found (we have only two fair copies). As stated already by Sobolevskii, the main text of the book was translated from German, not French. Yet a quatrain was translated from French, and a longer poem from Latin. Only these two poems from the preliminaries were chosen for translation, although the front matter of the book contains altogether seven poems in French and two in Latin, which had not been translated into German for the bilingual edition and thus could be translated only from the original languages.

Can we establish the identity of the translator(s)? We think it would have been logical to assign the task to Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, who had native competence in German, who knew Latin and was the only French-language specialist employed at the time. We suppose that at least the two poems in the preliminaries were translated by Tiazhkogorskii, but we also consider it likely that he was asked to translate the whole book (which does not contain a lot of text). At the same time, we cannot exclude as a possible scenario that the original book was torn into pieces and given to several translators, as was the case with the next Pluvinel book, translated in 1677. A sampling of the translation from the German text suggests that it is quite accurate, with no instances of any misunderstanding. Also the translation from Latin (analysed in detail in Maier et al. 2021) on the whole is quite competent. Yet the quatrain in French, engraved under a portrait of King Louis XIII, has more problems: the first two lines have been rendered accurately, but the last two contain some serious misunderstandings (see Maier and Rusakovskii 2019). This one short text is insufficient to demonstrate confidently how well the translator – presumably Tiazhkogorskii – knew French, but it conveys the impression that he was less competent in it than he was in German.

The Pluvinel translation of 1670 falls near the beginning of the period in the 1670s when the Ambassadorial Chancery was producing some lavishly illustrated presentation copies for the royal family (Kudriavtsev 1963). Given the scope of this activity, often with short deadlines, it made sense for such translations to be assigned not to single individuals but to a team of translators, if there were enough of them who were competent in the language of the original. The work also would have involved an overall editor, copyists skilled in good calligraphy, book illustrators, and binders. All of these considerations seem to have been in play when a translation from another 'Pluvinel' book was commissioned in 1677.

Fedor Alekseevich, now the tsar, initiated the new translation. His fascination with horses seems only to have grown. A presumably reliable account indicates that he had been thrown from a horse at age thirteen, an accident which left him disabled to the extent that he could no longer walk or could do so only with difficulty (see Shapiro 2017: 9–10). Possibly his disability was related to other issues, too. In any event, riding was still an option. He would experience frequent bouts of bad health, one of them during the winter of 1676–1677, confining him to the palace for several months. He even had to cancel participation in the traditional ceremony reenacting Christ's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The printed copy of *L'Instruction du Roy / Reitkunst* – another bilingual edition – had been delivered to the tsar's chambers back in December and apparently had remained there during his confinement until sent for translation.[19] The tsar's health had begun to improve by March 1677, and on 9 March he ordered that a translation be made from the second Pluvinel book, to be completed by Trinity Sunday (3 June in that year). That important religious holiday coincided with events in the popular tradition, marking the start of summer, evocations of nature and fertility. It also happened to fall within a week of the tsar's birthday on 9 June. It would be reasonable to suppose the tsar hoped by then to be able to visit his stables once again to ride.[20] There is no reason to think Fedor Alekseevich would have forgotten about the earlier translation, but it simply could not have been of much use for the new project because the book now to be translated was a new 'Pluvinel', substantially expanded, even if parts of it may have overlapped with *Maneige Royal*, the book that had been translated in 1670.

The deadline set by the tsar, less than three months away, would prove unrealistic. The book was not a huge one – 253 numbered pages with text in two languages, plus introductions and illustrations on non-paginated folios (the short explanatory captions

19. A more detailed title of the book translated in 1677 is: *L'Instruction du Roy, En L'Exercice De Monter A Cheval Par Messire Anthoine de Plvvinel. Reitkunst Vveijland H. Antonii De Plvvinèl, Königlicher Maijestat in Franckreich Oberstallmeistern, Raht von Staed, Cámmerer und underGoverneur* [...] Paris: Ruette, 1629 (VD17 39:126115S). For details about the book and its translation, see Maier 2022, which corrects the indication in Maier and Rusakovskii 2019 that a Frankfurt edition of 1670 was the basis for the Russian translation. This book was first published only in French in 1625. Its content is very different from the first book attributed to Pluvinel (*Maneige royal*), among other things through the inclusion of a text – originally published in 1612 – by Rene de Menou, another equestrian master (and perhaps the real author of the 'Pluvinel' books). The quality of the engravings in *L'Instruction du Roy* was inferior, and they also had to be folded to fit the upright folio format of the book, whereas the engravings still were in landscape format (which is more suitable for the illustration of horses). The parallel German text that was added for the bilingual 1629 edition was copied from a German version published in Frankfurt am Main in 1628.

20. RGADA, f. 159, op. 2, pt. 1, No. 1735, fols. 1–4. For a detailed analysis of this important document, which covers the whole history of how the work was assigned and then actually proceeded, see Maier 2022: 153–156. Another explanation which has been given (e.g., Lavrent'ev and Matveeva 1992: 243) for the choice of Trinity Day for completion of the translation is that in certain regions of Russia (the south and the Volga area) there was a horse ritual (*vozhdenie konia*) in connection with the holiday. However, it seems unlikely that this tradition had anything to do with the decision to translate the book. The ritual did not involve real horses but rather the leading of play-actors costumed as horses during the procession of the mummers (see Vinogradova and Plotnikova 1995: 391).

on the illustrations were not translated at all). However, the text would have to be corrected, a fair copy made and illuminated, and bound. In order to meet the schedule, the book was quite literally torn into five pieces, each part consisting of some fifty pages to be translated by five different persons. Three of them were German-language specialists (Leontii Gross, Ivan Tiazhkogorskii, Efim Meisner); the other two were not officially translators for German: Andrei Vinius' main language was Dutch, and Andrei Kreft – who, moreover, had just been appointed during the previous year – was a translator for English.[21] In other words, all available forces had been mobilised.

Gross was to translate the first 50 pages of the main part of the book and presumably the (non-paginated) front matter. He might have been the most fortunate of the five translators, given the potential advantage of having seen the beginning of the book rather than starting in the middle or near the end. At the close of May, just days before the tsar's deadline, Tiazhkogorskii returned his portion to the chancery, but without any translation. The archival document does not explain why, but surely the reason was his assignment to join Grigorii Romodanovskii's troops for the Chyhyryn campaign – Tiazhkogorskii also had participated in the one the previous year and had returned to Moscow only for the winter. His portion was subsequently divided into three parts and given to Gross, Vinius, and Meisner. Nothing was given to Kreft – who, incidentally, turned in his own share just a couple of days later with the argument that he was unable to make a translation. Perhaps his knowledge of German was not good enough to translate a text about equitation, or – more likely – his command of Russian might not yet have been on a sufficiently high level. In any event, he had been assigned the *last* 50 pages of a book whose first 200 pages he probably had not even seen. Kreft's untranslated pages were handed over to Meisner, who, as a result, now had on his desk almost half of the book. Vinius was the only one to meet the tsar's deadline by delivering his draft translation on 2 June (albeit perhaps a *little* late if the fair copy of the whole book was to be ready on 3 June). We do not know when the remaining parts of the translation were delivered.

Analysis of the opening section of the book, which we assume was translated by Gross, shows that it was scrupulously accurate (Maier 2022: 144–149). Title pages (and also other front matters such as dedications etc.), it seems, were usually translated in this way at the Ambassadorial Chancery. So we should not draw the conclusion, from this fragment alone, that Gross generally was more meticulous than other translators; in order to show this, we would have to compare some fragments from the main part of the book. The translator must have been familiar with the technical terminology of the original, and he devised inventive solutions for rendering it into Russian, where such specialized vocabulary did not yet exist. An analysis of a later section of the translation (from the part assigned to Vinius) also shows that the translator understood the text clearly (ibid.: 149–152). Unlike in the case of Gross, he simplified and condensed some non-essential parts of the text, in order to make it more easily accessible for a Russian

21. For Kreft, see Beliakov et al.: 130–131, which dates his initial service 1675/76.

reader. Such an approach is analogous to what we see in the translation of the newspapers for the *kuranty*, which by this time rarely were full renderings of the originals. An analysis of the translation by Meisner – the largest portion of the book – remains to be carried out as part of a still-needed project to study the techniques and compare the results achieved by the three translators.

The contribution of Semen Lavretskii to the project, sometimes misrepresented in the literature, did *not* involve translation of the German text. As a specialist in Polish and Latin, he was to translate the Latin poems by an anonymous author, printed on a series of sixteenth-century Flemish engravings that had been issued for the first time in Antwerp around 1580.[22] These large-format engravings, which featured above all well-known and popular horse breeds, were made after drawings by Jan van der Straet/Stradanus (FIG. 8.2). Each image was accompanied by Latin verses whose author is uncertain – somebody who obviously was well versed in the poetry of Vergil and Ovid. There were various reeditions of the engravings, some with additions to the original publication.

The set of the engravings received by the Ambassadorial Chancery and sent to be translated in 1677 derives from more than one printing, but there is no reason to think it had been collected in Russia over many years. Most likely it was obtained at the same time as the bilingual edition of *L'Instruction du Roy / Reitkunst*, and for the translation it was treated with the book as part of a single project. When Lavretskii completed his assignment is not known. His translations were written directly on the original engravings, and later on, when all parts of the Pluvinel translation were finished, edited, fair copies made and illuminated, the Flemish engravings were bound together with the Pluvinel text, at the very end of the volume.[23] Judging from a preliminary analysis, the quality of his

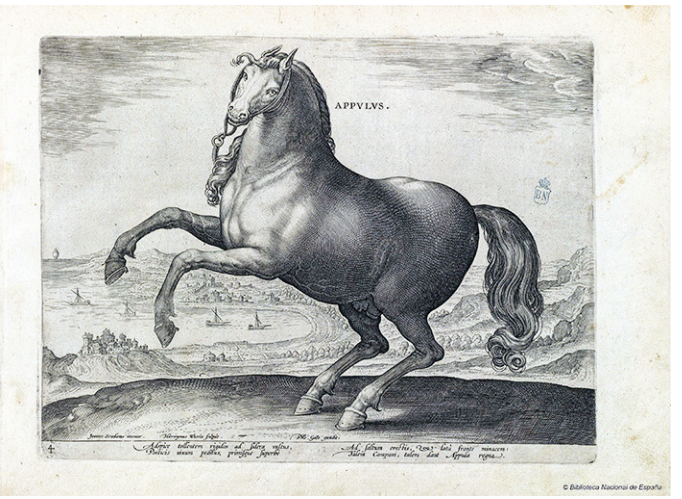

FIG. 8.2. Engraving showing the horse breed 'Appulus', from *Eqvile Ioannis Avstriaci.*

22. For a detailed analysis of the engravings and Lavretskii's translations, which appends parallel texts of all the verses, see Maier 2021. The title of the series of engravings is: *Eqvile Ioannis Avstriaci Caroli V. Imp[eratoris] F[ilii], In quo omnis generis generosissimorum equorum ex variis orbis partibus insignis delectus. Ad vivum omnes delineati à celeberrimo pictore Iohanne Stradano Belga Brugensi. Et à Philippo Gallęo editi.* For a set of its engravings, whose title page is identical with that in the Russian collection, see http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000043254.

23. The single known copy of this translation is now in RNB, Pogodin Collection No. 1717. More than one third of the original 41 engravings were later taken out of the volume. For a reconstruction of which engravings are now missing, see Maier 2021: 639–642. It seems likely that the tsar himself might have removed them from what is clearly a presentation copy of the book (ibid.: 642).

translation is uneven (Maier 2021: 643–645). He did not attempt to write in verse but focused on conveying the meaning of the original. In most cases he did so remarkably well, given the fact that the texts are full of Classical allusions and place names, not all of which would have been familiar. At the same time, there are mistakes where he seems not to have understood the allusions or geography, and in the case of one quatrain his effort was totally unsatisfactory. As in other instances where there is no draft copy to be studied, it is not always possible to know whether some lapses were the fault of the translator or the copyist.

By October, all the draft translations were ready and had been corrected by an undersecretary of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Maksim Burtsov, who also was responsible for supervising the production of the fair copy (made by one Lazar' Lazar'ev, also an undersecretary in the chancery), placing the illustrations – engravings taken from the original Pluvinel book – into the fair copy, and probably foliation of the whole volume. Burtsov surely merited for his 'editorial' work the reward of a swatch of embroidered silk damask he received on 11 November. The copyist and translators were also rewarded, on two occasions (Sedov 2006: 275 n. 426). The finished presentation copy is on the finest paper, in the calligraphic hand of a single copyist, with ornamentation in colored ink on the title page and initials and headers written in gold. The engravings cut from the Pluvinel original were placed throughout, and the Antwerp portfolio engravings, their Latin hexameters translated into Russian, were included as an appendix.

8.3.3. The translation of a death certificate (1680)

It is sometimes surprising to see how anxious the Muscovite authorities in the late seventeenth century were to ensure the accuracy of translation. One example we have been analysing and will present here is about a casualty, more exactly a medical certificate, written by the tsar's personal physician Laurentius Blumentrost. It is about the death cause of a Russian citizen. This incident is interesting due to the preservation of the translations themselves together with a discussion regarding their accuracy. An additional advantage is that the names of the translators are documented, too.

The background was the following: In 1679, the government of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich ordered an embassy to proceed with a Polish mission to the Habsburg court in Vienna. The Russian embassy was headed by Ivan Vasil'evich Buturlin and seconded by Ivan Ivanovich Chaadaev (*PDS* 5: 557). As the envoys were returning through the Commonwealth in 1680, there was an outbreak of the plague. Back already in Muscovite territory, the members of the mission were instructed not to return to Moscow but to remain at their estates (most of them apparently in the Smolensk region) until it was safe to travel. Finally they were ordered to return to the capital by 12 September (ibid.: 856). However, Chaadaev's son, who had been on the embassy staff and had been ill since October of the previous year, worsened during the return trip and died on 10 September 1680, 40 *versty* outside of the city.[24] Naturally the authorities were concerned

24. The key documents covering his death, the investigation and report are in *PDS* 5: 858–876.

that the death might have been from plague. Chaadaev and his suite were instructed to proceed no further until an autopsy could be performed; the prominent physician in the Apothecary Chancery, Laurentius Blumentrost, was sent to do it.[25] Blumentrost arrived on 15 September, examined the body, and wrote out his findings in Latin and German. His conclusion was that the young Chaadaev had died from a prolonged illness affecting the lungs and not from the plague.[26] He pointed out in support of his diagnosis that he had been consulted three months earlier and had prescribed medicines for Chaadaev. Although they had brought some temporary relief, according to the doctor, they could not save the patient's life. Moreover, interrogation of others from the embassy showed that none of its staff had contracted any serious infectious disease while abroad.

To make absolutely sure that Chaadaev jr. had not died from the plague, the Moscow authorities ordered several of the most skilled translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery to produce separate translations of the documents, which were then to be compared.[27] Stakhei Gadzalovskii (who would subsequently instruct Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld in Russian) and Stepan Chizhinskii jointly produced the first translation of the Latin-language report, Ivan Tiazhkogorskii the second – and finally, as a check on their accuracy, Leontii Gross made a third translation.[28] Here are excerpts of the three translations made from the Latin version of Blumentrost's certificate (Table 8.1):[29]

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25. For Blumentrost's biography, Dumschat 2006: 569–572. – In the context of our discussion of translators, this is just a curious coincidence: when Blumentrost married for the third time (after the death of his previous wife), in 1678, his new bride was a daughter of the Courland merchant Johann Gosens – apparently the same Gosens who had translated for the Potemkin missions.

26. The original illness was probably tuberculosis. Some of the infected boils or abscesses described in the medical certificate may well have been unrelated causes (and the autopsy was made when Chaadaev jr. had been dead for 5–6 days!). The term *chakhotka* that appears in the translations about the young Chaadaev's disease is an old one, referring to progressive deterioration of health in severe cases of tuberculosis; *sukhota* 'dryness' also can refer to a debilitating disease.

27. Although the mission had with it three translators – Semen Lavretskii, Iakov Ivanov syn (Roman Vilimov syn) Eglin, and Afonasii Semenov syn Lavretskii (the son of the lead translator) – there is no indication that they were involved in the investigation (see *PDS* 5: 1118).

28. Regarding Gadzalovskii, see Beliakov et al.: 96–98; on Chizhinskii, ibid.: 219–222. Both of them were nobles who had come from Lithuanian or Ukrainian territories and were fluent in Polish and Latin, presumably having acquired the latter in formal schooling. Chizhinskii also was considered a specialist in 'Belorussian'. Even though Chizhinskii has traditionally been considered one of the most prolific Moscow translators for books from Polish in the late seventeenth century, there are uncertainties as to how many of those translations can confidently be attributed to him (see Jansson 2021). On Tiazhkogorskii, see Secs. 7.1.5 and 8.4.1; on Gross, Secs. 7.1.4 and 8.4.2.

29. The excerpts are taken from the edition in *PDS* 5: 865–870. In our quotations we follow the edition, except that we leave out the letter <ъ> at the end of words, as is the rule in modern Russian. The parentheses in the third translation (Gross) are in the edition. In *PDS* 5: 867–871 there are also two translations from the German version of Blumentrost's attestation, one made by Gross and one apparently by Tiazhkogorskii. We do not include them in our comparison.

TABLE 8.1: Excerpts from three translations of a death certificate written in Latin (1680)

Gadzalovskii and Chizhinskii	Tiazhkogorskii	Gross
[...] тот умерший подлинно ни с какой жестокой болѣзни повѣтренной и не с моровой умре, но болѣзнию огненною долго в нем пребывающею, которая уже весь год трудила, ею скончался и та болѣзнь огневая, которой наукою дохтурскою пособити немочно было для путного шествия и премѣнного воздуха, наступила на него болшая так же чахотная с кашлем и удушьем и с прочими дрожанми жил, на котором потом повремяни учинился болшой чирей, тот когда провалился на стегнах, откуду множество гноя злосмрадного житкого вышло, чего ради понеже ослабѣло тѣло его и безсилно стало, а как силы его изнемогли, последняя черта живота его пришла [...]	[...] умерший никакою острою повѣтренною моровою болѣзнью не умер, но с долговременной и ежедневной болѣзни лихорадной, уже год владѣющей, преставися. Предходящая лихорадка по художеству лечитись не могла, помѣшки ради дороги и воздуха наслѣдовала сухотная болѣзнь с жестоким кашлем, одышкою и иными им равными, сих повремяни наслѣдова чирей, или опухлина, которой провалился по голени и из него множество нечистоты гноистой и водяной вытекло, и вытекши опухлина осѣла, но он обезсилѣл, и так послѣдний срок всѣх дѣл смерть поспѣла [...]	[...] тот умершей ни от какой острой болѣзни и не от прилипающей и ни от смертной угас, но от долговременной скорби, которая близ года цѣлого была на нем, кончину свою восприял, потому что предходящую лихорадку, которая по художеству исцѣлитися не могла для неприключимости путешествия и воздуха, послѣдовала сухота и конечное изнеможение с жестоким кашлем, удушьем и иных припадающих немощей, а к тому послѣ послѣдовая учинилась поведением времяни мокрота, которая наконец развредилась (разгноилась) в голенех и вышла от того много нѣкоторая обилная густая (гной) материя и водяная, и по выведении той материи у тѣла опухлина опала, но по убывающей силѣ наконец смерть, яко послѣдний срок вещей послѣдовал [...]
прилагаю и то что ни един человѣк в толь великом числѣ тою болѣзнию не умре, как вопрошающу мнѣ о том никто не подтвержал [...]	Придаю сие что никто между толь множеством людей провожатых моровою болѣзнию не умер, что мнѣ допрашивающему истинно оказано […]	Прибавляю же, что никто от посолских людей от морового повѣтрия не умер, якож про то спрашивающему подлинно и по чистой совѣсти сказали […]

Of course, we cannot produce a serious assessment here of the quality and accuracy of the translations, since we do not have the Latin original. All three translations seem to agree on the doctor's main conclusions, and all are written in comprehensible Russian, albeit in a somewhat awkward style, but no worse than other contemporary translations (and even original writings) of the time. At the same time, there are distinct differences in the translations, a discussion of which can supplement what we have already observed about the Russian-language mastery of the specialists in this group, comprising some of the very best translators in Russian employ during that period. According to our impression, Gadzalovskii and Chizhinskii (first translation) attempt to follow as closely as possible the wording of the Latin original, for instance, by using a plain Instrumental

case after the (aorist) verb form *umre* 'he died' to express the cause of death (the disease): 'umre bolezniiu ognennoiu dolgo v nem prebyvaiushcheiu' (literally: 'he died of an ardent disease, which had been staying with him for a long time'). This expression with the Instrumental, and also the use of a present participle in this sentence, were probably triggered by the syntax of the Latin source, which almost certainly expressed the cause of death with a plain Ablative, for example *morbo morior* 'die of a disease'. In seventeenth-century Russian, the construction with a plain Instrumental case was not yet altogether obsolete, although it was old-fashioned. In rare cases it can still be documented in other contemporary sources,[30] but the 'modern' construction, *umirat', pomirat' ot bolezni* 'die from a disease', was undoubtedly the more common one by 1680.[31]

The second translator (Tiazhkogorskii) is the one in this group who is most prone to omit occasional phrases. He may have done this without being aware how crucial exactness was in this specific case. That his translation is the shortest of the three can also be seen in Table 8.1 (whereas Gross' text is the longest). As with the first translation, this one also has an aorist form for 'he died', *prestavisia*, and Tiazhkogorskii, too, chose the 'heavy' construction with a present participle, but he expresses the cause of death with a prepositional phrase, *s … bolezni*: 's dolgovremennoi i ezhednevnoi bolezni likhoradnoi, uzhe got vladeiushchei, prestavisia' ('he died from a long-time and common ardent disease, which had possessed [him] for one year'). The third translator (Gross) does not have an aorist form. He also chose a more colloquial relative clause instead of a heavy participle construction and expressed the cause of death with the preposition *ot*, exactly as in modern Russian (cf. *umeret' ot raka*): 'ot dolgovremennoi skorbi, kotoraia bliz goda tselogo byla na nem, konchinu svoiu vospriial' ('he suffered death from a long-time illness, that had been with him almost for a whole year').

All three texts are almost free from Church Slavonicisms, with a few exceptions (only in the first and the second translation). On the syntactic level there is a 'Dativus absolutus' in the first two translations, for one and the same construction of the original (supposedly an 'Ablativus absolutus' that elicited the obsolete Russian construction): *voproshaiushchu mne* resp. *mne doprashivaiushchemu* (last sentence in Table 8.1); both can be translated as 'when I asked; upon my question'. On the morphological level, some forms of the aorist stand out, a tense no longer in use in contemporary colloquial Russian. Thus, the team Gadzalovskii and Chizhinskii has the aorist form *umre* ('he died') in two instances. In this concrete case, Tiazhkogorskii has the modern Russian form *umer*, and Gross has *ugas* ('his life extinguished') and *umer*. However, Tiazhkogorskii has two aorist forms in other places, *prestavisia* 'he died' and *nasledova* 'followed'. The only translator who did not use a single aorist form, but only modern Russian colloquial

30. Cf. this example from 1654 (quoted in *SRIa XI–XVII*, vol. 17: 9): 'U prikhodov i v monastyrekh pomerlo 932 cheloveka skoroiu bolezniiu s iazvami' ('in the parishes and monasteries 932 persons died of an imminent illness with ulcers').

31. Cf. *pomereti ot glada* 'to die of hunger' in the *Lavrent'evskaia letopis'*, 1377, under the year 997, quoted from *SRIa XI–XVII*, vol. 17: 9.

verb forms to express past tense, was Gross, and he was also the only one who did not use any other Church Slavonicisms. Incidentally, it seems symptomatic that three of the four aorist forms that appear in these translations are formed from Russian verbs with the meaning 'to die'; apparently, in this 'transcendent' vocabulary two of the translators were more willing than in other lexical fields to make exceptions from their rule to use only 'modern' Russian grammatical forms, and *umre*, *prestavisia* were certainly forms they would have heard at church.[32] (Tiazhkogorskii went a little further, using – in one case – a 'non-transcendent' verb in the aorist, *nasledova* 'followed'.) We have not observed any distinct lexical Church Slavonicisms in these translations.

The certificate contains a lot of phrases expressing death causes ('to die of/from'), and we see at least three Russian constructions used to express this meaning: the team Gadzalovskii and Chizhinskii has first a prepositional phrase, *ne s morovoi umre* ('he did not die from the plague'); the next time they used a noun phrase in the Instrumental case, without a preposition: *toiu bolezniiu ne umre* ('he did not die from this disease'). Tiazhkogorskii has the latter construction in both cases, and he actually has exactly the same phrase both at the beginning and at the end of the attest: *morovoiu bolezn'iu ne umer* ('he did not die from the plague'). Gross' translation contains altogether five phrases, expressing a disease from which Chaadaev had died (resp. had *not* died), and it is consistently the same construction: a prepositional phrase with *ot* (the modern Russian construction), for instance *ugas* […] *ot dolgovremennoi skorbi* ('he died from a long-time disease'). Two of the translators occasionally give two synonyms, certainly both for one and the same Latin word: Tiazhkogorskii in one case, *chirei, ili opukhlina* ('abscess, or swelling'); Gross in two cases *razvredilas' (razgnoilas')* 'was damaged (festered)'; *obilnaia gustaia materia (gnoi)* 'abundant thick matter (pus)'. (He added his explanations within parentheses – a very modern approach.) It is somewhat odd that Gross is the only one of the translators who transcribed the doctor's surname erroneously (as *Dumentros* – not in the cited excerpt), but we suppose that the scribe of the fair copy may have found it difficult to read Gross' handwriting and might have garbled the name, since it is hard to imagine that Gross himself would not have known the name of this physician, who arrived to Moscow back in 1668 (together with Laurentius Rinhuber, the doctor's assistant).[33]

The differences in terminology undoubtedly reflect the fact that none of the translators was a medical specialist, nor was there likely a standard Russian vocabulary for medical terms. It is therefore understandable that the three versions differ in their

32. Exactly with this verb, *umeret'*, an aorist form can be documented also in the *Vesti-Kuranty*, although these newspaper translations usually are almost free from any obsolete forms and Church Slavonicisms; cf., however, in V-K VII: 115: *takzhe po nem Modonegskoi umre* ('and after him, Modonegskii [=Mondoñedo] also died').

33. Pastor Johann Gottfried Gregorii, Blumentrost's stepson (and the author of the first Russian court plays), was also in this company, but he was *returning* to Moscow, after a long fundraising trip through the German lands.

choice of terms, each translator trying to find a good solution, for instance: *bolshaia* […] *chakhotnaia s kashlem* 'a large atrophy with a cough' (first translation); *sukhotnaia bolezn' s zhestokim kashlem* 'dryness with violent cough' (second); *sukhota i konechnoe iznemozhenie s zhestokim kashlem* 'dryness and finally exhaustion with a violent cough' (third).

Nevertheless, all three translations clearly agreed in conveying the doctor's important evidence that Chaadaev jr. had not died from the plague. This was repeated at least twice in each version. The translations also agreed that no other member of the embassy had died from the plague. The bureaucrats and the tsar thus would have had good reason to be satisfied with this result. However, this was apparently not the case: a secretary – or possibly the lead translator Leontii Gross – made a compilation of excerpts from the different translations, summarising their most important content. Subsequently the other translators were deposed orally about their texts. What seems to have caused particular concern was the choice of the word *chirei* ('boil, carbuncle, abscess') for what appears to have been a nasty infection that settled in Chaadaev's lower extremities; in the first translation: *uchinilsia bolshoi chirei* ('a big abscess appeared'); in the second: *nasledova chirei, ili opukhlina* ('an abscess, or swelling, emerged'). The concern here undoubtedly was due to an idea that the symptoms might be related to bubonic plague. When quizzed on this, Tiazhkogorskii and Gadzalovskii explained that they had done their best to render this text, and they had 'added' the word *chirei* (which apparently did not have a literal correspondence in the Latin text) 'because pus cannot go through anything else, except an abscess (*chirei*).' They also admitted that they were not certain about names of diseases, because 'in the medical science there are many Greek words,' and only a person who has studied Greek can understand them. Moreover, the medical science is very different from ordinary learning (implicitly: a person with no medical training will not understand a medical text).[34] Chizhinskii confirmed what his colleagues had said about these translations. The discussion ends here (at least in the edition); so probably the employers were satisfied with this answer. However, despite the doctor's conclusion that the death of Chaadaev jr. was not due to infectious disease, his father was told to bury his son in the Novinskii Monastery, at about 40 km (40 *v.*) from Moscow. In addition, he was ordered to go to any of his villages after the burial and stay there until 1 October; during this time he should neither send anybody to Moscow, nor receive a person from the capital. Ivan Vasil'evich (Buturlin) was told to come to Moscow with all his men when the tsar had departed for the Trinity Monastery (col. 871). So the joint efforts by the tsar's doctor and his very best translators did not convince the Russian government that it was safe to let the ambassadors and their suite, who had been in Vienna and in Poland, come to Moscow. Did the allusions about the difficulty in translating medical terminology undermine what seems to have been a consensus about the doctor's diagnosis?

34. 'v dokhturskikh naukakh mnogie slova Ellinskie i krome tekh, kto tomu uchilsia, ne znaet i dokhturskaia nauka s grazhdanskoiu v velikom raznstvii' (*PDS* 5: 876).

As we have seen, the linguistic means chosen by the three foreign-language specialists were different, but is it possible to say which of the translations was best? Not really, because the main difference is in their style, and here much depends on the reader's preferences. The use of occasional aorist forms (mostly for verbs meaning 'to die') was certainly not a problem for any contemporary reader (they would have heard these forms at church). Probably the use of the 'Dative absolute' would cause a problem for some readers. In this respect, preference can be given to Gross' translation, which is the 'clearest' of the three, and it also did not condense the content, something that perhaps should be avoided in cases where accuracy is so crucial. Of course, when Gross set out to translate the certificate, he already knew that absolute exactness was required, and he had the help (if needed) of the two translations already made by his colleagues.

There were also two translations of Blumentrost's German-language report, one apparently made by Tiazhkogorskii and the other, for verification, by Gross.[35] Perhaps reflecting the fact that both translators were German native speakers, the translations from German read more smoothly than the ones from Latin. They both transcribed the Latin name for the main cause of death, 'Morbus chronicus' (used only in the *German*-language certificate!), as *morbum khronikum* (it surely appeared in the Accusative in the certificate: 'we call it *morbus chronicus*').[36] On the one hand, this is a generic term for chronic illness, but it can also be a short form for *Morbus chronicus obstructionis pulmonum*, 'chronic obstructive pulmonary disease', that is, a chronic inflammatory lung disease.

8.4. Newspaper translations by the most experienced and best translators in the last third of the seventeenth century

As we have seen, it may be possible to identify who translated larger books in late Muscovy, projects that might require the work of a team of several specialists in order to meet a short deadline. Unfortunately, there are relatively few instances where the translator of a *kuranty* item is documented. In the absence of specific attribution, there may be a reasonable hypothesis as to the identity of the translator, if at a given time only one person was known to be employed for expertise in the language of the original. Here we will examine only the cases where we know the translator: for German texts, Ivan Tiazhkogorskii and Leontii Gross, and for Dutch, Andrei Vinius.[37] Why there seems to

35. *PDS* 5: 867–868, 870–871. There are only two translations from German: one signed by Gross and one unsigned. The document does not specify that the anonymous translation was made by Tiazhkogorskii, but it follows directly on his translation of the Latin text, and Gadzalovskii and Chizhinskii were not German-language specialists, so they are not relevant here. In referring to this translation from German in his summary, Gross writes simply that it was in the 'report'. Gross 'signed' both of his translations at the bottom of each text; the other attributions are specified by the chancery officials who drew up the full report (perhaps Gross himself).

36. In Early Modern German texts, Latin words were usually quoted in the grammatical case the noun would have had in the corresponding Latin sentence. Both translators followed this rule when transcribing the name of the disease into Russian.

37. We should emphasize that these examples can be documented from the published volumes in

be a narrow chronological cluster of *kuranty* texts that identify their translators between 1669 and 1671 is uncertain. At best one can hypothesize that the practice of 'signing' the translations arose when there had been a dispute over the fact that the postmaster, Leonhard (Leontii) Marselis, was opening the packets with the newspapers and marking passages in them that would be of interest to translate. The translators – Gross and Tiazhkogorskii – protested, insisting successfully that only they had the authority to select what news would be translated. The following examples will illustrate the process of selection as well as the competence of the translators.

8.4.1. Ivan Tiazhkogorskii's *kuranty* translations

Fortunately, in V-K VII there is a whole set of translations from German printed newspapers that is signed by Tiazhkogorskii, and moreover, for all of these translations the foreign originals have been identified.[38] The German newspapers – at least five different issues – had arrived in Moscow via the Vilna post on 29 November 1671. From this package he selected for translation eight reports: one from *Mittwochischer Mercurius* (*MM*, Berlin) 1671/42 [=43]; three from *Sonntagischer Mercurius* (*SM*, Berlin) 1671/43; one from *Ordinari Diengstags Zeitung* (Hamburg) 1671/43; one from *B. Einkommende Ordinari und Postzeitungen* (*BE*, Berlin) 1671/42/St.3; two from that same paper's issue 1671/42/St.1. The first four articles cover news from Poland and Ukraine about the wars there involving the Cossacks and Tatars; three of the remaining entries relate to other 'Turkish' news, and a single short sentence has been extracted from a longer piece about the fiscal measures anticipating a French invasion of the Netherlands. The approach how the news from different regions was rendered in Russian varies, apparently depending on the subject: the first four articles with news from Warsaw or Ukraine are but barely condensed, whereas the final selection, dated Venice 9 October, is substantially shortened from a very long article in which – apart from the news from Istanbul, which was of interest to translate – there was a lot of other, less relevant news from Italian cities. Tiazhkogorskii chose to translate a single sentence from one more article (datelined Cologne, 18 October).

With very few exceptions, Tiazhkogorskii translated accurately into understandable Russian. Where he clarified certain items, such as a date, or identified the name of an otherwise anonymous location, generally he did so correctly. He was able to understand the often complex syntax of the original, and in some instances where it was not really clear, he could come up with a more intelligible equivalent. Occasional problems may have been due to the carelessness of the typesetters at the the Berlin printing office. In some cases we get the impression that the translator might not have understood the

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the V-K series. Other cases where the translator is mentioned may be found in the yet unpublished *kuranty* from later in the seventeenth century. Stepan Shamin (2011a: 98) mentions two such examples where the translators' names are mentioned – Gross and Tiazhkogorskii, again.

38. The Russian translation is in V-K VII: 222–224, No. 30; the German source texts and commentaries are in ibid.: 463–471.

complicated German syntax, but in all these instances the explanation can also be mistakes made by the scribe of the fair copy – and, in any event, the original newspaper sources (especially the Berlin paper) suffered from deficient editorial work, so it may be virtually impossible to understand exactly what was to be communicated. That Tiazhkogorskii generally did not have any problems understanding difficult German sentences (as has been noted already in Sec. 7.1.5) is not so astonishing if, as we believe, he had native ability in German. Judging from these eight signed news reports, for which the exact printed sources have been identified, we would give him the highest possible marks in translating German-language newspapers.

One of his translated articles contains a couple of Church Slavonicisms (*otversty*, *byst´*, *sut´*), which is unusual to find in the *kuranty* but can be documented particularly in Tiazhkogorskii's other work as well (see Sec. 8.3.3). A possible explanation might be that he certainly was dealing with Church Slavonic texts when he was a parish priest in Minsk, before he was employed by the Ambassadorial Chancery, so he might have learned some Church Slavonic words and grammar (see Sec. 7.1.5).

We have one more news report that was certainly translated by Tiazhkogorskii, a draft translation dated 6 May [1669] (V-K VI/1: 354). The Russian translation informs us that this is an excerpt from a German 'sheet' (in Russian, *list*). The source has not been identified, and if this report was taken from a handwritten newspaper, as we suppose it was, it is virtually impossible to find the original. The folio (fol. 2) is apparently a fragment which was combined with another fragment (fol. 1) to form a *kuranty* set (No. 143). At the bottom of fol. 2 is a note that it was translated by 'Ivan Tezhkogorskii'. It is impossible to assess the quality of this translation because we lack the original news report, and we can only note that the Russian text is comprehensible. The striking foreign words – *elektsyia*, *pospolitoe rushenie* – may well have been taken from the German original; the Polish term *pospolite ruszenie* 'general mobilization of armed forces' was used regularly in news reports published in German newspapers.

The source for the news report on fol. 1 from Warsaw, 12 April 1669, and translated on 10 May is *Königsb. Sontags Ordinari PostZeitung* (*KSO*) 1669, No. 32.[39] The translation must have been done by a very experienced translator. It is very exact; only occasional words have been omitted, and even an error in the original has been corrected: 'Masuren' in the newspaper certainly should have been 'Masowien', because the news item

39. The German source text from the Königsberg newspaper and the commentary are in V-K VI/2: 358–359. On the copy of the newspaper (which is kept in RGADA) is a note that it had been translated. Several issues of the Königsberg paper for 1669, an almost unbroken sequence, have been preserved in Moscow, all of them with the annotation that they had been translated. At least some of those translations have survived and are published in V-K VI/1: 349–351 (No. 139), 355–357 (No. 145). The comparison of the Russian texts with the originals shows that, as with the news item from Warsaw, the translations were skillfully done, albeit not free of some mistakes. Where the original texts were condensed in the translation, the result generally is clear, and there is even evidence of some ingenuity in rendering the Latin words found in some of the German sentences (see V-K VI/2: 365–367). Given the ability of the translator to handle Latin, it is possible that these translations were made either by the multilingual Tiazhkogorskii or by Gross.

mentions a 'general assembly' to be held in Warsaw (which is situated in Mazovia). Even though the translation on fol. 2 of *kuranty* set No. 143 is attributed to Tiazhkogorskii (V-K VI/2: 359), there is no certainty that the attribution applies as well to fol. 1.[40] This means that the report from Warsaw also could have been translated by Leontii Gross.

8.4.2. Leontii Gross' *kuranty* translations

Leontii Gross 'signed' two sets of *kuranty* translations from German printed newspapers, the first received on 29 October 1671 and the other in what was probably the next delivery on 7 November, both via the Vilna post.[41] The sources which have been identified for comparison with his translations are all Hamburg newspapers: *EMZ* 1671/40;[42] *NM* 1671, Eeee, September; *WDoZ* 1671/40; *ODiZ* 1671/41[43]; and *ESZ* 1671/39. Even if there is some uncertainty about the exact source for the articles he chose, we can use this list to provide an approximate sense of the principles for his selection of what to translate.

Four of the Hamburg newspapers published between six and eight items in each issue. The one issue of *ODiZ* had twelve articles, which tended to be shorter than the ones in the other Hamburg papers. In all five cases, Gross translated only a single datelined entry from an issue. He drew on other sources which have not been identified for an additional nine news items. Of the fourteen articles he translated, four pertained to Polish-Ukrainian affairs, five to news primarily about the Ottoman Empire, and three related to Swedish news. Since these newspapers often featured reports on Polish-Ukrainian and Turkish affairs, the coverage often overlapped between articles. While there is some repetition in what he translated, he also ignored other items that contained pretty much the same information. Generally he omitted news about naval activities in the western Mediterranean, court news from London, Paris or Vienna, and reports anticipating the imminent war between France and the Netherlands. Reports from Italy focusing on papal affairs also were of no interest. It is clear that one of the major concerns for the Ambassadorial Chancery, as reflected in Gross' translations, was the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, not only because of the longstanding involvement of the Russian government with the Cossacks and Tatars but also because of the likelihood that the Ottoman Turks would invade. Thus, the conflicting newspaper reports about

40. From the introduction of V-K VI/1: 30 (written by Stepan Shamin) it becomes clear that the two leaves originally belonged to two independent *kuranty* sets, a conclusion drawn from palaeographic evidence.

41. The Russian texts are in V-K VII: 202–204, 208–211, Nos. 27 and 28; for the German originals and commentary, see ibid.: 450–455.

42. There are enough textual differences between the article and Gross' translation to suggest he must have used a slightly different version of this news report from another source (see V-K VII: 451). In particular there is a section in the translation dealing with the objections by Crown Marshal Jan Sobieski regarding the provisioning of his troops in winter quarters. That material presumably was in the actual source for Gross' translation – possibly one of the Berlin or Königsberg papers for which no copies are extant – and is not something he added from other sources he had read, .

43. The article found in this newspaper (which was used in analyzing the translation) is essentially identical with its printing in *EMZ* 1671/41; so it is impossible to know for certain which was the source Gross used. See V-K VII: 453.

major disturbances in the Arab lands under Ottoman control were of interest, for rebellions there might divert the Turkish government from undertaking military campaigns in the north: in Hungary or Poland and Ukraine. Reports about Arab uprisings had been translated in the *kuranty* of 1665–1666 as part of the considerable attention devoted to the Jewish false-messiah Shabbetai Zvi (V-K VI/2: 252–255). While it is difficult to pin down exactly what was happening in the Ottoman East in 1671, there undoubtedly was some factual basis for this news in that year.

The quality of Gross' translations is impressive. His translations of the news coming out of Warsaw (four of the five articles) rarely omit any words and are quite precise, even when the syntax of the originals was complex. He would occasionally add specific explanatory identification and seems to have known the geography well enough to render place names accurately for his Russian audience. The remaining article of his five for which we have a source, a report from Venice, begins with a long, complex and, even for a native German speaker, presumably incomprehensible collection of news about Ottoman affairs, focusing on the unrest in the Arab lands. Clearly Gross struggled to produce from it his rather free summary. His translation of the following sentence relating to Ottoman dynastic politics is quite clear though. He chose to omit the final section of the report containing news from Belgrad about the sultan's reaction to the Arab uprising.

8.4.3. Andrei Vinius' *kuranty* translations

The same postal deliveries via Vilna which brought to Moscow the German papers translated by Gross also delivered packets of Dutch newspapers, from which Andrei Vinius selected and translated material.[44] Several issues of the well-preserved Haarlem newspaper have been identified as his sources: *OHD* 1671/40 (two articles) and 41 (three articles); *OHS* 1671/40 (one article).[45] They account for only six of the twenty-seven dateline news items which he translated. Unfortunately, the other Dutch papers which he used are not extant: for the year 1671, only 14 Amsterdam issues and 16 from The Hague

44. The Russian texts are in V-K VII: 204–207, 211–214, Nos. 27 and 28. For five of the six source texts and commentary on the translations, see ibid.: 570–573. Vinius' translation work in the late 1660s undoubtedly involved excerpting from Western publications other information to be used in Russian diplomacy. For example, some days before the dispatch of a Russian embassy to Vienna and Venice headed by the merchant Thomas Kellermann, Vinius supplied the titulature for the Venetian head of state which he had translated from a German booklet ('vypisav iz pechatnoi Nemetskoi knizhitsy'; *PDS* 4: 716). This was then copied verbatim into the tsar's letter to his Venetian counterpart (ibid.: 717).

45. The source for the short item from Rome, dated 12 September, about the miraculous bleeding from the holy relic of the arm of St. Nicholas of Tolentino was not identified previously; it is from *OHS* 1671/40. The translation, published in V-K VII: 207, omits the first sentence of the newspaper article about the Portuguese ambassador and somewhat condenses the sentence about the relic: "Het Bloeden van den Arm van St. Nicolaes van Tolentijn heeft men naeder ge-examineert, en 't is, soo men hier spreeckt, loutre waerheydt bevonden; maer nu heeft men gelast, dat die Kasse sal werden toegeslooten, en aen niemant meer getoont." For information about Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, including the fact that his arms, detached from his dead body, were alleged to have been seen bleeding on a number of occasions over the years, see http://www.moodycatholic.com/Saints_St_Nicholas_of_Tolentino.html.

have been preserved in RGADA, although we are quite confident that many more issues were received.[46]

The selection of material by Vinius also emphasized news about events in Poland and Ukraine (eight items) and in the Ottoman Empire (nine items), that is, well over half of the articles he translated. So there was some repetition of information translated by his colleagues from the German news, the emphasis in both cases suggesting agreement within the Ambassadorial Chancery amongst the translators and secretaries about news priorities. The Dutch coverage of news from Poland was less extensive than that found in the German papers, but in the two instances where the translation of articles from Warsaw can be matched with their Dutch source, Vinius condensed little of the original.[47] However, in the case of one item from Smyrna and two from Venice, with news about the Ottomans, only the opening sentences of longer articles (not all of which dealt with Turkish matters) were translated. While in the absence of the originals we cannot be certain about the other translated reports, our impression is that many of them either just summarize or select small parts from them. It is not surprising that a couple of those articles dealt with events presaging the Franco-Dutch war that was widely anticipated and in fact broke out in May 1672, a subject that would have received a lot of attention in the Dutch papers and presumably was of personal interest to Vinius. Even if seriously condensing from the originals, Vinius quite often would insert some helpful explanatory words, and he showed himself capable of handling particularly complicated subordinate clauses. Material in the final five articles Vinius translated from the newspapers received on 29 October may hint at some of his personal interests: a report from the Hague on serious damage in Zeeland from a storm, two reports about the Arab uprisings, including one with very specific information about destruction in Mecca by one of the relatives of the Prophet Muhammad, and a report from Rome about the bleeding relics of St. Nicholas (see our Sec. 21.1.2).

While we suppose that there was some coordination within the chancery to avoid too many long translations of essentially the same material, there is one example where both Gross and Vinius translated what clearly was the same report from Warsaw, albeit from their respective German and Dutch newspaper issues. Only in the case of Gross' translation are we in the lucky situation to have access to the exact source that he employed, whereas no copy of the Dutch newspaper used by Vinius seems to have survived. However, despite the lack of a Dutch original, it is of some interest to see the Russian output of the two expert translators in parallel with the German original Gross used (Table 8.2).

Gross is very exact in his rendering of the news item from Warsaw. He left out two

46. For a bibliography of all Dutch seventeenth-century newspapers preserved in RGADA see Maier 2004. See also our Sec. 19.1, which discusses of the Russian government's subscriptions to newspapers starting with the establishment of the foreign post.

47. Interestingly though, one omission was a reference (published in *OHD* 1671/41) to Jan Sobieski, who was mentioned in an analogous report Gross had translated about the army going into winter quarters.

TABLE 8.2: Comparison of Gross' and Vinius' translations of a news item from 1671.[48]

NM 1671, September, p. 599	V-K VII: 203, No. 27 (Gross)	V-K VII: 206, No. 27 (Vinius)
Warschau vom 19. Septembr.	Из Варшавы сентября в 19 д(е)нь	Из Варшавы ж сентября в 20 де(нь)
Die Ritterschafft kommt wider zurücke/ ist also ihr Feldzug schon zum Ende. Ihre Königl: Majest: aber werden dennoch mit einigen Woywodschafften nach Lemberg und weiter gehen.	Рыцерство н(ы)не возвращаются, и тем воинскои поход совершается. королевское величество с некоторыми воеводствами итить намеренъ во Львов и далеи.	Шляхта паки возвращаются, и тако поход их скончался, а король с некоторыми воеводсты пошол ко Львову.
Das 1000. Cosacken und 3000. Tartern von den unsern bey Bar seyen geschlagen worden/ continuiret. Hirauf haben die Unsrige nicht weit von Braclau 7000. diser Raubvögel zerstreuet/ Braclau/ Craseur/ Szorogrod/ Brakilo und Winnic erorbert und besetzet/ und soll hirauf Mohilo berennet werden. Man hat an Pferden/ Vieh und Gelde grosse Beuten bekommen.	а что 1000 члвкъ [человек] казаков и 3000 члвкъ татар от наших под Баром побиты, и те вести и н(ы)не подтвержаются. а после того наши тех же хишников недалеко от Бряславля 7000 члвкъ розогнали, а городы Брясловль, Красное, Шаргород, Врагилов и Виницу взяли и оставили в них ратныхъ людеи, и потомъ хотятъ осадит(ь) Могилев. А ратныя наши люди великую себе добычю достали лошед(ь)ми и скотиною и денгами.	а что писали бут(ь)то 1000 казаков да 3000 татар под Баром от наших побиты. и те вести подтвержаютъ, и потом наши ж войска с семъ тысячь техъ хишников розогнали, и Брагилев, Красное, Шарогротъ, Винницу и Браколов взяли и своими людми засадили, такъж и Могило взяли.
Hirauf hat der Bassa in Bialegrod/ die Unsrige hart bedrohet/ daß/ wenn wir den Dorosensko/ als des Türcken Unterthan/ also gefähren würden/ er gantz Pohlen umkehren wollte/ welches hart geblasen/ aber wenig geachtet ist.	А паша белогродцкои нашим полякомъ зело грозитъ, будетъ они что над Дорошенком учинятъ, и он за то всю Пол(ь)шу разоритъ.	а паша белогродцкои нас зело угрожает, буде Дорошенку учинитца от нас какая шкода, или наподокъ, и он за то станетъ какъ за подданного Турского г(о)с(у)д(а)рства, и на всю Пол(ь)шу великую жалобу наведетъ.

phrases: that Doroshenko is 'a subject of the Turks', and then the final phrase "welches hart geblasen/ aber wenig geachtet ist" (approximately 'these are hard words, but barely to be taken seriously'). The elimination of such a personal comment by the journalist is very common in the *kuranty* (see V-K VI/2: 154). The translators surely felt that such things, which do not contain any 'news' but only an attitude, were of no value to be communicated to the tsar. On the other hand, Gross made a couple of additions, apparently

48. In our transcriptions we simplify the Russian orthography, substituting all letters that are no longer in use by their modern equivalents, and we also modernize punctuation.

in order to make the text easier to understand. Not quite clear is why in all three places where the original has numbers (of Cossacks, Tatars, predators) he added the word *chelovek* ('person, man'), so he wrote '1000 men Cossacks; 3000 men Tatars; 7000 men predators'. The German text contains three unspecified expressions like "von den unsern; die Unsrige". The reader would understand that the deictic expression 'our men' in a news item from Warsaw would mean 'the Poles', and in the first two cases Gross used corresponding Russian deictic expressions (*ot nashikh*; *nashi*). However, in the third case, in the last part, he decided to be explicit and replace the deictic expression of the original with the specific one *nashim poliakom* 'our Poles'. He also specified that the indefinite pronoun *man* ('one', pronoun) in this context refers to 'our men of arms' (*ratnye nashi liudi)*. Finally Gross did a very good job in rendering the place names – which, as a rule, were garbled in the German sources (and still worse in the Dutch ones!): of the five place names in Ukraine mentioned in the news item he gave the correct Russian names in four instances, whereas *Vragilov* should have been *Bragilov* – but this might well have been the result of a misreading by the scribe who produced the fair copy, because he also would not have been familiar with all place names in another country (here in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). This news item in Gross' Russian version was just as clear as the German original.

When trying to assess Vinius' translation, we have to do so without being able to compare his output with his source – a very serious disadvantage. Although it is very likely that the report in the Dutch newspaper originally was based on exactly the same newsletter as the article published in Königsberg, news from far-away Poland was nearly always shortened in Holland (either already by the Dutch translator or by the publisher). Other changes could be made, on purpose or by mistake. The fact that Vinius has the date 20 September, whereas the Königsberg paper and Gross mention another date (19 Sept.), certainly means that 20 Sept. was in his source. Why somebody changed the date is hard to say; maybe the author himself sent out his report to different places on two subsequent days, depending on the day of the outgoing mail in different directions. Where Gross had written, very precisely, *itit' nameren vo Lvov i dalei* (for "werden [...] nach Lemberg und weiter gehen"), Vinius has simply *poshol ko Lvovu*, that is, he presents as an accomplished action something that at least in the German source (and in Gross' translation) was a future event, a plan. This may well have been in his original, but it also is consistent with other examples we have (mentioned earlier) where the translation makes more definite something that is still uncertain or in the future, and an action that was planned for 20 September would probably be completed by the time the Dutch newspaper was to be translated in Moscow. There is a similar case further down: the printed paper and Gross write about the attack on Mogilev as a future event, but Vinius' version has *Mogilo vziali* ('they have conquered Mogilev').

The use of the 'Polish' word *shliakhta* (from *szlachta*) in the first sentence is not surprising: *shliakhta* and derivatives from this word (*shliakhtich* etc.) can be considered

as 'normal' Russian loan words from Polish in the seventeenth century.[49] Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that the Dutch newspaper would have had this Polish word, but this is quite unlikely; the Dutch translator would most certainly have translated the German term *Ritterschaft* with the corresponding Dutch *ridderschap*. Incidentally, even the Polish original might have had the word *rycerstwo* (if there *was* a Polish original, and the item was not written by a German news agent in Warsaw), and in any event it is unlikely that the Dutch translator would have translated directly from a Polish-language newsletter.

Vinius seems to have had greater problems in rendering the Ukrainian place names than Gross, particularly concerning the forms *Bragilev* and *Brakolov*. However, without access to his Dutch source we cannot really blame him for these mistakes since it is completely possible that the Dutch paper had distorted beyond recognition the first name – Braclau in the Königsberg paper – so that it could become *Bragilev* in Vinius's version. (Gross' *Shargorod* and Vinius' *Sharogrod* are both correct.) While Gross had rendered the numerals exactly as they were in the source, Vinius clarifies that *about* 7000 ('*s* sem tysiach') 'predators' have been scattered, something that could have been added for all big numerals, for instance, *about* 1000 Cossacks and *about* 3000 Tatars in this text. Either Vinius has left out the information about the Polish army's booty (horses, cattle, money), striving for condensation of his original, or this elimination had been made already earlier. Finally Vinius preserved the useful explanation for the pasha's threat – that Doroshenko is considered a Turkish subject ("als des Türcken Unterthan" → *kak za poddannogo Turskogo g(o)s(u)d(a)rstva*) – while Gross has disregarded that detail.

Summing up we can say that both translators have done a generally excellent job, the only – minor – mistakes being the adaptations of some geographical names in Vinius' version. Since Vinius himself was highly interested in geography, we think that the reason for the garbled Russian place names could be similarly distorted names given in the Dutch source newspaper.

8.5. Conclusion

This chapter has questioned the assumption in the older literature that translators in Russia rarely were capable of producing accurate and readable work. In fact there is substantial evidence that many of the professionals in the Ambassadorial Chancery were very able, and their translations into Russian, usually produced rapidly to meet short deadlines, were remarkably good. As we have shown, there are methodological challenges in being able fully to demonstrate the accuracy of translations and to identify the work of specific people, since few translations are 'signed'. It is essential to have the exact foreign sources as well as the Russian texts (the latter ideally both in draft and fair copies).

The examples we have in which it is possible to identify specific translators' work on the *kuranty* and some of their sources provide an insight into the way they approached

49. The Old Russian dictionary by I. I. Sreznevskii has an example for *shliakhta* from as early as 1589, and for *shliakhtich* even from 1388 (Sreznevskii, 2: 1597–1598).

their task. It seems that some translators tried to be more literal and precise, whereas others were more willing to summarize news in their own words. At the same time, while there undoubtedly was a certain degree of coordination in the production of the *kuranty* – that is, there was common understanding of what news was deemed really important for the government – there are still some unanswered questions. For instance: To what extent did the translators for the different languages consult each other? And did they always know exactly what the others were doing, given the fact that they had to make the news available in Russian almost immediately after it had been received?

The evidence of collective translation projects for entire books suggests that each translator worked separately until some final stage of pulling together and editing of the parts. The situation with the *kuranty* may have been different. In the case of newspapers (German and Dutch), we suppose that there was usually only one translator, or at most two, for these languages. These two would certainly have had some interchange about what to translate and what had already been done. During the period we have been focusing on in this discussion, Leontii Gross and Ivan Tiazhkogorskii were probably the two German-language specialists who were translating manuscript newsletters and printed newspapers from German (and when Tiazhkogorskii was on a campaign, Gross alone), while Andrei Vinius likely was responsible for most translations from Dutch sources. Our examination of the work by these most capable professionals helps considerably in assessing the quality of the many anonymous translations in the *kuranty*, even though it is clear that by no means all of the other translations of foreign news were produced on an equally high level.

CHAPTER 9

Diplomacy and the Challenges of Communication in a Foreign Language

To conclude our discussion of translators and translation technique, we shall examine some of the challenges that emerged in diplomatic negotiations because of linguistic issues and how the Russians attempted to deal with them. Controversy over the accuracy of translations frequently prevented the diplomats from dealing with substantive issues, and the effectiveness of diplomatic missions in obtaining intelligence might also depend very much on how successfully they could function in a foreign-language environment. Did the Russians always have the right personnel? If not, how effectively did they compensate for this disadvantage? Our examples will be drawn from different periods.

9.1. The assignment of translators to diplomatic missions

Diplomatic missions ranged in importance from merely the transmission of letters by an individual acting as a courier to the highest level of exchange, involving a huge entourage and headed by a ranking member of a country's elite. Unlike the elite missions, lower-level ones generally did not engage in serious negotiations, although they still would be expected to observe established protocol and obviously had some need to communicate effectively with the officials of the host country. Even couriers were expected to collect and report intelligence. To deal with practical necessities while in a foreign country might require knowledge of the local vernacular, which, however, could be inadequate for formal exchanges at a foreign court, especially in situations where official written documents were exchanged. Throughout most of early modern Europe, Latin was the common medium in formal negotiation. Vernaculars that were most widely of value included Italian (for the Mediterranean basin) and German (for northern Europe). When the translator Ivan Fomin Almanzenov was sent on an extended mission to the Holy Roman Empire in 1614–1617, an assignment on a rather low level, he was apparently able to function quite effectively with his native command of German (see above, Sec. 4.5). Beginning roughly in the middle of the seventeenth century, it was increasingly common for the government to dispatch diplomatic missions headed by a translator whose specialty was one of the European languages.

At that time it was still rare that any diplomat of rank from Russia would know foreign languages. Possible exceptions in the early Muscovite period were individuals who could speak some Tatar (the legacy from the period of Mongol rule and its immediate aftermath) or Polish, the latter including elite immigrants or others who had come from regions along the western borders. From the late fifteenth down through the second half of the seventeenth centuries, most Russian diplomatic missions of any importance were headed and seconded by men who were monolingual, and the primary copies of any formal documents they carried were in Russian. The most important missions also would include a translator (capable of dealing with written texts) or an interpreter for oral communication (or both). Host governments also employed translators and interpreters, although commonly not ones who would know any Russian. Ambassadorial reports make it clear that the translators and interpreters were kept very busy as intermediaries with the hosts and in the gathering of intelligence. Standard protocol in the diplomacy of the time governed which translator might be employed for specific functions, but there seems to have been considerable flexibility if it proved necessary for a mission to employ the translator of the host country, even if there would be some suspicion that he might be biased in the work he was doing.

In the relatively rare instances where a Muscovite ambassador might know the host country's language, it might still be essential that he have translators on his staff. A case in point would be the several years in which Afanasii Nagoi was the Russian ambassador in the Crimea (see Sec. 4.7 above). Presumably he knew Tatar, but he still had a staff of Tatar-speaking interpreters who were very active in intelligence gathering and day-to-day tasks that would have demeaned the status of the ambassador. Some members of the Crimean elite knew Russian. Whether in Russian or Tatar, Nagoi could converse directly with individuals who had long experience in dealing with the Russian missions. Down through the seventeenth century there never seems to have been a language barrier to effective communication in dealing with the Crimea, although over time the knowledge of Tatar amongst the Russian elite undoubtedly declined.

9.2. Negotiations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: a special case

The situation in contacts with Poland-Lithuania is something of a special case, too. Given the fact that borders between Muscovy and the Commonwealth changed, there were many immigrant families, and people living in border regions (for example, in the area around Smolensk) might be bilingual. Moreover, many members of the Muscovite elite knew at least some Polish, and within the Commonwealth there were also large groups of people with whom the Muscovites could communicate directly in Russian.[1] The documents sometimes specify that incoming written communications are in 'Lithuanian writing', 'Belorussian', or 'Russian writing'. What was meant with the two former ex-

1. See Erusalimskii (2021), who focuses on the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. He emphasizes this point, although he also mentions specific circumstances in which translators were employed.

pressions was allegedly the Ruthenian language (also called *prosta mova*) that had first been used, in the sixteenth century, in the chanceries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and then developed into a literary language used by both Ukrainians and Belorussians.[2] Without major difficulties it could be understood in Moscow as well. Diplomatic correspondence from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (and, later, from 1569, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) to the Russian tsars was being sent in this language at least up to around the middle of the seventeenth century. This can be illustrated with an incident in March 1646, when the Russian ambassadors Vasilii Ivanovich Streshnev and Stepan Matveevich Proestev during their mission in Warsaw accused the Poles of having made a mistake in the address of a letter to the Russian ruler – they had written *samoderzhtsy* 'autocrats', instead of *samoderzhets*, singular – and demanded that the guilty person be executed. In their defense, the Poles averred that their command of Russian was not perfect and threatened that if such problems would arise in the future, the king's letters would be sent to Moscow in Polish. The Russian ambassadors protested: 'It has been an old practice that the king's letters to the great ruler are written in the Belorussian language, and it is not convenient that they now be written in Polish, contrary to all previous usage' (Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 469–470). Documents written in Polish would have needed to be translated, but not if they were written in 'Belorussian'; an important difference was undoubtedly the fact that Polish is written in the Latin alphabet, Ruthenian in Cyrillic.

In oral negotiations between Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania during the sixteenth and for the most part well into the seventeenth centuries no translators were needed: diplomatic documents do not mention the presence of translators (Iuzefovich 2007: 195). The courier Grigorii Kunakov, who was sent to the Commonwealth on three missions in the 1640s, was not accompanied by a translator and seems to have had no problem in communicating with his hosts (Jansson and Waugh 2023; Ch. 15 below). We have no explicit information on whether he knew a language other than Russian, but he probably knew at least some Polish, since he was acquiring Polish books while in the country and was able to file remarkably detailed intelligence reports, drawing on information provided to him by officials at the Polish court. The formal diplomatic mission headed by Grigorii Pushkin in 1650 included the translator Ivan Maksimov, who was competent in Polish and presumably knew at least some Latin. One of the purposes of the embassy was to protest against the publication in Poland of books which the Russians claimed insulted the tsar. The hosts insisted that the problem was not the books but the failure of the Russians to learn enough Polish and Latin to understand them. The colorful Russian response emphasized that from the Russian standpoint, there was no need to study those

2. About the *prosta mova* ('simple language', but this translation should not be understood literally) see, for instance, Moser 2002 and Uspenskii 2002: 388–404. In Muscovy, the *prosta mova* used in the South-Russian areas (politically belonging to Poland-Lithuania) was called either 'Belorussian' or 'Lithuanian' (Uspenskii 2002: 388). Today, this language is sometimes called Old Belorussian (*starobelorusskii*; ibid.: 386).

languages, since Slavonic was the language of the one true Orthodox faith (Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 562–563). Of course it is difficult to know from such accounts what the evidence tells us beyond the exchange of insults in diplomatic sparring.

When the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667 arranged for the two countries to exchange resident diplomats, the Muscovite official who was sent to Poland, Ivan Tiapkin, knew Polish and Latin (Nikolaev 1989a: 154). After Tiapkin returned to Moscow, in 1677, there was no Russian resident in Poland until 1688, when the secretary Prokopii Voznitsyn was appointed (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 3: 159–160). He was replaced in 1689 by Ivan Volkov, who served as the Russian resident there until 1691. Volkov regularly reported important news to Moscow (see Gus'kov 2005: 337–338). Voznitsyn's early career provides no evidence about his knowledge of foreign languages, though he would later be appointed to a number of important diplomatic missions (Beliakov 2017: 291). Whether he or Volkov knew Polish is uncertain. Volkov was replaced by Boris Mikhailov, who continued to serve in this position for several years (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 3: 162). The appointment of the experienced translator Nikolai Spafarii – who knew Latin but presumably not Polish – to replace him in 1695 was cancelled (ibid.: 163).

An important language at least in oral communication with Poland-Lithuania was the language called Old Belorussian, Old Ukrainian, West Russian, or Ruthenian, depending on the researcher's national and cultural background; by Russian contemporaries it was called 'Belorussian'. In the period 1645–1682, no translators for 'Belorussian' were recruited by the Ambassadorial Chancery, which probably means that no written translations were made from that language. The few translators who included 'Belorussian' into their repertoire of languages were employed, in the first place, for translation from other languages – German and Latin in Ivan Tiazhkogorskii's case, Polish and Latin in Stepan Chizhinskii's. Belorussian was added as a 'complement' (Beliakov 2017: 110), presumably with the aim to make somebody's list of languages more impressive or to get a better salary.

For many other countries translators were essential. In some cases, as the Muscovites learned, it was necessary to bend what they considered appropriate procedure in order to accommodate their host, when the latter requested they translate a document submitted in Russian. In other cases, where there was a desire to have an expert witness to back up a Russian claim, a person with the right credentials might be hired on the spot.

9.3. Translators at foreign courts

Certainly the knowledge of Russian at foreign courts would have been limited. The imperial ambassador Sigismund von Herberstein knew some Slavic and probably learned to communicate at least to some degree in Russian (see also below, Sec. 9.6). The interpreter mentioned in the reports of a Russian embassy that went to Sweden in the 1560s was a Swede;[3] the Swedes sent at least a couple of students to Muscovy to learn Russian.

3. See *Puteshestviia* 1954: 8: 'a v tolmachekh s nimi Pantelei Iur'ev'. In the commentary to the edition the interpreter is identified as Bertil Jörenson (ibid.: 359 n. 8).

In the seventeenth century, some Russians entered Swedish service either because they had defected (for instance, Hans Flörich and Hans Brakel), or because they had been captured. The latter included two of the 'Godunov students' sent to Lübeck in 1603: Dmitrii Mikolaev, who finally started serving the tsar in 1610, and Ignatii Kuchin in 1619. The most famous of the defectors to Sweden (albeit not a translator) was Grigorii Kotoshikhin, who wrote for his new bosses a detailed intelligence report (1666–1667) that is still considered one of the most accurate comtemporary descriptions of Muscovy during the reign of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. Kotoshikhin apparently was involved in other tasks for the Swedes as well – however, nothing that would have implied translation. His foreign-language competence may have been limited to some passive knowledge of Polish (Maier 2014: 575–576). Later, in the 1680s, the scholar Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld spent three years in Moscow studying the language, collecting books and manuscripts in Russian, and compiling an impressive Slavonic-Latin dictionary (Birgegård 2002: 13–17).

In the cases of Holland and England, starting in the late sixteenth century, there were enough merchants and residents with long experience in Muscovy to provide a pool of those with linguistic competence that could be tapped for diplomatic service (see above, Sec. 6.1.1). The availability of John Merrick, who knew Russian, to assist the embassy to England headed by Grigorii Mikulin in 1600 may help to explain why Mikulin came back with a much more informative report on his mission than did Fedor Pisemskii, who had gone there nearly two decades earlier (in 1582).[4] Of course, in that interval, the Russians had had time to become much more knowledgeable about English affairs. In the seventeenth century, it was common for Russian embassies to England and the Netherlands to be met by individuals who had experience in the Russian trade.

9.4. The Russian insistence on using Russian; Latin as the *lingua franca*

Moscow learned very early in its relations with the West that Latin was the *lingua franca* of European diplomacy. In the Muscovy of Ivan III, there were individuals conversant in the language. Some of them were involved in translation projects where that language was essential, such as the production of a complete Bible in Slavonic, for which previously unavailable chapters were being translated from the Latin Vulgate. The Habsburg embassy that was in Moscow in 1505 brought a letter from the 'king of the Romans' Maximilian I (later, from 1508, emperor) to the grand prince in which the king explicitly requested that the Russians write in Latin, since there was no one in his kingdom who understood Russian – the few who had known the language had died (*PDS* 1: 130). Decades later, when Istoma Shevrigin was sent to Rome, he carried Tsar Ivan IV's letter to the pope in both the original Russian and in a German translation, but the German version was presented to the hosts only upon their special demand (*PDS* 10: 14).

4. Both reports are published in *Puteshestviia* 1954.

Russian embassies would generally hand over only the original Russian version when presenting their credentials and the substantive letter from the tsar. However, it seems to have become common practice for them to bring along Latin translations prepared in advance in Moscow, to be handed over on request. If they did not come prepared with such, they might object to having their own translator produce them on the spot. So, after the envoys sent to Venice in 1657 had handed over the tsar's letter, a Venetian official came to see the Russians in their residence, asking for a translation of the letter into Latin, which otherwise nobody could read or understand. The envoys first refused, saying that it was beneath their translator's dignity to make a Latin version of the letter. When the Venetian official said that in this case there was nothing to discuss at all, since they did not know the content of the tsar's letter, the Russians changed their strategy and resolved the problem by ordering their translator, Timofei Toporovskii, to produce a translation and a secretary to make a fair copy (*PDS* 10: 1046). When the mission headed by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii in 1662 was en route to Italy (via England and France), the Russians provided the French customs officials a list in Latin of all the members of the embassy and all the ambassadorial gifts (*PDS* 10: 687–688). This was a practical matter where they recognized that the local officials could not possibly translate such a document if it were given them in Russian. The Scot who had been hired as an interpreter for his Latin wrote out the Latin text.

Yet the insistence on Russian on the part of the Kremlin continued well into the seventeenth century and could hinder diplomatic exchange. The first Prussian envoy to Moscow was Heinrich Reyff (purportedly originally from Kleve), who had spent thirteen years in Moscow between 1625 and 1641, serving as a goldsmith (*Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013: 529). Toward the end of May 1650, he petitioned the tsar about a problem: he had received the tsar's response to the message sent to Moscow by the Brandenburg elector, but it was in Russian. However, as Reyff stated, there was nobody in the elector's territories who could translate any letters from Russian into German (ibid.: 352). The envoy's own knowledge of Russian was apparently not good enough to read and translate letters written in Russian. In his memorandum – written when he already had left Moscow – Reyff mentioned that he had requested of the state secretary in the Ambassadorial Chancery that he be given a German translation. The Muscovite official said he could not do so without the tsar's permission, and the tsar was on campaign at that moment. Now Reyff, already on his way home, asked the tsar to arrange a translation of the letter into German or Dutch, and then, having sealed the translation, give it to Reyff's wife, who was staying in Moscow, so that she could forward it to him. According to an annotation on Reyff's memorandum, the request was granted by the tsar.

It seems that two decades later the Moscow chancery had not learned from this experience, nor had the ability of the Prussians to deal with Russian documents improved. On 23 September 1671, Melchior Lipper, secretary to the Brandenburg elector, wrote from Cöln-on-Spree (today in the center of Berlin) to Peter Marselis through the post. Lipper's letter – which arrived on 29 October – apologized for the fact that the tsar's

letter and a pass (presumably so that a Brandenburg envoy could come to Moscow) had been delayed. As he explained, 'here [in Brandenburg, or Berlin] no one could be found who could understand or read what was written in the tsar's missives, which therefore were sent to Prussia to be translated. But there they were held up for a long time, because no one could be found there who knew Muscovite writing [= Cyrillic] and truly understood the spoken language' (ibid.: 336–337).

9.5. The need for Italian translation: Russian missions to Italy

While Latin may have sufficed for many diplomatic exchanges, it did not necessarily help for day-to-day matters of negotiating transport, obtaining supplies and the like. An instructive example is the history of the embassies sent to Italy in 1656, 1659, and 1662. Ivan Chemodanov and Aleksei Posnikov arrived in Livorno at the end of November 1656, accompanied by their translators, Timofei Toporovskii, who knew Latin and Polish but not Italian, and Lazar' Zimmerman (Tsymarmanov), apparently a specialist for German.[5] They were told by a Venetian merchant and city officials that Latin would not suffice for the embassy's needs. 'Except for the clergy, nobody knows Latin, and everywhere in Italy where you will go and in Venice they speak Italian, and you need to be on the road and stay in Venice, which will be absolutely impossible without Italian, not only for carrying out official business but also in order to obtain supplies' (*PDS* 10: 966). The hosts recommended that they hire a translator in Livorno before proceeding any further, so they hired for two months' service 'a translator for Italian', Ivan (?Hans, Johannes) Sachs, who had been working as a lieutenant for the duke of Florence (ibid.: 751). Sachs would be with them for the whole time they were in Florentine territory and obtained permission to go on with them to Venice. We know nothing about how he might have learned Russian, assuming that this was the language he used in communicating with the envoys.

Some years later, in 1659, when Moscow sent Vasilii Likhachev and Ivan Fomin to Italy, Toporovskii again was assigned to the mission, now listed as a translator for Italian (he must have learned the language on the job), but he died two days out of Archangel (ibid.: 517–518). So the Russians once again found themselves with the services of Sachs during their visit to Florence. Whereas Chemodanov's report never specifies how the Russians communicated with Sachs (other than instructing him to translate a speech into Italian), on this occasion the envoys mention specifically that Sachs spoke to them in Russian ('a govoril Ivan Saks poruski' – *PDS* 10: 536).

5. In the end-of-mission report, Zimmerman is called an interpreter (*tolmach*), but he is also referred to as a translator (*perevodchik*; *PDS* 10: 976, 1001). Since the mission did encounter situations where it dealt with Germans, Zimmerman clearly would have been of some use; for instance, the barkmen on their bark from Bologna to Venice were Germans ('i barochnye naemnye nemtsy po nemetskomu iazyku skazyvali im' – ibid.: 998). In various places the envoys mention crowds of *nemetskie liudi*, presumably meaning simply 'foreigners', not specifically Germans (e.g.: 'vykhodili mnogie nemetskie liudi s zhenami i s detmi i, sniav shliapy, krichali i govorili po svoemu iazyku "viva" […]' – ibid.: 1015). For Zimmerman's career, see Beliakov et al.: 214–215; for Toporovskii, ibid.: 198–199.

In the preparations for the next Russian embassy to Italy (in 1662–1663), headed by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii and seconded by the secretary Ivan Fomin, the authorities in Moscow seem to have anticipated that one translator was not going to suffice (or at least so the embassy itself decided once it had arrived, first, in England): 'And on instruction of the Great Sovereign they had taken along from England [as they left Gravesend for France] the undersecretary of the Land office Semen Zlobin and the interpreter Vilim Kheimz [Willem Heims?], and another interpreter from England for Latin, the Scot Aleksandr Govdin [Alexander Gordon?], but they did not take the colonel Andrei Foret [Andrew Thoret?] for translation because he said he did not know Italian or Latin.'[6] The two interpreters seem to have been able to negotiate the customs issues on arrival in Calais (presumably requiring spoken Dutch or French, in addition to Latin for written documents), and both were active on the way through France and on into northern Italy, making arrangements locally for transport and accommodation.[7] Outside Pisa, though, who should meet the embassy but Ivan Sachs, sent by the duke to escort them the rest of the way into Florence (ibid.: 713). Sachs was always present for various functions in Florence, even if another official was assigned to the Russian mission as the escort. The Russian report regularly refers to Sachs by his rank (*porutchik*) and not as an interpreter. In the frequent references to him, there is never any mention he had to use an interpreter when talking with the envoys. By and large the mission's own interpreters fade into the background in the end-of-mission report, perhaps because Sachs simply assumed some of the functions they normally would have performed. We know that at one point, when there was a banquet for the embassy hosted by Duke Ferdinand de Medici's son Cosimo, the Russian interpreters and the undersecretary from Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery, who was along on the embassy, did not sit with the high-ranking officials in the main dining hall but rather dined in a separate room (ibid.: 740). Govdin (Gordon?), who seems to have done much of the interpreting on the way through France, was sent ahead from Florence to make arrangements in Venice for the arrival of the Russians there (ibid.: 749).

Following the Florentine duke's order, Sachs accompanied the Russians to a place outside Venice (Ariano nel Polesine?), and the Russians thanked him, giving him three pairs of sables and one pair to Sachs' colleague, apparently happy to have got rid of them

6. *PDS* 10: 679. The secretary, Ivan Fomin, is not to be confused with the translator Ivan Fomin Almanzenov. For the former, see Demidova 2011: 599. So far there seems to be no other explicit information about employment of Govdin or Kheimz as interpreters. However, it is possible that Kheimz was the father of Andrei Vilimov Geins, who accompanied a mission to Berlin in 1687 as an interpreter, and who also served as an interpreter during Tsar Peter's 'Grand Embassy' in 1697–1698 (Erik-Amburger-Datenbank). If the identification is correct, this Vilim Kheimz would have been an immigrant from England, and his main employment would have been as a watchman at the armory (*Oruzheinaia Palata*; *PDS* 6: 16).

7. The French insistence on collecting customs duties kept cropping up and was obviously a thorny problem, even though the mission's supply of furs to be used as diplomatic gifts had been recorded and put under seal on entering the country. The Russians, under protest, ended up having to pay (*PDS* 10: 695–696).

(ibid.: 747–748). However, Sachs was back very soon, saying that he had been asked by the Venetian officials to serve as the mission's interpreter upon their arrival in Venice. Since he had to receive permission from the Medici duke in Florence, he is going to Florence now. The local Venetian commandant outside of Venice asked the envoys whether they would like to make use of Hans Sachs' service; in this case, they would order that he return with them to Venice. A rather curious exchange followed between the commandant and the Russian envoys (ibid.: 752–753):

> And the envoys, seeing in Ivan Sachs Florentine carelessness (*neradenie florenskie*), told the commandant: 'If it is the will of the prince that he [Sachs] be the translator, so be it, for the situation in which they do not have an interpreter. But he, Sachs, doesn't know how to translate, and as an interpreter he is not very perceptive (*ne samo vrazumitel'no*), so for their part, they don't want him.' And the commandant said: 'We do have interpreters, and a translator could probably be found, too. However, that Sachs would be allowed to be the envoys' interpreter, if you would wish.' And the envoys said: 'The Florentine prince instructed us to release him at the Venetian border, and we let him go; we did not send him to Venice and gave him no instructions to the resident there, and we have those who can deal with the affairs of the Great Sovereign, and we have interpreters who also can translate and write from German and Latin, and we can get by with those interpreters whom we have.[8] If Sachs had been needed, we would have discussed this issue with the Florentine prince.' The commandant said that he would have sent this Sachs with them to Venice, if this had been according to the envoys' wish, but since they have their own interpreters, why should they bring him there?

So Sachs finally was sent back to Florence. Of course this raises interesting questions: if the Russians had determined he was really incompetent, how did they know for sure when it came to translation of written documents? And if in fact he was, how might that have affected their mission and that of the previous embassies to Italy, where he had been the interface with the local officials? Might they simply have found his presence annoying, or might they have become concerned that his main function was as an intelligence agent to keep track of all their movements and learn their secrets?

In the diplomatic exchanges that followed in Venice, the chief problems that arose seem to have had little to do with translation but rather focused on questions of protocol in official audiences, where the Russians insisted – citing the precedent from Chemodanov's previous embassy – that the doge stand and take off his cap, which he refused to do. So the Russians then called in as an 'expert' the Greek Orthodox metropolitan who, presumably to their consternation, confirmed that in diplomatic receptions, the doge remained seated, wearing his velvet cap. Eventually a compromise was reached, and the audience took place. Oral presentations were written down and handed over to the other side to be translated and examined for accuracy, but the negotiations quickly reached a conclusion so the ambassadors could head home. In the circumstances, what seems to have been expected from the mission was an expression of mutual interest in

8. Apparently, Vilem (Vilimov) Kheimz for German and Alexander 'Govdin' for Latin.

trade and support in trying to defeat the Turks, but no formal treaties were being negotiated. Venice would fight on to defend Crete over the next few years before finally having to give it up to the prolonged Turkish assault.

As we demonstrate elsewhere (see Ch. 13), an examination of translations made during embassies by the Muscovite translators or interpreters suggests that they were quite competent. And it is important to note that during the seventeenth century, Moscow seems to have been increasingly willing to appoint translators (or other specialists who were native in foreign languages) to head missions abroad – Ivan Fomin, Vasilii Bousch, Peter Marselis, Paul Menzies, and Andrei Vinius are among the more prominent examples. However, thorny problems might arise when it came to the subtleties of diplomatic terminology in written texts. Moscow placed a high priority on ensuring that the honor of its sovereign receive due respect by foreign countries. Apart from instances where the tsar would complain if it was learned that a foreign publication had somehow cast aspersions on him and his government, most contentious issues in written texts inevitably were the ones over titulature. It became normal procedure for Russian envoys to insist that any letter being sent back to the tsar be verified by them for accuracy in rendering his titles before it was finalized and sealed. So, for example, during Afanasii Vlas'ev's embassy that met the emperor in Pilsen outside of Prague in 1599, the emperor's letter back to Moscow was checked (apparently, in a Latin original) by the mission's translator, Iakov Zaborovskii, who determined that part of the correct title had been omitted, thus requiring the letter be drafted anew before it could be accepted.[9]

9.6. Arguments over the translation of titulature: the mission of Petr Potemkin to Spain and France in 1667–1668

Since the 'common language' through which titulature was expressed and communicated was Latin, foreign diplomats often had to wonder whether the minions of the tsar really knew the language well enough when they would stubbornly insist on their own understanding of words such as *illustrissimus* or *serenissimus*.[10] In Vienna in 1687, the argument revolved around whether the translators for Latin in Moscow had correctly rendered the word *povelitel'* in the tsar's titles as 'imperator', instead of – what Vienna felt to be correct – 'dominator' (*PDS* 7: 216–217). It would be better, the Habsburg officials suggested, if the Russians just sent their letters in Slavonic, as had been done before, since translations into Latin could be produced in Vienna. The Russian response was that the correct equivalents were *obladatel'* = 'Dominator' and *povelitel'* = 'Imperator',

9. *PDS* 2: 715–716. Iakov Zaborovskii, from Poland-Lithuania, was an interpreter and later translator for Polish and Latin, documented at the Ambassadorial Chancery for more than thirty years, 1582–1613 (Angermann 1998: 233; Liseitsev 2003: 161, 165, 166, 356; Beliakov et al.: 116). He was the chancery's best-paid translator for Latin around 1613 (Liseitsev 2003: 356).

10. Both sides in a negotiation could be equally obstinate about titulature. Elector Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg probably took some satisfaction in stating his demands regarding the superlatives with which he was to be addressed, sending a message to the tsar via Peter Marselis, who turned it over to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 15 May 1665 (see *Rossiia i Prussiia* 2013: 219–220).

and that there had never previously been an argument over the matter. Moreover, 'in the ruling city of Moscow, in the State Ambassadorial Chancery, the translators are scholarly men and trained in Latin translation.'

If everything else failed in trying to reach an agreement, outside experts might be called in, as happened during the Russian embassy to Spain discussed in the next pages. Negotiations in such circumstances could involve reading in Russian and in the host vernacular, then oral translation via Latin, which would be written down and checked against the written version of the original document, a 'relay' procedure that certainly had the potential to invite misunderstanding and inaccuracy. Errors introduced by such processes of multi-stage translation had helped condemn Maksim the Greek back in the sixteenth century, when he arrived to translate church texts in Grand Prince Vasilii III's Moscow.

Among the more revealing examples of the challenges posed by translation was the argument which arose during the embassy of Petr Ivanovich Potemkin to Spain and France in 1667–1668.[11] Of course, where there never previously had been any diplomatic mission to Spain, the authorities in Moscow could not know exactly what to expect and seem in fact to have been somewhat ill informed. (For some perspective, the arrival of the Russian mission certainly caught the Spanish by surprise as they had had no advance warning and had to search their archives for appropriate protocols to receive Potemkin.[12]) The translator who was assigned to the mission because he knew Latin was Ivan Gosens (Johann Gossen), a merchant from Courland. One can but speculate that the Russian government felt his commercial connections might prove helpful. The mission also had an interpreter, Roman Eglin (Iaglin), for translation of English and German.[13] As became apparent on Potemkin's arrival in Spain, where he was met both by Spanish officials and Dutch merchants, it was going to be essential to have a translator for Spanish. The merchants in Cadiz provided the mission with such a translator, the Dutchman

11. For the Spanish part of Potemkin's mission, the authoritative collection of documents is now *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018, which we use here instead of the older publication in *DRV* 4.

12. The Russians presumably would have been insulted, had they known that the Spanish officials who received Potemkin decided that the appropriate protocols were the ones that had been used for reception of an Ottoman ambassador in 1649. See the recommendation of the State Council (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 285) and the plan for the various stages of the formal reception (ibid.: 293–295). Searching for protocol precedents in this way was not uncommon: Russian documents provide widely ranging evidence that this was done regularly in Moscow.

13. See Beliakov et al.: 102–103, 286; Beliakov 2017: 342. Gosens and Eglin would also translate for Potemkin when he was sent to Vienna in 1674 (*PDS* 4: 1090, 1092), Gosens' assignment being *dlia perevodu i tolmachestva* or *dlia perevodu* (ibid.: 1102), but Eglin designated only as an interpreter. Eglin's career continued, including later assignments to another mission to Vienna. Dumschat (2006: 617) mentions Ivan Gossen as a translator for Latin, German, Italian, and Dutch in the tsar's service, and the father of the apothecary Georg Gossen. Beliakov et al.: 102 simply gives his death date as 'no earlier than June 1674', the date of the payment record. (Dumschat's death date for Ivan Gossen, around 1666, must be wrong.) In fact, he was with the Potemkin mission in February 1675 as it was passing through Courland, and there is good reason to assume that he returned with it to Moscow on 15 March 1675 (*PDS* 4: 1291, 1296, 1301).

Jeremias van Kolen (Collen or Keulen), the representative of an important merchant house, although it is not clear how long he was assisting the Russians.[14]

How well informed the mission was before leaving Moscow is a good question, as anyone who had been keeping up on the international news would have known that King Philipp IV of Spain had died on 17 September 1665, succeeded by a sickly four-year-old Charles (Carlos) II, rumors of whose early demise would be a staple of European news for several decades. Yet Potemkin's letters to the Spanish ruler were addressed to the dead Philipp, and the Russians seem to have been unprepared to deal with a regency headed by the queen mother. The Spanish officials had to explain to them the position of the queen mother as regent and the powers she had (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 99). When courteously informed of the mistake in the tsar's letter, the Russians apologized by saying Spain was far away, and the countries had not previously had diplomatic relations (ibid.: 105).

So how could they have known in Moscow? In fact, surely the news would have arrived there in the stream of foreign newspapers brought by the new Muscovite international post. While the somewhat fragmented preservation of the translations in the *kuranty* means we do not have a direct report of his demise, some news items selected for translation concerned the now disputed question of the Spanish Netherlands following Philipp's death. One item datelined Antwerp, 12 February 1666 reported: 'Next week will be the coronation of our new King Carlos the Second,' and another one, from Paris, 5 March 1666, mentions the 'late king of Spain' (V-K VI/1: 158, 166, Nos. 37, 40). We know for certain that the Dutch newspapers and newsletters which were the source for the first of these reports had been delivered to Moscow by Jan van Sweeden on 26 March 1666 (O.S.). Yet another mention of the 'former king' was in a news report translated in Moscow on 23 May 1666 (ibid.: 178, No. 45). An English embassy sent to Spain was received by the queen, presumably the queen mother regent, not by the king, and her movements would be reported in other translated news items as well during 1666 (ibid.: 183, 186, 195, Nos. 48, 51). Potemkin left Moscow on his mission over a year later, on 7 July 1667. Of course, for an embassy to show up with letters that had been overtaken by events since the time they had been written and sealed was not all that unusual. In fact, going well back into the sixteenth century, Muscovite ambassadors had been instructed about what to do if they arrived to find that the original addressee of the tsar's letters was dead. In general, they were to carry on and simply deal with the new ruler as they would have done with his predecessor. However, in this case King Philipp IV had died almost two years before the Russian embassy left Moscow.

The Muscovites' ignorance of the news aside, the problem that arose in Spain focused rather on the translation of the official documents. The Russian ambassadors presented the tsar's letter (in Russian) during the first audience, and a day later the state secretary

14. *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 85: 'da s nimi galanets dlia perevodu ishpanskogo iazyka'. See also ibid.: 155 n. 9, which identifies Van Kolen as a merchant and mentions that he was paid by the embassy for his services.

came to them requesting that they provide a translation, for 'they [the Spanish] had no one to translate His Tsarish Majesty's letter, and [they ask] that you, ambassadors, order your translator to translate His Tsarish Majesty's letter' (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 104). The Russians had come prepared and immediately handed over the Latin version they had brought along from Moscow, which the secretary then translated into Spanish for the rulers. A torturous round of diplomatic sparring over protocol followed before the envoys could sit down with their Spanish counterparts to discuss matters not laid out in detail in the tsar's formal letter. There was in fact not much substance beyond statements of good will, an expressed desire that the Spaniards send a reciprocal embassy to Moscow right away, and a verbal indication of interest in free trade in both directions. The Russians then asked to see the formal written response to the tsar, insisting that it be handed to them in yet another formal royal audience before they could leave. Furthermore, when they learned that it would be written in Spanish, the Russians demanded to see a Latin translation of the letter (ibid.: 119). They claimed that the Habsburg emperor always delivered in person his response for Russian ambassadors to take back to the tsar. However, the Spanish insisted that this was not the case here in Spain, and they simply would have it delivered to the ambassadors' residence; they had no intention to adopt some new procedure invented by the Russians in this case. Yet, a few days later, the Spanish officials acceded to the Russians' demands (ibid.: 122).

The argument then turned to the question of titulature. What, the Spanish asked (ibid.: 120–121), do the titles 'Tsar and Autocrat' (*Tsar' i Samoderzhets*) mean? Acting as though this was an odd question, the Russians responded by asking why they needed to know. The Spanish secretary replied that they needed to know how to render the titles in Spanish. In response, the envoys summarized at tedious length the fictions about how the Russians inherited the crown given Vladimir Monomakh by the Byzantine Emperor and the reality of how, with the conquest of all the Tatar khanates and with the consolidation of Muscovite power, Ivan IV had assumed the title of Autocrat. Ah, we didn't know that, the Spaniards replied, but we'll now let our superiors know. The Spanish secretary promised that a Latin version of the final letter in Spanish would be shown the ambassadors for their approval. The Latin letter arrived, but the ambassadors found that the titles of the Muscovite ruler were not rendered correctly; they demanded that they should be written exactly in the same manner as in the tsar's letter to the Spanish king. The next version was duly checked by the translator Ivan Gosens, who confirmed that this time indeed it rendered accurately the full titles of the Muscovite ruler (ibid.: 122).

But the saga did not end with the handing over of the Spanish version of the letter in what was supposed to be the final audience with the king and his mother on 18 May:

> And when the envoys arrived back from His Royal Majesty at the ambassadorial residence, no one could read the intitulatio [*podpisi*] on the official royal letter, since the translator Ivan Gosens does not know Spanish. And Petr [Potemkin] and Semen [Rumiantsev] instructed the undersecretary Andrei Sidorov to examine closely the intitulatio on the king's

> missive to determine whether His Tsarish Majesty's name and title were written in full, and there are no mistakes, because he, Andrei, while in Spain, had learned to read Latin script. And the undersecretary Andrei Sidorov looked and said that the naming and titles of the Great Sovereign, His Tsarish Majesty, on the intitulatio of the king's missive, are not written according to form and did not correspond to the Latin version of that letter.
>
> And after that, on the next day, gentleman of the table [*stol'nik*] Petr and secretary Semen requested that in order to obtain unimpeachable testimony, they locate a Dominican from Seville, since, when the envoys had been in the Spanish city of Seville, one of the Dominican brothers, a Caspar-Plius from Brabant, had visited the envoys in their residence and had come to help with translation from Spanish in dealings with the Seville administration and had conversed with the envoys about state affairs. And he [Caspar-Plius] had written to a Dominican in Madrid that he wished the best for the tsar's envoys. And when that Dominican came to the Ambassadorial residence, *stol'nik* Petr and secretary Semen requested that he translate into Latin the great ruler's name and titulature in this intitulatio in the king's letter. And the Dominican translated the intitulatio on the king's letter from Spanish into Latin, and the translator Ivan Gosens translated it from Latin into Russian, together with the undersecretary Andrei Sidorov (ibid.: 124).[15]

The *stateinyi spisok* then quotes the Dominican's version in Gosens' Russian translation, on the basis of which the Russian envoys determined that it did not correspond to the Latin rendering of the tsar's titles in the translation of the tsar's letter to the king that they had brought from Moscow. The order of the words was not the same in the Spanish version. So the Spaniards would have to rewrite the letter. No, the Spanish official (*pristav*) responded: it is simply an issue that Spanish and Latin are different when it comes to word order, so a literal rendering would be incorrect in Spanish. We refuse to accept it, the Russians responded, and tried to hand it back, but the Spanish official would not take it and went off to report the impasse. Finally, presumably anxious to get rid of the annoying Russians, the Spanish swallowed hard and rewrote the intitulatio in (allegedly corrupted) Spanish so that it would match what the Russians wanted. The Russians then had their translator Gosens, the undersecretary Sidorov, and the interpreter Roman Eglin all confirm it was accurate, so that the diplomatic game could finally conclude, the Russians being given portraits of the king and the queen mother as parting gifts.[16] Departing Madrid, they accepted an invitation to visit the Spanish royal mausoleum at the Escorial, since the hosts informed them that no visiting ambassadors ever had missed the opportunity. When eventually they wrote up their end-of-mission report,

15. When in Paris on the continuation of this mission, Potemkin again had to turn to a Dominican brother, this time to deal with French, a language which Gosens did not know (*Puteshestviia* 1954: 272). Apart from everything else, one issue here could be the difficulties of deciphering fancy scripts such as the stylized *viaz'* used in the headers of the elaborately decorated official diplomatic letters.

16. *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 127. The Privy Chancery archive contains a record of a box containing a diamond stud and eleven watches having been taken from Potemkin and delivered from the Privy Chancery to the *Masterskaia palata* in 1669/70 (*RIB* 21: 859, 1493). Could these be gifts or purchases brought back by Potemkin, which it was determined he should not keep? Perhaps only the tip of an iceberg of what he acquired?

they included a description of what they saw there in a long and interesting appendix (ibid.: 132–141). For all of his apparent Muscovite obtuseness, it turns out that Petr Potemkin was one of the most curious of Russian envoys abroad and both in Spain and France would experience a broad range of cultural events.[17] His end-of-mission reports are in many ways the best examples of 'what the Russians knew' from their ventures into the sea of European diplomacy.

Curiously enough, when the ambassadors were on their way home to Moscow, a notice datelined 'Riga, 29 October [1667]' – apparently printed in a Dutch newspaper – mentions the translator by name (but not the ambassador!): 'On the 21st of this month a Muscovite ambassador, who had been in Spain and in France and had passed through Holland, was received here with great honor. He has with him the translator Ivan Gossen.'[18] In Riga the news agent might have heard about Gosens, originally from Courland, whereas the names of the ambassadors probably were not familiar.

9.7. The ongoing concerns over the accuracy of translations

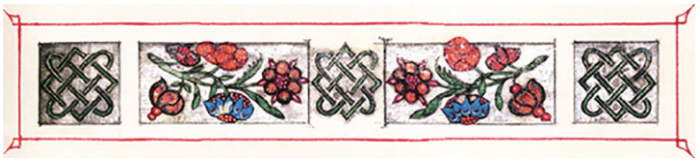
There is no particular reason to think that the early 1680s was a time when there had been some significant increase in the concern over translation accuracy. The Chaadaev case (discussed in Sec. 8.3.3) was deemed to be particularly important, given the long-standing concern in Moscow about preventing the spread of infectious disease. At other times, even in matters not of such pressing importance, there had been cases where for verification or improvement of a translation a second one was made. However, it is striking that in the 1680s there is evidence that complaints by foreign representatives about translations of official letters were being taken seriously, to the extent that the opinion of a foreign diplomat about the accuracy of a translation might be considered. We have already noted at the beginning of Chapter 8 the complaint by the Danish envoy Hildebrand von Horn about what he said was an incomprehensible translation of his official discourse, which then resulted in a new translation being made that proved to be satisfactory (by none other than Leontii Gross). In 1684, when an imperial embassy was in Moscow, an anonymous translator made a Russian version of the emperor's letter to Tsars Ivan and Peter. A comparison of the translation with the Latin original must have raised questions about its accuracy. So two more translations were produced, by two of the most experienced translators who knew Latin, Stepan Chizhinskii and Nikolai Spafarii (Milescu). Then all three translations were taken (by Leontii Gross and Chizhinskii) to the imperial embassy's secretary, J. E. Hewel, and read aloud to him – presumably in German translation since he most certainly did not know any Russian. Interestingly, the only translation that provoked Hewel's criticism was the one made

17. See our Sec. 5.4; Jensen et al. 2021: 88–92.

18. The Russian translation of this notice is published in V-K VI/1: 318, No. 118.187. We could not locate the original newspaper (from Amsterdam?). The papers from Amsterdam are very poorly preserved for this period. For instance, no issue of the Amsterdam newspaper *CID* has been preserved from 8 October 1667 to the end of the year (Weduwen 2017: 258); for the other Amsterdam paper, *TVQ*, the lacuna is from 1 October to the end of the year (ibid.: 313).

by Spafarii: it contained an expression which not only did not correspond to the Latin original, according to Hewel, but was completely incomprehensible (*PDS* 6: 316–318). Possibly the figurative stamp of approval given Chizhinskii's translation was one reason for his appointment, in 1686, as the translator for the return mission to Vienna (and to the Polish king), headed by Boris Petrovich Sheremetev (ibid.: 1089). Apparently having established himself as the best of the departmental translators from Latin, Chizhinskii was assigned to yet another mission to Vienna in 1695.

While it is difficult to know exactly what to make of the apparent deficiencies in Spafarii's ability in Latin (surely he was well educated in the language?), the cases where translated texts had to be checked by several of the best translators must have underscored for the Muscovite government the value of having formally educated specialists staffing the Ambassadorial Chancery. Tiazhkogorskii, Gross, Chizhinskii, and a few others were increasingly engaged for important assignments, which meant they were overburdened, expected to produce quick results (at the expense of inducing errors), and they were facing the challenges of advancing age. So there was a strong rationale for Peter I to support the educational programs both within Russia and by sending Russians abroad to study, where the purpose in part was that they acquire foreign language training. The result was that before the end of his reign, Russian representatives abroad could function even more effectively than their distant predecessors had done, and more and more of the Russian elite would be encouraged to acquire the languages that enabled them to move comfortably in European high society.



IV. THE *KURANTY* IN CONTEXT

The *kuranty* (defined as the Russian translations from Western newsletters, published newspapers and pamphlets) were only one source of foreign news in Muscovy. Ideally, it should be possible to determine what the impact of the *kuranty* was on Russian knowledge of the outside world and in particular whether or not that knowledge can be connected with decision making by the tsar and his officials. However, even to attempt to do so means that the *kuranty* cannot be analyzed in isolation from the other sources of foreign news and intelligence which were regularly mined by the government. That is, it is necessary to consider reports submitted by officials about interrogations of individuals who had arrived in Muscovy from abroad, reports based on intelligence missions (or spying) dispatched to neighboring territories, and information that was obtained in the course of diplomatic exchanges both within and outside of Russia. The need to consider all such sources is even greater on account of the fragmentary preservation of the translations. There are many gaps in the *kuranty* files, some perhaps reflecting that for certain periods no incoming news was translated, but others presumably evidence that the preservation of the manuscript files is very uneven. A great deal arguably has been lost, although there really is no way to estimate how much.[1]

Keeping these considerations in mind, these chapters will use selected examples to explore the place of the *kuranty* in the larger flow of foreign news. The criteria for the choices vary. Ideally, we would have a substantial block of uninterrupted news translations along with copies of the originals. In such instances, comparison of the translations with the originals can reveal something about the process of selection, if the foreign sources were not simply translated in their entirety. Even if we do not have an extant original source, it may at least be possible to hypothesize what that source was and also to place the translation we do have in the context of the foreign policy concerns and other foreign news sources for a particular period. Since often the translated news contains material that is extremely difficult to match with readily documentable events, another

1. There was a major fire in Moscow in 1626, which destroyed a significant body of material in the government archives. Historians of Muscovy frequently have cited this fact to explain why certain documents we might expect should exist are no longer extant. However, since there are extensive files pertaining to Muscovite diplomacy that date back to the fifteenth century, the issue of how much really was lost is uncertain. There are several inventories of the archive, pre- and post-fire, which have been published, though their often cryptic entries are not always very helpful in determining specific content. For the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery, see *Opis'* 1626 and *Opis'* 1673.

criterion for selection may be to choose examples based on how prominent and potentially important the events were. Were the events of 'greatest consequence' (granted, a somewhat slippery concept) known in the Kremlin? If they were, did the Russian recipients understand why they were important? If they were not, what might this tell us about how well the government was informed? The ability to assess information such as that in the news reports was, of course, contingent on what those reading or listening to them brought to the task. That is, in the absence of some prior knowledge that would enable one to contextualize a given news item, its significance might well be lost on the recipient. This was as much true in other countries as it was in Russia.

Our investigation may also be limited by the availability of the 'non-*kuranty*' sources. Many of the most important archival files containing foreign news have not been published; existing source collections are but selective. The best guide to what news was being acquired thus tends to be a few key secondary studies where the authors have thoroughly mined the yet unpublished archival files (for example, in the various monographs by Boris Floria). In the absence of such studies (more of which are needed to cover all the main aspects of Russian foreign policy in the seventeenth century), very interesting periods when obtaining foreign news arguably was extremely important to the government simply cannot be properly analyzed. That said, some areas of Russian foreign policy that indeed were important and about which there is a substantial literature will be treated here only cursorily. For want of time and space, our focus will be on relations with the immediate neighbors to the West: Sweden and Poland-Lithuania. The latter perforce involves events in Ukraine and relations with the Crimean Tatars and Ottoman Empire. However, a full treatment of this 'southern component' of Muscovite policy (not to mention other aspects of the state's relations with Asian polities) would require a separate volume.[2]

Where we have a good idea of the full range of news sources, it is logical to look closely at the dates when a particular item of information arrived and when a decision was made which would seem to reflect knowledge of it. Reports from border commanders or regarding information obtained in diplomatic negotiations may well be precisely dated, but the same is not always true for the *kuranty*. We often do not know from whom and when a news source was obtained and when it was translated; it may be difficult to determine how dated it was by the time of receipt. In such instances, it is only the internal datelines in the news reports which can give us an idea about the likely date of the source; yet that of itself may not reveal anything about how much time elapsed before the information made it to Moscow. Furthermore, it is always possible that a coincidence of dates between receipt of news and a decision may not necessarily prove a causal relationship. These and other uncertainties on account of the problematic nature of our sources will be treated in the discussions which follow.

2. Particularly useful for contextualizing Ottoman and Crimean Tatar involvement in Central and East European affairs and the responses of the European states directly affected by it is the collectively-authored *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1998–2001.

The first decades in which the *kuranty* were produced in Moscow are also the first decades of the Thirty Years War, whose coverage in the news is the focus of Chapter 10. Our first of two examples will focus on the beginnings of the war, from about 1618 to 1621, a period when the emerging crisis in Western and Central Europe became important in the eyes of the decision makers in the Kremlin. Our second example will focus on the early 1630s, in which the Swedish entry into the war significantly changed its course. Then too, the events were important to Moscow, since they are intertwined with the Russian war against Poland that aimed (unsuccessfully) to recapture Smolensk. Fortunately for both of these periods, there are detailed Russian studies based on material in the foreign policy archives which contain a lot of information about the acquisition and importance of the foreign news. In the 1640s, a significant amount of foreign news arrived in Moscow, in part due to the negotiations with Denmark about a possible royal marriage. In particular in this period, there is a remarkable string of news reports obtained from a foreign 'intelligencer' whose identity has now been established and will be the subject of Chapter 11. In Chapters 12 and 13, we explore the ways in which the peace negotiations at Westphalia were covered in the news obtained in Moscow and an unusual example from negotiations with Sweden in 1649, the year following the peace treaties, when a Russian embassy was in Stockholm. With the Cossack uprising in Ukraine beginning in 1648, the focus shifts in Chapter 14 to relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Cossack Hetmanate. The example in Chapter 15 of the courier Grigorii Kunakov illustrates vividly how effective even a lower-level Muscovite official might be in obtaining news while abroad. Chapters 16 and 17 explore the decade prior to the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post in 1665, a period when both the interests of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich and the broadening horizons of some of his key officials paved the way for the decision to regularize the mechanisms for obtaining foreign news reports through the new postal connection.

CHAPTER 10

The Beginnings of the Thirty Years War

While it rather quickly came to involve almost all of Europe, at its inception the Thirty Years War was largely an internal affair involving Bohemia as a part of the Holy Roman Empire.[1] The dramatic 'defenestration' in Prague on 23 May 1618 was but one stage in a complicated and long-simmering conflict within the empire, the details of which presumably would have been hard for outside observers to understand.[2] News about how the Catholic regents were thrown out the window of the Prague castle by the rebelling Protestants was alarming and widely reported in Europe. However, where that event was going to lead could not have been anticipated by even well-informed observers within the Habsburg dominions. Recent work (Wilson 2009) has argued that for much of the period from 1618–1648, what Europe experienced was regional conflicts reflecting particular interests of the parties involved, where the events in Bohemia were not at the forefront of their concerns.[3] The parochial interests of individual polities thus to a

1. See Floria 1986: 90–91 for an astute summary. His book, which we rely on heavily in our analysis, is by far the best treatment of Russian policy in its relationship to the beginnings of the Thirty Years War. His lectures on Russia and the war condense nicely a lot of complex material and provide a broader view (Floria 2021: 385–442). In English, for the larger history of the war, Wedgwood 1938/1961 is still valuable, even if in many ways it is now dated; specifically for the military history, see the more recent Wilson 2009 (but note the qualification in note 3 below). For a broad look at the importance of the war for international politics, with specific reference to Russia, see Dukes 2004.

2. As Holger Böning (2019), one of the leading experts on the early German press, has argued, focusing on the first decade and a half of the war, the newspaper reportage on the events leading up to and during those years provides in many ways the most complete record of events, one that, had it been followed diligently, would have provided readers with an excellent understanding of what was unfolding. While bias and propaganda in the war news would later grow, to a considerable degree the newspaper publishers strove for accuracy. See especially his chapters 4 and 5, a detailed narrative of the events of 1618–1621 derived from his careful reading of all the extant German newspapers. He argues (p. 10) that a reader of the extant newspapers beginning in 1609 would not have been surprised by the dramatic events of 1618 – even though now one can but guess what was in the newspapers assumed to have been printed between 1609 and 1617, as they are no longer extant. However, there is little that can be determined about actual readership. We might ask, how many readers actually did follow the news closely, so that reports on apparently obscure happenings would in fact have been provided with some context to understand them? Nonetheless, Böning forcefully argues (p. 425) that the public (however one might define it) may have been better informed about the events of the Thirty Years War than we would be today about military events governments cloak in secrecy.

3. While we have relied extensively on Wilson's treatment of the war, Böning (2019: 149, 193–194,

considerable degree governed what news received attention.[4] Nuances of political calculation and campaigns in distant locations might never be covered in the news sources accessed by a government and, even if reported in the press, might have little resonance in the reading public. Thus, silences in the record of what was known to the Muscovite government may tell us either that its news sources were silent about some events or there was no perceived need to learn anything regarding them.

The onset of the Thirty Years War within but a few years after a number of regularly published newspapers had appeared was a stimulus to the rapid expansion of European newspaper publishing.[5]. The proliferation of newspapers in the Netherlands occurred in the early years of the war. The full range of many regular German-language newspapers covering the war may never be known, given the poor state of their preservation. However, it is clear that war news (and the related diplomatic maneuverings) dominated the press and provided a market for new titles. At least fitfully, if not on a predictable, regular basis, the European news about the war made it to Moscow.

As historians of seventeenth-century news suggest, detailed reportage, if the focus was on very specific local events, might make sense only to those who were following the news on a regular basis through the periodical press or subscriptions to manuscript news services.[6] Responses to and understanding of the news were conditioned by what its consumers brought to the task in terms of previous knowledge and motivations for obtaining information. That said, as the Muscovite examples show, even in situations where some of the nuance and detail found in the newspapers might have been lost on those who used the *kuranty* translations (and where sometimes the translations were inaccurate), indications of developments of great potential significance for the formation of foreign policy might nonetheless be gleaned. However, as Arthur der Weduwen (2017: 5) has suggested, "the newspaper was rarely the first source of information; or at least, of information of immediate importance to the reader. Generally, when it came to urgent matters, the newspaper offered confirmation and supplementary details of news heard elsewhere." We might question such a sweeping assertion, but, with some exceptions, what Der Weduwen indicates certainly seems to have been the case in Muscovy.

10.1. How much did the Russian government understand about the events leading into the war?

How prepared Russian officials were to understand and absorb the information is difficult to know. Even in cases where there had been substantial interaction with individu-

216, 222, 231, 256, 372–373) frequently questions him or corrects mistakes which could have been avoided had Wilson mined the reports in the German newspapers. In Böning's view, the work of many other historians of the war suffers from their not having used the newspapers as sources.

4. This has been demonstrated in the case of England by Boys 2011. Even though there were dynastic ties and a concern for the fate of Protestantism, English involvement in the conflicts was indirect. Where there was a broader interest in the war, in the first instance it seemed to reflect concerns regarding commercial enterprises on the Continent.

5. Pettegree 2014, Ch. 10; Weduwen 2017: 7; Böning 2019: 25–26

6. Pettegree 2014: 9; Böning 2019, passim.

als and governments whose homes were not directly adjacent to Muscovite territory, it is sometimes surprising to see the degree of ignorance in the Kremlin about the political structures of those countries. As late as 1615, the Russian government had failed to grasp the political system of the Dutch Republic (Floria 1986: 50–51) and until the middle of the seventeenth century had a very limited appreciation of the complications of English politics (Kobzareva 2008). In many ways, the Kremlin was much better equipped to understand the structure of the Holy Roman Empire and the tensions within it, since such information had been obtained through diplomatic exchanges beginning even in the late fifteenth century and especially via the rather intensive negotiations with the Habsburgs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century (see our Ch. 4). Yet this knowledge tended to be limited to an understanding of the larger structures of the empire – its electoral system and the distribution of the various autonomous states that owed some allegiance to the Habsburg rulers. What really went on within those states probably was *terra incognita*.[7] Oversimplifications were likely, for example, in regard to the religious map of the empire, a subject of lesser interest to the Russians than the simple fact that the Habsburg emperor was a Catholic and thus might be assumed to align the empire with other Catholic states. Distinctions and disputes between Calvinists and Lutherans were glossed over, since to the Orthodox Russians, most Protestants were of the same ilk in their beliefs. Where there may have been some deeper appreciation of the relations between the emperor and the estates, the focus was primarily on the aspects of those relations which might affect Habsburg relations with neighboring Poland-Lithuania and Sweden (Floria 1986: 76–77).

At the onset of the Thirty Years War, even if direct diplomatic relations with the Habsburgs were frozen on account of disagreements in the immediate post-*Smuta* years, the individuals who would shape Russian foreign policy were ones who certainly must have had some understanding both of imperial and more broadly European affairs. Appointed to head the Ambassadorial Chancery on 2 May 1618, coincidentally about two weeks before the defenestration in Prague, Ivan Taras'evich Gramotin remained as its head until 1626.[8] Like many of the chancery staffs who continued in their posts right through the Time of Troubles, he had acquired diplomatic experience as the secretary on two diplomatic missions to the court of Emperor Rudolph II in Prague. In addition, given his substantial involvement with Poland during and in the first years after the Time of Troubles, it is reasonable to assume that Gramotin knew Polish and Latin. According to Floria, he was the only high-ranking diplomatic official in all of Europe who had actually

7. This becomes clear from Wilson's detailed explication of the background to the Thirty Years War (2009, Part I). The complexities of the competing interests and political structures challenge the ability of the modern reader. For a broad assessment of the degree to which Russian officials may have understood the complexities of the Holy Roman Empire, see Roll 2002.

8. Floria 1986: 78. For Gramotin's biography, see Rogozhin 2002: 120–129. See also Putsillo 1878 and Varentsova 2010, who emphasize his 'un-patriotic', self-serving willingness to work for any of those who fought for control of Muscovy during the Time of Troubles and also the evidence of his greed.

spent time in the Czech lands when the Bohemian revolt began. His knowledge of European affairs surely was enhanced when he spent several years (unwillingly?) in Poland after arriving there on a Russian embassy in 1611.

With the establishment of the Romanov Dynasty and the return of Patriarch Filaret from Polish captivity in summer 1619, half a year after the Truce of Deulino that ended the war against Poland, the patriarch assumed de facto control of Russian policy. Even though during his first years as a captive in Poland he was kept in close confinement, starting in 1615 he was in Warsaw, resident in the home of the Lithuanian chancellor, where he had ample opportunity to be kept abreast of the news and even receive visits from Russian diplomats. Furthermore, he seems to have been a frequent guest of the king, and by the last months of his captivity would have been in a position to obtain readily information about what was going on in the Habsburg dominions (Floria 1986: 78–79). Of course what he actually learned is a matter of speculation, but there is plenty of evidence that once back in Moscow, he was actively involved in the formulation of Russian policy and was keeping informed of almost all the news which could be obtained about events beyond the Russian borders.[9] Up to the last days before his sudden death in 1633, he was reading and annotating reports and directives. In its general outlines, the knowledge the Muscovite policy makers obtained did have an impact on decisions, even if Filaret's rather single-minded focus on preparing for a war to regain territory lost to the Poles may have distorted his appreciation of European realities. The events in the empire would be of interest primarily to the degree that they might bear on Moscow's more pressing foreign-policy concerns.

Even though in the immediate aftermath of the Prague defenestration there were Russian embassies abroad where they surely were in a position to have learned about the events in Prague, there is no extant documentation to indicate they reported such news. And there is reason to think it might have escaped their notice if it was perceived as some minor disturbance within Bohemia that bore no relationship to Russian foreign policy (ibid.: 103). The first information that there was some conflict underway came in vague reports forwarded to Moscow in January 1619 by the military governor in Pskov, who had interrogated there some mercenaries who were seeking employment in Russian service.[10] Yet contradictory, even inaccurate, reports about foreign news arrived subsequently from Novgorod, indicating that all was peaceful in the Habsburg lands, as the electors were allegedly gathering in the Czech lands to elect a new emperor. The first more or less accurate information received in Moscow came only a year after the Prague

9. As Porshnev (1976: 190) suggested, it appears that Filaret's caution about resuming the conflict with Poland in the early 1620s may have provoked some dissatisfaction in Moscow. Gramotin was replaced in 1626 by Efim Telepnev, another experienced diplomatic official, at which point Filaret's regime began to pursue a more active policy of building a coalition that could support Moscow in a new war against Poland.

10. This information and what immediately follows for the most part is a summary of Floria 1986: 102 and passim.

events, when a courier sent to Poland in connection with the exchange of war prisoners reported the news he had learned while there. Ivan Gramotin then attempted to obtain confirmation by interrogating a courier sent to Moscow from Denmark in June 1619. He reported that Archduke Ferdinand (a committed Catholic) had been selected to succeed (as Emperor Ferdinand II) the deceased Emperor Mathias, but that the Czech population had risen up against the imposition of Catholic control and the Jesuits had been expelled. That the Ambassadorial Chancery took this news seriously is confirmed by the instructions drawn up for the translator Eremei Eremeev (Jeremy Westermann), who was sent to accompany the Danish courier back to Copenhagen in July. He was tasked with confirming the specific details of what had been learned about the situation in the empire.

A fresh round of information gathering occurred in January 1620, when Gramotin interrogated a newly arrived Danish courier about the news and learned that indeed Ferdinand had been elected Emperor and, significantly for the events that would soon unfold, the Protestant Elector Frederick of Pfalz had been chosen by the Czechs to be their king (FIG. 10.1). It is clear from the line of questioning which ensued that the government in Moscow had become aware of the potential relevance of the events in the empire for Muscovite relations with its immediate neighbors, Sweden and Poland.

The news the Dane brought in fact was more current and accurate than what King Gustavus Adolphus had put in a letter sent to the Muscovite government that arrived just a few days later (ibid.: 106). The Swedish king emphasized that the Protestant forces had gained the upper hand, whereas the election of Ferdinand certainly was evidence that contradicted Gustavus Adolphus' assertion that the Catholic forces had been defeated. What we can see in this one incident is how in diplomatic exchange, those communicating important international news tended to bend it to their purposes. In this case, the Swedes were trying to convince Moscow it would be safe to join them in waging war on Poland, since the Poles could not expect any Habsburg support. Renewal of Muscovite-Polish hostilities might ensure the success of Swedish designs on Polish territories along the Baltic and possibly even open the way for the two monarchies to come under the rule of the Swedish king. The ongoing friction between Sweden and Russia over border delimitation following the Peace of Stolbovo ensured that the Kremlin would look with suspicion on Swedish proposals, so Gustavus Adolphus also sent a

FIG. 10.1. Frederick of Pfalz, the 'Winter King'. Portrait attributed to Gerrit van Honthorst (1590–1650).

mission to Frederick of Pfalz asking that he prod King James of England to support Russian designs against Poland. In his letter to Moscow, the Swedish king suggested the English had indeed agreed to the idea. He also mentioned (misleadingly) that Swedish forces were already massing on the border with Poland, anticipating the renewal of war. Suspicious of these assertions, the Russian government immediately solicited intelligence from Novgorod, where the Russian military governor reported there were no such troop movements. So the Kremlin then rejected the Swedish overture to launch any attack on Poland, recognizing that there was no expectation of meaningful support from the Swedes (or from anyone else). On into the summer, there were continuing efforts to obtain through spies operating out of western border towns news regarding the relations between the Habsburg emperor and Frederick of Pfalz. Those reports included new information that some contingents from Poland had been detached to support the emperor.[11]

10.2. The first *kuranty* reports on the war

At this point in 1620 we have *kuranty* news reports (V-K I: 29–49, Nos. 3–5), few in number, but of interest for their content, for what we may hypothesize about their origin, and for the way in which they fit in the context of the other news the Kremlin was receiving. Close analysis of this material illustrates some of the methodological challenges involved in trying to analyze the *kuranty*.

The translations provide only a very imprecise idea of when the news might have been received and contain nothing explicit about who provided the original newspapers from which they were made. In all three cases, the headers appear to be translating the title of a newspaper.[12] Two of the three titles are identical, the third enough different to suggest possibly it is from a different newspaper. The translator(s) have added to the A.D. year of the original sources an indication of its equivalent in the Russian system, calculating years from the Creation. In one of the three cases, the specification is that the date is from 'the present year'; a second of the headers does not specify that but implies it too is from the 'present year'; and the third example indicates the newspaper dated to the 'previous' Russian year. What this means is that two of the translations may antedate September 1, the beginning of the Russian year, but one of them post-dates 1 September. One that antedates 1 September contains news reports dated in their headers between 1 February and 16 March (though primarily for the month of February), and the other

11. Indeed, some 19,000 Cossacks were sent in support of the imperial forces in the first half of 1620 (Wilson 2009: 293).

12. For example, V-K I: 29, No. 3.1: 'Perevod s vestovoi nemetskoi tetrati chto deialosia vo Ustrei i v Polshe i v Slezhi i v Frantsovskoi i v Golanskoi i v Aglenskoi i v Ytalianskoi i v Ugorskoi zemle i v ynikh mestiakh n[y]neshneg[o] 1620 godu po ruski [7]128 godu.' In this early period of the acquisition of foreign news publications the translators seem fairly consistently to have made a distinction between 'quires' (*tetradi*), a term that applied to both the quarto-format German newspapers and separates, and 'sheets' (*listy*), referring to the single half-sheet format of the Dutch newspapers. However, in many instances, especially in later decades, only the term *listy* appears, referring to both of the newspaper formats.

contains news for the first half of March.[13] The translation made after 1 September includes news from mid-April. The papers with the February and March news could have been received a month or so after the date when it was printed, but also might have been delayed in transmission for as much as 3–4 months. The news received after 1 September has to have been some five months out of date by the time it arrived and was translated in Moscow.

While we have not found the exact source for any of these translations, we have two extant German newspapers that clearly must have shared the same news service as the newspaper(s) received in Moscow.[14] That news service (probably one providing manuscript *avvisi*, newsletters) seems to have come out of Nürnberg, even though it would be many decades before a newspaper would be published there. In all three cases, most (if not all) of the news articles contain basically the same information, even if differing in some small details. The evidence we have suggests that most of each presumed German original was translated, which would be consistent with what we know about other *kuranty* translations made before the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post. Comparing those two German texts with the translations reveals that one of them is closer to the translation than is the other. The titles in the translations suggest that the source was another German newspaper (or perhaps two very similar ones), of which, unfortunately, we have no extant copies from the date in question.[15] Where it was published

13. The latter (V-K I: 47–49, No. 5.31–38) includes a section of news with November dates, which clearly must have been mechanically combined with the manuscript pages containing the news from March. That is, there is no reason to think the March and November news could possibly form a 'set' of news received at one time. The November news would have to have arrived in Moscow only around the end of the year, and certainly not prior to the beginning of September. We will consider below what is in the November news but concentrate first on that which dates to the period from February through into April.

14. The newspapers are *Die* [number] *Zeitung auß gantz Europa in diesem 1620. Jahr den* [date] *zu Hildeßheimb angelangt*, and *Aviso. Relation oder Zeitung Was sich begeben und zugetragen hat in Deutsch- und Welschland/ Spannien/ Niederland/ Engeland/ Franckreich/ Ungern/ Osterreich/ Schweden/ Polen/ Schlesien/ Item Rom/ Venedig/ Wien/ Antorff/ Ambsterdamm/ Cölln/ Franckfort/ Praag und Lintz/ etc. So von Nürnberg den* [date] *unnd sonst Wöchentlich avisirt und angelanget. Gedruckt im Jahr/ 1620*. For our textual comparisons with the *kuranty* we have used these copies of the Hildesheim newspaper: **Die 10. Zeitung* (2 March 1620), *Die. 12. Zeitung* (17 Mar.), **Die 13. Zeitung* (25 Mar.), and **Die 18. Zeitung* (26 Apr.). The numbers of *Aviso* which were checked are: **9. Aviso* (26 Feb.); *11. Aviso* (11 Mar.); **12. Aviso* (18 Mar.), *13. Aviso* (25 Mar.), **17. Aviso* (22 Apr.). The great majority of the entries in the *kuranty* correspond to what is in the asterisked numbers of these papers, with only a very few entries matching any of the articles in the other numbers we compared. It is possible that those other numbers reflect one or more additional sources from which single items of news were drawn, but in the absence of the direct source for the translations, we cannot know. It would not surprise us if the source newspaper for the translations differed (either by omission or addition of a few articles) from the papers we have for the comparison. Even if the core source for all these papers was the same news service, the printers would not necessarily have restricted themselves to a single source. The texts in the Hildesheim paper, not those in *Aviso*, are clearly the ones closest to what we find in the *kuranty*, but we stress that there is no reason to think either of those specific papers would have been received in Moscow.

15. *Relation dessen, waß sich in Böhemen, Osterreich, Polen, Schlesien, Franckreich, Hollandt, Engellandt, Jtalia, Vngarn vnd andern Ortern mehr, denckwürdiges itz lauffendem* [...] *dieses Jahrs*

has not been established, but it is reasonable to guess it was produced in Hamburg. The newspaper is one whose title and content suggest it was being issued in the first instance to report on the events that were beginning to consume Central Europe. It seems to have drawn mainly on Protestant sources, as indicated by the designations in the articles as to who is 'one of us' and who is the 'enemy'. However, as Boris Floria (1986: 109–111) has stressed, the news these *kuranty* contained certainly would not have inspired confidence in the success of the Protestant cause, as support for the Catholic or imperial cause was coming from various directions. The newspapers indeed were painting a picture of how the regional conflict already was engaging much of Europe and even the Ottoman Empire.

The news from February and March included several items about battles already being fought, especially by the mercenary forces of Count Ernst von Mansfeld that were so far seeming to defend successfully Upper Pfalz from the Habsburg army headed by Count Carl Bonaventura von Buquoy. Whether many of the specific place names in these reports would have meant anything in Moscow is questionable, but the fact that there was military conflict between the Protestant and Catholic or imperial forces surely would have been clear enough. To get a real sense of whether one or the other side was really 'winning' (beyond the results of some localized battle) would have required regular reading of the news, something that we cannot assume was happening in Moscow. The military news was not good everywhere, as in Horn (a city in lower Austria) the defenders against an impending attack were short on supplies, a hint at least of the very serious problem which was emerging in supplying and paying the Protestant forces. A report from Prague on 17 April reinforced the news that supplies and revenues were short, the army not having been paid in three months and turning to looting in order to survive. In Prague, confiscation of Jesuit properties was underway, though it is possible much of the gains from those measures merely supported the frivolous entertainments of the court.[16] It still seemed as though diplomatic initiatives to gain foreign support might bear fruit. There was some speculation reported from The Hague that Dutch and especially English support for the Protestant cause would be forthcoming. There was further confirmation about the English position in the April news, which reported that King James had flatly told the Spanish ambassador he would support the Czechs.[17]

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begeben, Jnsonderheit, was in jtzigem Bohemischen Kriegßwesen dieser Zeit fürgelauffen. den [...] *vnd sonsten Wochentlich von Nürnberg avisirt. Jm Jahr* [...] Given the complex (and largely undocumentable) histories of the possibly related German newspapers during the early years of the Thirty Years War, there is always the possibility that yet another paper might have been the direct source of the Moscow translations – that is, some other one that would have had a title similar to or nearly identical with that of *Relation*.

16. Wedgwood (1961: 117–118), who emphasizes the role of personalities in explaining the events, paints a picture of a dissolute court in Prague that was partying as though no danger was in sight. As Wilson (2009: 287) writes, extreme Calvinists at Frederick V's court in Prague instigated depredations that offended even Bohemian Protestants.

17. Such reports seemed to reflect wishful thinking in the Protestant camp. The Dutch provided but limited support; King James in England was more interested in mediation to end the conflict than he

To read selectively from this batch of news reports might have conveyed the impression the Protestant forces were at least holding their own. However, the same newspapers contained disquieting news as well. In Vienna, the emperor had issued a proclamation denouncing the Czech rebels and threatening them with destruction. The newspapers reported the opening of a convocation at Mühlhausen involving the Elector of Saxony, and representatives of the Elector of Bavaria and some other states. Called at the behest of Emperor Ferdinand, this broad array of representatives (including members of the Catholic League and Lutherans from the northern parts of the empire) hastened to support the imperial condemnation of the Czechs. Following this decision of the convocation on March 20, as news from Brussels reported on April 12, the Elector of Saxony had committed major military resources to the imperial cause.[18] The same report indicated that a very substantial financial subsidy for the campaign to put down the Protestant revolt was on its way from Spain.[19] Other news mentioned raids by mercenaries dispatched from Poland into the Czech lands. When the main Habsburg armies began their march during the summer, they were able to advance rapidly. Effective resistance by the Czechs collapsed, and the Czech forces were shattered in the Battle of the White Mountain on 8 November (FIG. 10.2; Wilson 2009: 303–307). Imperial occupation of Prague and the Czech lands followed, bringing vicious policies to eradicate Protestantism.

FIG. 10.2. The final stages of the Battle of the White Mountain, the city of Prague shown in the distance. Engraving by Matthias Merian from *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main, 1635), following p. 462.

was in supporting his son-in-law, Frederick V (Wilson 2009: 285–286).

18. See Wedgwood 1961: 105–106. A translation of the text of the declaration at the conclusion of the convocation is in Wilson 2010: 58–59. Saxon military operations began only some months later (Wilson 2009: 301).

19. On Spanish subsidies and then direct military involvement, see Wilson 2009: 297–301. Spanish aims throughout the war were focused on the Rhine and the Netherlands, not on supporting the imperial policies in Germany (ibid.: 319–320).

FIG. 10.3. Gábor Bethlen (1580–1629). Engraved portrait, after Lukas Kilian (1579–1637).

Even if some of these news reports from winter and early spring would have arrived in Moscow relatively quickly, they may not have told the policy makers in the Kremlin anything of real consequence regarding events affecting the Czech lands that they had not already learned from intelligence transmitted by border commanders, who could interview new arrivals and send spies westward. The same newspapers did include material that presumably would have been of more direct interest than military events in Upper Pfalz or (as was being reported in April) lower along the Rhine. One of the wild cards in unfolding political events was the activity of Gábor Bethlen, the prince of Transylvania (FIG. 10.3), who clearly was committed first and foremost to actions which would enhance his own power.[20] In late summer 1619, he had attacked the Habsburg forces in Hungary and with the support of the Protestants there had himself proclaimed King of Hungary. He then moved into what is now Slovakia and even for a time besieged Vienna, but was forced to retreat. A treaty with the Habsburgs in January confirmed his possession of certain territories in the east, and at the time of the first news reports in the *kuranty*, he seems to have been biding his time in anticipation of renewing war against the Habsburgs later in the year. As the newspapers reported on 6 February from Bethlen's current residence at Kassa (Košice), a Crimean Tatar emissary had obtained permission from the Transylvanian prince for a Tatar army to pass through his territories and raid into Poland. A month later, as the April news indicated, Bethlen was preparing to move west into Austrian territory. An Ottoman Turkish army was gathering in order to move into Hungary (in support of Bethlen?). The lure of possible Ottoman military support, first broached in a message from Frederick of Pfalz to the sultan in January, now was to be followed up by a major embassy, to Istanbul, as the newspapers also reported in April.

Prodded by Bethlen and information he and presumably others provided, suggesting that the Poles were about the ally with the traditional enemies of the Turks, the Habsburgs, the Ottomans decided to campaign against Poland. Already in early March, the Russian envoy in the Crimea was reporting to Moscow about the Turkish plans for a campaign against Poland, although by the time he returned to Moscow in April, he indicated that a major invasion by the Turks was unlikely. Unaware of the news about the Crimean Tatars arranging passage through Bethlen's territories in order to attack Poland, the Russian envoy assumed that the most likely target of any Tatar raids would

20. On Bethlen and his intervention in the conflict, see ibid.: 283–284, 289–294, 307–308, and, for details about the politics within Transylvania and more broadly in Hungary which explain Bethlen's actions, Katalin 2002: 60–82. See also *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1998–2001, 1: 88–96.

be Muscovite territory. In fact it was Bethlen and the Hungarians, not the Russians, who would be informed in May of 1620 about the intention of the Turks to attack Poland, news which clearly had to be of interest for the anti-Habsburg forces who wanted to ensure that the Poles would not actively support the emperor.

All of this and the subsequent unfolding of events in Eastern Europe falls well beyond what could have been learned from the *kuranty* which covered events only in mid-winter and into the spring in 1620. What we know about the subsequent development of Muscovite policy suggests that it relied primarily on other sources of news. The fragmentary *kuranty* reporting events in November 1620 (V-K I: 41–49, No. 5) are badly damaged and often difficult to interpret but on the whole contain primarily war-related news, including clear indications of support for the imperial cause. It is likely the source(s) were later numbers of the newspapers which had supplied the earlier news. Even though Moscow might have received a somewhat earlier number reporting on the Battle of the White Mountain on 8 November, the extant translations contain no mention of that imperial victory, which marked a turning point in the war. And in fact it seems the news was not yet known when two Russian embassies were being sent to visit various north European polities in January 1621.[21]

Even though there is some disagreement as to their main purpose, these two missions were tasked with the gathering of intelligence on European affairs and may well have been responsible for the acquisition of the published news sources which were subsequently translated in 1621.[22] It is of some interest that in both cases the missions were not headed by high-ranking court officials but rather by foreign-born employees of the Ambassadorial Chancery who commanded relevant languages. Ivan Fomin (Hans Helmes) was a long-term translator in Muscovy, a specialist for English and German who had considerable previous experience on missions to the Habsburg court (see Secs. 4.5 and 7.1.1). He was accompanied by Boris Borisov (Barend Kögelken), who probably was fluent in German. Their itinerary included Sweden, Denmark, Holstein and Mecklenburg. Of particular relevance here is the fact that they were present at the meeting of potential supporters of Frederick of Pfalz, convened by Danish King Christian IV at Segeberg in the second week of March. Thus Fomin was able to report on his return that the result seemed to be a commitment to the Protestant cause, even though, as it would turn out, nothing of consequence in fact followed.[23] A Dutch message received in Moscow in late

21. In Vienna, the emperor had received the news ten days after the battle took place and in another four days had received details in a letter from the imperial commander Count de Bucquoy. The news arrived in Madrid by December 15 (*Documenta Bohemica* 1972: 264, 269).

22. See Floria 1986: 134–136, 143–144, where he emphasizes the intelligence gathering and in particular an interest in determining the potential that France might become involved in the conflict in the German lands. However, as he explains, the goal of the missions also was to feel out the possibilities for an advantageous dynastic marriage for Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich. Iurii Rodionov's instructions also included the hiring of mining and other foreign specialists. While the first folios of his instructions are damaged and only partially readable, the section on intelligence gathering is essentially complete. See *PDS* 2: 1363–1365.

23. For the Segeberg convocation, see Goll 1875 and Wilson 2009: 320–321, where there is no men-

June (prior to when Fomin would have been able to report) explicitly emphasized the significance of Danish support (with possible Swedish collaboration) for the Protestant cause and the likelihood the Swedes and Danes would take part in military action against Poland (Floria 1986: 155–156).

The other Russian mission was headed by Iurii Rodionov, whose language specialization included English and who presumably had a command of German.[24] Rodionov's instructions regarding intelligence gathering focus on the conflict between the emperor and Frederick of Pfalz and contain specific questions relating to the possible involvement of various polities. Rodionov's itinerary took him along the Baltic littoral, with stops in Riga (February 20), Königsberg (March 7), Danzig (March 11), and then on to Dresden (April 1), where he spent about three weeks at the court of the Elector of Saxony.[25] He reported that representatives of Brandenburg, Denmark, Bavaria and Württemberg were there, as well as the Habsburg Archduke Charles (Emperor Ferdinand's brother), urging the Saxon elector to mediate in the conflict between the emperor and Frederick of Pfalz. While in Dresden, Rodionov looked up an acquaintance, Hans Tube, who had been a military captive in Moscow and now was in the service of the Elector of Saxony. Tube seems to have facilitated the stay in Dresden (and presumably was a source of information), even though on the official level Rodionov was handled by a higher-ranking court councilor, Kaspar Schönberg. Rodionov went on to visit the Leipzig fair, passed through Nürnberg and Strasburg, and arrived in Paris on May 14. He was able to report about the ongoing conflict between the French king and dissident princes; while he could not meet with the king, he hired for Russian service a goldsmith, a pharmacist, and a medical specialist.

Both Russian parties returned via the long route around the north cape to Archangel. Some time in late June, Fomin and Borisov booked transport in Hamburg, and Rodionov shipped from England. The exact dates of their return to Moscow seem not to have been recorded, but presumably they had arrived in July or early August (Floria 1986: 162, 197 n. 88). There is no evidence that these two missions sent any intelligence back to Moscow while they were away (the international post connection did not yet exist to enable them to do so). So, whatever they learned was reported only after their return, possibly while they were still en route to Moscow from Archangel.

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tion of the Fomin's presence. Not surprising, of course, since the Russian mission was not any kind of official one, and presumably Muscovy was far from the concern of the Protestant representatives. Fomin also would report other news suggesting that meaningful support for Frederick of Pfalz in fact had followed on the Segeberg convocation (see Floria 1986: 164). Floria cites Fomin's as yet unpublished *stateinyi spisok*; the only published documentation from his mission is his expense report in *PDS* 2: 1378–1384.

24. When Rodionov was asked in Dresden to present a translation of one of his letters of credence (since no one at the Saxon court could read the Russian original), he apparently complied. There is no reason to think that he had brought a German (or Latin) version of the letter with him. His report suggests he had no problem communicating with his interlocutors on the mission while in German-speaking lands. How he communicated in Paris is not clear.

25. His somewhat cryptic *stateinyi spisok* is in *PDS* 2: 1365–1375.

In the meantime, the Kremlin had been receiving news from other sources. While some of the information they possessed was garbled, the officials involved in negotiations with the English envoy John Merrick in March 1621 revealed that by then, at least, they had learned of the occupation of Prague by the imperial forces (ibid.: 144, 195 n. 1). Even though King James was holding back from supporting Frederick of Pfalz, urging him to give up his claims in Bohemia, during the negotiations in Moscow regarding a possible Anglo-Russian alliance, Merrick was deliberately minimizing the real import of the news from Prague and was holding out the hope of a broader anti-Habsburg alliance; it seems that the Russian officials trusted his assertions.

As Floria emphasizes, if anything in the succeeding months, Moscow's interest in the situation in Central Europe was growing on account of perceptions regarding its potential bearing on the Russian concerns over both Poland and Sweden closer to home. The policy makers in Moscow were continuing to collect assiduously foreign news, especially the information about the Polish war against the Ottomans and their Tatar allies. In the Baltic region, there were now confirmed reports about Sweden's massing troops, with conflicting news as to where they would be sent – in the direction of Novgorod or rather toward Riga. Finally it became clear that Riga was to be the destination, thus lifting concern about a renewal of hostilities with Sweden. It seems that all of the key information relating to these events was coming not directly from foreign printed news but rather from what was collected by diplomats and normal border intelligence operations (for details, ibid.: 149–152).

As far as the conflict within the empire was concerned, the reports from the Russian envoys who returned by early August suggested that, despite the fact Prague and the Czech lands had fallen to the imperial forces, the Protestant cause was not dead. This information coincided with intelligence that had been gathered in Novgorod and with news translated for the *kuranty* covering the period of March–May 1621.[26] It is possible that the originals for those *kuranty* translations had been acquired by Rodionov or Fomin, especially the latter, since at least some of the sources for the translations seem to have been Hamburg newspapers, and Dutch papers would have been arriving there on a regular basis.[27] One of the Dutch papers was published on 5 June in Amsterdam and could have arrived in Hamburg prior to Fomin's departure. While it is difficult to know exactly which news source may have been the most trusted (and thus difficult to determine how important the *kuranty* really were), the Russian decision to make a serious effort to negotiate with Denmark (perceived as playing the key role in a budding Protestant coalition directed against the Habsburgs) seems clearly to have been based on the mutually reinforcing intelligence the various news reports provided.

26. Floria 1986: 162–167; V-K I: 50–65, No. 6.

27. Unfortunately, the current archival location of this set of the *kuranty* (in the generic f. 155, which contains foreign news translations) is of no help in determining how the originals were acquired or when and where the translations were done. In the case of the following set (V-K I: 65–70, No. 7), the translations are in the Danish Affairs files and are prefaced by a clear indication they were given to Russian ambassadors who, as we know, were in Copenhagen at the time. See below.

At very least here, it is of some interest to see what was in the *kuranty* reports preserved from 1621. Not only are they quite substantial, but importantly, they are ones for which we are certain about sources, published in German and Dutch. The structure and sources for this 'set' of the *kuranty* (V-K I: No. 6) are summarized in Table 10.1. For those who understood the context, this set of news reports contained a lot of potentially significant information. For example, there are texts of several treaties. On the surface

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TABLE 10.1. The content and sources for the *kuranty* texts published in V-K I: 50–65, No. 6

kuranty manuscript (publication)[28]	contents	Western source
RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 1-9 (V-K I: 50–51, No. 6.1–9)	News reports from various cities, dating between May 21 and June 3.	Untitled Dutch newspaper published in Amsterdam on 5 June 1621 by Broer Jansz (later titled *TVQ*). Translation complete but for opening article from Madrid (Maier 2006a: 455).
LOII, f. 276, op. 1, No. 26, fols. 10–16 (V-K I: 217–218, App. No. 1.10–16). The Russian archival copy was made at the beginning of the twentieth century by N. V. Golitsyn from a now lost original.	Apocryphal letter of the Ottoman Sultan to the King of Poland.	Dutch newspaper published in Amsterdam on 5 April 1621 by Broer Jansz, fol. 1^{v} (Maier 2006b).
RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 17–29 (V-K I: 51–54, No. 6.17–29)	Treaty of 8/18 February 1621 between Johann Georg, Elector of Saxony, and Archduke Karl Frederick of Münster; with a speech at the occasion by a Reinhard, 'doktur Breslavskii' and a description of celebrations.	To date, no source identified among the extant (and longer) German published pamphlets about the treaty. Possibly taken from a newspaper account that condensed the text.
RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 30–39 (V-K I: 54–56, No. 6.30–39)	Newspaper reports from April 16 through May 6.	Translation of *WZ* (Hamburg), 1621/18, starting on fol. 1^{v}. The entry from Frankfurt on fol. 2 is dated '26 diß', where the previous article was dated 6 May. The actual month must have been April, although the Russian translator literally understood the 'diß' to refer to May (Schibli 1988: 86; Maier 2006a: 455).

28. The references to the published texts in V-K I cite first the pages of the edition, then the number of the news packet (as determined by the editors) and the folio numbers in the manuscript. Hence, e.g., V-K I: 50–51, No. 6.1–9 refers to packet No. 6 and fols. 1–9 of the manuscript used for the edition, the text published on pp. 50–51. Citations with 'App. No.' are to the numbered appendices (*prilozheniia*) in the V-K volume.

RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 40–48 (V-K I: 56–58, No. 6.40–48)	Treaty signed between commander of the Imperial forces in Flanders, Ambrosio Spinola, and Count Moritz of Hessen, 26 March/5 April 1621.	Complete translation (the long title page has been condensed) of *Abschied* […] *zwischen* […] *Ambrosio Spinola* […] *und* […] *Moritzen Landgraffen zu Hessen* […] *den 26. Martii 5. April verfasset und geschlossen worden*. N.p., 1621 (VD17: 7:655169W). Several very similar editions are known (Maier 2006a: 455).
RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 49–65 (V-K I: 58–62, No. 6.49–65)	Newspaper reports from 4 March – 24 March 1621.	Translated from *Wochentliche Zeitung auß mehrerley orther* 1621, as the title (fol. 49) clearly indicates. Presumably from No. 12 of the newspaper, copies of which are not extant.
RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1621, No. 1, fols. 66–76 (V-K I: 62–65, No. 6.66–76)	Speech of Polish ambassador Jerzy Ossoliński to the King of England, 11 March 1621.	translation from *Oratie Vanden* […] *Heere, Georgivs Ossolinsky* […] *op Sondgh den 11. Martij, Ao. 1621*. The original Latin text, published in London, was the source for the Dutch translation (Maier 2006a: 455).

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they might seem to be of little interest for the makers of Muscovite foreign policy, and thus might simply suggest that the Russians were translating indiscriminately anything that came their way. The treaty between Saxony and Münster in February confirmed the adherence of Saxon Elector Johann Georg to the imperial cause and explicitly excluded Johann Georg of Brandenburg and Christian of Anhalt, who had been included in the imperial decree against Frederick of Pfalz and his supporters. A report (from Prague?) at the beginning of March summarized the terms of the treaty the emperor had signed with Upper and Lower Silesia in Dresden, confirming support for the imperial side.[29] Ambrogio Spinola's treaty with Count Moritz of Hessen a month and a half later was part of a larger settlement whereby the imperial commander had taken control of the areas along the Rhine, with the result that the somewhat feeble Protestant Union supporting Frederick of Pfalz dissolved.[30] We can wonder what the diplomatic experts in Moscow would

29. V-K I: 60, No. 6.55–59. There are separate pamphlet publications of this treaty. The Russian version overlaps only partially with *Warhafftiger/ Historischer Bericht des gantzen Verlauffs* […] *Actum Dreßden den 18. Febr.* […] N.p., 1621 (VD17: 3:600964P) and is much shorter, suggesting that it likely was made from a summary version published in a newspaper.

30. Wilson 2009: 316. This is but one indication that news of Spanish military intervention in the war may well have interested the policy makers in Moscow, if for no reason other than the fact that Spanish policy was focused in the first instance on trying to regain control over all of the Netherlands and thus was a threat to the Dutch commerce, which was so important for Muscovy. The translation from *WZ* 1621/18 included reports on Spinola's activities and on the Dutch capture of a Spanish ship with a rich cargo (V-K I: 55, No. 6.33–35). The only article in Broer Jansz's 5 April 1621 newspaper which appears not to have been translated in Moscow was the first one from Madrid relating to internal

have made of the report from Frankfurt dated 26 May – translated from the Hamburg *WZ* – about the gathering in Lüneberg (not far from Hamburg) a month earlier of officials representing the Lower Saxon Circle and representatives of Protestant states. The newspaper listed all the dignitaries by name but gave no indication of the outcome of the meeting.[31] Unlike Johann Georg, based in Upper Saxony, who had agreed to support the imperial side, the Lower Saxons were very hesitant to commit to major military action in support of Frederick V and thus failed to fall in line behind him (Wilson 2009: 320).

Yet at the end of the same issue of the Hamburg newspaper, there was an optimistic statement about the strength of the Protestant forces under Ernst von Mansfeld, who was ready to renew the war in the Czech lands.[32] In a subsequent issue, the same newspaper reported from Upper Pfalz, where Mansfeld was still entrenched. In the Dutch newspaper that included this news and was the source for the Russian translation, there also were clear allusions of trouble ahead.[33] A Bavarian contingent was now joining the imperial commander Jean Tilly, who was preparing an offensive. The Russian translation from that Dutch source also included an article reporting the reception of the 'Winter King' of Bohemia, Frederick V, and his Queen Elizabeth in Amsterdam. They had arrived as exiles in The Hague in April.[34] Elizabeth would live out her years there. At the end of the Dutch newspaper source for this *kuranty* translation was what appears to have been an advertisement (duly translated in Moscow) for a book entitled *Deductio nullitatum*, published in the Hague, dismissing as worthless the imperial ban on Frederick and his supporters that had been issued back in January.[35] Even if the Dutch and German papers may have been sympathetic to the Protestant cause, there was much here to suggest that the tide had turned in the favor of the Habsburgs. It is impressive how much news of some consequence was packed into but a few dozen folios of the *kuranty*.

Even though (as we now know) the sultan's threatening letter to the King of Poland was fictional propaganda, there is good reason to think that it might have attracted more

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Spanish affairs, which may well have been deemed of little interest. March news that was translated included information about successful Dutch efforts to obtain support in France (ibid.: 61, No. 6.61).

31. Ibid.: 55–56, No. 6.35–38.

32. Ibid.: 56, No. 6.39.

33. Ibid.: 50–51, No. 6.1–9. Several of the articles in the Hamburg paper overlap with those in the Dutch one, but clearly it was the latter which the Russian translators used.

34. A brief note at the end of the 5 April 1621 issue of Broer Jansz's newspaper (fol. 1^{v}) anticipated Frederick's arrival in Amsterdam. That issue of the newspaper was known in Moscow, where it was the source for the translation of the sultan's apocryphal letter (Maier 2006b).

35. The Dutch newspapers pioneered in the printing of advertisements (Pettegree and Weduwen 2019: 81–84). The Russian translators of the news might translate advertisements – perhaps not understanding what they represented. See V-K VI/2: 42, in which Maier cites the example of *Deductio nullitatum*. It is not clear whether in fact the mention of the book's publication by the Dutch editor was advertising (there is no indication of the publisher or where one might purchase it): this could be simply additional information following up on the reporting about Frederick V's efforts to drum up support in the Netherlands. The book in question is: *Deductio nullitatum: quibus Proscriptionem in Aula Imperatoria contra Electorem Palatinum decretam* [...] The Hague: Hillebrand Jacob, 1621.

attention in Moscow than did news from the lower Elbe, that is, Hamburg. As apparently the earliest such apocryphal letter of the sultan to have come to Moscow, and given the fact that it was published in a serious Dutch newspaper, the letter might have been deemed authentic.[36] And in any event, of crucial importance at the moment for Russian foreign policy was the Ottoman and Tatar war against the Poles, which had begun in September 1620 when a Turkish and Tatar army destroyed that of the Poles at Cecora (Floria 1986: 127–128). The March 1621 news translated in Moscow included reports on new Turkish military preparations and on an effort by the Poles to obtain support from the Habsburg emperor against the Turks.[37] There also was news about military actions of Gábor Bethlen in Hungary where he was being backed by the Turks. Whether his off and on fighting against the Habsburgs was deemed of particular interest in Moscow is hard to know, but his involvement in the affairs of East-Central Europe, especially if coordinated with the Ottomans, certainly would have been. The speech of the Polish ambassador to England, Jerzy Ossoliński, delivered on 11 March (translated in Moscow from a pamphlet separate) was an eloquent plea for assistance to fight the Turks. Emphasis was given the Turkish threat to conquer all Christians, a possible reference to the apocryphal letter that was circulating in various media. All of this news, including the sultan's letter, apparently would have been known in Moscow prior to the new Turkish campaign which led to the bloody standoff in the battle of Khotyn in September and October, the turning point followed by a Turkish retreat and the signing of a truce to end the war.[38]

As Moscow learned that the Swedes really had made no preparations to attack Poland in support of a Muscovite war against Poles, any possibility that Muscovy could be drawn into the larger arena of the Czech war vanished. There certainly was nothing in the news that presaged Protestant victory or any kind of meaningful support against the Poles on the part of the anti-Habsburg forces. The decisive factor in the Russian decision would not have been these few translations of German newspapers published in 1620–1621 but rather what was learned about real Swedish intentions that was not openly reported in the news. At best, the newspapers could have provided information

36. As Maier states (2006b: 145–146), we simply cannot know whether the Russian translator would have recognized the letter to be fictive, though that is at least a possibility, if he was well versed in the diplomatic documents pertaining to the Turks.

37. V-K I: 58–59, No. 6.50–51.

38. An Ottoman embassy to Moscow, supported by the Orthodox Patriarch Cyril Lucaris, departed Istanbul at the same time the Ottoman army was marching on Poland and arrived in Moscow while the battle was still raging. The goal of the embassy was to arrange an Ottoman-Russian alliance for the war against Poland. The Russian government was reluctant to be drawn into the conflict even before the outcome of the battle was known. See Smirnov 1946, 1: 9–14; Podhorecki and Raszba 1979: 272–275; *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1984; *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1998–2001, 1: 84–86. The real import of the battle may not have been clear right away, as both sides suffered heavy casualties but claimed it as a victory. Rumors from sources along the southern borders continued to arrive in Moscow late in the year, suggesting that it was a Polish defeat (Floria 1986: 174). Apparently the Russian government first learned of the Ottoman-Polish peace only in June 1622, when a copy of it – as reported in German newspapers – was brought back by the Russian embassy that had been sent to Copenhagen (ibid.: 188).

about the broader context of European politics and some reinforcement of information received from what were probably more trusted and current sources. Content aside, the news in the *kuranty* would have been so dated by the time it was available that it was not really 'news' but 'history'. That said, it is important to remember that everywhere in Europe, the realities of *relatively* slow communication affected the ability of decision makers to devise effective policies.

The coda to this sequence of news acquisition is the indication of how it was used (and, as it turns out, abused) by the decision makers in Moscow, who were intent on waging war against Poland. While they undoubtedly were reading too much into the reports about Denmark's commitment to the Protestant cause and potential as an ally in a new war against Catholic Poland, Filaret and his ministers in Moscow elected to send a major embassy to Denmark in August 1621, soon after the latest Russian missions abroad would have returned with their news. The goal was to conclude an alliance, sealed by a dynastic marriage, even though there seemed to be little real evidence such a marriage was likely. The assumption was that the Danish government would see in Moscow a useful ally in its commitment to support the Protestant cause. In the situation where Russia was still struggling with the devastation wrought by the Time of Troubles and the only recently concluded conflicts with Sweden and Poland, the government decided it was necessary to convene a Land Assembly (*Zemskii sobor*) in early October in order to drum up support for renewal of war against Poland (Floria 1986: 169–174). The speech delivered in the name of the tsar laying out the government's argument placed the blame for the conflict on the Poles. While some of the facts of the current international situation were honestly reported (an interesting example of how foreign news received in the Kremlin might be disseminated to a broader audience), the government's case also deliberately distorted reality. It suggested that collaboration with Sweden was likely, even if initiatives a year or two earlier from the Swedish side had not received any support in Moscow. The fact that the government now seemed to be pinning its hopes on an agreement with Denmark was not even mentioned (and of course there was no result yet from the embassy that had been sent, which would end in total failure). The idea of some kind of collaboration with the Turks and Tatars against the Poles was cautiously advanced, given the overtures from the Porte about an alliance. However, to suggest this possibility was problematic, given the traditional rhetorical emphasis on Christian-Muslim hostility. Somewhat misled then about the real possibility of a successful war against Poland, the *Zemskii sobor* dutifully approved sending an ultimatum to the Poles. At least through the end of the year additional news reports coming in from, among others, Lübeck merchants in Novgorod seemed to support the case that now was the time to strike, since Poland was isolated and threatened on all fronts (ibid.: 174–179).

However, by the beginning of 1622, the news was less reassuring, as the immediate threats to Poland both in the Baltic and in the South had ended, and the initial Polish response to the Russian ultimatum was to temporize. Nonetheless, Filaret's government plunged ahead, sending a circular letter to town commanders laying out the rationale for

war against Poland and in support for this communicating a substantial amount of the foreign news it had selected (including an indication that the Poles were still engaged in war with the Ottomans). Military preparations began in border towns, but then, finally, the Kremlin pulled back from the brink of war, when news arrived that the negotiations in Denmark had failed, leaving Muscovy with no reliable ally (ibid.: 181). In retrospect it becomes clear that the Kremlin's assessment of the situation in the West had misjudged the degree to which the Danes and other potential Protestant allies were committed to meaningful intervention on behalf of Frederick of Pfalz. A more careful and open-minded reading of the foreign news reports (even if some were clearly biased in the favor of anti-Habsburg forces) might have avoided this mistake. Granted, at the time of Fomin's mission in 1621, there had been grounds for optimism, but later in the year, the international situation had changed (ibid.: 184, 186). Contributing to the misleading perceptions was a conscious Swedish effort to promote the idea that a Swedish-Danish alliance was in the offing, even though the reality in the Baltic was that their interests potentially diverged.

As the Russian negotiations in Copenhagen in March and April proceeded, it became clear that the Danes were concerned that a Russo-Polish war might unduly weaken Poland. In part to counter Russian arguments, the Danes provided the Muscovite envoys with copies of published Hamburg newspapers, including one containing the text of the peace treaty signed on 9 October 1621 between the Poles and Ottomans to end the hostilities that Moscow hoped would occupy the Poles in the South (ibid.: 188). Uncertain whether to believe this news, the envoys then sought out military officers who had been involved in the war and who confirmed the news. The Russian translations of these Hamburg *kuranty* have been preserved in the Danish Affairs files relating to the embassy (ibid.: 201 n. 205). V-K I: 65–70, No. 7 publishes the translation of the entire issue of the Hamburg *WZ* 1622/8. The header to the translation specifies that it had been given to the Russian envoys by the king's councilors on 7 March; the translation erroneously mentions that the newspaper was published on 5 February, though in fact that is merely the date of the first report (Schibli 1988: 86–87). The folios in the archival file have been mixed up; interspersed with them (but, oddly, not included in the V-K edition) is the translation of the Ottoman-Polish treaty, which had appeared in No. 51 of the same newspaper in the previous year.[39] V-K I, No. 7 contains detailed news from January and February 1622 concerning the various military operations and preparations in the West. Given the wording in the Russian translation of the heading to this packet of news and the fact that one of the most experienced Muscovite specialists for German,

39. Might it not be that additional folios in this sequence, whose content is not identified by Floria or in V-K I, contain more of the translations from the Hamburg paper, at very least the rest of the issue (No. 51) in which the treaty terms were published? For a full text of the treaty, see *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1984: 189–191. The version in the newspaper condenses the preamble, shortens some of the articles, and divides the text somewhat differently, but seems to convey the substance of the treaty accurately. As negotiated on 9 October, it was still subject to ratification by both parties.

Hermann Westermann, was serving on this embassy, it is possible that the translations may have been made in Copenhagen, not back in Moscow. However, the news they contained would have arrived in Moscow only on the embassy's return on 5 June.[40] The failure of the mission to Denmark was followed by other disappointments in efforts to find support for the war against Poland that need not be detailed here (see Floria 1986: 188–195). There was no choice but to postpone it for the indefinite future.

The evidence just analyzed here suggests several conclusions about the Russian government's acquisition and use of foreign news in the early period of the Thirty Years War. Even though on the one hand it is impressive how at least some numbers of the Western newspapers began to arrive in Moscow within but a few years of when this new information medium had come into being, there was as yet no mechanism for obtaining the news on a regular basis. The acquisition of the foreign publications may in the first instance have occurred only when a Russian embassy abroad happened to obtain them or when some foreigner in Muscovy handed them over to a Russian official. There is good reason to think that the contents of the published news reports either were not trusted or were relegated to secondary importance in favor of information that might be obtained through intelligence operations at the Russian borders or the reports by envoys when they returned home. While the situation is not unique to Muscovy, almost any kind of news reports in this period were so dated by the time they were acquired that they could not necessarily be of much help in making correct policy decisions. News that had been received through the mail, collated, and then published might well be obsolete by the time it was received and translated. This is not to say, however, that an intelligence report or interrogation at a border town would necessarily be either more accurate or more current, even if those receiving it may have believed that to be the case. Personal contact, as opposed to impersonal perusal of a text, often made the difference in the reception of news. At the same time, there was a substantial amount of misinformation that was being disseminated both in diplomatic negotiations with other governments and even domestically, where it might support preconceived, if ill-advised notions about foreign policy.

There certainly was a substantial amount of information available to the Kremlin concerning the early years of what was becoming a European-wide crisis, but it generally did not arrive in timely fashion, and much of it arguably was not directly relevant to Muscovite concerns regarding its relations with its immediate neighbors. Although in theory at

40. For the dates of the embassy, see Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 217. On Westermann, see Beliakov et al.: 77–79; for his identity (the Russian sources give his name as Eremei Eremeev), see Leitsch 1960: 66–67. The curious mistake in the Russian translation of the German newspaper, where the date of the first article was given as the date the paper was published, suggests, of course, that such papers were still unfamiliar, which might cast doubt as to whether Westermann, who had been in Denmark two years earlier as an envoy, could have been the translator. Possibly the mistake was induced by a copyist who was not familiar with the datelines in the newspapers. In any event, this is not an unusual instance where Russian diplomats were skeptical about news and wanted to confirm its accuracy. That continued to be the case even later, when Western newspapers would have been more familiar.

least some of the envoys and translators who represented Moscow on missions abroad would have been in a position to understand quite a lot about the emerging conflicts, complicated alignments, and so on, we are left with uncertainties as to how much they and their superiors really understood and how important that knowledge was.

10.3. The Dutch connection

The subsequent years, down to the moment when Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus' invasion of the German lands in July 1630 marked a new phase in the war, seem to confirm many of these observations about the nature and irregularity of Muscovite news acquisition. Here we will provide but a few summary observations before moving on to the news relating to the Swedish king's successes and death on the battlefield. While the published materials in V-K I may somewhat skew the evidence and be incomplete, to a considerable degree the evidence points to the importance of Dutch sources for the foreign news being received in Moscow during much of the 1620s.[41]

FIG. 10.4. Portrait by Frans Hals, probably depicting Isaac Massa and his wife, for the occasion of their wedding in April 1622.

Beginning even a few years earlier, whether or not he was commissioned by the government in Moscow to do so, the Dutch merchant Isaac Massa found it in his self-interest to serve as a news agent for the tsar (FIG. 10.4).[42] Massa had been in Moscow during the Time of Troubles and would publish an account about that experience. In 1615 and on several subsequent occasions he was sent to Russia by the Dutch government as an envoy.[43] Archival inventories record that he wrote many letters to the tsar and sent him foreign news. All the information from Massa was arriving on Dutch ships in Archangel only during the brief window of the summer navigation season and with a minimum of some two months en route. Massa arrived in Moscow on his second diplomatic mission in September 1616 and remained in Russia until the following summer. Apparently during his mission, he informed the tsar's government about the involvement of Dutch envoys in peace negotiations with the Swedes.[44] On 7 January 1617, the Livonian merchant Ondrei

41. Most of this material in V-K I has been drawn from the Dutch Affairs files, leaving open the question of whether other archival deposits might still yield a wider range of sources.

42. This kind of arrangement is analogous to what Heiko Droste (2021) has analyzed about the personal relations of news agents with highly placed patrons. Presumably even without any kind of 'contract' Massa would have perceived benefits from having the tsar himself as the patron for his services. See Veluwenkamp 2000 for an overview of the important role of the Dutch entrepreneurs in Muscovy's foreign trade in the seventeenth century.

43. See Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 174–176, 178; Linde 1864; Meiden 1993.

44. *Opis'* 1626: 309; *Opis'* 1673: 338.

Kel'derman (Heinrich Kellermann) delivered a 'sheet (*list*) and thirty letters, written in German (*po nemetskii*) on paper, which the Dutchman Isaac Avramov Massa writes to the sovereign about news (*o vestiakh*), what is happening in foreign states' (*Opis'* 1626: 199). Unfortunately, if these letters survived after being inventoried in 1626, their exact content is still unknown.[45] Yet this at least hints at some arrangement to acquire foreign news even before the first Dutch newspapers are known to have been received in Moscow. In 1622/23, Massa sent a message which the Russians translated about 'foreign news' (*o nemetskikh vestekh*; ibid.: 200). On 22 August 1624, Massa arrived on another embassy, and on 17 September 1624, the Ambassadorial Chancery he was recorded as having handed in a quire (*tetrat'*) of six sheets with 'news of what is happening in Sweden and in other foreign states' (ibid.: 204). Might this have been a printed German newspaper?

There are several documents which contain news summaries he sent in 1625–1628 along with enclosures.[46] The presumably New Style dates when Massa wrote – with the Old Style dates in parentheses of when the letters were received or translated in Moscow – are: 15 May (23 July) 1625; 20 April, 20 June and 4 July 1626; 16 May (16 July) and 17 June (14 Sept.) 1627; and 30 June (15 Sept.) 1628. The dates suggest Massa would write in spring, his letters delivered to Russia early in the navigation season, and write again a month or more later to catch one of the later sailings that would reach the Russian north before the end of the summer.

Clearly Massa was attuned to what news might interest the Muscovite government, but apart from the selection he included in his own summaries, he enclosed in at least one case two Dutch newspapers, which were duly translated on their arrival in Moscow.[47] A well documented case involves the arrival in Archangel on 22 June 1625 of Iakov (Jacob) Andreev, Massa's brother. When he appeared for his deposition at the local government office (a standard procedure for questioning new arrivals), he brought an engraved broadside depicting the siege of Breda by imperial forces, one of the major military events of the Habsburg-Dutch war that ended with the Spanish-led Habsburg army taking the city. Isaac Massa had sent the broadside to be delivered along with a

45. Some of the entries in the archival inventory of 1626 specify that documents were moldy or otherwise damaged, but that does not mean they did not survive for a long time, as even in such cases they were inventoried again in 1673 and at least some have been published in V-K I.

46. His letters are in V-K I, Nos. 8, 11, 13, 18, 19, 25; related correspondence by Muscovite officials, Nos. 9, 10, 20. Massa seems to have been happy to sell his services to others: when he was back in Moscow in the early 1630s, he was acting as an agent for Sweden (see Arzymatov 1956: 90).

47. V-K I: 73–76, No. 12 is a translation whose heading specifies it is from the printed newssheet (*vestovoi pechatnyi list*) which Massa sent. The sources for the translation are two different issues of Broer Jansz's Amsterdam newspaper (see Maier 2006a: 455), the most recent of which was published on 27 June 1626 and thus probably had been sent off to Russia with Massa's own letter dated 4 July. He was sending the latest information, but presumably it would not have been translated earlier than the second half of September. While it is difficult to know for certain, given the state of preservation of the archival files, the translations seem to have been selective, condensing some news, omitting other articles. They include material not in those two numbers of the Dutch newspaper and whose source so far cannot be determined.

newsletter to the tsar. The Russian officials quizzed Jacob Massa about the latest news, which included the death of the Dutch Stadtholder and Prince of Orange Maurice (on 23 April, prior to the fall of Breda) and that of English King James I (on 27 March). The report, with the enclosed engraving and letter to the tsar, were then sent on to Moscow, where they arrived on 23 July. The letter was translated the following day.[48]

In his letter written in Haarlem on 30 June 1628 (translated in Moscow on 15 September), Isaac Massa mentions having compiled (already sent?) information that surely would have interested the tsar regarding Swedish-Polish relations.[49] Apparently some individuals hostile to him were preventing him from doing more (the passage is not clear). Possibly this is a reference to the short account, clearly deriving from a Polish source, explaining why the Polish Diet was likely to agree to a truce ending the war with Sweden.[50] This translation follows immediately in the archival manuscript another one that is based on one of the most important Amsterdam newspapers, *CID*, 18 March 1628 (for more on this manuscript, see note 57). Also he mentions having sent in the previous year a compilation about Jesuit intrigues in various places. The long pamphlet about the siege of La Rochelle discussed below does highlight Jesuit intrigues, but it is not clear whether Massa might be referring to it.

Iurii Klink (Georg Everhard Klenck), a Dutch merchant in Moscow, was also supplying news in this period, which he gave directly to the state secretary Efim Telepnev in the Ambassadorial Chancery on 9 January and 25 February 1627.[51] What he handed over in the first case was a newsletter (presumably manuscript) with two reports dated July of the previous year, a long one from Constantinople about political unrest there and a shorter one, also about political unrest but in France. In February, Klenck handed over some manuscript news and copies of *CID*, one published on 14 November 1626, the other on 19 December 1626. The first of these was translated almost in its entirety; the second apparently only partially and its news combined with that from other sources.[52]

48. The report has been published as V-K I: 71–72, No. 9; the letter, ibid.: 70–71, No. 8. The documents were inventoried (see *Opis'* 1626: 362–363), the inventory specifying that Jacob Massa had reported news 'about the Spanish king and about the Dutch Prince Maurice,' and that Isaac Massa's letter included 'news about German states and the French ambassador.' So far there is no information on the fate of the broadside, very likely the one published in Amsterdam by Claes Jansz.Visscher, a copy of which is in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Inv. no. RP-P-OB-81.082 (http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.458627). We can but speculate that such prints were among the 'friazhskie' and 'nemetskie pechatnye listy' which we know were used in the education of the future Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich and other members of the royal family, even though it seems most were obtained through purchases in the 'vegetable market' in Moscow. See Zabelin 2000–2003, vol. 1, pt. 2: 89, 100–101, 103, 167–169.

49. V-K I: 132–133, No. 25.

50. Ibid.: 131–132, No. 24.

51. The translations are in V-K I, Nos. 14, 15 and 16, the last not dated but containing news of the end of 1626.

52. Since the folios of the original scrolls were separated later by the archivists in Moscow, with the result being that folios may not have been preserved in proper order, we cannot always be certain about whether the translations as we now have them are complete. The translated news in No. 16 which precedes that from the Dutch newspaper (beginning on the top of fol. 22) concludes (at the bot-

There is substantial war news from Germany in these papers, but they also included a range of other material. We assume the report on the Swedish-Polish conflict, datelined Toruń 14 October, which was the first item in the 14 November issue of the Dutch paper, would have been of real interest in Moscow. So also would have been the long report from Vienna, dated 28 October, with news about Gábor Bethlen's threat to imperial forces thanks in part to Turkish support. The later collection of news Klenck provided included further information on the disposition of Swedish forces and important news about how Dutch ships were taking measures to protect shipping on the Archangel trade route from possible Spanish attacks.[53]

Of interest here is what we can learn about transit times for the news. Klenck must have had connections via the Baltic to have received news published in Amsterdam in late autumn, as it could not have been sent during the winter months around the north cape. We cannot know when he would have received the newsletter with information dated back in July 1626. In any event, it was half a year out of date by the time the Russians received and translated it. In contrast, the reports printed in the Dutch newspapers were a lot fresher: the most recent somewhat over two months old by the time the translations were made. In winter conditions, that probably represents relatively fast communication.

Did the Kremlin then have to wait several months, until the opening of the north cape navigation, for a new set of European news reports? One of Massa's letters, written in Haarlem on 16 May, was received and translated in Moscow on 17/27 July 1627.[54] It may well be the carrier of that letter was another Dutch merchant, Karp Demulin (Carel Jansz. du Moulin). There is a lengthy set of translations, whose heading credits him for turning in the original newsletters some time in July, which likely means he had arrived via the north cape route on one of the first Dutch ships of the new navigation season. This packet of news has several component parts, some of the material possibly drawn from at least two different Dutch newspapers, and a long concluding section with a heading that specifies it is a translation from 'vestovye tetrati' about Anglo-French relations, the terminology suggesting the source may well have been a pamphlet separate.[55] Of

tom of fol. 21) with the indication that the news was written in Hamburg on 22 October 1626, though this of itself does not have to mean either a publication date or the fact that Klenck had a Hamburg source for that news. It could have been copied in some other Dutch source he had in hand. No. 16 has no date in the heading specifying when it was translated, but it follows immediately in the archival file for No. 15, suggesting that the translation also can be dated 25 February.

53. V-K I: 83, No. 16.20.

54. V-K I: 95–96, No. 18.

55. V-K I: 86–95, No. 17. Among the news articles are ones datelined Bergen op Zoom May 1 and April 12. If the sources here were Dutch papers, those probably would have been amongst the most recent reports printed near the end of each number. Typically issues of *CID* would include a report from Bergen op Zoom. May 1 is the latest date in this news set; so a newspaper published soon thereafter could have been in the same shipment as Massa's letter written in mid-May and reached Moscow via the north cape route in late July, the transit time in this case relatively fast. That said, Du Moulin's long set of news items cannot necessarily be traced to any specific Dutch newspapers. There is a nearly complete set of *CID* for this period, with several issues including reports from Bergen op Zoom, but

particular interest for Moscow would have been the opening paragraphs of his report regarding possible naval threats by Spain and England to the Dutch commerce with Archangel and the measures taken by the Dutch to protect the convoys. Du Moulin writes that he had been dispatched by 'the leading Dutch merchants' (*nachalnye torgovye liudi galantsy*) involved in the Archangel trade in order to inform the tsar about these events (V-K I: 86). The long analytical pamphlet on Anglo-French relations pertains in particular to the conflict developing between the two countries: the English were sending forces to support the Protestant Huguenots of La Rochelle, who were under siege from the French. The La Rochelle news would figure prominently in other *kuranty* translations.

Clearly the printed news arriving in Moscow in this period, however irregularly, was from a range of different sources, not just the Dutch newspapers we can document from the extant copies that can be compared with the Russian translations. Among the other translations of material received in the late 1620s is one made from a broadsheet with an engraving depicting the Swedish siege of Danzig in 1627 (ibid.: 98–99).[56] The siege surely was important, as more evidence about the tightening hold Sweden was gaining on the shores of the Baltic during its war against Poland. The Swedish war with Poland was certainly important in the planning in Moscow for the Russians to break the Truce of Deulino and resume their war against the Poles. Of course, to what degree imported newssheets were useful in Moscow might be questioned, as it is more likely the most current news could have been obtained from intelligence operations across the borders run out of Novgorod or Pskov. Nonetheless, the active diplomacy of the late 1620s connected with Gustavus Adolphus' eventual decision to launch a major invasion of Pomerania in 1630 also may explain the possible interest in Moscow of several additional items which were translated for the *kuranty* in 1628. There is plausible evidence to hypothesize that Massa may well have been the source for the originals of a whole group of those translations, all of which are currently in one archival file.[57]

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none of them corresponding to the reports submitted by Du Moulin. Broer Jansz's regularly published Dutch newspaper of the same period (later to be called *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren – TVQ*), is poorly preserved. As Arthur der Weduwen's comprehensive bibliography (2017) indicates, it too regularly included domestic reports at the end, but not, apparently, in items specifically from Bergen op Zoom. It is possible that the merchants who sent Du Moulin supplied him with reports from handwritten newsletters to which they subscribed. A search in bibliographies of Dutch pamphlet separates, and in contemporary English and German publications, so far has not identified a possible source for the 'vestovye tetrati', which may well have been copied from some longer book.

56. A search in VD 17 and in Delpher has not turned up the source for this. One can but visualize what it would have looked like from an analogous broadsheet issued in the next year during the siege of Stralsund. See below, note 63. The newsbook published by Nicolaes van Wassenaer (*Historisch Verhael*, deel 13) in 1628 for the relevant period of the previous year depicts on its cover portions of engravings showing the sieges of Grol and Danzig, though it is not clear whether they were copied from engraved separates or commissioned specifically for the newsbook. A later volume of Wassenaer's compilation similarly included on its cover an engraving showing the siege of Stralsund, but one very different from that on the broadside cited below in n. 63. See the engravings on the website of the Rijksmuseum (http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.458233; [...].COLLECT.458247).

57. The file is RGADA, f. 155, 1628, op. 1, No. 1, fols. 1–118. The editors of V-K I have broken it up under three separate Nos.: 22, 23, and 24. It is clear that when the individual sheets which had been

Of particular interest is the translation of a sizeable pamphlet whose Dutch source has been identified (Maier 2006a: 440, 455), an account of the failed attempt of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, to lift French King Louis XIII's siege of Huguenot La Rochelle in September 1627.[58]

Immediately following that translation in the current archival file is another containing a follow-up to Buckingham's disastrous expedition: the speech of King Charles I to Parliament in April 1628 (basically a plea for raising funds), the English Chancellor's response, and Buckingham's abject declaration of devotion to the king.[59] Buckingham would be assassinated but a few months later. Reports on the siege of La Rochelle are scattered through the several issues of Dutch newspapers which were being translated in Moscow that cover events in the first months of 1628. There must have been some awareness of the potential importance of French involvement in the conflicts in the West: whether French resources were tied down in ways that would prevent any French intervention in the events that affected Eastern Europe.[60] French envoys would come to Moscow in the next year, and soon after, French commitment of financial support to

pasted together to form a long scroll were separated by archivists in modern times, some folios were numbered out of proper sequence, and apparently some were lost or filed elsewhere. However, there is good reason to think that the current file contains most of what had been in the original scroll in the seventeenth century, even if the separate parts within it may be translations made on different dates.

58. The Dutch source is: *Manifeste, Off Ontdeckinghe Der Oorsaecken end Redenen de van Rochelle moverende de VVapenen te gebruycken, en haer te voeghen by die van de Coninck van Groot-Britannien* [...] N.p., n.d. [1627]. The translation is in V-K I: 99–112, No. 22. The siege of La Rochelle obviously was much in the European news and the subject of numerous separates, among them an account translated from French into German about Buckingham's expedition, *Gründtlicher Unnd außführlicher Bericht/ welcher gestalt und auß was ursach der Hertzog von Buckingam zu Portismünth in Engellandt/* [...] *entleibt worden* [...] N.p., 1628 (VD 17 12:648889G). The French victory over the English in May of 1628 was reported in another pamphlet, originally published in Paris and translated into German: *Warhafftige Newe Zeitung. Von der herrlichen Victory/ welche der König in Franckreich wider die Engellender in der Belägerung vor Roschell den 18. Maij dieses lauffenden Jahrs 1628. erhalten* [...] N.p., 1628 (VD 17 12:197693H). The king's triumphal entry was reported in: *Weitläuffiger unnd Eygentlicher Bericht/ welcher gestalt Königliche Mayestät in Franckreich/ nach Eroberung der starcken Vestung und Statt Roschell/ Ihren in Person triumphierlichen Einzug gehalten* [...] N.p., 1628 (VD17 12:197688Q).

59. So far it has been impossible to locate a source for this translation in V-K I: 112–115, No. 22.46–57, but most probably it is from a Dutch publication. There is a short pamphlet published in England containing a fuller version of Buckingham's speech: *Aprill 4. The proceeding of the Parliament being this day related to the King, by the councellors of the Commons House of Parliament*. London, 1628 (STC, 2nd ed., 24739), but a search of Early English Books Online does not turn up an English version of the larger pamphlet, nor is there any evidence of such a pamphlet in German in the VD 17 database. It is possible that the source here was not a separate but rather a long section in a Dutch newspaper, a likely candidate being a no longer extant copy of Broer Jansz's Amsterdam paper, one issue of which proves to be the source for the following item in the RGADA f. 155 manuscript.

60. News items translated in the *kuranty* reporting on the siege of La Rochelle include V-K I: 116, 119, 123, 127, Nos. 23.61, 23.72, 23.85, 23.87–88, 23.100–101; 131, No. 24.113–114. After the city fell, King Louis XIII was free to intervene in Italy in support of Mantua against the Habsburg forces; the Mantua war also was reported in a number of the news items translated for the *kuranty*, even if it may have been of no consequence for the policy makers in the Kremlin. On these events, see Wilson 2009: 440–446, 457–458.

Sweden would be a factor in Gustavus Adolphus' decision to invade northern Germany. Immediately following the translation of the speeches made in the English Parliament is a translation of a proclamation issued by King Gustavus Adolphus from Stockholm, addressed to Germans on 22 March 1628, inviting them to move to Sweden where he would protect them.[61] The source for this translation is the 10 June 1628 issue of Broer Jansz's untitled Amsterdam paper (later *TVQ*), which also served as the source for a chunk of the translated and summarized news on subsequent folios of the same archival manuscript.[62] The king's letter had been issued as a response to the fact that the imperial forces were completing their conquest of most of the largely Protestant centers in northern Germany. As he was launching his invasion of northern Germany in 1630, he would issue similar appeals aimed not just at Protestants but to Catholics as well who might have felt threatened by the Habsburg forces (Wilson 2009: 461–463). In May 1628, the imperial army besieged Stralsund, which held out after the rest of Pomerania had submitted to the Habsburgs. The Swedes provided military assistance and installed a Swedish garrison in June. The leading imperial commander, Albrecht von Wallenstein, took command of the siege later in the month, but by August was forced to withdraw. Stralsund would continue to be an important outpost for the Swedes over the next years. The siege in spring and summer of 1628 was widely covered in the newspapers and in separates.[63] Thus the publication of Gustavus Adolphus' letter even with a delay of some weeks after it had been issued must have been of considerable interest. Probably the Russian translation was produced no earlier than the end of September, when it could have still been deemed in Moscow of value for its possible bearing on future Swedish involvement in the European wars.

Long selections of translated news dating from February to early June 1628 follow the Swedish king's letter in this same Moscow manuscript (V-K I, Nos. 23, 24). While we have not been able to identify precisely all the sources, much of the material comes from the two Amsterdam newspapers, Van Hilten's *CID* and its untitled rival published by Broer Jansz (*TVQ*). It is reasonable to hypothesize that most of the translated articles for which we have not been able to locate the source come from copies of *TVQ* which are no longer extant to check. We can be quite sure that *CID* published on 18 March,

61. The text is published in V-K I: 115–116, No. 22.58–61, its manuscript starting on a new sheet, which of course may mean its current position is not the original one.

62. Maier (1997: 81) writes that there seemed to be no evidence of such a letter in the Swedish archive. Later, Maier (2006a: 455) identified the likely source for the translation as the Hamburg newspaper *WZ* 1628/21: [2]–[3], at the time not having located the Dutch newspaper. A comparison of the texts, and the fact we know the given issue of the Dutch paper had been received and was being translated in Moscow confirms that it, not the German newspaper was the source. The Swedish government had earlier during its still ongoing war against Poland issued propaganda and proclamations distributed in published separates. The Hamburg newspaper appended the letter to a report datelined Stockholm 7 May.

63. Examples include a broadside with a large engraving of the siege: *Belagerung der Stadt Stralesunth in Pommern ligende*. N.p., ca. 1628 (VD 17 23:676051K); short reports covering the entire history of the siege: *Gründlicher Bericht Auß Stralsundt* [...] N.p., 1628 (VD 17 14:003637A).

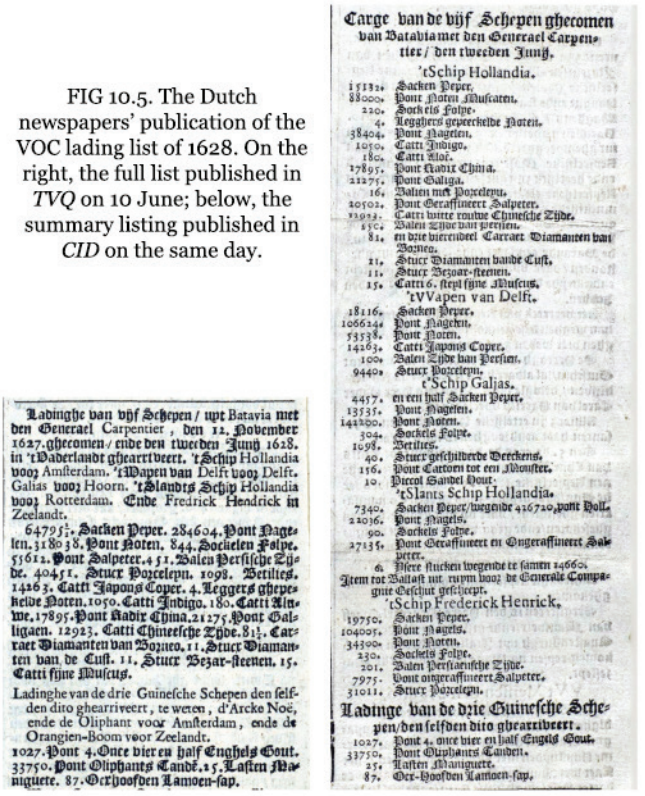
1 April and 22 April were used, as were *TVQ* of 10 and 17 June.[64] That there are two distinct chronological groupings here (mid-March through mid-April and then mid-June) suggests that we have two different deliveries of foreign news. The earlier one in theory might have been sent from the Netherlands (via the north-cape route) with the first ships in the navigation season which could have departed early in May. The second could have arrived via the same route, having shipped out of the Netherlands at the end of June or beginning of July. The first shipment could have reached Moscow toward the end of July, the second toward the end of September. It is at least possible that both sets of news sources had been sent by Isaac Massa, since he had in the previous year sent a letter with presumably the opening of the navigation season, and in 1628 he wrote from Haarlem on June 30, when he could have had in hand the two June issues of *TVQ*. Of course it is also possible that some other Dutch merchant provided these news packets, but the evidence seems particularly strong to connect Massa at least with the second of them.

The translators in Moscow were selective with their originals, although an impressively large amount of what was in each newspaper either was translated or summarized. Much of it was news about the ongoing battles between the imperial forces and those supporting the Protestant cause. There was news from the Spanish Netherlands relating to the long-standing conflict with Holland, and there was information on events in Italy which we know had at least an indirect connection with the military and political situation north of the Alps. A number of articles dealt with affairs in the Baltic, including the Danish involvement there; this news surely would have been of interest in Moscow even if it was received several months out of date.

A very detailed lading list of quantities and products which the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) fleet had just brought back at the beginning of June was translated in its entirety. This is the earliest known Russian translation of such a lading list, the source the June 10 issue of *TVQ* (FIG. 10.5).[65] Reproducing what presumably was a

64. The following conclusions may need to be qualified by allowing for the possibility that some of the news articles in question could have derived from German newspapers, not the Dutch ones. We know that often news articles were translated and thus reprinted in another language. That said, it seems likely that C*ID* 18 March is the source for V-K I: 130–131, No. 24.110–24.115, where the translator has mistakenly used the date in the header for the opening article (from Venice), which he did not translate, instead of the correct date for the subsequent article with news from Vienna which he did. *CID* 1 April is the source for V-K I: 125–127, No. 23.94–23.101. *CID* 22 April 1628 is the source for V-K I, No. 23: 127–129; No. 23.102–23.109, breaking off in the middle of the article datelined Luyck (but mistranslated as Lübeck). *TVQ* 10 June is the source for V-K I: 115–116, No. 22.58–22.61; 116–117, No. 23.61–23.66; 120–122, No. 23.78–23-84. *TVQ* 17 June is the source for V-K I: 117–120, No. 23.67–23.77. The source(s) for V-K I: 122–125, No.23.85–23.93 have yet to be identified. Even though at least two articles (V-K I: 124, No. 23.89–90) overlap in content with ones published in *CID* 25 March, that does not seem to be their source. Possibly here the material comes from two issues of *TVQ* which are no longer extant to check. One of them would have been that published on 22 April, which might have contained the entry datelined Bergen op Zoom, 18 April (V-K I: 125, No. 23.93). It is not the same as an article with the same dateline published in *CID* 22 April.

65. *CID* also published on 10 June the news about the arrival of the Dutch commercial fleets but in a condensed version that cannot have been the source for the Russian translation. Unlike *TVQ*, *CID*



Ladinghe van vijf Schepen / upt Batavia met den Generael Carpentier, den 12. November 1627. ghecomen / ende den tweeden Junij 1628. in 't Vaderlandt ghearrt veert. 't Schip Hollandia voor Amsterdam. 't Wapen van Delft voor Delft. Galias voor Hoorn. 't Slants Schip Hollandia voor Rotterdam. Ende Fredrick Hendrick in Zeelandt.

647952. Sacken Peper. 284604. Pont Nagelen. 318038. Pont Noten. 844. Sockelen Folye. 55612. Pont Salpeter. 451. Balen Persische Tyde. 40451. Stuer Porceleyn. 1098. Betilles. 14263. Catti Japons Coper. 4. Leggers gheperseelde Noten. 1050. Catti Indigo. 180. Catti Aluwe. 17895. Pont Kadir China. 21275. Pont Galligaen. 12923. Catti Chineesche Tyde. 81½. Carraet Diamanten van Borneo. 11. Stuer Diamanten van de Cust. 11. Stuer Bezar-steenen. 15. Catti fijne Muscus.

Ladinghe van de drie Guinesche Schepen den selfden dito ghearriveert, te weten, d'Arcke Noë, ende de Oliphant voor Amsterdam, ende de Orangien-Boom voor Zeelandt.

1027. Pont 4. Once vier en half Engels Gout. 33750. Pont Oliphants Candt. 25. Lasten Manniquete. 87. Oer-hoofden Lamoen-sap.

Carge van de vijf Schepen ghecomen van Batavia met den Generael Carpentiers / den tweeden Junij.

't Schip Hollandia.

151320. Sacken Peper.
88000. Pont Noten Muskaten.
220. Sockels Folye.
4. Leggers gheperseelde Noten.
38404. Pont Nagelen.
1050. Catti Indigo.
180. Catti Aloë.
17895. Pont Kadir China.
21275. Pont Galiga.
16. Balen met Porceleyn.
20502. Pont Geraffineert Salpeter.
12923. Catti witte ronde Chinesche Tyde.
451. Balen Tyde van persien.
81. en drie vierendeel Carraet Diamanten van Borneo.
21. Stuer Diamanten vande Cust.
11. Stuer Bezoar-steenen.
15. Catti 6. stepl fijne Muscus.

't VVapen van Delft.

18116. Sacken Peper.
1066244. Pont Nagelen.
53538. Pont Noten.
14263. Catti Japons Coper.
100. Balen Tyde van Persien.
9440. Stuer Porceleyn.

't Schip Galias.

4457. en een half Sacken Peper.
13535. Pont Nagelen.
142300. Pont Noten.
304. Sockels Folye.
1098. Betilles.
40. Stuer geschilderde Beeckens.
116. Pont Cartoon tot een Mouster.
10. Pieces Gandel Hout.

't Slants Schip Hollandia.

7340. Sacken Peper / wegende 416720. pont Holl.
22036. Pont Nagels.
90. Sockels Folye.
27135. Pont Geraffineert en Ongeraffineert Salpeter.
6. Fiere stucken wegende te samen 24660.

Item tot Batasit uit ruym voor de Generale Compagnie Gesichut gesleept.

't Schip Frederick Henrick.

19750. Sacken Peper.
104005. Pont Nagels.
34300. Pont Noten.
230. Sockels Folye.
201. Balen Persiaensche Tyde.
7975. Pont ongeraffineert Salpeter.
31011. Stuer Porceleyn.

Ladinge van de drie Guinesche Schepen / den selfden dito ghearriveert.

1027. Pont 4. once vier en half Engels Gout.
33750. Pont Oliphants Candeu.
25. Lasten Manniquete.
87. Oer-Hoofden Lamoen-sap.

FIG 10.5. The Dutch newspapers' publication of the VOC lading list of 1628. On the right, the full list published in *TVQ* on 10 June; below, the summary listing published in *CID* on the same day.

communique issued by the VOC, Jansz reported with precise quantities all of the goods carried by each of the five ships (which he named) in the East Indies fleet and the total cargoes of three ships which had arrived on the same day, June 2, from Dutch Guinea (the Dutch West India Company's fleet from Fort Nassau, today Ghana).[66] While it is easy enough to imagine why the information in such lists could have interested the tsar or his officials (given the involvement of the Dutch in the Archangel trade and the demand for certain foreign goods), the translation may well have been made simply because at this time the Dutch papers coming to Moscow were being translated largely in their entirety, as was the case with this issue of *TVQ*. The examples of the later translations of the Dutch lading lists suggest other possible explanations as to their interest in Russia.[67] It is likely that the translation – and those in some of the other *kuranty* discussed here – was made by Boris Borisov / Barend Kögelken, who for many years was employed by the Ambassadorial Chancery as a specialist in German and Dutch (see Beliakov et al.: 67–69).

In many respects, the cargoes recorded in 1628 differ considerably from those of the 1660s and early 1670s that we shall discuss later (Sec. 19.6). First in importance in 1628 was pepper, the total in the five ships from the East Indies nearly 65,000 sacks, which

included for each return ship the name of its chamber (the subdivision of the VOC which sponsored it). However, rather than list the goods separately for each ship, *CID* totaled the amount for each product for the fleet as a whole. Both newspapers reported just below the lading list for the East Indies fleet a much shorter list with the totals for the three ships that had arrived on 2 June from Dutch Guinea (now Ghana in Africa); *CID* provided their names, whereas *TVQ* did not.

66. As the online database of VOC Asian shipping reveals (Bruijn et al. 1967–1979), the East Indies fleet had sailed from Batavia on 6 November 1627 (this date is mentioned in the report in *CID*). Even though both newspapers state that the ships had arrived home on 2 June, in fact that was the case only for the *Wapen van Delft*, *Galiasse*, and *Frederik Hendrik*, the two ships named *Hollandia* not docking until 28 June. In other words, this is evidence that the lading lists were printed prior to the actual arrival of some of the fleet.

67. See the discussion below in Secs. 12.3 (esp. pp. 395–396) and 19.6 and in Waugh 2023c, which analyzes all of the translations of the lading lists.

is apparently the equivalent of over 1.8 million kg. Other spices and medicinal herbs were also a significant part of the cargo – cloves (Nageln), nutmeg (Noten Muscaten), mace (Folye, mistakenly rendered in the Russian text as *folge*), China root (Radix China; in the Russian: *chepuchinnovo koreni*), the ginger-like *galana* (Galiga, in the Russian: *koreni kalganu*).[68] In 1628 and later in 1671, the cargoes contained a lot of saltpetre (in Russian, *selitr*). There were some barrels with porcelain, which we know the VOC was having manufactured to specification in Chinese kilns. Persian and raw white Chinese silk were in the cargoes and some quantities of diamonds. Only one of the ships had some sandalwood. The same ship was distinctive too as the only one carrying textiles – relatively small quantities of 'Betilies' and painted cloths ('geschilderde Deeckens') – both known from the later lading lists. The later lading lists included a much broader assortment of textiles. The Russian translation omitted the names of the ships and separate heading for the Guinea fleet, thereby conflating its cargo with that of the fifth ship in the East Indies fleet. Guinea supplied some gold, lemon juice and, interestingly, nearly 17,000 kg. of elephant tusks.

There is ample evidence here that the translators were exercising some selectivity, even if not to the degree that would be the case after the establishment of the international post in the mid-1660s, when there was so much more international news arriving frequently and on a predictable basis. In 1628, what came in, only at infrequent intervals, was more likely to be translated more fully, even if we cannot be sure how much of the detail it contained really would have commanded the attention of the Russian officials in Moscow. Were these Dutch sources, covering much of the first half of 1628 (but with significant gaps), the only Western news reports obtained by the decision makers in the Kremlin during that period? We simply do not know. However, the evidence suggests Moscow was still a long way from having any regular supply of foreign news. This may explain why in the subsequent years, as the Swedes invaded Germany with major

68. We have not attempted a full analysis of the translation, which on the whole is quite precise. With the exception of a couple of the fractional amounts, the numerical statistics for all the cargoes are accurately reproduced. The occasional foreign place name was omitted or rendered in an odd fashion, perhaps because it was unfamiliar: van Borneo>*melkovo*; Chin(ese)>*chepuchinnyi*; Japons Coper>*indeiskaia med'*. Russian familiarity with China and Japan developed only later in the seventeenth century. The unusual *chepuchinnyi* is a term that could designate at least in a general way a medicinal substance. However, the translation of Betilies as *chepuchinovyi koren'* is wrong, since Betilies (Bethilles), attested in the 1667 lading list too, is clearly some sort of textile. A few terms transliterate the Dutch for products that may have been in common use by the seventeenth century (Galiga>*kalgan* [*kgalgan*]; Bezoar-steenen>*kamen' besuinyi*). There are a few puzzles, such as Maniguete>*magnetovyi kamen'*. Indigo>*divimed* (the term used later was *krutik*) presumably refers to cassia indigo (*Indigofera cassioides*). The translation meaning 'wild honey' may be because of confusion with *Cinnamomum cassia* (cassia cinnamon), attested in earlier Russian recipes (and translated as *divyi med'*) for medicinal and aromatic preparations (see Bobrov 2022: 31). As Clare Griffin discusses (2022: Ch. 2 and passim), many of the ingredients in the medicaments prepared by the tsars' apothecaries were herbs that originated in East or South Asia and which could have been known from translations of Western herbals. The VOC played a significant role in supplying Europe with Bezoar stones and China root (see Borschberg 2006, 2010).

consequences for all of Europe, there is some evidence suggesting that the Russian officials attempted to improve the flow of news.

10.4. The Swedish intervention

Russo-Swedish relations in the late 1620s and early 1630s were important to the military planning of both states.[69] For Muscovy, success in a new war against Poland might depend on whether the Poles could be isolated internationally and whether other powers might be brought in on the Russian side to force the Poles to fight on two fronts. For Gustavus Adolphus, success in any campaign in northern Germany might be contingent on his *not* having to fight on two fronts. Thus, any threat from Poland had to be neutralized, which a Russo-Polish war could be expected to accomplish. Yet the possibility of mutually advantageous collaboration did not erase the legacy of the Swedish intervention in the Muscovite Time of Troubles and ongoing tensions over border issues. Neither side could willingly accept the possibility that its territorial claims or dynastic aspirations might be sacrificed to the interests of the other party (see, e.g., Porshnev 1976: 194). If Poland-Lithuania were to be defeated, who would be the real beneficiary?

Significantly, in August 1626, more than a year after he had launched his own war against Poland, Gustavus Adolphus approached Moscow with a proposal of military coordination (ibid.: 179–181). The Russians ignored his overture, still recovering from the devastation of the Time of Troubles and otherwise viewing the international situation as unpromising. While we can assume additional information was being received through intelligence operations out of Novgorod and Pskov, the *kuranty* provided the Kremlin with news regarding both the Polish-Swedish war on the Baltic and the im-

69. The importance of Russo-Swedish relations in the history of the Thirty Years War often has been ignored or downplayed (e.g., by Wilson 2009). A significant exception is the work by the Soviet historian Boris Fedorovich Porshnev (1956, 1976). His focus is on the period leading up to Gustavus Adolphus' invasion of Pomerania and the immediately succeeding years encompassing his successful campaigns, his death in 1632 and the continuing military history of the war past the middle of the 1630s. Porshnev overestimates the importance of Russia in the Swedish king's decision to launch his invasion of Pomerania in 1630 and in the successes which followed. He argues that the Muscovite threat to Poland certainly eased Gustavus Adolphus' concerns over a possible second front, and Muscovite subsidies in the form of grain exports were a significant means of shoring up the over-stretched economic resources of Sweden. As Boris Floria (2021: 418) has noted, citing Swedish scholarship, Porshnev exaggerates in equating the Russian grain subsidies to Sweden with the financial support provided by France. Porshnev makes good use of much of the older and still valuable scholarship on the war (including work by Swedish historians) and has mined many of the still unpublished Russian archival files. In so doing, he made a serious attempt to relate the acquisition of news and intelligence to the processes of decision making, even if there are some instances of his misreading the data. Short of examining as he did all the Swedish Affairs files in RGADA f. 96, we have to rely on what he tells us from them which is relevant to our subject here. In his view, the policy makers in the Kremlin were very well informed (Porshnev 1976: 178). We have used the Russian original of Porshnev's 1976 book, not the condensed English translation which appeared in 1995, with an introduction and commentary by Paul Dukes. Floria's broad treatment of Muscovite policy in the years leading up to the Swedish invasion is particularly valuable for his discussion of Russian efforts to negotiate an alliance with the Ottoman Empire, which arguably was a higher priority than allying with the Swedes in the planning for an attack on Poland (Floria 2021: 402–416, 418).

perial conquest of most of the northern German territories. As discussed above, this material included a translation of an illustrated broadside covering the Swedish campaign in the vicinity of Danzig in 1627 and translations from several Dutch newspapers about events from February and March and May to June in 1628.[70] However, there is no evidence that any of the separates, devoted to the news sensation of that year, the successful defense of Stralsund against imperial forces, were received and translated in Moscow.[71]

In 1629, Gustavus Adolphus again approached Moscow about collaboration, even as the war against Poland was winding down and would come to an end in September with the Truce of Altmark, which the French had helped mediate in order to free up Swedish forces for the war against the Habsburgs.[72] By this time, Filaret's government seems actively to have been trying to build a coalition to support a war against Poland (Porshnev 1976: 194); yet news of Altmark, which should have been a blow to those plans, in fact seems not to have disturbed the Kremlin.[73] Both the Swedes and the French, who would become significant supporters of the campaigns against the Austrian Habsburgs, were impressing on Moscow the idea that Poland would be significantly weakened if it were to lose Habsburg support. The rhetorical stance of the Swedes is interesting, in that they emphasized to the tsar that the struggle in the West was against the Papists in support of the interests of both Protestants and Orthodox.[74] So success against Poland and

70. V-K I: 98–99, No. 21; 115–116, No. 22.58–61; 116–132, Nos. 23, 24 passim.

71. The Treaty of Lübeck in May 1629, which ended Danish military involvement against the imperial forces, confirmed Habsburg control over almost all of northern Germany, the one exception being Stralsund, where Swedish and Danish intervention had forced the Habsburg armies under Wallenstein to abandon their siege in August of 1628. While it is not clear when Moscow learned of the treaty, it was not pleased at the news, as the Russians made clear to a Danish envoy in June 1631. In the Russian view, the Danes should have settled their longstanding differences with Sweden and been actively supporting the war against the Habsburgs (Porshnev 1976: 195).

72. Porshnev 1976: 170–176, 181–182.

73. The Treaty of Altmark became official on 16/26 September 1629, and news of it probably reached Moscow before the end of October, although the French envoys, who were in Moscow and presumably knew about the treaty, had apparently not shared that information with their hosts (Porshnev 1976: 199). It would seem that as early as the first half of 1628, the decision makers in Moscow could have anticipated the conclusion of the Polish-Swedish war, since a translated report, apparently based on some Polish source, appended to the *kuranty* translation from a Dutch newspaper published in March, listed the reasons why the Polish Diet (*sejm*) probably would have to agree to a settlement (V-K I: 131–132, No. 24.116–118). Unfortunately, it is impossible to know exactly when this translation was made, other than between January and the end of August 1628, and whether it was noticed. The Kremlin did not obtain the full text of the treaty until February 1630, from the Swedish envoy Anton Monier, who had brought a message from Gustavus Adolphus about its signing (Porshnev 1976: 200; Floria 2021: 414). Contrary to what Porshnev claimed, there seems to be no evidence that the Poles hastened to conclude the treaty mainly out of concern over an impending Russian attack (Floria 2021: 414).

74. French envoys arrived in Moscow in October 1629, where their emphasis, given the fact that Louis XIII was a Catholic, was carefully focused on the idea that Muscovy could support the Transylvanian ruler Gábor Bethlen and his Turkish allies in attacking Poland (Porshnev 1976: 186–187). It is clear that in Moscow news of Transylvania and more broadly information about the intentions of the Ottoman Empire regularly attracted attention. In the subsequent diplomacy of 1630 and 1631, representatives of the Transylvanian ruler would negotiate in Moscow (see, e.g., ibid.: 247) and were

in the West against the Habsburg forces which had reconquered much of the German lands were interconnected. The Russian response was a firm verbal commitment, news of which the Swedes then were happy to spread across Europe (Porshnev 1976: 198). Yet Gustavus Adolphus launched his invasion of Pomerania in June 1630 without having yet received definite information as to when Moscow would launch its own invasion of Poland. It was sufficient, apparently, to have reached an agreement with France for a monetary subsidy and to have learned on the eve of the Pomerania campaign that Moscow had agreed to a grain subsidy.[75] Even a year later, in 1631, when the Swedish forces began to push south into Germany, they did so knowing that it would probably be almost another year before the Russians would move militarily.

So, even if there was potential value to both in a Swedish-Russian alliance, the record of their diplomatic interaction in this period leaves open the question of the degree to which either party deemed an alliance, or short of that, any meaningful coordination of military activity, was essential to plans which were likely to be pursued even in the absence of such collaboration. This makes it all the more difficult to assess the degree to which the acquisition of any particular body of intelligence and news about the ongoing wars and political alignments in Europe may have influenced decision making. Events that in retrospect one might imagine *should* have had an impact on decisions may in fact have been ignored, even if the information seemed to dictate a particular course of action other than one which had been already planned. The political history of this period also vividly illustrates the degree to which information was manipulated by those who disseminated it. The issue here is not simply one of outright falsification, though there was some of that, but more often matters of emphasis and timing. Events of minor significance might be blown out of proportion. The transmission of information about important events might be expedited to encourage a quick decision before other news might have argued for restraint; or communication of news might be deliberately delayed in circumstances where that news likely was not going to be learned any time soon from another source.

The main focus in what follows will be on the news and decision making in Moscow encompassing the time from the Swedish landing in Pomerania on 26 June/6 July 1630 through their great victory at Breitenfeld (7/17 September) and its immediate consequences in autumn 1631. The first half of 1631 is one of the rare periods this early in the seventeenth century for which we have a long, almost unbroken run of translated newspapers in the *kuranty* files. However, careful analysis of those *kuranty* files raises serious questions about the 'coverage', and the *kuranty* translations in any event do not provide a full picture of what the Kremlin may have known and whether that information really was taken into account.

involved in various ways with Gustavus Adolphus' diplomacy.

75. The Swedish-French agreements were reached in preliminary form at Västerås on 5 March 1630 and finalized in the Treaty of Bärwalde on 23 January 1631.

In May 1630, Jacques Roussel and Charles de Talleyrand, emissaries from Gábor Bethlen, had arrived in Moscow, only to learn while there that Bethlen had died. So Roussel (presumably acting on his own, as he was wont to do) began promoting the idea that Gustavus Adolphus might become King of Poland following a successful military campaign against the Poles (Porshnev 1976: 247). Roussel left for Sweden in July; subsequently he would be back and forth to Moscow, providing important, if at times deliberately deceptive news from the West.[76] On 9 July, the Swedish forces took Stettin, which then became the base for further operations, and at the beginning of August, Magdeburg allied with Sweden, a commitment that would have disastrous consequences for the city in the next year. Probably the first full account received in Moscow regarding the Swedish invasion of Pomerania was that brought in August or September by Alexander Leslie, who had been sent by Gustavus Adolphus as the head of a large diplomatic mission to impress upon the Russians how important it was to attack Poland as soon as possible. Leslie's report indicated the Swedish King was still trying (as it would turn out, unsuccessfully) to persuade the Elector of Brandenburg to ally with him.[77] While the Treaty of Stettin (25 August/4 September) confirmed the Swedish occupation of Pomerania, well into the next year Gustavus Adolphus seemed to be biding his time there, waiting for the assurances that would support a further advance south into Germany. A number of his diplomatic initiatives aimed at prodding the Russians to attack Poland brought news to Moscow.

The king had sent Johan Möller (Mioller) to Moscow back in June, but Möller, lacking full diplomatic credentials, was turned back by the authorities in Novogord and would arrive in Moscow only in October, via the roundabout route through Archangel. We cannot be sure what he told the Russians, but when he met Gustavus Adolphus in early 1631 after leaving Moscow, he provided intelligence on Russian military preparations. There had been a two-pronged effort in November 1630 to prod the Russians into action: a formal diplomatic mission by Anton Monier, who was sent to Moscow (but delayed in his arrival until the following spring) and a mission headed by Roussel ostensibly to the Polish *sejm,* where he was to promote Gustavus Adolphus' candidacy for the Polish throne. However, Roussel parked himself in Riga and Dorpat (Tartu), rather than going into Poland, and from that secure base, he was sending provocative information into Poland, some of it even printed, and other intelligence to Moscow. He was probably responsible in December for the inaccurate news Moscow received about an impending

76. Roussel is one of the more intriguing 'operatives' in the diplomacy of the period, self-promoting, an adventurer, often making policy proposals without any official governmental sanction. As Floria (2021: 414 and passim) suggests, his direct contacts with Patriarch Filaret (Romanov) had a bearing on the Russian decision to attack Poland in the Smolensk War. On Roussel see also Kármán 2013: 806–809.

77. Porshnev 1976: 242, 265. Gustavus Adolphus would subsequently force Brandenburg to support the Swedish efforts, confirmed by treaties in May, June and September. By marching his troops on Berlin, he secured in the treaty of 11 June the right to have Swedish troops occupy several Brandenburg fortresses and the guarantee of subsidies. The treaty of 10 September was signed a week before the battle of Breitenfeld.

Polish attack on the Russian border, on whose receipt the Kremlin sent instructions to nearly two dozen cities to strengthen their defenses. News, however (intentionally) inaccurate, could affect policy. Roussel also provided Moscow with a copy of his instructions from Gustavus Adolphus and the king's letter, dated 5 November in Stralsund, urging the Polish magnates to support his candidacy for the Polish throne. The Swedish governor of Livonia, Johan Skytte, sent the dispatch containing this material to Pskov with a cover letter urging it be forwarded immediately to Moscow in view of its importance. And indeed the news must have produced an impression, since in response a Russian embassy, whose dispatch had been delayed since October, was sent off to Sweden at the end of January, accompanied by Alexander Leslie, who was to deliver messages from the tsar to Denmark, Holland and England, and importantly, to engage in the hiring of mercenaries (see below).

Roussel continued his campaign to drag the Russians into war. In February 1631 he sent from Dorpat to the Russian border post near Pskov information about the disposition of Lithuanian forces, which were supposedly preparing to attack Pskov. It seems as though the Kremlin now found Roussel's intelligence suspect, as the response then was to instruct border commanders to send two or three spies (disguised as merchants) across the border to verify the accuracy of the news. When Roussel himself arrived at the border in March, he was greeted with suspicion but allowed to proceed to Moscow, where he engaged in secret talks and tried to persuade the tsar's advisers that Leslie's mercenaries could not be trusted to remain loyal and might defect to the Poles. When Roussel left on 13 May to return to Riga (and later departed to the border from Pskov on 26 May), he had apparently been commissioned by the Kremlin to act as an intelligence agent in obtaining information that would be particularly useful in planning the Russian campaign to retake Smolensk (Porshnev 1976: 280 n. 103). Subsequently he would send to Moscow news about the possibility that a fifth column within Swedish-held Smolensk would turn the city over to the Russians and also intelligence about the city's military defenses.

Delayed by some months after having been given his assignment by Gustavus Adolphus, the Swedish envoy Anton Monier arrived in Moscow two days after Roussel's departure. Unlike Roussel, who was pushing for direct Russian intervention from the east, Monier brought a proposal that an army be raised in the west, to be commanded by the king, but that its costs would be borne by Moscow. However, he was unable to obtain an official Russian response to this. According to the handwritten archival inventory, Monier arrived in Moscow 'with information about the Swedish army's taking of many cities from the emperor.'[78] Obviously this news was intended to encourage the Russians to support the Swedish campaign.

78. RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1631, fol. 85^{v}, No, 7. Here and below, we are referring to the archival inventory, which can be accessed via the RGADA website.

Days before Monier departed from Moscow at the end of the first week of June, his replacement, Johan Möller, sent by Gustavus Adolphus, arrived. Möller, who had been in Moscow a few months earlier, came armed with instructions to stay on as the resident Swedish agent in the Russian capital, this marking an important new development in Russian dealings with Europe. In the subsequent months, he was able to send to the king fairly regular reports on Muscovite affairs, and in turn he provided news from the West, even if some of it clearly was distorted in order to influence Russian decision making. Throughout much of the rest of the seventeenth century, first the Swedish and later the other foreign residents posted to Russia would be important conduits for foreign news, even after the establishment of the international post in the 1660s provided an alternate means of obtaining it.[79]

Immediately on his arrival, Möller pressed the case for the Russians to speed up their preparations and attack Poland (Porshnev 1976: 258). He reported to them that a Polish embassy had been sent to Gustavus Adolphus, pressing for a permanent peace both with Sweden and with Moscow. However, this was really a deceptive plot by the Poles, who were also asking the Habsburg emperor to mediate. The emperor was reported to be sending an embassy to Moscow via Poland. Möller indicated that he had obtained this news surreptitiously from two Habsburg messengers he had met on his way to Moscow. He further related how Gustavus Adolphus had taken several cities that had been intriguing with the Poles, and that Polish assistance to the empire meant that in effect the Poles had already broken the terms of the Truce of Altmark. As a result, Gustavus Adolphus was preparing to attack Poland. If Moscow would now move, the king was promising that the reward, when the Poles would be defeated, would be the restoration to Moscow of all the Belorussian lands. At about the same time Möller was conveying this news, Alexander Leslie was on his way back to Moscow with the results of his mission. He sent on ahead reports, presumably composed in Stockholm, confirming that the Poles had sued for a permanent peace settlement, but that Gustavus Adolphus would not agree to it (ibid.: 263 n. 112). In fact, since he had just taken Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, the princes and estates in Silesia were asking him to send in troops there, with the promise that Silesia, Moravia and the Czech lands all would welcome this. Poland thus would be isolated in the West and would be an easier target for Moscow.

During the first months of 1631, while these initiatives from the Swedish side were providing information to Moscow, the Russian embassy that left for Stockholm on 30 January was also gathering foreign news. The embassy was headed by Fedor Plemiannikov and Afanasii Aristov. Its translator, Ignatii Andreevich Kuchin, presumably was fluent in German and Swedish, because he had been sent abroad as a boy to study in Lübeck and then, after being captured by the Swedes, had worked for several years in

79. Floria (2021: 418–419) seems to have confused the information about Monier and Möller, asserting that the former stayed on for several months in effect as the first Swedish resident diplomat in Moscow, the one responsible for sending news from Russia to the Swedish authorities.

Sweden as a translator before he was allowed to return to Russia.[80] He also knew Danish (though there were complaints about his work when on an earlier Russian embassy to Denmark) and had learned at least some Latin while in Lübeck. Even though we have no documentation to prove it, there is at least the possibility that some of the translations of foreign newspapers found in the *kuranty* of 1631 can be attributed to him and could have been made by him while he was still abroad with the embassy.[81] Some time prior to 25 March, the Russian embassy arrived in Stockholm, where they remained until navigation on the Baltic opened and they could cross to Germany to meet Gustavus Adolphus in Stettin. He received them there on 14 June, an event that was reported in contemporary newspapers (Porshnev 1976: 268 n. 121), and they stayed on after he returned to the front. Plemiannikov fell ill and died in Stettin in July, and Aristov finally made it back to Moscow in early November, via Archangel, at which point he filed the *stateinyi spisok* for the mission.

10.4.1. The first Russian resident agent in Europe?

Presumably before they left Stockholm, the envoys had sent (via what route we do not know) a compendium of news translated from various European newspapers covering events from January through March. A notation on the manuscript, which remains unpublished in the Swedish Affairs files, mentions that it was read to the tsar and patriarch on 12 June, a sign of their direct interest in obtaining European news (ibid.: 204 n. 96). While in Stockholm, Plemiannikov had a discussion with a merchant, Melchior Beckmann (Böckmann), about his offer to enter the tsar's service. Apparently the discussion first dealt with the proposal that he come to Moscow to help with printing, but Beckmann responded he did not have that skill. It is not clear whether any agreement was reached about what he might do. However, when Beckmann wrote to Plemiannikov on 12 September (not knowing the latter had died back in July) referring to the earlier meeting, he offered his services as a recruiter and as an intelligencer (V-K I: 161–162, No. 32). He proposed he could send his agents via Danzig into Poland and then forward to Moscow every month what they had learned. In other words, this service is analogous to that which Roussel had agreed to provide (or perhaps would have used Roussel's services), where it would be possible with Swedish control of the Baltic littoral to transmit news to Moscow relatively quickly and securely. At the end of the letter, he included a short report about news that a Polish embassy had arrived in Amsterdam on its way to England. The letter in which Beckmann proposed his service was translated in Moscow on 13 December, three months after it had been written.

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80. Maier 2009; Selin 2016: 166–167; Beliakov et al.: 137–139.

81. There is the curious fact that two different translations seem to have been made from *WZ* 1631/26 (V-K I: 143–144, No. 29; 159–161, No. 31; Schibli 1988: 88–89). One (No. 29) is less polished than the other. Might one have been made on the fly abroad, while the other was produced in Moscow?

There is no evidence that Beckmann's offer was ever taken up.[82] In fact there is some confusion regarding whose initiative it may have been that he become what would have been the first Russian resident stationed abroad.[83] Apparently in their discussions in June with Gustavus Adolphus in Stettin, the king had agreed in principle that there be a Russian resident in Stockholm, since Möller, the first Swedish resident in Moscow, had just arrived there. When the Swedish envoy Anton Monier reported to the king and received further instructions from him to return to Moscow, it seems Monier had suggested that Beckmann's brother Johan be the Russian resident in the Swedish capital (Porshnev 1976: 292). But Johan was sent off to Amsterdam to deal with grain sales and some time afterwards died there. Monier then proposed that Melchior be the Russian resident. Possibly Melchior's letter to Plemiannikov was a followup to his nomination. Moreover, Melchior did write again to Moscow on 30 September reporting the news of the Swedish victory at Breitenfeld and citing the information he had received from one of the commanders, Jacob Pontus (Forsten 1893–1894, 1: 367 n. 2). While there is no published evidence about the receipt of that letter, there are several *kuranty* translations and one German newspaper in the Moscow archives which bear a note he had sent them some time in 1631. These may all merely be part of his 'job application' where he was hoping to show the Moscow authorities what kind of news he could send. To examine them in context illustrates some of the challenges in trying to assess the impact of the news that Moscow was obtaining from abroad.

Although we still lack crucial palaeographic information about the archival manuscript file, it is important to examine as closely as possible what turns out to be the main source for the published *kuranty* texts from 1631. Some of the texts in that file were published in V-K I from what presumably are fair and hence secondary copies, all of them kept along with drafts in RGADA, f. 141, *Prikaznye dela starykh let*, op. 1, 1632, No. 65. Clearly it is a compendium of separate materials, with some folios out of order, some missing, and many instances where translations from individual newspapers begin on a new sheet of paper. The chronological sequence of the news, most of it drawn from German newspapers which can be identified, does not follow the order of the original publications. Thus we cannot assume that any section that contains a header referencing the source and date of translation necessarily tells us about what follows after such page breaks. The editors of V-K I published this *kuranty* material as Nos. 26–32 and

82. The case of Beckmann certainly is not closed though. In passing, Porshnev (1976: 383) cites information that in January 1633 Beckmann was in Moscow. Presumably material in the archives may still shed some light on what he was doing there. If in Moscow, in any event he could not have been the tsar's intelligencer in Stockholm. We assume this is the same 'Melkher Beokman' mentioned in 1646 in a letter sent by Christian Shimmeliar (one-time secretary to Peter Marselis) from Stockholm to the Swedish agent in Moscow, Peter Krusebjörn. Referring to the miracle-working waters of the Protestant spa at Hornhausen, Schimmeliar wrote: 'i ot inykh svoikh nemoshchei osvobozheny byti a Melkher Beokman takzhe tudy poekhal […]' (V-K III: 145, No. 51.164).

83. See below for a discussion of the brief assignment of Dmitrii Franzbekov (Alfred Farensbach) as the Russian agent in Stockholm a few years later.

Appendices 3–5, their division of the parts thus glossing over the questions we might pose about the manuscript sources.

The material from this archival file highlights two important facts: it contains what appears to be all of the translations whose headings connect the sources with Melchior Beckmann, and most (but not all) of the translated news comes from German newspapers published in Hamburg in 1631. The Beckmann materials include his letter to Plemiannikov of 12 September, translated in Moscow on 13 December, a 'newsletter' (*vestovoe pis'mo*) translated on 8 December, and a translation made on 9 December from a presumed Dutch printed source. In addition, one section of the translated news (with no heading indicating it comes from Beckmann) in fact is from a copy of one Hamburg newspaper preserved elsewhere in the archive, on which there is a notation that it came from Beckmann. In other words, there is enough material here connected explicitly with Beckmann to suggest at least hypothetically that he might be associated with at least some of the other news texts, but only if we ignore issues such as the page breaks and mixing up of the chronological sequence of sources and news.

10.4.2. German newspapers and their *kuranty* translations about the Swedish invasion

The evidence about the printed sources for most of this news is striking. Most of the translations were made from the Hamburg newspapers that appeared twice each week, the *Wöchentliche Zeitung* (*WZ*) and its Tuesday number titled *Post-Zeitung*.[84] As first established in detail by Roland Schibli (1988), the following numbers were drawn on for translation in Moscow, for the most part in their entirety, but with the occasional omission or shortening of articles: *WZ* Nos. 17, 19, 20, 23, 26, 27, 28, 30; *Post-Zeitung*, Prima Nos. 21, 28, 29.[85] In addition, No. 14 of *Reichs-Zeitungen* (Z44) and No. 27 of *Ordentliche PostZeitung* (Z10) were translated (Schibli 1988: 93–94), the second of these preserved in a copy in the Moscow archive indicating it came from Melchior Beckmann. While by no means all of the issues of *WZ* printed between the first and last one in the sequence are included here (it is, of course, possible there were others received that were not translated), the degree to which there is almost unbroken coverage of European news dated between the end of March and the beginning of July is truly impressive. The lone copy of the *Reichs-Zeitungen* is something of an outlier chronologically, as it has mainly news from February to mid-March, with one retrospective inclusion of a document written at the end of December. This publication tends, it seems, to include more news and over a wider range of dates than what we find in the apparently more frequently published *WZ*. The one case in the currently known *kuranty* translations of

84. The same newspaper – catalogued by Bogel and Blühm as Z9 – later would have three issues a week, which we abbreviate as *ODiZ* (the successor to *Post-Zeitung*, Prima), *WDoZ* (the Thursday issue of *WZ*), and *WZ App*. (the appendix to *WZ*, published on Saturday).

85. For his compact summary of the sources and what was translated from them in 1631, see Schibli 1988: 87–94.

1631 that comes from a printed Dutch source is the item explicitly indicated as having come from Beckmann (V-K I: No. 27), with news of July about the military successes of Gustavus Adolphus and with a prophecy of the imminent final victory over the Habsburg forces (this prior to the battle of Breitenfeld). The colophon under these items tells us that the publisher was Broer Jansz in Amsterdam; it is likely that the material derived not from a number of his *TVQ* but rather from a separate publication he issued, which is not extant to check.[86]

Apart from that item and the translation specifically derived from the one copy of the *Reichs-Zeitungen*, it seems possible that the only other of these texts we can be *certain* derives from what Beckmann sent is the first part of what has been published as V-K I: 219–222, App. 3.27–33.[87] The explicitly Beckmann-sourced text, apparently not from any printed source, indicates the information had been obtained through contacts in Poland and Riga; that is, it is exactly the kind of news Beckmann in his letter to Plemiannikov had promised he might supply. And it is news he presumed would be of particular interest in Moscow, regarding Polish affairs and the foreign interest in Russian military preparations. All of the Beckmann-related news seems to have been translated in Moscow in the second week of December.

How then might we account for all the rest of the news based on Hamburg newspapers? Of course, some or even all of it could have come from Beckmann. Another possibility would be that the Swedish resident in Moscow, Möller, who was tasked by Gustavus Adolphus with providing a stream of news to the Russians, was receiving the newspapers and, as would his successors, presumably turned them over to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Conceivably Roussel was a source for at least some of the newspapers, since we know that on at least two occasions, on 22 July and 7 October, he sent news with his secretary Christian Wasserman.[88] Yet another possible Swedish source would have been the messenger sent post-haste to Moscow by Gustavus Adolphus with news of the battle of Breitenfeld.

A further possibility here would be the mission of Plemiannikov and Aristov. We know they sent back a compendium of translated news covering January through March,

86. In addition to publishing his regular newspaper, Jansz was issuing separates, with generic titles such as *Extraordinaris tijdingh*e *over de nederlage* […] (Weduwen 2017: 274). It seems likely that the Russian translation at the head of the newssheet sent by Beckmann (‘Narochnye vesti pro odolenie korolia sveiskogo’) is an accurate rendering of such a title.

87. A partial copy, lacking most of the first part, is in V-K I, No. 26.

88. See Porshnev 1976: 305. Wasserman was in Moscow from 9 August to 22 September on the first of these trips and at his departure was thanked for the news he brought after having just been in Poland where he talked with some of the Polish magnates. However, there is no explicit indication here that Wasserman also brought with him printed newspapers. When he returned to Moscow in October, he informed the Russians about ‘the victories of Gustavus Adolphus “against the common enemy”,’ but what form that information took is not specified. In referring to the f. 141 news file we are analyzing here, Porshnev (1976: 293 n. 45) suggests it is material sent by Roussel, but cites no evidence to confirm that. The inclusion of the Melchior Beckmann materials in it would cast doubt on Porshnev's assertion. That said, it is very clear that Roussel was providing Moscow a lot of information, some of it potentially of great value for the planning of the Smolensk campaign (ibid.: 304 n. 82).

which would have arrived in June when it was read to the tsar and patriarch, but the date range for it would exclude most of the *kuranty* we now have. There is no indication that subsequently, while they were still abroad, they sent any further news. When Aristov returned in early November, he filed his end-of-mission report with information on various treaties and, we might expect, a compendium of other news.

In the most optimistic of these possibilities, at least some of the German newspapers could have reached Moscow within a few weeks of their publication, perhaps arriving in separate packets and via different intermediaries. It is also possible they arrived with considerable delay and might have been translated no earlier than late autumn, when the news they contained was seriously dated. Were that the case, then for the must up-to-date information on news of direct relevance to Muscovite foreign policy, the Russians might have had to rely on what Möller or Roussel chose to tell them or what the intelligence operations overseen by border commanders turned up. Any and all of this news would invite verification. It is certain that at least some of what the Kremlin was being told was patently false. What we might stress here is the fact that in this period, German, not Dutch printed sources seem to have been the main ones translated. The obvious reason for this was the establishment of Swedish control of the Baltic littoral and the possibility for active diplomatic connections between Muscovy and the West via the Baltic. This was to be the future for the development of the government's mechanisms to ensure a regular and timely flow of European news.

It is instructive to take a brief look at the contents of these *kuranty*. Even if dated and possibly inaccurate, the news reports could have helped officials in Moscow understand the broader context of European affairs. Most newspapers in early modern Europe quite consistently from one issue to the next would include items from the network of informants they had established in a relatively small number of important cities that were connected by the postal networks. Thus *WZ* quite regularly would have reports from Rome, Venice, Vienna, Prague, Cologne, and The Hague. On account of the focus on war-related news, there would as well be other news from Italy, and from any number of other German cities: Ulm, Nürnberg, 'Oberlandt', and occasionally Breslau, Lübeck or Stettin. Unlike the Dutch papers, which devoted considerable attention to military and commercial matters of direct interest in Holland, there was less of that kind of news published in Hamburg, but it was not totally absent from the German press.

So the reader of the Hamburg German press in this period and its translations in Moscow would have known a great deal about the Mantua war in Italy, negotiations of German princes for or against the emperor, the possibilities of foreign (e.g., English, French, Danish) intervention on one side or another, and of course the movement of armies, battles, and the subjugation of cities. The military commanders of the period appear frequently in the press reports: Mansfeld, Tilly, Wallenstein, Pappenheim, and, of course, Gustavus Adolphus.

FIG. 10.6. A medal depicting Gustavus Adolphus as a crusader slaughtering the heretics.

Many of the newsworthy events in 1630–1631 were the subject of huge numbers of separates, often of polemical content. There was, for example, a vast outpouring of Protestant propaganda extolling Gustavus Adolphus as a kind of Classical hero and divinely inspired crusading knight (FIG. 10.6; see Hämmerle 2017, 2018). Yet when Magdeburg, which

FIG. 10.7. The siege of Magdeburg. Engraving from *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. II (1637), after p. 356.

had thrown its lot in with the Swedes and then, absent their military support, was taken by Tilly in May 1631, pillaged and burned to the ground, the enthusiasm for the Swedish king was dampened in the outpouring of published sensationalism about the event (FIG. 10.7).[89] If any of such polemical excesses in the separates and broadsides made it to Moscow, we have no evidence of their preservation there. However, the events leading up to the fall of Magdeburg and the news of its destruction did become known. A translated report from Hamburg dated May 15 (not, apparently, directly sourced from a printed newspaper) covered the destruction of the city.[90] The news translated from *Post-Zeitungen*, Prima No. 28, included a report from Breslau 26 June, listing in detail the composition and size of Tilly's army. Another article dated Berlin 20 June reported

89. For a sampling of eyewitness accounts and contemporary commentary about the siege and destruction of Magdeburg, see Wilson 2010: 144–169.

90. V-K I: 226, App. 5.57–58.

that a Swedish force under Marshal Gustav Horn was on its way to Silesia, an important gesture Gustavus Adolphus in fact had made in response to the plea that he send in his troops at very least to forestall any possibility of Polish support for the imperial side.[91]

In the following weeks, stunned by Magdeburg's fall, Gustavus Adolphus advanced and engaged in a series of battles against the imperial forces, some of them near Leipzig, where he established a forward base. Two of these battles were reported in the Dutch source provided by Beckmann, with, it seems, a certain amount of exaggeration about the Swedish success and with some inaccuracy concerning who amongst the commanders might have been wounded or killed.[92] The thrust of that news, under a heading of the 'Victory of the Swedish King', fitted nicely with a report concerning heavenly signs over Braunschweig, which contemporaries interpreted to foretell the final defeat of the imperial forces, a prescient anticipation of the Battle of Breitenfeld.

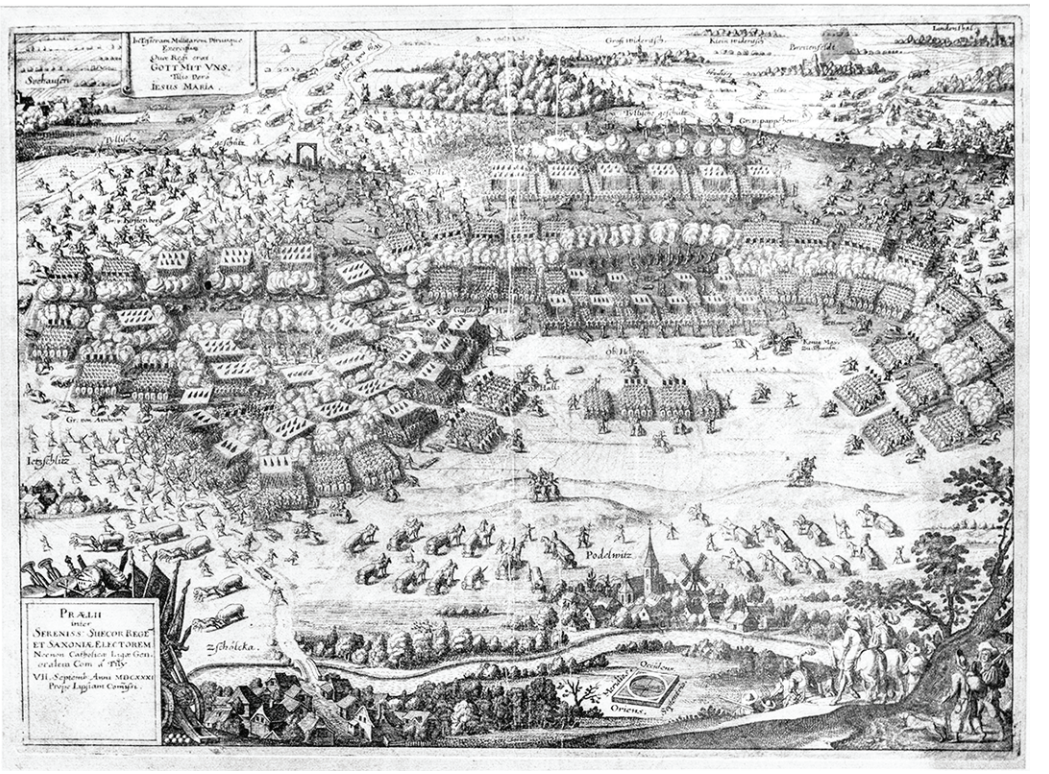

FIG. 10.8. The Battle of Breitenfeld, 17 September 1631. Engraving probably by Matthias Meriam.

91. V-K I: 153–154, No. 30.37–44.

92. V-K I: 137–138, No. 27. Cf. Fryxell 1862: 279–282; Droysen 1870: 361–375. Even in the separates of the period, the battles in July 1631 received a lot of attention and were touted as victories by the Swedish forces. See, e.g., *Extract Schreibens auß dem Fürstenthumb Anhalt den 19 Julii* [...] *Eygentlicher Bericht was sich den 17 Julii zwischen Ihr Königl. Mayst. zu Schweden und Herrn General Tilly Cavallerey in einem Dorffe bey Tangermunde begeben* [...] N.p., 1631 (VD17 23:291030Q); *Eigend- und Gründlicher Bericht Von der Mächtigen Victoria So die Königliche Mayestät in Schweden wider das kayserliche Volck den 17 Julii diese Jahres gehalten* [...] N.p., 1631 (VD17 14:004447A), both accessible via DP Bremen.

10.4.3. Responses to news of the victory at Breitenfeld and the king's death at Lützen

Of course the Swedish victory at Breitenfeld on 7/17 September (FIG. 10.8) did not bring about a quick end of the war, even if it marked the high point of Gustavus Adolphus' successes and assured for many in subsequent generations his heroic stature. We know for certain that the Russians received news of the battle as quickly as it could be communicated: a messenger sent directly to Moscow by the king arrived near the end of October. (Even though Beckmann also sent a message about the battle from Stockholm on 30 September, it seems unlikely it would have arrived earlier.) The response in Moscow to this news was extraordinary, for, unlike in the West, where news of another country's military success might instantly be broadcast through the press, there was no tradition in Muscovy for such dissemination of foreign news. The few examples we do have of the broadcasting of foreign news are ones where the events might require government to secure the borders (either against military attack or the incursion of infectious disease) or where it was deemed necessary to stir up support to raise funds or men for the army. We have noted above one earlier example where the government cited the foreign news in order to strengthen sentiment for a possible renewal of war against Poland.

Immediately on receiving the news about Breitenfeld on 27 October, Johan Möller communicated it to Prince Ivan Borisovich Cherkasskii, at that time one of the tsar's closest advisers. When Möller reported to Stockholm the reception of the news, he stressed how he had encouraged the Russians to celebrate with a big public display, arguing that this was a normal way that allied countries commemorated each other's separate successes.[93] Undoubtedly there was a political calculation here, to firm up Moscow's commitment to launch its war against Poland (and perhaps frighten the Poles at the prospect of an attack on two fronts) and not simply a desire on the part of the authorities to share good foreign news with a broader public. The Moscow celebration opened with a church service on 1 November, and the next day involved a military parade in full regalia with an artillery salute. To what extent news about this may have made it out into the provinces remains to be determined, but the Swedes, naturally, were happy to prepare for dissemination in the West a report on the celebrations in Moscow.[94]

There are no published *kuranty* for 1632 and few for the immediately following years. Yet 1632 was certainly a year of some consequence for Russian diplomacy and the military preparation to attack Poland. To the degree that foreign news was arriving regularly in Moscow, it seems to have been coming in communications sent by the Swedish governor in Livonia and Jacques Roussel. In Porshnev's telling, there was a definite connection between the receipt of particular items of news and the decision mak-

93. See Forsten 1893–1894, 1: 367; Möller's report dated 14 November in Forsten 1889–1893, 2: 131.

94. The anonymous "Glaubwürdiger Bericht", which must have been based on Möller's reports; Forsten 1889–1893, 2: 129–130.

ing in the Kremlin (1976, esp. Ch. 8). The timing of a major Russian embassy to Sweden headed by the boyar Boris Ivanovich Pushkin seems to have depended on the receipt of news.[95] As it was already in Finland en route to Stockholm on 5 January 1633, it learned from its Swedish hosts about the Battle of Lützen in which Gustavus Adolphus died (6 November; ibid.: 377). Of course the king's death was the subject of a great deal of newspaper and pamphlet publication (about which see Hillgärtner 2017). The event receives special attention even today in the exhibits of the Military History Museum in Vienna (see FIG. 10.9). There is no evidence that any of the Western separates made it to Moscow or were translated. Perhaps because of the negative implications of the king's death for Muscovite foreign policy, unlike in the case of the victory at Breitenfeld, there seems to have been little effort to publicize Lützen in Russia.

FIG. 10.9. School children being regaled with an account about Lützen in front of the painting of the battle by Peeter Snayers (1592–ca. 1667) at the Heeresgeschichtliches Museum (Vienna).

On learning the news, Pushkin immediately forwarded it via courier to Moscow. According to Swedish sources, as a mark of his grief, Patriarch Filaret proclaimed a special fast and on more than one occasion declared to the boyar council that the tsar gladly would have traded half his territories for the life of the Swedish king (Porshnev 1956: 70). On 25 January the envoys on their way to Sweden were instructed to return to Moscow, the tsar's message indicating that there now were doubts about the continuation of the war in Germany. Before they made it back, however, a new instruction from Moscow on 11 February directed them to resume their travel to Stockholm and meet with the new Swedish ruler (whoever that might turn out to be). Prior to their receipt of these instructions, the envoys were given additional news by their Swedish hosts: details about the battle, the decision of the Riksdag that Christina would assume the throne, and the fact that Gustavus Adolphus' widow had gone to Germany to accompany her husband's body back to Stockholm. Yet more news arrived in Moscow, via the Swedish governor in Livonia, who reported that in Poland, Władysław had been named the successor to

95. Apart from Porshnev, whose focus is on the diplomatic issues, see Selin 2016: 307–318 for details about the travel of the Pushkin embassy and some additional information about the news it received on the way. Forsten 1891 provides an overview of the relations between Russia and Sweden during the reign of Queen Christina.

the deceased Sigismund III (see below). So the Kremlin again recalled its envoys, while trying to sort through conflicting information about the political situation in Sweden and perhaps not fully appreciating what the rule of Christina and the political domination of Axel Oxenstierna on Swedish policy was going to mean. New instructions were issued, where now, it seems, the main purpose of the mission would be to learn details about Swedish affairs and the likely impact of the king's death on the future of Sweden's alliances. The instructions to the envoys embodied concerns about whether now Sweden could be counted on as a reliable ally. Once again on their way to Stockholm, the envoys reported news, including the decision of the Swedish authorities to continue the war. Notations on these reports indicate that on their arrival in Moscow they were all being read to the tsar and patriarch. While in Stockholm, the envoys were sending back additional reports including a German newspaper (*vestovaia tetratka*) containing reports about events in Germany, in which was an item about a meeting between Oxenstierna – who had gone there to oversee the Swedish forces – and a Polish emissary to the Swedes (Porshnev 1976: 381). Additional news about Polish overtures intended to forestall any attack from Sweden was obtained by the envoys in Stockholm and dutifully reported to Moscow, presumably to the consternation of the Kremlin, which had been counting on Swedish military support against the Poles.

There is much more to be learned about the acquisition of Western news in this period. Of particular note is what is known about the arrival in Moscow on 22 February 1633 of Håkan Skytte, sent by his uncle, the Swedish governor in Livonia.[96] Skytte brought messages concerning possible arrangements for replacing Johan Möller (who had died) with another Swedish resident. There was a large packet of important news, which included: confirmation of Christina's succession; the rejection of Władysław's claims to the Swedish throne (but indications he may have been contemplating a dynastic marriage with Christina); the journal of the Diet which confirmed Władysław's election to the Polish throne; a printed account of a church service celebrating his enthronement; secret news about a planned Polish-instigated attack by the Cossacks on Muscovy.[97] There was political and court news from Paris and information on the course of the war and political events in Germany, at least some of it in a German newspaper. Assuming this material is still in the Russian archives, it can fill a significant gap in what we can learn from the sparse information in V-K I for 1633.[98]

96. Porshnev 1976: 383; Selin 2016: 319–324, on the arrangements for his travel from the border.

97. We would need to see the reports summarized here by Porshnev, but it is worth noting that some of this news may have been rather dated by the time Skytte brought it to Moscow. The meeting of the *sejm* and proclamation of Władysław with a description of the planned celebration that would include a *Te Deum* mass was reported in the lead article, datelined Warsaw 12 November, in the Hamburg *Post-Zeitungen*, Prima No. 48. The actual coronation took place only at the beginning of February 1633. Presumably Skytte was bringing newspapers published perhaps no earlier than the beginning or middle of December.

98. Simonov 1979 does not list any German newspapers that could be the one(s) in question here among those preserved in the Russian archives. A search of the German newspapers available on line from the Bremen collection has not turned up one with an article from Paris which would seem to cor-

Over the next decades, while unevenly distributed, Russian translations of western news sources increase, and there is evidence of initiatives to improve the acquisition of news. Our next chapters will illustrate these developments prior to the establishment of the foreign post and then explore how the post really ushered in a new era.

10.5. The exchange of resident agents: Dmitrii Franzbekov in Stockholm

With the death of Gustavus Adolphus the negotiations for a military alliance between Muscovy and Sweden ended in no agreement. This failure to enlist Swedish support may have been the decisive factor preventing the Russians from taking Smolensk and forcing them to sign a 'permanent peace' with Poland at Polianovka in 1634. With the Russian defeat, there no longer was a rationale for Sweden to pursue an alliance. Moscow was now in no position to consider being drawn into the morass of the war in the West. As the Soviet-era historian Osip Vainshtein (1947: 202) put it in the conclusion to his book on that involvement up into the 1630s, the Kremlin entered a period of 'significant weakening of diplomatic activity' which would last into the reign of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. Having in a sense been burned by the failure to obtain meaningful support for Moscow's own foreign-policy goals, the Russians were not receptive to any efforts to draw them into the conflicts in the West and elected instead to concentrate on matters closer to home. A survey of Russian diplomatic exchanges in these years suggests that only in very rare cases was the tsar's government proactively pursuing policies with broad geopolitical goals.[99] When missions arrived from abroad in Moscow, for the most part they dealt with trade, with the involvement of foreigners in Muscovite service, with transit of foreign missions through Muscovite territory, or with the settlement of border issues that had not been resolved in previous treaties. Very few high-level Russian embassies were dispatched to any European country in those years.[100] However, this 'inward turn'

respond to Porshnev's description. However, this may simply reflect the fact that there are significant gaps in the holdings of extant copies. The German press did regularly include reports from Paris. The news the Swedes brought to Moscow about the death of Marshal de Schomberg seems to have been accurate. Henry de Schomberg, Comte de Nanteuil, was an important commandant in the French army who had played a key role in defeating the attempt by the Duke of Buckingham to relieve La Rochelle in 1627 and 1628. De Schomberg died on 17 November 1632 (see "Schomberg" 1791: 19).

99. Even though as a source it has some gaps, Bantysh-Kamenskii's (1894–1902) classic survey of Russian foreign relations up to 1800, which arranges dealings with individual countries in chronological order, supports this contention. Missing from his compilation are dealings with non-Western entities, notably the Ottoman Empire and its sometime vassal state, the Crimean Khanate.

100. An exception to these generalizations about Moscow's foreign relations concerns the southern borders and relations with the Crimean Tatars and Ottoman Empire. During the 1630s and 1640s, the Kremlin had in effect permanent representation in the Crimea (see the tabulation in Novosel'skii 1948: 438, and his detailed discussion in Chapters 5–8). For relations with the Ottoman Empire, see Smirnov 1946, Vol. 2. Apart from frequent diplomatic exchanges, reports from border garrisons and interrogations of clerics, merchants and others who entered Muscovy from the south, not Western newspapers, were the most important regular sources of information. The flurry of activity connected with the Cossack seizure of the Ottoman-held fortress of Azov in 1637 raised the possibility of a war against the Turks, but, as was the case with the wars in Europe, in the early 1640s the government in Moscow refused to be drawn into an expensive conflict far from home.

of Russian diplomacy did mean there was no interest in keeping abreast of international news. In fact, as the record of the *kuranty* reveals, there was some effort to improve the acquisition of foreign news in these years, which would culminate in the 1660s with the establishment of the foreign post.

Given the infrequency of Russian missions abroad, there was little intelligence that could be acquired on a regular basis by direct interaction with European courts. There surely must have been an awareness of the value of having resident representatives abroad, but there is little evidence the Kremlin pushed to appoint them. Initiatives to appoint residents who might have diplomatic functions and at very least could serve as intelligence agents seem to have come only from outside. Jacques Roussel apparently had reached an agreement in Moscow to supply news about events in Poland, but his self-promotional efforts as an agent were short-lived.[101] If Melchior Beckmann hoped to be hired in such a capacity, he was disappointed.[102] The Russians would have had first-hand acquaintance with what a resident could do on the basis of their dealings with Johan Möller, the Swedish representative in Moscow during the negotiations with Gustavus Adolphus. Obviously the Swedes understood his value, since he was charged with funneling regular communications to the Russian government and in turn sent frequent reports on Russian affairs.

As noted above, the Swedes had apparently been the first to propose there be a Russian resident in Stockholm. While details about the negotiations of the Russian embassy to Sweden headed by Pushkin in the immediate aftermath of Gustavus Adolphus' death are not available, the letters it brought back to Moscow included one concerning the exchange of residents: the Swedes would be sending a replacement for the deceased Johan Möller and stated that the Russians were invited to send their own resident to Stockholm.[103] The Swede, Peter Krusebjörn, arrived in Moscow with his wife and a sec-

101. With the death of Gustavus Adolphus, Roussel lost his main support as an 'autonomous' agent for Swedish foreign policy. The officials in Stockholm began a campaign to discredit him with the Russians as a 'fugitive and traitor' (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 159). He was compelled to leave the Baltic and go to the Dutch Republic (see Porshnev 1976: 399, 401, 422). As he was leaving Moscow in 1634, Isaac Massa (apparently representing the wishes of the government in Stockholm) wrote to the tsar about Roussel, then in Moscow on his way through Russia to Constantinople, concerning all of Roussel's 'despicable conduct' (*durnye povedeniia*; RGADA, f. 50, *Opis'* 1, 1634, fol. 23, No. 1). The Russians seem to have been interested in keeping track of Roussel subsequently. In April 1636, when an employee of the merchant Thomas de Swaen was being interrogated in the Ambassadorial Chancery on his return to Moscow from Holland, he passed on news that Roussel had died (RGADA, f. 50, *Opis'* 1, 1636, fol. 25, No. 3).

102. On 1 April 1632, Gustavus Adolphus informed the Russian government that Beckmann was free to enter Russian service and recommended he become the Swedish resident in Moscow (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 157), a suggestion the Kremlin rejected. The Swedish Affairs files in RGADA contain a copy of the letter informing Beckmann of this decision in 1633 (no day and month are listed). See the inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1633, fol. 90^{v}, No. 13.

103. In the absence of full publication of the archival files, we had to piece together the information on this exchange of residents and in particular the story of the Russian representative from the following sources: Eingorn 1901; Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 158–165; Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 9]: 196–197; Arzymatov 1956: 93–94; *Russko-shvedskie* 1960. Regarding Krusebjörn, the best summary is Schibli

retary Hans Paul on 31 August 1634. In November, the Kremlin drew up instructions for Dmitrii Andreev syn Franzbekov (Alfred Farensbach), a Baltic German who had earlier entered Russian service and converted to Orthodoxy, to represent Russia in Stockholm. He was to serve as a diplomatic go-between, collect information about the ongoing war in Germany and on Swedish or Habsburg diplomatic initiatives, as well as report regarding Polish and Crimean affairs. Given the potential sensitivity of the intelligence, he was to use cipher in reporting it to Moscow. On 27 December 1634 Franzbekov set out for Sweden with a suite of nearly three dozen, among whom was a secretary (*pod'iachii*) to handle his correspondence, Ivan Isakov syn Leont'ev. Franzbekov was supplied with a generous budget, including various goods that obviously were intended as gifts to elicit insider information. However, the understanding was that each government would pay the expenses of the other's resident.

Apparently from the outset Franzbekov's mission was fraught. Even before he arrived in the Swedish capital, he was complaining to his hosts that he was not being treated with dignity appropriate to the tsar's representative and not given adequate accommodations and food. The Swedes seem to have settled the Russian mission in a less than desirable part of town. Assuming that the dates quoted from the archives are correct, even before he was received at court in March 1635, Queen Christina sent a letter to Moscow complaining that a member of his staff had gotten into a fight with a Swede and killed him. On further investigation, the Swedes determined in August that the victim had probably provoked the fight. The two governments then argued about whether it was appropriate that the other's resident should be supported by the host country or rather should be funded by the home government. The Swedish complaints about Russian conduct seem to have had some basis in fact. In its decision to recall Franzbekov on 30 April 1636, the Kremlin chastised him for having engaged in unacceptable activity. Probably more important was the fact that his presence in the Swedish capital had not been of any help in obtaining useful information relevant to the ongoing Russian concerns about Poland. As his recall noted, he had failed to send reports on a regular basis, and what little information he did send was of no value.[104]

None of the news reports published in the *kuranty* series are identified as ones he sent, but of itself that fact does not prove he sent none at all. The assumption seems to have been that a member of his staff could act as courier to deliver his reports to Moscow.

1988: 52–54. Apparently the arrangements for Franzbekov's mission had been completed as early as late August 1633, even though his departure was delayed for over a year. See the inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1633, fol. 89, No. 4.

104. Even though they have been consulted by scholars, many documents pertaining to his mission remain unpublished. The inventory for the Swedish Affairs files in RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1636, fol. 94, No. 3 lists materials connected with Franzbekov's mission, including reports he sent and his end-of-mission report (*stateinyi spisok*). This material will have to be consulted before one can be certain about whether he accomplished much of anything in Stockholm, other than to annoy his hosts and disappoint his employer in Moscow. His career in Russian service continued: among other assignments, he was involved in the heated discussions in Moscow during 1644 regarding the possible marriage between the Danish price Waldemar and the tsar's daughter.

At very least, he wrote to the Kremlin regarding complaints of Russian merchants about their treatment at the hands of the Swedish authorities, who, allegedly, were demanding payment of larger customs duties than they should.[105] It seems likely that the Kremlin's disappointment with Franzbekov explains why there is little evidence during the subsequent decades of any enthusiasm in Moscow for having its own residents abroad.

10.6. The exchange of resident agents: Peter Krusebjörn in Moscow

In contrast to Franzbekov, Krusebjörn would remain as Swedish resident in Moscow until 1647. The history of his activities in Moscow can be but sketched until the full archival records have been published.[106] Having a diplomatic resident or agent in another capital provided the means for diplomatic correspondence to be exchanged without necessarily sending full-fledged ambassadorial missions. Thus much of the communication between the Swedish government and the Kremlin passed through Krusebjörn's hands, presumably in some cases accompanied by news reports on European affairs. Among his correspondents were the Swedish administrators in the Baltic area. Part of his mission was to represent Swedish commercial interests in Russia, which meant that he was in a position to receive newsletters or newspapers from merchants. Since his activity required he interact frequently with Muscovite officials, he had opportunities to cultivate informants who might provide him with news that could be sent back to Sweden about Russian affairs. There is ample evidence from later in the seventeenth century that the Swedish residents in Moscow could be very well informed, and once the international post connections to Moscow were established, could send regular reports via the Swedish administrators in the Baltic. However, Krusebjörn's residency antedated the estab-

105. *Russko-shvedskie* 1960: 99, No. 63; 102–107, Nos. 66–71. Annotations on some the original documents indicate how and when they arrived in Moscow: No. 63, in which Franzbekov requested instructions as to whether he could complain to the Swedes regarding the treatment of the Russian merchants, was delivered in Moscow 17 July 1635 by a Tula resident Osip Kuz'myshev. A response to this was sent back to Franzbekov on 26 August. Nos. 66–69 were delivered in Moscow on 5 December 1635 by Elizar Gol'chin. Nos. 68 and 69 dealt with purchases of cannon by Franzbekov and their shipment to Moscow. Franzbekov reported in No. 70 conversations he had with the Swedish officials on 18 December 1635. Very likely the report arrived on 28 February with another message (No. 71), brought by Andrei Parskii.

106. The inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, compiled by Nikolai Bantysh-Kamenskii (with various annotations by subsequent archivists), does not always reveal much about the contents of individual files. He lists annual collections of documents pertaining to Krusebjörn, with a note that the deposits also include letters sent via him from the Swedish government and the Russian responses to them. These deposits contain translations of news reports, many with the specific information Krusebjörn had turned them in to the Ambassadorial Chancery, but many also are ones turned in by other individuals. The editors of V-K I published Krusebjörn's news reports up through 1639, but for some reason, the deposits connected with him during the rest of his tenure were not tapped for the publication of the *kuranty* in V-K II or V-K III. In V-K II, the few documents relating to Krusebjörn have been published from other archival deposits. Thus, we cannot be certain whether Krusebjörn continued to supply news on a regular basis to the Ambassadorial Chancery in the 1640s. To learn about the frequency of his communication with the Swedish government will require a close examination of the archival files in Stockholm and in the Baltic countries. A summary chronology based on the Russian archival files is in Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 160–165.

lishment of the Russian international post. So his communications were undoubtedly less frequent, and in the best of circumstances, it could take a month and a half for letters sent between Moscow and Stockholm to reach their destination.

It is difficult to know how well Krusebjörn was treated in Moscow, though there is evidence that his relations with the Russian officials were not always smooth and seem, over time, to have deteriorated. In 1640, the Muscovite authorities had told him he should go home, as he no longer had any reason to stay on in Moscow. Furthermore, they insisted that his designated replacement, Peter Antonius Loofeldt, would not be admitted.[107] Krusebjörn petitioned to stay on, although subsequently he tried, unsuccessfully, to have the Russians allow Loofeldt to replace him. In December 1642, the Kremlin issued detailed instructions to the military governor in Pskov how he should respond to the request from the Swedish commandant in Riga that Loofeldt be admitted.[108] The instructions laid out the history of how residents had first been exchanged in the 1630s at a time when Moscow felt a need to have an intelligencer (Franzbekov) in the Swedish capital. Now, not only was there no need to have a Russian resident in Stockholm, but there likewise was no rationale for a Swedish resident in Moscow. Furthermore, the peace treaty between the two countries had never included an agreement about exchanging residents. Difficulties arose on account of trade engaged in by Krusebjörn or those on his staff. The Swedes were claiming that Russian officials had exacted tariffs, where allegedly the agreement had been none were to be paid.[109] The Swedes allegedly were trading in forbidden goods (tobacco and alcoholic drinks) and ran up debts to locally based merchants.[110]

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107. Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 163. However, see ibid.: 164, where he writes that Loofeldt arrived in Moscow to replace Krusebjörn at the end of 1643. It is not clear whether that was actually the case. When Loofeldt was initially refused entry, his government instructed him to go to Narva to wait, and there to report what he could learn about Russian affairs (V-K II, No. 32). On 30 December 1643, still attempting to have Loofeldt admitted, Krusebjörn wrote to the tsar, indicating that the Swedish government had agreed to pay some outstanding debts (run up by Krusebjörn), and enclosed Queen Christina's letter to that effect written in Stockholm on 30 October. See V-K II, Nos. 37, 38. Apparently nothing came of this, as there seems to be no evidence Loofeldt actually took up the residency. On Loofeldt's activity as a 'Russia expert', see our Sec.11.5 and especially its note 47.

108. *AAE* 1836, 3: 466–468, No. 318.

109. On the dispute about tariff payments, see V-K II: 89–90, No. 39.142–147 (Queen Christina's letter to the tsar written in Stockholm on 20 October 1643). Krusebjörn's petition to the tsar delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 25 February 1644 protested long-standing abuse of him and his staff by the Russian officials, the disputes apparently concerning unpaid debts (V-K II: 125–126, No. 58). See also a petition lodged on 4 July 1643 by an English merchant John Tomson (Ivan Tomasov) against Mathias Jonson (Matvei Enson), 'cheloveka shvedskogo rezidenta Petra Kruzberna', for a debt of 640 rubles (RGADA, f. 141, *Opis'* 2, [1643], fol. 146, No. 38). One of those to whom Krusebjörn allegedly owed money was Andries Winius (the father of the Andrei Vinius, who later became the Muscovite postmaster). See RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1648, fols. 103–103^{v}, No. 4. Even if there was some friction between the Swedish resident and the Russian authorities, that did not prevent the tsar from honoring him with a gift of alcoholic drinks from the royal table on 30 January 1644 (RGADA, f. 141, *Opis'* 2, 1644, fol. 171^{v}, unnumbered file).

110. The accusations against Krusebjörn were summarized in the boyars' response in 1647 to the request transmitted by a Swedish envoy that Karl Pomerening be allowed to take up residence in

The Russian effort in 1642–1644 to negotiate a marriage for the tsar's daughter Irina with the Danish prince Waldemar (about which, see Chapter 11) undoubtedly complicated Krusebjörn's position, given traditional Danish-Swedish rivalry in the Baltic. The Danes were courting Moscow for a possible alliance against Sweden. Ultimately the marriage negotiations foundered on the unwillingness of Waldemar to convert to Orthodoxy, and the Russians side-stepped the proposal for an alliance. However, the two Scandinavian countries drifted into war. It seems that in this context, Krusebjörn may have been actively working in Moscow to undermine the ongoing negotiations for the marriage, and, as we shall see, he clearly was happy to provide news about continuing Swedish military successes in the West.[111] When an imposter 'count' Lev Aleksandrovich Shlakovskii – who had arrived in Moscow with Danish backing in 1643 – and his entourage tried to break into the resident's compound on 28 September 1643 and a few days later openly threatened Krusebjörn on the street, the Swede protested vigorously to the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K II: 50, No. 13). At very least, even if the attacks were not instigated by the Danes, this would seem to be evidence of some desire to undercut Krusebjörn's position in Moscow. Nonetheless, the Swede stayed on until Karl Pomerening arrived in 1647 and the Russians allowed Krusebjörn to depart with his wife and children.

Even though there is no direct evidence about the Russians' response to the news reports Krusebjörn submitted over the years, a review of those translations suggests that they constituted a sizeable portion of the foreign news being translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery. The headings in the Russian translations generally specify that he had turned them in to the chancery ('chto podal v Posolskom prikaze sveiskoi agent Petr Kruzbiorn'), which suggests that the Russian officials were not intercepting and opening his mail. Whether he felt compelled to share the news is impossible to know, but certainly much of it would have served the interest of Swedish policy. He may well have withheld information that would have been detrimental to those interests. Some of the translations recorded in the Swedish Affairs files with no indication he provided the originals have not been included in V-K I but are worth mentioning here to provide a fuller picture of what was being obtained in Moscow.

The first item is listed as 'A translation from the terms of rule under Queen Christina adopted by the parliament in Stockholm, consisting of 65 articles.'[112] This document

Moscow as Krusebjörn's replacement. But the Russians then decided, out of 'friendship', to allow the new resident to come at least temporarily, with the warning he would be expelled if caught engaging in improper conduct. See Solov'ev, bk. 5, [vol. 10]: 606.

111. The Danish resident Peter Bibi in Stockholm wrote to Peter Marselis (then in Copenhagen) on 7 October 1643 indicating how incensed Swedish officials were about the negotiations for the marriage. Bibi reported that Krusebjörn in Moscow now had limited respect from the Russians (*v prostoi chesti u ruskikh liudei*), who were wanting to have him recalled. The reason was that the Russians no longer had a resident in Stockholm, and Krusebjörn had been doing everything possible to hinder the negotiations with the Danes. See V-K II: 58, No. 22.

112. RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1634, fol. 91^{v}, No. 4.

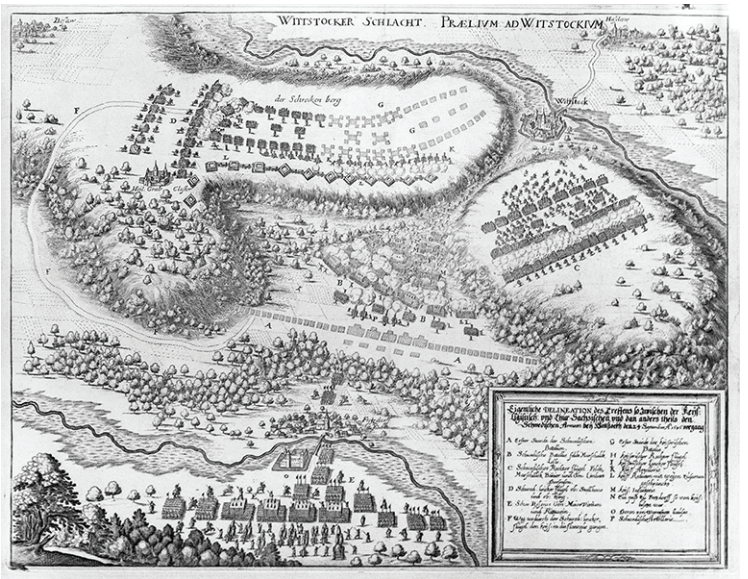

FIG. 10.10. The Battle of Wittstock. Engraving from *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. 3 (1639), after p. 634.

occupies some 43 folios, suggesting it may be a full translation of the formal conditions drawn up by the Swedish authorities for Queen Christina's accession to the throne and the period of the regency during her minority. The file is dated 29 July, about a month prior to Krusebjörn's arrival in Moscow. There is no information about how the Russians received it.

The second item is 'A translation of the treaty concluded at Stuhmsdorf between Swedish Queen Christina and Polish King Władysław for a truce of 26 years.'[113] The Russian interest in this treaty of Stuhmsdorf (now Sztumska Wieś in Poland), which France had brokered, would have been considerable, since it extended the truce of Altmark which the Swedes had concluded with Poland back in 1629. By making some significant territorial concessions to Poland, the Swedes got Władysław to renounce his claims to the Swedish throne and now could concentrate their forces on the war against the empire. Any idea of possible Swedish help for Muscovy in a future conflict with Poland was now dead. The file is dated 2 September 1635, presumably a backward conversion of the September 12 date of the treaty.[114]

The third item is an essentially complete Russian translation of a German pamphlet published in Stockholm about the Swedish victory in Brandenburg over imperial and Saxon troops at Wittstock on 24 September 1636 (FIG. 10.10).[115] Krusebjörn submitted

113. RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1635, fol. 93^{v}, No. 6. While there is no specific evidence, it seems likely that the text of the treaty would have been sent to Krusebjörn from Stockholm or obtained there by Franzbekov. On the treaty, see Wilson 2009: 577. The Latin text of the treaty and a facsimile of the manuscript can be found at https://www.ieg-friedensvertraege.de/treaty/1635%20IX%2012%20Waffenstillstand%20von%20Stuhmsdorf/t-108-3-de.html?h=3.

114. Bantysh-Kamenskii (4: 160–161) lists this treaty as one of several items Krusebjörn delivered to the Russians on behalf of his government in 1635. Letters dated 14 August and 17 August were delivered to the Russians by him respectively on 3 January and 15 March 1636, suggesting that there was infrequent and much delayed communication. Bantysh-Kamenskii indicates that Krusebjörn delivered the text of the treaty too but gives no date as to when it arrived in Moscow.

115. V-K I: 167–171, No. 35. Schibli (1988: 95) stated that the original was *Relation. Was vor eine herrliche grosse Victori* [...] *bey Wittstock in der Marck Brandenburg bey vorgangenem Haupt-Treffen der Königl. Mayst. zu Schweden* [...] *gegönnet unde verliehen*. Stockholm: H. Kayser, 1636. Maier 1997: 63–64 has identified also a pirated German edition (probably published in

the original to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 18 January 1637.[116] On 5 March, he would deliver a 'German newsletter' (*nemetskoe vestovoe pismo*) containing a long account of the same battle, reported by some 'distinguished soldier'.[117] It is possible the source for this was either a separate or a special number of a newspaper, even though that is not specified by the title in the Russian translation. The accounts overlap in many particulars; it seems likely they had a common source. By the time the second account was translated in Moscow, the news was already almost half a year old.

Also on March 5, Krusebjörn handed in both a published German newspaper (*vestovye pechatnye listy*) and a newsletter (*vestovoe pismo*). The translators selected only about half the material from the newspaper, an untitled one that was published in Danzig in early 1637 containing news reports primarily from late December.[118] They translated in full the first two articles, about the Swedish campaigns in Saxony, but omitted a long article about ceremonies at the electoral congress being held in Regensburg, at which Emperor Ferdinand managed to consolidate support for continuing the war in the face of the recent series of defeats (see Wilson 2009: 585–587). He had to have his younger son approved to become the Elector of Trier (as another article from the same newspaper, translated in Moscow, indicated). However, that the Trier question had been postponed and, more importantly, that the congress on 22 December approved the designation of the emperor's older son as King of the Romans and thus his successor was news that never made it into this number of the Danzig newspaper. The vote approving the succession was timely, since Emperor Ferdinand died within a month of the end of the congress. The rest of the newspaper, much of the news concerning the activities of the imperial forces, was translated in its entirety. The (presumably handwritten) newsletter submitted by Krusebjörn had apparently been compiled in its entirety from reports sent to the writer from Stralsund. It contained a considerable amount of information on the military progress of the war and a long report about an impending treaty by which the

Stralsund) and a Swedish edition published in Stockholm by Kayser. Her linguistic analysis demonstrates that the Stockholm German edition was the one used by the translators in Moscow, who made but occasional mistakes. On the battle, see Wilson (2009: 580–583), who judges it to have been "one of the most important battles of the war."

116. It may be that Krusebjörn's acquisition of foreign news was from sources other than what his government sent him. Most likely instead he was obtaining the newspapers and newsletters from the European merchants in Moscow with whom he interacted. The dates of his news submissions do not match with the information about when he handed in messages from Stockholm to the Russian officials. According to Bantysh-Kamenskii (4: 161), the Swedish resident turned in on 13 August 1637 a letter written in Stockholm the previous November, and on 1 January 1638 letters written in August 1636 and one written in June 1637. Bantysh-Kamenskii's data are somewhat puzzling, since they seem to suggest that Krusebjörn received the official messages from Stockholm with huge delays (and infrequently) or for some reason may simply have delayed turning them in.

117. V-K I: 174–176, No. 37, misdated 1637 by the editors.

118. For the identification, see Schibli 1988: 96. The 'heading' for the paper (catalogued by Bogel and Blühm as Z53) is merely '1637. Num. 2'. While the header for the Russian translation uses the plural to refer to the printed newspapers received, the text which follows seems to come only from that single issue of the one paper.

English would provide military support for France. The report listed several key articles of the agreement.

This information was certainly fresher than the news about the Battle of Wittstock, whose consequences were beginning to play out in the subsequent military confrontations and at the Regensburg congress. The reports would have provided Moscow with a snapshot of some of the important developments involving the Swedish forces at least for the relatively narrow period of late autumn 1636. However, the published *kuranty* contain nothing to indicate that in Moscow the significance and outcome of the Regensburg congress, the first imperial assembly to convene since 1630, became known and was appreciated. Understandably, if the Kremlin could obtain news compiled or published in locations such as Danzig and Stralsund, there was a reasonable chance that it could keep abreast of key developments relating to Moscow's concerns in the Baltic region. However, there may have been no urgency to learn more about the affairs of the empire, once the crisis in the south erupted with the Cossack seizure of Azov in June of 1637.

While Dutch newspapers were important sources of foreign news in Moscow from their beginnings in the seventeenth century, the German papers published in Berlin and the Baltic cities of Hamburg, Danzig, Stettin, Königsberg and Riga ultimately may have been more important, even though the substantial gaps in extant holdings of them can make it difficult to determine the exact relationship between the sources and the Russian translations. A good example is the single compilation devoted entirely to news from 1637, which is based on *vestovye pechatnye listy* that the Ambassadorial Chancery had received from the Dutch merchant David Mikolaev (Ruts) on 9 March 1638, nearly three months after the most recent of the datelined reports (V-K I: 176–182, No. 38). Ruts' primary employment in Russia seems to have been for Danish interests. There are several possibilities for the sources of the translation. Roughly the first half of the file (fols. 1–6) likely derives from one or more German newspapers. Unfortunately, there are no extant copies (with the appropriate dates) of the most probable source, the Hamburg *WZ*, which we know at other times was received in Moscow. However, we do have a long run of the *Einkommende Wochentliche Zeitung* (*EWZ*) for the last months of 1637. Articles in several of its numbers correspond closely to those in the Russian translation.[119] It was quite common for essentially the same reports to appear in different newspapers, which borrowed from one another or otherwise drew on the same sources. Moreover, given what we know about the tendency in this period for the translations in Moscow to include large portions or the entirety of their sources, it seems somewhat unlikely that they would have selected so little from half a dozen different newspaper issues. This suspicion is confirmed by the subsequent section of the news compendium starting on a

119. The correspondences here are as follows (identified by their datelines in the order of translation): Paris 2 Dec. (*EWZ* 1637/227, first four paragraphs); Vienna 2 Dec. (?*EWZ* 1637/211, condensed from the final paragraph of the entry, dated 12 Dec.); Münster 16 Dec., and Dunkirk 14 Dec. (*EWZ* 1637/229, the the translation reversing the order of original reports); Lippe river 15 Dec. (*EWZ* 1637/226, condensed); Em river 16 Dec.; Paderborn 16 Dec. (*EWZ* 1637/226).

new sheet (fol. 7), most (if not all) of which has to be based on a single issue of the Amsterdam newspaper, *TVQ*, No. 50, published on 12 December 1637.[120]

It is difficult to imagine why some of the news that was translated here would have been of real interest (or at least understood) in Moscow, even if for an experienced international merchant like Ruts, who may have read his papers regularly, a lot would have made sense. There are countless names of places and people involved in negotiations or military actions who would have been hard to identify. Unlike in some of the material submitted by Krusebjörn, there is little here that could be related directly to Swedish activities in the war. There probably would have been some interest in the report about the Spanish treasure fleet (a topic that appears in other *kuranty* translations). One item reported news from Constantinople that a 'Tatar king' named Cantemir had been executed but would seem to have garbled whatever in fact happened. A small item from the Spanish Netherlands mentioned the imprisonment of the former commandant of the city of Breda for failing to prepare supplies to withstand its siege. This could have evoked some recognition in the Kremlin, since we know that among the translations in the Dutch Affairs files there were the terms of the treaty concluded by the Prince of Orange when he took the city.[121] That very likely would have been from a Dutch source.

In the Swedish Affairs archival file that brings together the documents pertaining to Krusebjörn for 1638 are three sets of news items (V-K I: 182–192, Nos. 39–41) translated from the originals he turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery. The first, whose source was a letter written in Latin and German, reported on a meeting of the Polish Diet on 10 March, followed by other news from Poland into the middle of April. It includes a report on a Russian embassy in Poland – the Kremlin was always interested in knowing what was being said about Russian embassies abroad. Some of the material seems to be in the form of diary entries, probably reflecting the fact that there was an informant in Poland who was thus providing good intelligence information, recorded on a regular basis. The second of Krusebjörn's submissions was a 'newsletter' (unpublished), delivered on 18 August. Since its translation immediately precedes in the archival manuscript that of the first item, it is at least possible the two were received and translated at the same time. If so, the news from Poland was rather dated. That in the 'newsletter' is relatively fresh, the oldest report one from Hamburg dated 19 May, but two others from Hamburg dated 2 June and 9 June. While there is one date for Amsterdam (5 June), the other items

120. We have not seen the extant copy of this newspaper (in the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris), but the descriptive listing in Weduwen (2017: 282) is sufficient to establish it as the source. All of the locations and dates he lists coincide with the ones in the Russian text. The only uncertainty is the final section of the Russian text, which likely corresponds to the miscellaneous news items typically placed at the end of the Dutch newspapers which Der Weduwen designates simply as 'domestic'. The title line in the Russian text, 'Vesti iz roznykh mest 1637-go godu', translates the Dutch, the date having been added by the translators, so that the title parallels that translated from the German papers at the beginning of the file.

121. RGADA, f. 50, *Opis'* 1, 1637, fol. 26^{v}, No. 4. The file is dated October 1637, many months before the receipt of the newspapers from Ruts, but that presumably is derived from the date the capitulation was signed, not the date when the text was received and translated.

all seem to be of 'Baltic' origin: the three from Hamburg, one from Lübeck, one from Wismar. Internal references tell of news being received from Breslau from a courier met near Stettin and news arriving from Cologne and Augsburg. So there is much here that fits into a pattern whereby Krusebjörn was providing sources with a focus suited to the interests of the policy makers in the Kremlin. Even if we might suspect German sources behind the newsletter he submitted in August, there can be little question but that the third item he submitted (on 22 November) included the Dutch newspaper *CID*, No. 30, published in Amsterdam on 24 July, and possibly a later issue of that same paper.[122] The focus of much of this news is on the battles being waged in the Spanish Netherlands, along the borders with Holland and in the North Sea, a subject that would have to interest Moscow, given the importance of the Dutch trade. However, there also is news on the political disorders in France, which must have had a negative impact on the French military effort in the larger war. These files from Krusebjörn are few, submitted some months apart in the second half of the year on only two or three occasions. This has to raise questions about how much other news might have been arriving in Moscow from the West during the year and whether what Krusebjörn obtained and supplied came with any regularity.

Several of the *kuranty* translations which have been published for 1639 derive from materials provided by Krusebjörn to the Ambassadorial Chancery.[123] He submitted news on 22 January (three items), 3 April, and 9 August. In addition, he provided news orally, when questioned in the chancery on 28 February. One exception is news delivered some time in April (possibly on the same day Krusebjörn provided news or soon thereafter) by the Hamburg merchant Peter Marselis, who later would become one of the most important reporters of foreign news for the Russians and a key figure in the early history of the Muscovite foreign post.[124] These translated reports included material from late July,

122. With the apparent omission of one report from Cologne, the datelines in the translation suggest it includes all of the reports in that issue of the newspaper through the entry from the Palatine headquarters at Zevenaar. It is possible that the translation entry 'iz bolshikh tabor' could come from a later issue, where there were additional reports from the camp of the Prince of Orange at Noordgeest. The final items on fols. 201–203 are likely from a different source: No. 33 of the paper, published on 14 August, includes an entry from Wesel. The absence of a dateline for the report starting on fol. 201 means we cannot be sure of the dates for the items which follow. Both the translated title ('chto delalos vo Italianskoi i v Nemetskoi zemle') and the correspondence of the datelines confirm the identification with Der Weduwen's listing for No. 20 of this newspaper (Weduwen 2017: 220). Since the copy he examined in the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris is not available online, so far we have not been able to make a direct comparison with the Russian text.

123. V-K I: 204–207, Nos. 44–47; 209–214, Nos. 49–51.

124. The Marselis document is V-K I: 208, No. 48. All of these documents come from the folder in the Swedish Affairs files devoted to materials connected with Krusebjörn's residency. The pattern of preservation of such documents frequently suggests connections among them. Thus, the three documents translated on 22 January are on consecutive folios in the current numbering. The translation of the newsletter submitted on 3 April is followed immediately by the translation of the news submitted by Marselis, and the two sets of news submitted on 9 August are on consecutive folios. Of course to be certain about possible connections (translation or copying at the same time) would require careful palaeographic examination of the manuscripts, something which the editors of V-K I did not undertake.

mid- or late autumn 1638; January and February, May and June 1639, but nothing like continuous coverage. So it would be difficult to argue here, at least on the basis of the published *kuranty*, that the Muscovite government was keeping itself particularly well informed regarding European affairs.

A sense of the possible ways news could come into the hands of Krusebjörn can be gained from the cryptic account of his oral deposition in February, in which he told the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery about the French capture of Jan Kazimierz, brother of the Polish king and his eventual successor, on a mission to try to negotiate an alliance with Spain against France. Poland and Venice were negotiating about trying to obtain his release by attacking France. The Swedes, reported Krusebjörn, had finally taken the city of Brünn (Brno) after a three-year siege. The final bit of information was that the Habsburg emperor had a new son, named Maximilian (born 21 December 1638). The interrogation record is interesting not so much for the cryptic bits of news but for what it tells us about Krusebjörn's contacts. He learned this news from the courier who had just arrived in Moscow with messages for the Holstein mission that was currently there. Either the courier, the Holstein ambassador or Krusebjörn (the antecedent to the 'on zhe' is not clear) requested that he be able to visit the ambassador from Persia who was in town. The courier, named Jacob, was also interrogated. He indicated he had given the Swedish resident a newssheet (*listok vestovoi*) but had no additional news he could report. The translations we currently have seem not to include one from this newssheet.

Highlights of this news obtained in 1639 contain a substantial report from Constantinople dated 31 July 1638 concerning the death of the Orthodox patriarch, the struggle for succession to him, and news related to the Cossack occupation of Azov. Both subjects would have been of real interest in Moscow, and we know from an annotation that this news was read to the tsar. The next item in the file contains a translation of a report in German which had been sent by Jakob King, the Swedish commandant, to Chancellor Oxenstierna on 27 October 1638. The subject is the defense of Minden, a strategically located town on the river Weser in Westphalia, which the Swedes had captured in 1634. The last of these three newsletters which Krusebjörn submitted on 22 January 1639 was one in French concerning events in Spain, Alsace and Italy which involved France, as well as a rumor that the Orthodox patriarch had been deposed and strangled and the pope was seriously ill. The form of these reports is typical for ones trusted news agents might send to their regular contacts. Even though the letter about Minden was addressed to the Swedish chancellor, that does not necessarily mean Krusebjörn would have received it from Stockholm. It could also have been copied and distributed elsewhere. The newsletter he submitted in April apparently contained only one short item, a report sent from Venice in January: the sinking of a ship in Puglia due to a storm; the arrival of a French merchant vessel from Constantinople; plans for an international naval campaign against the Turks. In August, Krusebjörn submitted another short newsletter,

the one item datelined Stockholm 26 June 1639 concerning a major military victory by the Swedish General Banér over the imperial forces. Although the report does not say as much, this probably was the culmination of a successful campaign season, since the Swedes, short of men and supplies, would soon have to retreat from Bohemia (see Wilson 2009: 614–615). We get the impression that with these submissions Krusebjörn was at least in part trying to select items that he thought might be of particular interest to the Russians, not just turning over whatever news happened to come into his hands. He did deliver on 9 August a printed newspaper, with a broad range of news for late May and early June, the most recent item one from Brussels dated 5 June. News from Stralsund and Danzig was older.

There is one more long set of *kuranty* translations (which at some point were removed from the Moscow archive) covering European events for June and July 1639.[125] However, there is no indication as to who brought the sources, what exactly they were, and when they arrived. The most recent report is datelined Danzig 28 July and concerns tariff disputes with Poland, suggesting perhaps that we might be dealing with a Danzig newspaper. In general the coverage makes it likely the sources were German newspapers. It seems unlikely that the newspapers could have arrived in Moscow any earlier than late August or September.

This set of translations of the June and July news include articles on military events from almost every corner of Europe, many certainly remote to any Russian interests. The death of two of the Emperor's sons was reported from Vienna, and there were detailed accounts of events in Italy and Switzerland. We can imagine that news about the Dutch fleet under Admiral Tromp would have attracted attention, as would a report from Stettin concerning Swedish military preparations. News from England about negotiations of the English with the Scots (No. 42.5) may have been far from the ken of the tsar, but it is important to remember that a lot of Scots entered Russian service in the seventeenth century (most famously, later, Patrick Gordon). So perhaps someone involved with the production of the *kuranty* would have found that news to be of interest. As mentioned above (and to be discussed below), the Kremlin acquired many texts of treaties during the seventeenth century, some arguably of marginal relevance to the making of Russian foreign policy. In some cases, the sources were separate publications, but frequently the main points of treaties were also reported in the newspapers. The final item in this set

125. V-K I: 192–204, Nos. 42, 43. The manuscript is now in the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg (MS BAN 32.14.11, No. 7) along with other original scrolls (now separated into individual sheets) containing *kuranty* translations from later in the seventeenth century. Probably the manuscripts were removed from the Moscow archive at the time of the abortive project to publish the *kuranty* at the beginning of the twentieth century. The somewhat chaotic chronology of the entries suggests that the translations were made from several sources, and the folios as we now have them have been shuffled out of order. The editors of V-K I wrongly dated this set of translations to 1638. Proof that the news is from 1639 is in the reports of the death within a week of each other in June of two sons of Emperor Ferdinand III (Nos. 42.7 and 42.18), and the news about the negotiation and treaty between the Scots and the English discussed below. The catalogue of the manuscripts in BAN provides the correct date, 1639 (see Kopanev et al. 1965: 326).

of news reports summarizes each of the seven articles of the agreement reached on 17 June between the Scots and the English. This was the Peace of Berwick, which concluded the so-called First Bishop's War and eventually would contribute to the downfall of King Charles I because of the concessions he made. Although not mentioned in these news items, Alexander Leslie, first Earl of Leven, who had been an important military commander for Sweden in the Thirty Years War and played a key role in the Battle of Wittstock, led the Scottish forces; subsequently he had important roles in the English Civil war and in the final stages of the war on the Continent.[126]

In short, even though it is possible to make a case that these translations of the June and July news could have had some relevance to policy makers in the Kremlin, there is little evidence here of real selectivity. Very likely, as had been the practice earlier when relatively few newspapers were being obtained, the translators simply routinely translated what they had in hand. Only a really well informed regular reader of the news would have been able to appreciate such a widely ranging snapshot of European events that had occurred over about a month or so, assuming that the news had arrived with a delay of only some weeks, not many months later.

Even though as early as the next year, 1640, it seems the Russian authorities were trying to push Krusebjörn out the door, that fact is insufficient to explain why there is a gap of almost two-and-a-half years before there is concrete evidence that he again submitted foreign news to the Ambassadorial Chancery. The simple explanation would seem to be that the editors of the *Vesti-Kuranty* series never looked in the Krusebjörn folders in the Swedish Affairs files, which they had mined for the late 1630s.[127] What they publish that is attributed to Krusebjörn in the 1640s comes from other archival deposits. On 11 January 1643, he provided the Ambassadorial Chancery with a printed pamphlet on the battle at Breitenfeld in which, on 23 October of the previous year, the Swedes under General Tortensson defeated the imperial forces led by Piccolomini.[128] Both sides suffered significant losses, but it was still a major victory that helped secure Swedish control of upper Silesia – not that this one report anticipated the consequences. In the aftermath, Leipzig soon surrendered to the Swedes, and Brandenburg decided it was

126. On Leslie, see Stevenson 2007 and Dukes et al. 2009: 71–77.

127. There surely was much more foreign news being obtained up through the middle of the 1640s than is evident in V-K II. Apart from their having apparently ignored the Swedish Affairs files, the editors of V-K II passed over other material that presumably should have been included. For V-K I, the editors had selected some of the news documents from RGADA, f. 141 (*Prikaznye dela starykh let*). However, for V-K II, they failed to do so. RGADA, f. 141, *Opis'* 2, 1643, fol. 146^{v}, No. 67, lists one relatively short file from October 1643 containing 'Translations of foreign news from various cities', and a very sizeable file (1644, fol. 162, No. 1) containing for the first eight months of 1644 'Military governors' reports from various border towns, news about Polish affairs and correspondence with Polish officials.' It is possible that copies of some of the military governors' reports are the ones published from a different archival file in V-K II: 139–142, No. 66; 144–146, No. 68.

128. V-K II: 11–14, No. 1. Although there are several contemporary broadsides depicting the battle, and at least one incomplete descriptive pamphlet (all of them catalogued in the VD 17 database), so far the source for this translation has not been located. See Maier 1997: 79.

prudent to conclude a truce with them. It would last to the end of the war (Wilson 2009: 636–639). Only beginning in 1645 do we again find newsletter submissions from Krusebjörn, and occasionally then to the end of his stay in Moscow he delivered additional newspapers to the Ambassadorial Chancery.[129] However, this does not mean that the 1640s were devoid of foreign news in Moscow. On the contrary, between 1642 and 1645, there was a flood of information. The history of who was responsible for much of it is the subject of what follows. The story raises interesting questions about whether the government in Moscow now finally was making a serious attempt to obtain foreign news on a regular basis.

129. For the last of them, see V-K III: 78–82, No. 22; 121–130, No. 45. There also is one letter sent to Krusebjörn from Stockholm by the former secretary of Peter Marselis, one Christian Shimmeliar, which may have been obtained when the translators opened a packet of mail addressed to Marselis in 1646 (ibid.: 144–146, No. 51).

CHAPTER 11

‘Justus Filimonatus’, Lev Shlakovskii and the Acquisition of Foreign News in Moscow in 1643–1644: a Case Study

One of the most interesting episodes in the history of the acquisition of foreign news in Russia prior to the establishment of the regular foreign post in 1665 involves correspondence between a ‘Justus Filimonatus’, based in Swedish Livonia, and a Prince Lev Aleksandrovich Shlakovskii in Moscow.[1] We know about some four dozen of the letters written by Filimonatus between September 1643 and June 1644, most of them preserved in translation, and have as well quite a lot of the detailed news material which he sent. Shlakovskii responded, but occasionally it seems, the content of his letters is known only from their citation by Filimonatus. The official government translator based in Pskov, Matvei Veiger, played an important role in facilitating the correspondence. Given the substantial documentation of this episode, its close scrutiny provides details about the transmission of foreign news which cannot otherwise be adequately studied from the often fragmentary preservation of materials published in the *Vesti-Kuranty*. The evidence underscores what we know about the importance of perlustration of foreign mail in Muscovy. The identity of Filimonatus, a functionary in the Swedish administration in Livonia, is of interest as an example of the role played by many suppliers of both manuscript and printed news to European elites.

11.1. The writers and the inception of the correspondence

Until recently, little had been written about the correspondents, and the identity of Filimonatus, who was using a pseudonym, had not been known. Over a century ago, the history of Shlakovskii, an imposter who arrived in Moscow under false pretenses, had been documented in connection with his conversion to Orthodoxy, though without ref-

1. The correspondence has been published in V-K II. Roland Schibli (1988: 56–58) discussed the activity of Filimonatus, citing this publication of the correspondence, but stopped short of identifying who he actually was. This chapter is a slightly revised version of the English original for the Russian translation in Waugh 2022b (its summary is in Waugh 2021b) and has not previously appeared in English. In this discussion we have followed the Russian form of the surname as ‘Filimonatus’, although we note from the few preserved originals of his letters in German that he spells it ‘Philemonatius’. About those originals, see below, note 21.

erence to this correspondence.[2] Stepan Mikhailovich Shamin was the first to identify Filimonatus as Laurentius (Lorentz) Grelle, a highly placed secretary in the Swedish administration in Riga, a conclusion that we had reached independently of Shamin at about the same time.[3] While Shamin has emphasized the episode as evidence about espionage for the acquisition of foreign news, our interpretation emphasizes the personal interests of the correspondents. There is more to be said about the two individuals, the reason for their correspondence, and its contents, all of which will be treated here. We conclude, as did Shamin, that there is little here to suggest an initiative on the part of the Muscovite government to establish a regular and reliable channel for obtaining foreign news some two decades before that goal was actually accomplished by the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post. Yet it is reasonable to characterize as a missed opportunity the Russian failure to take advantage of what Grelle had to offer.

A brief review of the Russian efforts to arrange a royal marriage between Irina Mikhailovna, the daughter of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, and the Danish prince Waldemar will help to set the stage here and introduce the dramatis personae.[4] In 1640, the tsar began to explore the possibilities for a foreign marriage for his daughter. The initial inquiries included interrogation of the merchants David Ruts and Peter Marselis, who represented Danish interests in Moscow and reported somewhat different accounts of the sons of Danish King Christian IV. One of them, Prince Waldemar, his son from a morganatic spouse, was worth looking at closely. The experienced translator Ivan Fomin (Hans Helmesen/John Helmes) was dispatched in December to Copenhagen, where he determined that Waldemar was legitimate and was able to obtain his portrait to bring back to Moscow. Waldemar, in the company of Marselis, then came to Moscow as part of a Danish embassy in late summer 1641. The following spring, a high-level Russian embassy was sent to Copenhagen with secret instructions that it try to obtain permission for Waldemar to marry the tsaritsa. When the Russian ambassadors incautiously made

2. Tsvetaev 1890: 355–370. Tsvetaev's account expands on what Barsukov had written earlier about Shlakovskii; see Barsukov 1881–1904, 3: 243–253. Among Tsvetaev's sources (listed by him on p. 355 n. 1) was the substantial archival file focusing on the conversion of Shlakovskii and several of his retainers, now in RGADA, f. 150, op. 1, 1642, No. 8.

3. See Shamin 2020b: 89–94. Ahead of the completion of his doctoral dissertation, he generously shared with us in an e-mail on 24 September 2019 what he had written on Filimonatus. Heiko Droste and Ingrid Maier have provided additional information about the materials which remain to be fully analyzed in Swedish collections. Some letters which Grelle wrote in his own name are an important part of the documentation, their Russian translations published in V-K II along with documents connected with Veiger. Droste (2021), who will be further cited below, helps us to understand what Grelle was attempting to achieve, even if Grelle is not one of the individuals whose biographies he has examined in his prosopographical study.

4. The history of these negotiations and the debates in Moscow about the marriage is well known. For a chronicle of the Russian relations with Denmark, see Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 221–226. The most complete treatment, including the long stay by Waldemar when he returned to Moscow, is in Golubtsov 1891. His Chapter 2 provides details of the negotiations leading to the arrival of Waldemar and his first interactions there with the tsar. Tsvetaev (1890: Ch. VI) discusses the negotiations in the broader context of Muscovite marriage politics. See also Nottbeck 1900.

the point that the Protestant Waldemar would have to convert to Orthodoxy, the negotiations collapsed, and on their return, after intensive interrogations, the envoys were reprimanded for having botched the mission.

Within a week of the Russian embassy's departure from Copenhagen, King Christian wrote a letter on 15 August 1642, recommending that a 'count' Mathias Sigismund Shlakov (aff Schlaukoff) be received into Russian service. Armed with this letter, Shlakov traveled to Riga, where he made the acquaintance of a 'secretary' Laurentius Grelle, in the process getting to know the members of his household.[5] Shlakov then headed off to Russia and arrived in Pskov, where he received permission to proceed to the Russian capital. In Pskov, Shlakov wrote back to Grelle to inform him of his safe arrival; Grelle's reply, written in Riga on 7 December, had to be forwarded from Pskov to the addressee in Moscow (V-K II: 16–17, No. 3).

Much of that letter was devoted to foreign military news from various fronts. At the end, Grelle indicated Shlakov could learn details from (enclosed) newsletters. While there is no direct attribution to Grelle as the source, it is likely that the newsletter translation published as V-K II, No. 2, which follows Grelle's letter immediately in the original manuscript, is from one of Grelle's enclosures.[6] Its initial item is from Danzig, dated 23 November, with a report that had arrived by ship from Lübeck. What then follows is Dutch and English news. The final item is puzzling for its chronology, a report from a meeting of the Polish Diet, datelined Warsaw 12 February, which actually quotes from what seems to have been a speech concerning the need for careful consideration before Poland should commit to new military ventures. Could this be old news, from February 1642? Assuming that this set of news reports came from Grelle, it suggests something about his network of informants, which logically would include Danzig but also, as he promised those for whom he wished to work as an intelligencer, sources based in Poland.

Grelle and Shlakov play starring roles in our drama. Shlakov seems to have been a consummate liar, having concocted a false resumé to enlist the support of the king of Denmark, possibly fooling Grelle as to his real identity, then misleading the Russian of-

5. In the subsequent discussion, we will use the surname 'Shlakov', rather than the baptismal name, Shlakovskii, which he assumed on conversion in Moscow. The 'envelopes' in which Grelle sent his letters to Shlakov are addressed (in French) to 'Leo Alexandrowicz Schlackuff' and (in German) to 'Leoni Alexandrowicz Schlakuff' (see RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1643, No. 7, fols. 4ᵛ, 5ᵛ, 6ᵛ). Key documents for learning about Shlakov's Riga connections are V-K II, No. 3 (a letter from Grelle dated 7 December 1642), and Nos. 30 and 70 (from 'Filimonatus'). Grelle did write several letters in his own name, where the Russian translators rendered it as Иреллесми or Хреллен, probably because they could not decipher the signature. See, for example, his signature on a letter he wrote to Johan Oxenstierna on 15 May 1643 (RA [Sthlm] E 951). In one of his later letters to Shlakov (V-K II: 168, No. 74.476), likely written in April 1644, 'Filimonatus' mentions that his service in providing news for the Russians began a year earlier – in other words, roughly in spring 1643. However, his correspondence with Veiger in Pskov, which may have involved sending news, presumably began in the previous year.

6. V-K II, No. 3 precedes No. 2 in the archival manuscript (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1643, No. 5, fols. 45–49 and 50–53 respectively). In the case of No. 2, at least the dates prior to the final item from Warsaw are consistent with what Grelle could have had in hand at the time he wrote to Shlakov.

ficials in Pskov and in Moscow. Who he actually was, other than a self-serving scoundrel and imposter, may never be known. Later, when King Christian had learned of the deception and informed Moscow, he referred to Shlakov as a Pole who had been in service in Poland.[7]

Even though our observations still need to be supplemented by a careful examination of the sources concerning Swedish administration in the Baltic lands, we know that Laurentius (Lorentz) Grelle was indeed a highly placed functionary who had an important career.[8] A Laurentius Grell matriculated at the University of Rostock in 1627, where the records indicate he came from Pernau in Livonia (today, Pärnu in Estonia).[9] Assuming it is the same individual, in 1636, early in his professional career, he was in Stralsund just prior to the Swedish takeover, working for the Duke of Pomerania. He wrote from there to Bengt Bengtsson Oxenstierna, then Governor General in Livonia and Ingria, stressing his connections for obtaining news and offering his services. That 'job application' was successful, as he next appears, at least in 1642 and 1643, employed in Riga as a secretary to Oxenstierna, and involved in sending newsletters to Johan Oxenstierna, then Governor General in Stettin. Included in the letters is news about Russian affairs, Danish matters, and Swedish agents. When Bengt Oxenstierna was indisposed, Grelle seems to have written some of the letters in his name. Oxenstierna died in Riga on 6 June 1643, and was succeeded by Hermann Wrangel, who died on 10 December, and then for a year by Anders Eriksson, who had already accumulated considerable experience in Riga under the previous governors general. These changes in the Swedish administration in Riga may help explain why Grelle decided to seek other employment as a news agent for Russia. However, Grelle continued in Swedish service, and later was ennobled as Von Rutensköld/Rautenschildt. So we have here an educated, experienced and highly

7. The king's second letter, apparently as yet unpublished, written in Copenhagen on 17 April 1643, named him Matthias Sigismund 'aff Schlaukoff'. See Shcherbachev (1893: 223), who summarizes the letter from the archives in Copenhagen. Olearius (1656: 285) states the king specified that Shlakov had been 'an underling of Count Caspar von Dehnhoff in Poland'/ "ein untersaß des Graffen Casper von Dehnhoff in Polen". It is conceivable that, whatever he really knew about Shlakov at the time he first wrote, King Christian IV recommended him to Moscow in the hope that he thereby could plant a secret agent in the Russian capital. If so, Shlakov would disappoint. Perhaps the king already knew about Shlakov's real identity when he wrote the letter of recommendation.

8. We are grateful to Heiko Droste (e-mails of 19, 20 and 30 September 2019) for the information concerning Grelle based on documents from Riga and Stockholm, which will still require detailed study. His letters from 1636 are in Universitetsbiblioteket (Uppsala), Livonica, Vol. 1; the Oxenstierna letters are in RA (Sthlm), Oxenstiernska samlingen E 951 and E 980. There is additional material in the Swedish administrative files in the archives in Riga. Archival inventories suggest that the material on Grelle is to be found under several variants of his name: the given name, Lars/Lorentz/Laurentius; instead of Grelle, in some cases the surname he received when ennobled, Rutensköld or Rautenschildt. The online database of Swedish noble coats of arms indicates that there was a family legend of descent from a colonel in Polish service, alleged to have fled to Sweden after killing the Polish governor of Riga in a duel. The ennobling of Lorentz Grelle in 1650 as Von Rutensköld occurred when he was serving as secretary in the Court of Appeal in Dorpat. See https://www.adelsvapen.com/genealogi/Rutensk%C3%B6ld_nr_328.

9. See http://purl.uni-rostock.de/matrikel/100044661.

placed intelligencer, whose professional obligations could quite naturally have brought him into contact with Shlakov, the Danish contingent that would pass through Riga as part of Waldemar's mission, and the Russian officials in Pskov. What we can establish about his career and conclude about his aspirations fits very well the pattern of many other news agents who offered their services to members of the elite in the expectation of receiving in return some advancement or privilege (see Droste 2021, esp. Ch. 4).

A key intermediary in the correspondence between Filimonatus/Grelle and Shlakov was the official Russian translator based in Pskov, Matvei Veiger (Veiges, Veires; Matthias Weyher?).[10] Veiger had served in the Swedish army before entering Russian service in 1630/31. He brought to his position in Pskov, which began in 1635/36, competence in Swedish, Latin, Danish, German and possibly Finnish. His work involved maintaining close connections with the resident foreign merchant community there and correspondence with officials on the Swedish side of the border, among them Laurentius Grelle. Grelle obviously assumed that Veiger could be relied on to forward the sealed mail packets addressed to Shlakov, whom the translator would have met when the imposter showed up in Pskov on his way to Moscow.[11] When the big Danish diplomatic mission that brought Waldemar to Moscow arrived in 1644, Veiger translated for it and apparently accompanied it to Moscow before returning to Pskov. In June 1644, as part of his normal functions, Veiger was involved in the interrogation of a visiting theater troupe which had showed up in Pskov, hoping for permission to perform there, but instead were ordered to leave Russia immediately.[12] One can speculate whether Veiger was engaged in activities that would have been deemed inappropriate by the Russian authorities.[13] However, there is every reason to believe he was careful to report to his superiors what they needed to know about his contacts. That the mail packets for Shlakov were forwarded still sealed (rather than being opened and inspected in Pskov) presumably was normal procedure. In Moscow, they then were received not directly by Shlakov but rather in the Ambassadorial Chancery, where they were opened and the letters of interest were translated prior to their being delivered to the addressee.

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10. On Veiger, see Beliakov et al.: 76–77; Oparina 2007: 195–197; Bobrov 1999: 466. Bobrov discusses Veiger's involvement in the correspondence with Shlakov but treats Grelle and Filimonatus as separate individuals.

11. When Grelle (writing as Filimonatus) raised with Shlakov the question of establishing a better courier service to Riga, he noted specifically that for confidential communications to Riga Veiger had a regular carrier who knew the Swede personally: 'and that Matvei has a courier whom he always sends to me, and that person knows me, and hence I wish that he and no other is sent to me' (V-K II: 72, No. 28.173). However, the one courier could not handle the burden of regular scheduled communication.

12. See Maier and Shamin 2013, 2016; Jensen et al. 2021: 1, 5. The local authorities acted on instructions received from Moscow that the visitors leave Russia and escorted them back to Neuhausen/Novgorodok (now Vastseliina in Estonia) on the border.

13. The monitoring of foreigners' mail was common (see below); Veiger was not an exception. Among the translations produced in the Ambassadorial Chancery in conjunction with the extensive Filimonatus-Shlakov correspondence are letters written to Veiger by his wife in Moscow and one to him from Peter Marselis' agent Albert van den Bloch (see V-K II: 105–106, No. 47).

Shlakov had managed to get permission to proceed to Moscow from Pskov by claiming he had an important letter to deliver to the tsar from the king of Denmark, the letter in fact being the recommendation Christian IV had written for the bearer. Had he presented himself simply as a foreigner wanting to enter Muscovite service rather than a bearer of official communications, he probably would have been sent back whence he came. Upon arriving in Moscow in late November 1642, he was interviewed in the Ambassadorial Chancery and arranged a meeting with Peter Marselis, spinning the same tale about being the bearer of an important message that had to be handed directly to the tsar. So he was given a proper ceremonial audience with Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich on 1 December.[14] Shlakov submitted not only the king's somewhat general recommendation but also letters in which he laid out the tale of woe about how, during the ongoing wars in Bohemia, his noble Protestant family had lost their possessions to the Catholics. The tsar and his officials seem to have been taken in by the imposter; he was accepted into Russian service with rather generous compensation and in February granted another royal audience. Almost immediately after that, he announced his desire to convert to Orthodoxy and spent some time at the Chudov Monastery in the Kremlin in preparation for the rebaptism the Russians required, which took place on 25 March. The baptismal name and title he was allowed to assume was Prince Lev Aleksandrovich Shlakovskii. The reception Shlakov received at the Muscovite court seems to have given him delusions of grandeur. Knowing about the unrealistic demand that Waldemar become Orthodox, Shlakov may have decided to convert in order that he himself be considered eligible to marry Irina Mikhailovna. A royal marriage could bring ever richer financial rewards for the greedy imposter.

One of the important questions about Shlakov concerns his relations with Marselis and others who were working to promote Waldemar's marriage, since this has some bearing on the arrangements Shlakov entered into for obtaining news regularly from Riga. Obviously before coming to Moscow, Shlakov knew it was important he consult with Marselis. In Moscow, Marselis' brother-in-law, William Barnsley, introduced the imposter to Isaac Buchholz (Ivan Iur'ev Bukol't; Oparina 2007: 71, 120 n. 184). While away from his lodgings during the period of preparation for rebaptism, Shlakov hired Bukol't to look after his possessions which he had left under lock and key. His own sights

14. Tsvetaev 1890: 357 dates the reception 2 December. Here we follow the record in *DR* 2: 695 under the date of 1 December. This diary of the tsar's official functions describes Shlakov as: 'Datskiia zemli graf Matiiash Shliakov, dvorianin korolevskoi' and also adds after the record of the December reception a separate paragraph, indicating that Shlakov was baptized and rechristened. 'And the Sovereign bestowed favor on him and ordered that he enter His service and be included in the ranks of the Moscow nobility' ('I gosudar' ego pozhaloval, velel emu sebe sluzhit' i byt' vo dvorianakh Moskovskikh'). It appears that the compiler or copyist of the *Dvortsovye razriady* compressed into a single entry events that in fact occurred on two separate occasions. There is no record in *DR* concerning a second reception of Shlakov by the tsar in February, only following which occurred the decision to convert. However, there is good reason to think that the court calendar for that period as we now have it is incomplete. The documents detailing the gifts Shlakov and one of his retainers received from the tsar upon rebaptism are in Zabelin 2000–2003, 3: 761–766 (2nd pagination).

set on the tsar's daughter, Shlakov was taken aback when Bukol't was sent off (as a translator) with Marselis to Copenhagen to pursue the Danish marriage. Shlakov responded by accusing Bukol't of malfeasance.[15] This was just one example of what seems to have been a common pattern where Shlakov would turn on anyone whom he deemed as a threat to his advancement. An attack by Shlakov and his band of drunken retainers on the Swedish residency, about which the Swedish resident Peter Krusebjörn would lodge an official complaint, is another example. If there ever had been any doubt about whether Shlakov was collaborating with the Danes, that notion was disproven when Shlakov alerted the authorities that Waldemar was trying to leave Russia without permission. Thus they were able to intercept him. There is no indication Shlakov was brought in on the negotiations with Waldemar, even though he could have provided the perspective of a convert to Orthodoxy from Protestantism. Perhaps the Moscow authorities had already figured out it was a 'conversion of convenience', not evidence of any serious religious feeling.

The Russians seem to have bent over backwards to keep Shlakov happy. If disappointed in not landing Tsaritsa Irina, he got the next best thing, marrying Marfa Vasil'evna Sheremeteva, the niece of the current powerful court favorite, the boyar Prince Fedor Ivanovich Sheremetev, who had sponsored Shlakov for his rebaptism. Shlakov pried enough money out of the Russians to be able to live lavishly in the center of Moscow. Olearius provides a vivid description of dining at his house, although he was somewhat shocked when the host said the guest should kiss his wife on the mouth after she had served him a drink.[16] When in April 1643 King Christian IV wrote to Moscow denouncing Shlakov, it seems as though the tsar was unwilling to admit having made a mistake in judgment.[17] Some time in 1644, perhaps as a kind of internal exile, Shlakov was sent off on military duty to Sviazhsk and in the spring of 1646 appointed military governor at Alatyr to defend against Tatar attacks. Apparently Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich was less forgiving than his father had been. Soon after, Shlakov was deprived of the privilege of the patronymic with '-vich' (something reserved for the nobility) and sent off to Solovki in exile. Sheremetev, who had written him into his will at the time of the marriage, then

15. Oparina (2007: 71–72) hypothesizes that Waldemar's entourage and specifically Bukol't and Barnsley deliberately severed relations with Shlakov on account of his conversion. The archival file on Shlakov's conversion listed Bukol't among his retainers, who also converted at the time (see the inventory, RGADA, f. 150, *Opis'* 1, fols. 35^{v}–36, No. 8).

16. While we can but speculate, Shlakov's relations with women very likely were less than honorable. In two of his letters, Grelle/Filimonatus sent family greetings, including specifically those from '*devitsa* Ekaterina' (Grelle's daughter or other family relation?), who seems to have taken a fancy to him ('a devitsa Ekaterina v(a)shei kniazhsko(i) m(i)l(o)sti iaznosti vospominaet') and to whom Shlakov had promised to send some sables from Moscow, which she was still hoping to receive. See V-K II: 73, No. 28.176; 79, No. 30.213.

17. Some of the details here are uncertain from Tsvetaev's treatment and can be cleared up only with additional work in the archives. Referring to the king's letter, Olearius writes that, after chastising the imposter, the tsar nevertheless kept him on at court. It would be useful to determine whether Shlakov's departure for Sviazhsk coincides with the end of his correspondence with Filimonatus.

excluded him from any inheritance. However, within a year Shlakov was allowed to return and continued to reside in Moscow, though on half the government stipend he had received earlier. He subsequently petitioned successfully to have his '-vich' restored.[18]

The checkered history of Shlakov, a self-serving con man and imposter, raises questions about his role in establishing a regular channel for obtaining news from Livonia. Whose initiative was involved here? Was it the Danish court's idea to implant him in Moscow as an agent? Could the Swedish administration in Riga have thought it might benefit by supporting Shlakov's effort to get to Russia and in turn be able to use him as an intelligence agent? Did he attempt to secure his position in Moscow by reaching some agreement with the Ambassadorial Chancery to provide it regularly with foreign news? Was he actually acting as an agent to obtain foreign goods and hire specialists in connection with the reception of Waldemar or because of other interests of the Russian court?[19] Given what we can document about Shlakov's character and his actions, in the first instance, he was loyal only to himself. A self-serving scoundrel can, of course, also be an intelligence agent, where he sees in spying the route to personal advancement. At very least, there is ample evidence that no one who supported and interacted with Shlakov received anything in return; he quickly betrayed anyone whom he could not exploit.

11.2. The Filimonatus/Grelle–Veiger–Shlakovskii correspondence

For reference in the ensuing discussion, we start with a tabulation of all the letters relating to the correspondence (Table 11.1). The majority are the few written by Grelle in his own name and the substantial number he wrote under the pseudonym Filimonatus.[20] While in most cases the addressee is Shlakov/Shlakovskii, several of the letters were addressed to Veiger, usually simply as covers for the packets he was being requested to

18. Shlakov still had what we may assume was a substantial house in Moscow in 1655. When the government was preparing to receive an important Habsburg imperial embassy at the beginning of autumn, it requisitioned his house to be the residence of the visiting envoys. Accommodation for Shlakov was to be found elsewhere. It is not clear whether the Shlakov property had been well maintained, given his reduced circumstances. With winter coming on, the government inspected the stoves and determined that simply repairing them was impossible. They would have to be replaced. Also, to ensure that the visiting dignitaries would not be mired in muddy streets leading up to the house, the order was given to pave them (presumably by laying down split logs). The documents refer to Shlakov by that variant of his surname (not Shlakovskii), although he retains his princely title and his '-vich'. See *PDS* 3: 270, 279, 291, 312, 329, 333–334, 347. We should not read from this incident a particular animus toward Shlakov, since the practice of requisitioning a big house for a visiting diplomatic mission was not uncommon. And the government in analogous cases ordered that the streets on which visiting dignitaries would travel be repaired and cleaned 'so that everywhere all would be orderly' (*DR* 3: 495–496).

19. Shamin (2020b) emphasizes intelligence gathering and spying in his interpretation of the affair. Maier and Shamin (2013: 67) and Jensen et al. (2021: 5-6) treat the requests sent by Shlakov to Grelle/Filimonatus as part of an effort by the Russian government to hire foreign specialists (among them, entertainers).

20. Three of Grelle's original letters in German to Shlakov (written under the pseudonym Filimonatus) have been preserved in RGADA, f. 150, op. 1, 1643, No. 7. The Russian translations of all three are in V-K II: 65, No. 24.106–107; 71, No. 28.167; 106, No. 48.254–255 (fair copy; draft copy ibid.: 254, App. No. 14.129–130).

forward to Moscow. Some letters were written by Veiger. There is also a letter from the military architect Hendrik (Henrik, Heinrich) Mühlmann/Mukliman to Shlakov in response to Grelle's effort on the latter's behalf to recruit Mühlmann to come to Moscow. The only concrete evidence about Shlakov's own letters comes from references to them by his correspondents.

TABLE 11.1. Correspondence of Grelle/Filimonatus, Shlakov and Veiger

Abbreviations: F = Filimonatus; G =Grelle; V= Veiger; S = Shlakov (where, e.g., F>S means 'from Filimonatus to Shlakov'); P= Pskov; M = Moscow; R=Riga. Asterisked entries are for letters known only through references in other letters.

Date letter written	Place where letter written	Writer > addressee	Date (Place) letter received	Reference to publication of the letters in V-K II. Notes.
*1642	Pskov	S>G	(P)	Referred to in G>S, V-K II, No. 3.
7/XII	Riga	G>S	(P); (M)	V-K II, No. 3.
***?**1643	Riga	G>S		Referred to in F>S, V-K II, No. 41.
*?2./IX	[Riga]	F>S		Referred to in F>S, V-K II, No. 11. Possibly this is V-K II, No. 41.
30/IX	Riga	F>S	23/X (P); 3/XI (M)	V-K II, No. 11. Sent by G in sealed packet to V in Pskov; forwarded to Moscow on 23/X (see V>S, V-K II, No. 20). Header to translation indicates this is a second letter from F to S, presumably in the same packet.
5/X	Riga	F>S	23/X (P); 3/XI (M)	V-K II, No. 11; App. No. 7.
10/X	Riga	F>S	23/X (P); 3/XI (M)	V-K II, No. 11.
15/X	Riga	F>S	23/X (P); 3/XI (M)	V-K II, No. 17. Encloses letter from engineer Henrik Mühlmann (V-K II, No. 40).
	Riga	Henrik Mühlmann/ Mukliman>S	23/X (P); 3/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 40. Enclosed in F>S, V-K II, No. 17.
16/X	Riga	F>S	14/XI(P); 22/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 24. Forwarded from Pskov by V (see V>S, V-K II, No. 26).
21/X	Riga	F>S	14/XI(P); 22/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 24.
23/X	Pskov	V>S	3/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 20. Reporting that G sent large packet of letters and a box addressed to S; forwarded to Moscow by Pskov *voevoda*.
*?last week/X	Moscow	S>G	4/XI(P)	Referred to in V>S, V-K II, No. 26.
28/X	Riga	F/S	14/XI(P); 22/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 24.
5/XI	Riga	F/S	14/XI(P); 22/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 24.
*6/XI	Moscow	S>F	8/XII (R)	Referred to in F>S, V-K II, No. 30.
9/XI (2)	Riga	F>S	17/XI(P); 28/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 25. Sent by G to V in Pskov (see V>S, V-K II, No. 27).
*[?9/XI]	Riga	G>V	17/XI(P)	Presumed cover letter, G>V, for enclosed packet of letters addressed to S in Moscow (see V>S, V-K II, No. 27).

*[13/XI]	Riga	G>V	3/XII (P); 11/XII (M)	Cover letter to V, sent via 'kormovoi morshalok Erbgart' in Pskov, for packet of letters addressed to S in Moscow (see V-K II, No. 34).
13/XI	Riga	F>S	3/XII(P); 11/XII(M)	V-K II, No. 23; App. No. 9. Letters for S sent by G to Erbgart in Pskov to give to V; forwarded to Moscow with the musketeer *sotnik* Semen Osokin on 5/XII (see V-K II, No. 34).
14/XI	Pskov	V>S		V-K II, No 26. Mentions writing S on 4/XI about forwarding mail to G and receipt from G of new packet of mail for S, forwarded to Moscow. Possibly this packet or the next one contained additional letters by F which we have not been able to list individually here.
?17/XI	Pskov	V>S	28/XI(M)	V-K II, No. 27. Informs S that packet of letters addressed to him, sent by G, arrived Pskov 17/XI and immediately forwarded to Moscow. V-K II, No. 27.
20/XI	Riga	F>S	3/XII(P); 11/XII(M)	V-K II, No. 23; App. No. 9.
25/XI (3)	Riga	F>S	?../XII	V-K II, No. 28. Presumably packet sent with some of the purchases S had requested; via Danish 'kormovoi morshalk Erbergart z Dankleipom, alt.: Ebert Danlib' (see ref. in next letter, dated 28/XI).
28/XI	Riga	F>S	?../XII	Separate translation of this one letter, but published with those of 25/II as V-K II, No. 28. Referred to as his most recent letter to S, in F>S, V-K II, No. 30.
11/XII	Riga	F>S	?../XII	V-K II, No. 30. Refers to prev. letter of 28/XI.
11/XII	Riga	F>S	?../XII	V-K II, No. 30. Acknowledges receipt on 8/XII of letter from S written on 6/XI.
17/XII	Riga	F>V		V-K II, No. 33.
26/XII	Riga	F>V		V-K II, No. 33.
2.(?26)/XII	Riga	F>S	../I/1644	V-K II, No. 31.
1644 [16/I]	Iur'ev Livonskii	G>S	29/I(M)	V-K II, No. 42; App. No. 12.
16/I	Iur'ev Livonskii	G/V	29/I(M)	V-K II, No. 46; App. No. 13. Followed immediately in original scroll by Nos. 48, 42.
16/I	Iur'ev Livonskii	F/S	29/I(M)	V-K II, No. 48; App. No. 14. Sent sealed in letter to V; at bottom, note it was sent day and night with a reliable special courier.
18/I	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S	29/I(M)	V-K II, No. 48; App. No. 14.
[16/I]	Iur'ev Livonskii	G>S	29/I(M)	V-K II, No. 42; App. No. 12.
30/I	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S	?9/III(M)	V-K II, No. 44. Preceding files in original scroll are Nos. 52, 51.

30/I	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>V		V-K II, No. 52. Reasonable to assume that letters of 30/I through 5/II all forwarded to Moscow in same packet, surely one that would have been received there prior to the delivery in Moscow on 9/III. These could all have been in packet received in Pskov via van den Bloch on 10/II, in which case, if he handed them over right away, they probably would have been sent on immediately to Moscow, arriving there by ca. 20/II at latest.
3/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S		V-K II, No. 51.
3/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F/V		V-K II, No. 52.
5/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S		V-K II, No. 45.
5/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F/V		V-K II, No. 52. In original scroll, this letter translated on folios after break from the ones with letters of 30/I and 3/II. We do not have the text that would separate them.
*?ca5/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	G>van den Bloch	10/II(P)	Referred to in *voevoda* report [28]29/II, sent to Moscow with *sotnik* Fedor Gavrilov, received there 9/III and read to tsar (see V-K II, No. 57). The *voevoda* report is in two parts, which were received in Moscow 9/III; the part with the annotation precedes in the original archival scroll the translation of F>S, dated 25/II from Iur'ev; so that must be the enclosure sent by voevoda along with information on the proposals by G to V that they meet.
*?../II		S>F		Referred to in V-K II, No. 75 as having been sent to F in Pskov.
*21/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S	9/III(M)	Referred to in F>S, V-K II, No. 59; App. No. 16.
25/II	Iur'ev Livonskii	F>S	28/II(P) 9/III(M)	V-K II, No. 59; App. No. 16. Sent to Albert van den Bloch in Pskov, who gave it to V, who turned it over to voevoda to forward to Moscow with *sotnik* Fedor Gavrilov on [28]29/II (see V-K II, No. 57).
12(?2)/III	Riga	F>S		V-K II, No. 64. Date at bottom of letter is 2/III, though damage may have obscured it. In the header is 12/III.
24/III	Danzig	F>S	14/IV(M)	V-K II, No. 69.
	[Danzig]	[F>S]	[14/IV(M)]	V-K II, No. 70. Content makes it clear the letter is from F to S; immediately follows V-K II, No. 69 in original scroll.
	[Danzig]	[F>S]	[14/IV(M)]	V-K II, No. 63. Header indicates this is news sent by F, presumably appended to either V-K II, No. 69 or No. 70, and follows immediately on latter in original scroll.
*[]		V>F or G		Referred to with no indication of date, in V-K II, No. 74

[?April]	? Danzig	F>S	5/V(M)	V-K II, No. 74. Date in header, probably receipt, not sending date. Cf. header for No. 75 which encompasses several dated letters. Preceding No. 74 is No. 80, and following it is No. 78. No. 80 is report from Novgorod of interrogation there of returning merchants who had been in Livonia. They returned on 18/V; the interrogation took place 27/V; so the report of it arrived in Moscow in early June.
10/IV (2)	Danzig	F>S	? 5/V(M)	V-K II, No. 74. Apparently a second letter is part of this file. Fol. 478 may be the attached newsletter to first one, and second begins with salutation at top of fol. 479. To receive letter written in Danzig on 10/IV by 5/V in Moscow is fast but not impossible transit time.
16/IV	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Translators have numbered the letters from 1 to 6, dated between 16/IV and 26/V, the header suggesting translation in one batch on 26/VI. See ibid.: 171 for additional explanation why all may have arrived in one packet. With one exception, each letter with its numbered heading is copied on a separate sheet. The one exception has the header numbering on bottom of previous sheet. So possibly the letters were not all translated at once and then simply were brought together in a fresh copy with the sequential numbering. None of the news enclosures he refers to in letters are included here in the sequence. Preceded in original archival file by Nos. 74, 78.
20/IV	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Unlike letter 1 in sequence, datelined 'iz vedomovo mesta' but that must mean Danzig, not Iur'ev, since bracketed by Danzig letters dated 16 and 21/IV, the latter the day after this one written.
21/IV	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Refers to having received letter from S written in February which was sent to him in Pskov. But nothing from him since. Refers to enclosure with text of treaty between Swedes and György Rákóczi and latter's letter to Hungarian magnates.
26/IV	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Beginning of this damaged, seems to indicate that rather than try to send weekly newsletter to S, he has had to economize and send packets with news written over some weeks (see ibid.: 171).
10/V	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Refers to enclosure with latest news.
26/V	Danzig	F>S	26/VI(M)	V-K II, No. 75. Refers to enclosure with accounts about reasons for Swedish-Danish war and the letters of each side to the other about a possible peace congress.

[after 19/V]	Danzig	F>S	../VI (M)	V-K II, No. 78. Header indicates forwarded from Novgorod; most recent internal date of news is from Danzig, 19/V, which gives us a *terminus post quem* for writing of letter. This is bracketed in original scroll by Nos. 74 and 75. Could fols. 497–498 be misplaced, the middle and ending of a personal letter?

A number of observations can be made here even before examining closely the content of the letters. Assuming that the locations indicated in the signature lines of the letters are accurate, the writer of the Filimonatus letters was in Riga between late September and the end of December 1643. Some time before the end of January, he moved to Iur'ev Livonskii (Dorpat/Tartu), located ca. 150 km from Pskov on the road that would take one to it via the Pechory Monastery, and remained there at least through 25 February.[21] By 12 (?2) March he was back in Riga, and toward the end of March in Danzig, where he remained until the end of the correspondence in June.[22]

The second point to stress here concerns the frequency of communication. One has to be impressed with how often 'Filimonatus' wrote, many of his letters simply being the cover to enclosures with news material, but many also appending the news below his signature. Yet, frequent as his letters are, clearly he had to wait until there was an opportunity to send them securely on to Russia. This meant that packets of them arrived and were translated in Moscow at unpredictable intervals. The frequency and speed of the receipt of his news is substantially less impressive than the frequency and alacrity of his compiling it. So, even if we assume the goal (whoever was responsible for the arrangement) was to provide someone in Moscow with regular news, the reality of communications made that goal difficult to achieve. A letter written in Riga might take between a week and a half and nearly a month to reach Pskov and then require more than another week to travel from there to Moscow. Assuming we have read the data accurately (where we have only one reasonably solid set of dates), letters from our writer in Danzig took between one and two-and-a-half months to reach Moscow. On more than one occasion, Filimonatus indicated he had not received anything back from Shlakov to confirm that the letters being sent from Riga had safely arrived in Moscow. However, there is no reason to think Shlakov wrote back regularly. It is easy to see why Filimonatus appreciated the need for better communication between Riga and Moscow and finally decided to give up on sending news from Danzig. He suggested to Shlakov on 25 November that

21. Some of the letters from Iur'ev Livonskii name the town; others refer to it cryptically as 'the known place' (*vedomoe mesto*), which the evidence suggests must be Iur'ev, not Riga or some other location. There is one exception, as noted, presumably due to a copyist error. Some dates in the files are obscured or missing, and there can be some confusion about whether a header refers to the date a letter was written as opposed to when it was received in Moscow and translated. The data above present what we think is the most accurate picture, based not only on Filimonatus' letters but also on the other letters to the translator Veiger and the reports his superiors in Pskov sent to Moscow.

22. It is possible, of course, that Grelle/Filimonatus sent additional letters after June 1644 which did not survive in the archives, although it seems that the officials in Moscow were being particularly diligent to keep track of the entire correspondence.

the latter send a courier to Riga every week to pick up his letters.[23] In fact at least two couriers would be needed to ensure weekly deliveries in both directions. Obviously this suggestion was never implemented, important as it is in anticipating by two decades the thinking that underlay the creation of Muscovite international post.

11.3. The argument regarding Filimonatus' identity

On more than one occasion the documents indicate the involvement of the 'secretary' Laurentius Grelle in sending Filimonatus' letters.[24] Grelle was in direct communication with the Pskov translator Matvei Veiger. His letters to Veiger contain the clue to the real identity of Justus Filimonatus.

Since Filimonatus' letters were being forwarded via Grelle, it should not surprise us that they both were based in Riga. However, it seems more than a coincidence to find them both then taking up residence in Iur'ev at the same time and even writing letters to their contacts in Russia on the same day while there (V-K II, Nos. 46, 48). Their letters written on 16 January (Grelle to Veiger and Filimonatus to Shlakov) contain the same news report. It would be possible to explain all this in some other way, but the obvious conclusion is that they might in fact be one and the same person. Indeed, both of them wrote to their correspondents they expected to be coming to Pskov on either 10 or 12 March, a plan that apparently was then changed to arrange a meeting between Grelle, Veiger, and Albert van den Bloch (an agent of Peter Marselis based in Pskov) just inside the Russian border on 14 March.[25] It seems that this meeting, whose goal may simply have been to encourage the Russians to hire Grelle as an intelligencer, never took place (see the discussion below).

In sum, our news-writer Filimonatus was none other than Grelle, a highly placed Swedish functionary whose employment involved collecting news and intelligence for the Swedish authorities. Early in his career, when seeking employment, he had made a point of highlighting his ability as a news agent. If, on the death of his employer, Governor General Bengt Oxenstierna, in June 1643, the prospects of his keeping his job had become uncertain, Grelle's overtures to Shlakov might well have been his attempt to cultivate another elite patron with the possible reward of advancing his career through

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23. V-K II: 72–73, No. 28.172–174.

24. Ibid., Nos. 26, 27, letters of Veiger to Shlakov; No. 41, letter to Shlakov presumably from 'Filimonatus'; No. 66, report of Pskov *voevoda* Cherkasskii to Moscow on 5 March. Noting this close connection, Schibli (1988: 59) suggested that Grelle might have been Filimonatus' secretary, which would explain why the named individuals always seemed to write from the same towns.

25. Filimonatus' letters mentioning the planned trip are V-K II, Nos. 44, 51, 45, 59 (written in Iur'ev to Shlakov on 30 Jan., 3, 5 and 25 Feb.); No. 52 (letters of 30 Jan., 3 and 5 Feb. written to Veiger from Iur'ev). The *voevoda*'s reports about the information Veiger had received were sent to Moscow on 10 Feb. and 5 Mar. (ibid.: 124, No. 57.335–335^{v}; 140, No. 66.355). The letter packet from Grelle sent on 3 Feb. and received in Pskov on 10 Feb. also included letters for Peter Marselis. The annotation made in Moscow on the *voevoda*'s report of 10 Feb. reads: 'read to the tsar; the letter of Prince Lev Shlakovskii to be translated; those written to Peter Marselis to be sent immediately to him'; the annotation on the report of 5 Mar. reads 'read to the tsar; the German letter to be translated.'

high-level contacts with the Muscovite government. In practically every letter, he reiterates his interest in being sure his services were brought to the attention of the tsar in the hopes that then he would receive appropriate financial compensation. At one point he very explicitly asks about whether he could receive an annual salary and be named officially as 'resident' or 'agent' (*komisaris*; V-K II: 69, No. 25.125). In a letter he wrote to Matvei Veiger he inquired about whether the Pskov military commandant was interested in the news reported in the German newspapers which Grelle was sending, some apparently for Veiger and not just sealed for delivery to Shlakov in Moscow (ibid.: 83, No. 33.292). He states explicitly in one letter that he is willing to undertake secret missions (ibid.: 94, No. 42.260). Unlike many of the other news agents studied by Droste (2021), Grelle repeatedly emphasized his desire for financial compensation, but otherwise, the pattern of his efforts to establish a position in the service of a member of the ruling elite in the hope of some advancement is quite similar.[26]

Grelle's obsession with secrecy, as evidenced by his use of a pseudonym, raises questions about whether what he was doing was compatible with his official position in Swedish service. For the most part, even if some of it derived from Swedish intelligence and internal communications, the news he was sending probably would not have been seen as compromising Swedish security.[27] However, Grelle must have thought that what he was doing might compromise his career. In particular, the Swedish administration would have looked with suspicion on Grelle's 'Danish connection'. Where possible, in order to mail his reports, Grelle took advantage of those directly working for Waldemar or who were associated with Peter Marselis.[28] Grelle took great pains to be sure the letters were carried by reliable individuals, even if this meant considerable delay as to when they could be sent. His communications with Russia fall right in the period when ten-

26. Those wishing to be 'hired' as news agents by a member of the elite needed some reassurance in advance of the confidentiality of the arrangement and, pending confirmation that the recipient was receptive to the proposal, might send news items "as a sort of application for permission to correspond" (Droste 2021: 180). Droste's detailed discussion (Ch. 4) of a number of the news agents in the networks involving the Swedish elites quotes 'application letters' that are quite similar to the letters in which Grelle kept pressing for Shlakovskii to bring the Riga secretary's services to the attention of the tsar's government. Apart from hoping that the connection with Shlakov might bring him personal benefits, Grelle must have discussed with Shlakov the possibility that the 'count' could secure benefits for his father-in-law's commercial activities (see V-K II: 79, No. 30.214).

27. In his letter written on 30 January 1644 from Iur'ev (V-K II: 98–99, No. 44.308–311), Filimonatus included a newsletter that listed in detail the Swedish regiments in Danish and Holstein territory. This kind of military intelligence sometimes did make it into the published newspapers, although in this case the direct source could have been confidential documents to which Grelle had access. As Droste emphasizes, newsletter writers certainly were concerned about confidentiality, a striking example being Johan Gustaf von Beijer, who headed the Swedish post office and published an official newspaper in Stockholm. He would self-censor some news, so as not to get in trouble with highly placed officials, and he might eschew norms of polite discourse in letter writing in order that the news he sent in that correspondence to trusted individuals not be traced to him. See Droste 2021: 247–248.

28. On more than one occasion, he complained about the difficulty of finding couriers, in part simply because most of them who might otherwise have been available were being hired by the Danes in connection with the huge embassy of Waldemar that was heading to Moscow for the marriage negotiations. See V-K II: 84, No. 33.293–294.

sions between Denmark and Sweden were increasing, leading to open hostilities and the tightening of border controls.[29] Around the end of 1643 or beginning of 1644, the Swedish officials in Riga banned the sending of letters from Swedish territory into Russia. In these circumstances, where there would have been good reason to conceal his identity, Grelle's decision to use the pseudonym Justus Filimonatus makes sense. Other news agents working for elites in northern Europe similarly seem to have been concerned at concealing from anyone other than their employer their connection with the news they transmitted. As near as one can tell, the Russians never hired Grelle. His real 'employer' in Russia seems to have been Shlakov, who, in Grelle's view, was a valuable contact for gaining favor from someone even more highly placed. Shlakov probably never intended to pay for what he thought he could obtain for free. As it was, he exploited 'Filimonatus' for various commissions to obtain things in Riga and seems to have been less than forthcoming when it came to paying for them.[30]

By sending the news in sealed packets addressed to Shlakov, Grelle ostensibly hoped that the news reports would reach their destination unopened. Was he naïve enough to think that would be the case? And what difference should it have made, if in fact he was hoping the news would be turned over to the tsar and his officials? Once his letters arrived in Moscow, they were immediately opened and the contents translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery (see n. 25 above). That is, in no case is there an indication they first went to Shlakov, who then handed them in in the way that Krusebjörn or Marselis sometimes would hand in news reports they received.[31] Shlakov's mail was being opened

29. A Riga merchant Willem Bekker wrote to Peter Marselis' agent Albert van den Bloch in Pskov on 17 January 1644 about the fact that letters to Moscow were being held up. Van den Bloch forwarded this letter to Marselis from Pskov on 30 January, and Marselis reported the information in a letter to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 9 February which also contained news about the military buildup under way in Livonia. Bekker's letter is V-K II: 107, No. 49; Marselis' is V-K II: 127, No. 60. Probably Marselis had received these letters via the route through Vilna, which Waldemar's Danish embassy had established to avoid communication through Swedish-held territory.

30. The commissions included obtaining a brace of pistols inscribed with Shlakov's initials, a watch, medicines, and hiring of specialists, among them a riding instructor, a horn player, actors or entertainers, and an 'engineer' or 'fort constructor' (*gradodelets*). Whether the players and entertainers were intended for the court or merely so that Shlakov could entertain in style is not specified. In any event, absent the funds to pay advances and transportation costs, the prospective employees could not be lured to come. The engineer whom Grelle located would have been willing to go to Russia, providing he received guarantee regarding salary and advance payment for his expenses. See his letter to Shlakov, V-K II: 92–93, No. 40.

31. The translators and secretaries in the Ambassadorial Chancery seem to have been rather precise in conveying how they had obtained the news items now in the *kuranty*. While the matter still needs close examination over a full range of documents, preliminary observation suggests that the headings for letters which were opened on arrival before being passed on to the addressee simply indicate who had written to whom, sometimes with the information of where, and with a date that either could be the date of the letter or the date of its receipt. The headings for letters and newspapers individuals had received independently of the chancery but then were handed over to it specify as much. Headings might include both kinds of data: who the correspondents were (and where the writer was located) and who then handed in the letter to the Chancery. Of course such notes do not reveal to what extent the sharing of news in that fashion was voluntary or was expected.

before he saw it, whether or not he had given permission. Such perlustration was not uncommon for letters foreign residents in Moscow received.[32] Despite the fact Shlakov enjoyed the favor of the tsar, it is likely that, even before he was exposed as an impostor, his correspondence would regularly have been checked for possible threats to Russian security.

In one of the early letters, Grelle/Filimonatus explicitly stated it was important that the Swedish resident in Moscow, Krusebjörn, not learn of the correspondence. Was this a genuine concern on the part of a person interested in concealing from Swedish authorities what he was doing? Or might it hint at an alternative explanation for the entire initiative? Is it possible that the whole Filimonatus charade was a deliberate effort, by offering to send regular news reports, to obtain in return inside intelligence from the court in Moscow and in particular have the ability to learn what was happening in the marriage negotiations? In other words, in the situation where the Russian authorities were hoping to end the presence of a Swedish resident in Moscow, Grelle might have been trying to develop an alternative Swedish intelligence network by cultivating an agent in Moscow who was close to the Russian court.[33] It had been Shlakov's idea to seek his fortune in Moscow. Whether or not the Riga authorities (Grelle in particular) knew who he really was, they might have had an interest in facilitating his advancement in Russia, even if he was going there with the imprimatur of the King of Denmark.

On 9 November, Filimonatus/Grelle warned Shlakov that he had enemies (including those associated with Marselis) and that there were already rumors in Riga that Shlakov had fallen out of favor with the tsar because he had engaged in drunken brawls (V-K II: 68, No. 25.120–121). Moreover, it was already known that King Christian IV had written to the tsar exposing Shlakov as an imposter.[34] So Shlakov would be well advised to stay clear of the Danes and Waldemar's party when it arrived. It would seem that Grelle had learned of the complaint submitted to the Ambassadorial Chancery in early October by Krusebjörn about the drunken brawling. If Krusebjörn's effectiveness as a supplier of intelligence from Moscow had somehow been compromised, there would have been an incentive for the Swedish administration in Riga to have another conduit for obtaining intelligence from Moscow and possibly even to influence Russian policy. The way to achieve that would have been to offer information in exchange, which would be transmitted under the guise of secrecy to an agent in Moscow (Shlakov).

32. See Waugh 2023a and the discussion in Sec. 12.3 below.

33. There is a cryptic (and perhaps misleading) record in the archival inventory for 1647 referring to Shlakovskii as a 'Swedish agent', even though there is no other evidence in the records that he was considered to be one (see RGADA, f. 150, *Opis'* 1, fol. 40, No. 4).

34. Shamin (2020b: 90) has suggested that the letter King Christian IV sent to the tsar exposing the imposter may well have been in response to his betrayal of Danish interests by alerting the Russian authorities to Waldemar's plans to escape his confinement under house arrest in Moscow. However, the warning about the king's having written such a letter precedes the very arrival of Waldemar in Moscow. Receipt of the king's denunciation of Shlakov in Moscow apparently post-dates Waldemar's return to Denmark.

The aim of Grelle's plan to meet with Veiger and van den Bloch near Pechory or come to Pskov is not certain. Grelle wrote that he would be bringing information of importance for the tsar, but this may have been nothing more than the standard way of explaining why he should be allowed to enter Russia — that is, analogous to the way Shlakov had gotten his pass to proceed from Pskov.[35] In fact Grelle did nothing to keep his plans secret from the local Russian officials. One has to think Grelle's move to Iur'ev in January was a deliberate step in preparations for this trip into to Russia, although it is also possible he simply was trying to circumvent the Swedish postal blockade on sending letters into Russia.[36] It is hard to imagine how he could have expected to keep his job in Riga if he simply decided on his own to leave for Iur'ev. While it is possible that the meeting may have been intended to facilitate setting up a Russian-based intelligence network, Filimonatus' correspondence never seems to have suggested the writer wanted intelligence in return, only financial compensation and a service appointment. In one of his letters to Shlakov, Filimonatus emphasizes, not for the first time, that he needs to be paid for some of the services he has been providing.[37] The letter, somewhat damaged, may be read to indicate that he did travel to Pskov, incurring substantial expenses to get there, but then was turned back by the Russians since Shlakov had not responded to his earlier requests that he obtain an official document from the tsar about hiring Grelle/Filimonatus as a news agent or even possibly as a resident factor (*prikazshchik*) for the Russians in Riga.[38]

In any event, Grelle miscalculated with regard to his contacts. Shlakov obviously failed to do anything for him. Veiger, while apparently honest in his dealings, seems to have been caught in the middle of all this, his responsibilities necessitating his transmission of others' mail but at the same time ensuring that his superiors were well informed about what the foreigners were doing. Undoubtedly he either knew or suspected the truth about Grelle and Filimonatus, and as part of his job he corresponded with Shlakov. At least one letter, difficult to understand because it is damaged and written by a person whose identity is uncertain, suggests he was not at all pleased to be involved with

35. The Russian border authorities were given explicit instructions to block unwanted individuals from entering Russia if seeking positions in Russian service. While some of these measures were undoubtedly due simply to the fact that there were already enough foreign mercenaries in Russia in the wake of the earlier Smolensk war, it seems clear as well that there were concerns about security. On 7 September 1642, shortly before Shlakov would show up at the border, the commandant in Pskov was directed not to admit Polish or Lithuanian emigres other than nobles; the latter were to be detained until permission was received from Moscow that they be allowed to proceed. See *AAE* 3: 463, No. 315.

36. He did ask Veiger to hold any letters addressed to him, which he then would pick up upon arrival in Pskov (V-K II: 113, No. 52.297). This may suggest he worried that they might otherwise have been intercepted; in any event, he would be sure of receiving them with relatively little delay.

37. V-K II: 168, No. 74.476–477, sent from Danzig on 10 April. Filimonatus/Grelle emphasizes how much he had had to pay out of his own pocket for hiring a horse, although of itself that does not prove he actually crossed the border, even if he had traveled to it from Iur'ev.

38. Shamin (2020b: 93) reads this evidence to indicate Grelle in fact made it to Pskov.

Grelle and Shlakov.[39] In early February, when he was first told of Grelle's plan (in a letter delivered via the Danish agent Albert van den Bloch), Veiger reported this to the Russian commandant in Pskov, who promptly sent all the information on to Moscow and ordered that border security be tightened. The subsequent messages about the planned meeting were also quickly reported, the information read to the tsar, and instructions given that all the letters be translated.[40]

Apparently just a few days before Veiger reported receiving Grelle's letter about the planned meeting, the Russian military governor in Pskov, Vasilii Petrovich Akhamashukov-Cherkasskii, had written to Moscow in response to instructions that he strengthen border security.[41] On 1 March, Cherkasskii had received from his counterpart in Novgorod a copy of the tsar's instructions about taking steps to heighten security and obtain intelligence, the reason being that the government had learned about the active military preparations in Swedish Livonia. Cherkasskii confirmed that on 29 February Veiger had provided him with a summary of information obtained from Albert van den Bloch (Marselis' agent) and other foreigners in Pskov concerning the military preparations in Riga, Iur'ev and other Livonian cities. The head of Russian customs in Pskov also reported what he had heard from both foreign and Russian merchants about such preparations in Narva and Ivangorod in connection with the outbreak of war between Denmark and Sweden and the Swedish concerns over the Russian negotiations with Waldemar.

On 5 March, Veiger reported receiving news from Grelle about a significant Danish military victory over the Swedes and about Grelle's altered plans to meet with Veiger and Van den Bloch on 14 March at a village not far from the border near the Pechory Monastery. Cherkasskii promptly sealed this report and sent it to Moscow. Some time on or soon after 13 March, Cherkasskii sent another report (which arrived in Moscow on 22 March), providing details of the steps taken regarding border security and intelligence gathering. The list tells a great deal about how such operations could be mounted quickly and what sort of intelligence they might provide. Messages were sent to several of the fortified locations along the border, including the Pechory Monastery, to be on high alert and gather intelligence on military activity in Livonia. Clearly the concern was

39. V-K II: 142, No. 67.376. As Bobrov (1999: 468) suggests, it seems likely that the letter was addressed to Peter Marselis. The writer continually refers to Albert, who must be Marselis' agent, and to Veiger. There seems to be a signature of one 'Iakub f...ker', but so far a search to identify him has been unsuccessful.

40. See the notations ('read to the sovereign') on V-K II, Nos. 64, 66.

41. V-K II, No. 66. The appointment of Vasilii Petrovich Akhamashukov-Cherkasskii as *voevoda* in Pskov in 1642 may indicate not only the heightened concern about border security but also the anticipation of the possible arrival of Waldemar with a Danish embassy. Cherkasskii had extensive previous experience both in diplomatic negotiations and in administration of border regions. He had previously been *voevoda* in Viaz'ma and in Pskov. By the early 1640s, he had become an important court official and seems to have been close to the tsar (Abramov et al. 2016: 54–56). When Waldemar's arrival at the Russian border was expected in late 1643, as *voevoda* in Pskov Cherkasskii was instructed to arrange a formal welcome for the Danish party in the city (*DR* 2: 714, 717).

the possibility that it might be directed against Russia. While there is no direct evidence, it seems likely that in the face of these measures, Grelle would have been unable to make the meeting on 14 March, and Veiger likely would not have tried to show up for it. In any event, we know Grelle had been in Iur'ev as late as 25 February, but he was already back in Riga no later than 12 March. Presumably he had learned that he would not receive the formal invitation he needed, and undoubtedly he would have heard of the tightened security along the border.

11.4. The acquisition of foreign news and intelligence in Pskov and Novgorod

Whatever reservations the Russians may have had about hiring Grelle, they presumably were satisfied with the other options for obtaining intelligence. Cherkasskii was now receiving reports from agents who had been sent with some urgency to Gdov, Iur'ev, Reval (Tallinn), and Narva. There was a rumor that the king of Poland might be about to march on Riga from Vilna. The intelligence gathered from Iur'ev (and reported to Cherkasskii on 11 March) included details about the troop strength assembled there; another report received on 13 March out of Riga reinforced the rumor about the possible Polish attack. In Narva, news of the Danish battles against the Swedes was provided by a Scot named Hendrick and a German Johann from Lübeck. There was a probably fanciful rumor about a Prussian prince heading off to Sweden, possibly with the intent of marrying Queen Christina. On the whole, the network for gathering most of this intelligence was the merchants who traded between Pskov and the Livonian cities; in one case a peasant was enlisted as an agent. How reliable the information was is uncertain, though presumably eyewitnesses would have been able to observe local military preparations, and readily accessible newsletters or newspapers might have reported accurately on the battles.

The Russian authorities in Novgorod also reported on their response to the orders from Moscow to gather intelligence (V-K II: 144–146, No. 68). The word from Narva and Ivangorod (just across the river from Narva) was that there were no unusual arrivals of troops, but precautions were being taken to strengthen defenses. In Ivangorod, the Swedish authorities hauled in the local Russian Orthodox population and stripped their priest of his vestments, thereby pressuring the Russians to take an oath to Queen Christina. However, they made it clear they would not support any kind of an attack on the tsar. In Reval, there were substantial forces on the alert.

Apart from sending merchants or others across the border to gather intelligence, the border commandants regularly interrogated those arriving from Swedish Livonia who had been there on business. An interesting example was the interrogation of two Novgorod merchants who returned home on 18 May from Reval and Ivangorod (ibid.: 184–185, No. 80). They had obviously spent enough time, especially in Reval, to pick up a lot of the local talk regarding the international situation. A Danish fleet had appeared off the port, ostensibly scouting out places to land troops. The local Germans were ridiculing the Swedes (provoking them to a violent response) because the Swedish Queen Mother Maria Eleonora – the widow of Gustavus Adolphus – had fled Sweden and taken

refuge in Denmark on her way home to Brandenburg (an event which had happened back in 1640). There was talk of a Swedish peace with the empire and Denmark which might free the Swedes to turn against Russia. Given the effort to accumulate supplies in case of a siege, grain prices were inflated, and some of the locals were asking that the Russian merchants hire them. The written record of this interrogation was sent off to Moscow a day later, on 19 May, and on the 27th apparently was delivered directly to the Kremlin palace (*Bol'shoi dvorets*).

One thing is clear from all this: the Russian government was responding to foreign news and distilling it for distribution to officials, who then were supposed to act upon that knowledge. However, it is impossible to make a direct connection between the steps taken by the Russian military commandants and Filimonatus' reports prior to the beginning of March, since his news was not the only source of information about the outbreak of hostilities between Sweden and Denmark which was causing the Swedish authorities in Livonia to be proactive in military preparations.

The last packet of news from Filimonatus which has survived arrived in Moscow on 26 June 1644; in it was a long news compilation and six of his letters written in Danzig between 16 April and 26 May.[42] Filimonatus then disappears from the Russian sources. Bobrov (1999: 468) suggests that this was because Peter Marselis and his associates pushed Shlakov aside and became the main suppliers of foreign news in Moscow. Certainly there is evidence of their importance once the Filimonatus correspondence ended and even before then. It could well have been in the interests of the Danes and Marselis to interrupt the connection, but there is no hard evidence to indicate they pursued a goal of replacing Filimonatus as the main providers of news to the Russians. There are other plausible (if possibly related) reasons why the correspondence ended. Possibly Shlakov's assignment to provincial garrison duty (which may reflect that he had fallen into disfavor at court) severed the communications. Blocked from meeting with Veiger and realizing that probably Shlakov would never arrange for him to become the tsar's intelligencer, Grelle may have given up hope of institutionalizing the arrangements to provide news. The administrative changes in Swedish Livonia might suddenly have resulted in his being reassigned and ordered to go to Danzig, which proved to be not as convenient for continuing the news exchange with Russia, and, as he himself indicated, involved costs for rapid courier service which he could not afford. However, Droste (2021: 105) stresses, Danzig, along with Hamburg and Königsberg, were the key centers in the Baltic region for the collection and dissemination of news. The move to Danzig by Grelle would have put him in a position there to look for another patron for his services. In fact, given his later career and ennoblement, that seems to be exactly what happened.

42. V-K II: 170–172, No. 75; 150–167, No. 73. The connection of the news compilation (No. 73) with Filimonatus is suggested by the fact that it followed directly in the original archival scroll six other items whose headers explicitly indicate they came from him, five being letters addressed to Shlakov. The only item in the scroll which breaks this sequence is the copy of the report from Novgorod received on 27 May. See below additional comments on the news he sent.

11.5. Broadening the attribution of news packets by looking closely at their manuscripts

In order to assess the full range of the news Filimonatus supplied, it is necessary to look beyond just the letters and news packets bearing his name.[43] Some of what arguably are reports he submitted do not have any explicit indication they came from him. The editors of V-K II have published such translated reports as separate items and not in the sequence of the original archival manuscripts. For a general treatment of the methodological issues involved here, see our Sec. 1.3.

The translations of the Filimonatus correspondence seem originally to have been copied into two long archival scrolls (now RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1642–1644, No. 2, divided into three parts; and f. 155, op. 1, 1643, No. 6). While the scrolls contained material that definitely is not to be associated with Filimonatus, nonetheless there are compact groups of documents, where, either due to references within his correspondence or due to the proximity of the unattributed documents, we can reasonably hypothesize that the latter are also to be associated with him. His letters make it clear that he sent enclosures, which appear to have been translated at the same time as the letters and thus were filed next to them. The sequences in the archival scroll seem to be chronological, in the order in which each new packet of news arrived and was translated in Moscow.

Assuming this analysis is correct, we can reconstruct the following packets of translated letters and enclosures addressed to Shlakov, most sent by Filimonatus:[44]

- Delivery in Moscow of 3 November. V-K II, Nos. 41, 14, 15, 6, 7(?), 9(?), 17, 40, 20, 11.
- Delivery of 28 November. V-K II, Nos. 8, 5, 16, 27, 25, 12, 26.
- Delivery of 11 December (under cover of reports of Pskov authorities sent from Pskov on 29 November, V-K II, No. 34). V-K II, No. 23; App. No. 9; No. 22 (?).
- Delivery of ? December. V-K II, Nos. 28, 29.
- Deliery of ? January 1644. V-K II, Nos. 31, 30(?).
- Delivery of 29 January. V-K II, Nos. 46, 48, 42.
- Delivery of 9 March (under cover of reports of Pskov authorities, sent on 29 February, V-K II, No. 57). V-K II, Nos. 33, 52, 51, 44, 45; App. No. 16; App. No. 15; Nos. 59, 53.
- Delivery of 14 April. V-K II, Nos. 69, 70, 63.
- Delivery of 6 May. V-K II, No. 74.
- Delivery of 26 June. V-K II, Nos. 78(?), 75, 73(?).

43. In the analysis below, we will refer to the author of the letters by the name he used. Thus, most of the letters indicate that they came from Filimonatus.

44. The listings here include letters sent by Veiger, which generally just inform Shlakov that he is forwarding the letters of Filimonatus, which were in delivered in the same packet. The archival scrolls in question preserve only the translations, not the original letters or newspapers, some of which are still extant elsewhere in the archive (see below).

The first of these sets is worth close scrutiny, since it reveals a great deal about the kind of information Filimonatus was offering which is found in the subsequent deliveries as well. It is likely Filimonatus would have wanted to impress his possible employer at the outset of their relationship and thus took pains to send a great deal of material. Indeed, if our attribution of all the items is correct, the amount and substance of the news he sent in the first large packet is impressive. Referring to what he was forwarding, Veiger told Shlakov he would be receiving a 'large bundle of sheets' (*bolshuiu sviazku listov*) and a small box (*korobochku*; ibid.: 57, No. 20).

In the first of his letters which has been preserved (written in Riga on 30 September), Filimonatus refers to one written ten days earlier, which may never have arrived (ibid.: 40, No. 11.89). The 30 September letter contains a rather substantial news summary about the maneuvers of the Habsburg General Krockow in Pomerania, the Swedish counteroffensive under General Königsmark, and a planned meeting between Krockow and the Polish king in Vilna. Filimonatus also noted that there was talk in Riga about the possible marriage of Waldemar to Irina, and in connection with that, concern that Moscow would not adhere to its peace treaty with Sweden.

Filimonatus then reported on the progress in negotiations with an engineer (*inzhinir*) Hendrick Mühlmann/Mukliman to come to Moscow, in response to an initiative that seems to have originated with Shlakov. The arrangements for Mühlmann would come up in a number of the subsequent letters. Filimonatus reported on 15 October that he had just received Mühlmann's own letter addressed to Shlakov and containing details of his credentials (ibid.: 92–93, No. 40). Even though Filimonatus had just sent off his earlier letters and the packet of news enclosures, the letter of 15 October and Mühlmann's letter arrived together with them in Moscow on 3 November. Whether the engineer actually came is not clear, since his trip was contingent on Shlakov's sending some funds in advance and arranging for a translator and appropriate travel.[45] The negotiations to hire the engineer apparently involved a certain amount of subterfuge. Although he was happy enough to have Filimonatus' recommendation, Mühlmann explicitly asked that Shlakov keep his letters secret and then burn them. There seems to have been some concern that he wanted to avoid coming to the attention of Germans in Moscow who knew him.

In a number of instances, Filimonatus' cover letters specify quite clearly what he was enclosing. His letter written in Riga on 10 October mentions correspondence of the

45. On 30 January, Filimonatus wrote to Shlakov from Iur'ev, mentioning that the engineer (here called a *gradodelets*) was there and anxiously still waiting for a response from Shlakov (V-K II: 98, No. 44: 307). On 25 February, still in Iur'ev, Filimonatus again reported that the engineer had not yet received a response (ibid.: 126, No. 59.348). There is another mention of the matter in ibid.: 147, No. 70.439, an undated letter to Shlakov that undoubtedly was written by Filimonatus. While one cannot be certain of the identification, it may well be that this Mühlmann is the same individual who is mentioned in the proceedings of the Swedish Riksråd for 27 June 1648 as 'stadzens ingenieur Mülman' (*SRP* 12: 355). If in fact he was an engineer (perhaps with a specialization in military architecture) of some importance, this then could explain his concern about keeping secret his negotiation to come to Moscow.

French resident at the Polish court, and indeed translations of those letters are in the *kuranty* files, though without any direct attribution to Filimonatus.[46] One of the letters is a news compilation by the French resident dated 6 October; a second is a letter written to him from Kraków on 29 October by Christopher Opalinskii, the commandant of Poznan, with military news about Pomerania. The French resident was Charles de Bretagne, comte d'Avaugour, who also had been on missions to Sweden and would return there in subsequent years. His Latin letter (written in torturous and flowery prose) to the Archbishop of Gnezno – the politically most important prelate in Poland – and the senators, which Filimonatus had sent on to Moscow, seems to have been primarily a plea for the Poles not to support the imperial forces which had recently invaded Pomerania under General Krockow but then been driven toward Breslau by the Swedes under General Königsmark (Wilson 2009: 641). The military situation in Pomerania had also been the main subject of d'Avaugour's newsletter.

On or soon after 20 December 1643 (the dateline is damaged in the manuscript), Filimonatus sent a packet of news, which arrived in Moscow during January. His cover letter (V-K II: 79–80, No. 31) refers to several enclosures – a letter, printed newspapers and other manuscript newsletters. One of those enclosures undoubtedly is a letter which follows immediately in the original manuscript (ibid.: 80–82, No. 32). Addressed to the Governor General in Riga, the letter was written on 1 December by Peter Antonius Loofeldt (Lefel'di in the Russian), whom the Swedes had appointed to replace Krusebjörn in Moscow but who, as he explains in the letter, when turned away by the Russians, had taken up residence in Narva to monitor events in Russia.[47] Loofeldt reports on what he knew about the preparations in Poland and in Russia to receive Waldemar. There was a somewhat vague report about the Russians sending troops against the Kalmyks somewhere off near the Ural (Yaik) River. While no explanation was given, summary news sent from Hamburg on 22 November stated that the tsar had ordered the Swedish resident in Moscow to leave. A particular focus in the Russian news was a report that strict orders had been sent to Novgorod from Moscow about returning fugitives to the Swedes. So Loofeldt indicated it was now important to follow up on this and determine whether the same orders had been issued to Pskov and were being carried out. The matter of fugitives was an ongoing concern on both sides. Loofeldt included as well news relating to the military events in the West and from England, probably also derived from

46. The letter of 10 October is V-K II, No. 11; for the letters from Poland, see V-K II, Nos. 14, 15, with No. 16 probably sent in the next packet to Shlakov.

47. Loofeldt is one of the news writers included in Droste's study (2021: 190–191) who cultivated relationships with elite patrons in the hope of emoluments or career advancements. Loofeldt obviously became something of a Russia expert. He wrote a survey of the history of the Russian monarchy starting with the Time of Troubles, compiled an overview of the geography of Russian trade, wrote a history of the Waldemar marriage negotiations, including one of the religious tracts produced to refute Russian Orthodox beliefs, and wrote an account about the Novgorod and Pskov uprisings of 1650. A ledger book with these and his other writings, entitled 'Skrifter ang. Ingermanland, Ryssland och Wismar', is in RA (Sthlm): SE/RA/760004/68 and is available in its entirety online at: https://sok.riksarkivet.se/bildvisning/R0000435_00001#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-2151%2C-168%2C4882%2C2755.

Hamburg sources. Assuming that Filimonatus indeed was responsible for sending it on to Moscow, the Loofeldt letter rather convincingly suggests that the intelligencer had access to the papers of the Riga governor.

The archival file published as No. 32 continues on a new sheet (fol. 283) with what probably was Filimonatus' own compilation of news reports: one from Danzig dated 8 December regarding internal affairs in Poland and news from Stettin about Swedish military activities and the expectation that peace negotiations might begin. The most recent dated item in this news was from Danzig on 15 December, in which undoubtedly the most important report concerned the possible beginning of serious peace negotiations to end the wars, with diplomats being sent to Münster and Osnabrück. This may have been the first news received in Moscow about the initiation of the negotiations that, after several more years, would finally bring the Thirty Years War to an end.

In a later delivery, on 12 (? 2) March, Filimonatus wrote from Riga a cover note for his enclosure of a printed declaration of Queen Christina, dated 16 January in Stockholm, justifying the decision to declare war against Denmark.[48] While the translation of the declaration does not mention Filimonatus in the header, it follows immediately in the original archival scroll the translation of Filimonatus' letter and thus must have been made from the original he sent. Since the declaration could not have been received in Moscow much before the end of March, in a sense it was already 'history', as news sent earlier by Filimonatus, some received on 29 January, had included information on the outbreak of hostilities (V-K II, No. 48).

Filimonatus was obtaining a lot of his information from newspapers ('pechatnye novye vesti iz Liubka i izo Gdanska'), which he sent to Shlakov under the cover of his letter dated 5 October (ibid.: 42, No. 11.95). Remarkably both the lengthy translations

48. V-K II: 138, No. 64. As Ingrid Maier (1997: 67–72) has determined, there are numerous published versions of this text: at least 14 in German, two in Swedish, two in Dutch and one in Latin. She concludes that the Russian translation (V-K II: 202–205, No. 96) was most likely made from a Swedish version printed on a single sheet, even though we cannot exclude the possibility that a German text was used. The dateline on Filimonatus' letter is damaged, the editors having read it as 2 March, but the header specifies clearly a date of 12 March, which must be the day the letter was written, not when it arrived in Moscow. In one of his last letters, the translation copy somewhat damaged, written in Danzig on 26 May 1644, Filimonatus writes he is sending 'articles on the reason why the Swedes declared war against [Denmark]; as well as the letter of the Danish councilors and their rebuttal of the Swedes' letter (and) on the meeting on the Danish and Swedish border concerning that war, for (undertaking) appropriate measures and mediation to establish peace between them' (V-K II: 172, No. 75.508). It is difficult to know what might have been his source. Note, however, among the numerous pamphlets – some of them substantial booklets – published in connection with the war, that some append by way of an extended explanation for its causes a series of documents exchanged between the two governments. See, for example: *Manifest, Worinnen die Ursachen erklärt werden/ welche Die Königl. Mayest. zu Schweden/ [et]c. Bewogen und genöthiget haben/ einen Krieg zu resolviren,* [...] *wider* [...] *König Christians deß Vierdten zu Dennemarck/ [et]c.* [...] *Auß dem Schwedischen in das Teutsche transferiret*. N.p., 1644 (VD17 14:006439T). We have not yet located a pamphlet containing an exchange of letters specifically regarding a peace congress at the border which might have been published close to the time Filimonatus wrote his letter.

from these papers and some of the original imprints are in the Moscow archives.[49] The German newspapers which have been identified as sources for translations, all of them apparently made from the originals Filimonatus provided, are: *Post-Zeitung* (Hamburg) 1643, Prima № 37; *WZ* (Hamburg) 1643, Nos. 37, 38; *Particular Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* (Danzig?) 1643, Nos. 26, 27, and 28; untitled newspaper (Danzig?) 1643, № 37. Copies of all these papers have been preserved in Moscow, most with the notation 'translated' (*perevedeno*).

The translations render major sections of the German papers – that is, they show that the tendency still was to translate much of what came in, rather than summarize and substantially condense individual reports, as would be common later in the era of the international post. The news via Stettin concerned military action in Silesia, Pomerania and on the western front in the Netherlands and on the Rhine. A great deal of the often detailed reporting naturally concerned the Swedish forces. Separate reports from Hamburg and London covered in some detail the latest events in the English civil war. There were reports about the ongoing political unrest in France. There was little specifically on Denmark and nothing about the possible marriage in Moscow, which may not yet have attracted a lot of attention in the German-language press.

However, clearly the authorities in Moscow were interested in obtaining as much information as possible on the preparations for Prince Waldemar's visit. Immediately preceding the long run of Filimonatus' news reports, received in Moscow on 3 November, in the original archival scroll is a compilation that must have been made in the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow from various letters written to foreign merchants in September and October (V-K II: 38–40, No. 10). While damage to the manuscript obscures some of the dates, it seems clear that the translations were made at various times. There is a letter written from Reval (Tallinn) on 9 September, translated in Moscow on 6 October. Another letter was written on 16 October. While some of the news in these letters concerns battles in Pomerania, a letter from Hendrick Verporten (van der Poorten) to

49. The translations are V-K II, Nos. 6, 7 and 9. Schibli (1988: 456) correctly identified all but one of the listed newspapers as sources, the exception being *WZ* 1643/37, a copy of which is also in Moscow and undoubtedly was the source for three entries in V-K II: 24–25, No. 6.76–77. Our attributions of this material to Filimonatus is hypothetical. No. 6 follows immediately in the original manuscript two of the letters from Poland and like the following item, Filimonatus' letter written in Riga on October 15, was received and translated in Moscow on 3 November. Schibli notes (p. 91) that it likely is news supplied by Filimonatus. Nos. 9 and 7 (in that order) are followed immediately by a letter of the Danish resident Peter Bibi, sent from Stockholm on 7 October, probably to Copenhagen. The next items are all material we can associate with Filimonatus. It is possible that news sources for Nos. 7 and 9 were supplied by Marselis: newspapers published in Danzig could have been acquired by him when he passed through there in late October or early November, though the papers might already have been somewhat dated by then. However, Filimonatus' cover letter referring to the content of what he was enclosing would seem to confirm that the 'unattributed' translations (Nos. 7 and 9) derive in fact from newspapers he supplied. In particular, he emphasized the news contained details about Krockow in Pomerania (V-K II: 42–43, No. 11.95). There is very little of that news in No. 6 but a considerable amount in Nos. 7 and 9. Bibi's letter (see below) may have been intercepted by Swedish intelligence and not have come to Moscow from Marselis, although it is also possible it arrived with a report from Marselis in the same mail as one of the news packets Filimonatus sent.

Davyd Mikolaev (David Nikolasz. Ruts) reports that Peter Marselis had been granted a noble title in Denmark (which had occurred on 17 September; see Amburger 1957: 90) and that a fancy carriage was being made for Waldemar to ride in when in Moscow. Another letter also mentions the news about Marselis and the carriage and reports that Waldemar is already on his way through Poland. There is mention of a printed news sheet (*vestovoi listok*) from Danzig with information about a decree on trade; however, there is nothing here to suggest a copy of it had been received in Moscow. What compilations such as this one underscore is the degree to which the authorities in Moscow were monitoring the correspondence of the resident foreign merchants for intelligence, whether or not the addressees of the letters had given them permission to do so.[50]

Many of Filimonatus' letters contained information relating to Waldemar's entourage and its progress. A letter dated 5 November summarized how Waldemar had changed his original plans to travel by sea to Narva and instead decided to go to Danzig and from there through Poland. Ships carrying a lot of his supplies were sent to Riga, but one of them disappeared in a storm; it had not yet arrived (V-K II: 66, No. 24.108–109). A postscript to his letter sent from Riga on 13 November contained news about Waldemar's master of horse, who had been sent to take charge of getting all the prince's horses to Moscow.[51] Other letters reiterated the news of Waldemar's arrival in Danzig. On 25 November, Filimonatus reported that the missing ship with Waldemar's supplies had foundered along the coast of Courland. Lost in the cargo were the fireworks that had been prepared specially for the trip, but a bed made of elephant ivory had been salvaged (ibid.: 72, No. 28.171–172). In a postscript to that letter, Filimonatus repeated his warning written two weeks earlier that Shlakov needed to be careful regarding any dealings with the Danish contingent, as Peter Marselis was now influential and honored both by the Russians and the Danes. Moreover, there was some issue about a claim on one of Shlakov's servants (*malyi*), where the Swedish resident Krusebjörn was involved.[52] A set of newsletters with reports from Danzig dated 30 November and 1 December and another from Stettin dated 15 November, while not attributed specifically to Filimonatus, most likely were from him and presumably were received in Moscow some time in January (ibid.: 74–76, No. 29). A long item (apparently part of the Danzig article of 30 November) reported how Waldemar's people were talking about the likelihood of conflict between Russia and Sweden and how the Swedish resident in Moscow (Krusebjörn)

50. Interception of foreign mail affected both outgoing and incoming letters. For an example of the former, see the excerpts in V-K II: 209–210, No. 100. An impressive example of a compilation made from incoming letters summarizes some 18 of them dating from April through August 1645. Most are from late August, and many had been sent from Reval. Among the correspondents writing to Peter Marselis and David Mikolaev Ruts was none other than Adam Olearius (see V-K III: 39–44, No. 10).

51. V-K II: 59, No. 23.177. This apparently is the same Ebgart (Eberhard?) with whom Grelle sent some of the Filimonatus letters to Veiger in Pskov.

52. What exactly was involved here is not clear, since the manuscript is damaged and in any event the background to the dispute is not spelled out. This note immediately precedes Filimonatus' conveyance of greetings to Shlakov from his family and thus may relate to personal business that had nothing to do with the political pitfalls connected with Waldemar's visit.

was spreading the word there that Waldemar was illegitimate, in the hope of sabotaging the marriage negotiations. Waldemar planned to deal with that insult personally once he had arrived in Moscow. As late as June 1644, Filimonatus was writing from Danzig on the travels of Waldemar and described in some detail how his arrival in Russia was reported in the West (ibid.: 178–183, No. 78).

Given his access to news sources from Poland, it is perhaps surprising that Filimonatus reported relatively little regarding events in the south, where there were ongoing confrontations with the Tatars, threatening a possible renewal of war between Poland and the Ottoman Turks. One of his letters reported news from Danzig about a major Tatar incursion taking advantage of being able to cross a frozen river (ibid.: 114, No. 53.349). There was yet unconfirmed news of a victory (presumably by the Poles). And so it turned out, as Filimonatus was able to communicate from Danzig in news that probably arrived in Moscow on 14 April. The leading article was a report from the Polish camp in Ukraine dated 10 February about the total defeat of a Tatar army (ibid.: 131, No. 63.442). This was the Battle of Ochmatów (on 30 January), where many of the Tatars drowned when the river ice gave way. Widely reported in European news, it has been deemed Poland's greatest victory over the Tatars in the first half of the seventeenth century and the crowning achievement of Hetman Stanisław Koniecpolski (FIG. 11.1).[53]

FIG. 11.1. Hetman Stanisław Koniecpolski (ca. 1594–1646). 18th-century portrait.

A different perspective on the tensions developing in connection with the Waldemar visit was in a letter Peter Bibi, the Danish resident in Stockholm, had written on 7 October 1643 to Peter Marselis, who at the time was still in Copenhagen (V-K II: 58, No. 22). While this letter may have been forwarded by Marselis to Moscow, it is also possible it was intercepted by the Swedes and was sent on to Moscow by Filimonatus in Riga. The archival files fail to specify who handed it over to the Ambassadorial Chancery, where its translation was filed in the middle of a sequence of items we can connect with Filimonatus that arrived in late autumn. The letter is of some interest for its report that rumors had arrived about how the Swedish resident in Moscow, Krusebjörn, was out of favor. The Russians were pressing that he be recalled, ostensibly because there was no equivalent Russian resident any longer in Stockholm. Bibi also reported that members of the Swedish elite were very un-

53. See Kołodziejczyk 2011: 154; Czapliński 1967–1968. While it is not clear that Filimonatus had mentioned him by name in connection with the report on the battle, Koniecpolski's death on 11 March 1646 was noted briefly in a later compendium of translated and summarized news (V-K III: 64, No. 17.240). This news might have caught the attention of the Russian officials, given the important role he had played as one of the Polish military leaders against the Russians in the Time of Troubles and in the Polish-Swedish war of the 1620s.

happy about reports of the Russian overtures to Denmark concerning the possible marriage, seeing the prospect of a Russo-Danish alliance as a threat to Swedish interests.

Filimonatus' final packet of letters and information sent from Danzig at the end of May or beginning of June and received in Moscow on 26 June 1644 contained a substantial compilation of news, most of it probably derived from locally published newspapers.[54] The reports range in date from 19 March to 28 May. Two items with that final date are from Stettin, and a third one also from Stettin is dated but five days earlier, suggesting that the newspaper sources must have been printed shortly before Filimonatus would have had to send off his packet. Not surprisingly, much of this news concerned the Danish-Swedish conflict. The accumulation of so many letters and the date range of the enclosed news suggest that Filimonatus must have had some difficulty in finding a reliable courier, perhaps a hint as to why this ended up being the final delivery of his which has been preserved in Moscow. He alludes to this in his letters and notes that to send the news via special courier requires funds which he lacks. For the most part his letters simply reiterate his previous requests that Shlakov write him and secure for him a position as the tsar's news agent.

One letter indicates he was enclosing a copy of the treaty arranging for the Transylvanian Prince György Rákóczi to enter the war on the Swedish side and a letter Rákóczi wrote to the Hungarian magnates. While that declaration was issued on 17 February 1644, the treaty dates to the previous April. That Grelle would have included both in this mailing is undoubtedly to be explained by the fact that both documents were printed in pamphlets presumably at the same time in early 1644.[55] In the last of his letters, he mentions sending a copy of the Swedish justification for war against Denmark and the

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54. V-K II: Nos. 75, 73 (p. 164); see note 42 above. The content of No. 73, which is not explicitly attributed to Filimonatus, is consistent with what one would expect him to have acquired and sent. Ingrid Maier (2006a: 456) identified the *Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* (Stettin?) as a possible source for one entry in this news compilation. However, the texts are certainly not an exact match, and nothing else in the translated set of news seems to come from that newspaper, whose datelines generally are quite different from ones in Filimonatus' reports. The more likely candidate for much of this news is the Danzig paper *Particular Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung*, which we know was one Filimonatus obtained and copies of which he occasionally sent to Moscow. Unfortunately, there are no extant copies for the relevant date range that could enable us to confirm this hypothesis.

55. The agreement between the Swedes and Rákóczi was published as *Vergleichung Zwischen Ihr Königl: Mayest. zu Schweden Herrn General Feldmarschalln Leonhard Torstensohn/ Und I.F.G. Georg Ragotzky Fürsten in Siebenbürgen*. N.p., 1644 (VD17 35:728171X; copy in Rostock, Universitätsbibliothek, Jk-1039.5; another printing is VD17 14:005511V). The declaration of Rákóczi to the Hungarian magnates was published in German translation from Latin in a number of pamplets in 1644, one of which may have been the one Filimonatus sent. None of them has a place of publication. See, for example: *Manifest Des Fürstens in Siebenbürgen Georg Ragoczi* [...] *Aus dem Latein ins Teutsche versetzt und gedruckt im Jahr 1644* (VD17 28:732421H, copy in Rostock, Universitätsbibliothek, Jk-1039.4). Given the fact that Grelle matriculated at Rostock University, it is at least a reasonable hypothesis that the pamphlets he sent to Moscow may well have been copies of the printings which now are preserved in Rostock. On Rákóczi's intervention in the war, see *Osmanskaia imperiia* 1998–2001, 1: 172–175.

Danish response.[56] None of these items is in the set of translations which was preserved in the original archival scroll along with Grelle's final letters. Confirmation of the sources referred to here will have to await a discovery of either the original pamphlets or contemporary Russian translations from them, which may possibly be located in some other archival file. Clearly many such discoveries can still be expected.[57]

11.6. Conclusion: A missed opportunity?

There is ample evidence in the Filimonatus letters that attest to their value in keeping the Russian authorities informed of fact, rumor and foreign reportage concerning Waldemar's visit, in the process highlighting the way that the growing tensions between Sweden and Denmark could affect Russian relations with both countries. Apart from the news specific to Waldemar's visit to Moscow, these letters and their enclosures, which were based on sources in the Baltic region and Poland, contained a great deal of information about the balance of military power in the region. Once the Swedes had driven the imperial forces out of Pomerania and had signed a temporary truce with the empire, the way was open for Sweden to turn against Denmark. So the news then contained abundant detail about the Swedish forces, the seizure of Danish territories and the Danish response (on these events, see Wilson 2009: 685–689). In his letter to Matvei Veiger and – writing as Filimonatus – in his letter to Shlakov of the same date, 16 January 1644, Grelle characterized as 'unpleasant' (*nedobrye*) the news of the Swedish invasion of Holstein (Waldemar's principality).[58] However, this was news which Grelle was sure the tsar would be anxious to learn. The Filimonatus letter cautioned that the Swedish officials in Dorpat (Iur'ev) were keeping a close eye on Waldemar's agents posted there and had arrested at least one of them. So the messengers Waldemar was sending via Dorpat

56. Absent the Russian translation, of course it is impossible to identify the exact source. However, a pamphlet of analogous content seems to be *Kurtzer und summarischer Bericht der Ursachen welche man so wol in Nieder-Sachsen den See-Städten als auch bey etlichen Schwedischen Officirern per Discursum vernimbt warumb der Einfall in Hollstein erfolget seyn solle. Gedruckt im Jahr 1644* (VD 17 28:732424F, copy in Rostock, Universitätsbibliothek Jk-1039.3). As noted just above (n. 55), it may be no coincidence that this pamphlet and those containing the Rákóczi documents are preserved in sequence in the Rostock library. If all produced in a local print house, they easily could have been obtained by Grelle in Danzig. One edition containing at least the Swedish justification, if not the Danish response, was published in Hamburg (VD17 35:722938S, no copy online), and there is as well a version ostensibly translated from Dutch into German and published in Amsterdam on 23 April 1644, which lacks the King of Denmark's letter (VD17 547:712375K).

57. For another example of where Filimonatus sent a printed pamphlet, whose original has been identified and whose translation was preserved in the same files with his letters, see above n. 48. Even though he was not involved, one of the previously unidentified printed sources for the *kuranty* was a report about an important Swedish naval victory over the Danes: *Außführliche Relation Von dem starcken See-Treffen/ welches zwischen beyden Königl: Als Schwedisch: und Dähnischen Flotten den 13. 23. Octobris zwischen Laland und Fämern vorgangen/* [...] Wismar, 1644 (VD17 23:317318F). Complete and partial copies of the translation are in V-K II: 199–201, Nos. 94, 95, small textual differences attributable to the copyists. It is likely that the original was part of a news packet sent by a Swedish commandant in Livonia to his counterpart in Pskov, who then forwarded it to Moscow where it was received on 17 December 1644 (see V-K II: 206, No. 97).

58. V-K II: 104, No. 46.252; 106, No, 48.256.

to Vilna and on to Copenhagen needed to be very careful. A good question is whether the Swedish authorities would have been pleased had they known Grelle was giving such advice.

Since the gathering, selection and dissemination of news then and now is rarely dispassionate and objective, we might wonder who was *intended* to be the real beneficiary of the impressive amount of information Grelle supplied and who actually benefitted. The initiative seems to have come not from Moscow but from Grelle in Riga, who thought he had the appropriate contact in Moscow (Shlakov) to act as his agent there. Grelle certainly made some effort to keep Shlakov happy by trying to fulfill his commissions and at least on one occasion, unasked, sending a little gift of lemons and dried Riga flounder (V-K II: 69, No. 25.123). Yet Shlakov never seems to have responded with any kind of financial compensation either from his own funds or by arranging for Grelle to be hired on as the Muscovite intelligencer abroad. Moreover, there is no indication, at least in the Russian documentation, whether Grelle received important intelligence in return, if in fact that had been his real goal. Where his sources sometimes cited news coming out of the Russian capital, who was responsible for providing it is unclear. At very least, his Russian venture, had he launched it without permission from the Swedish authorities and if it was a failure, did not end up hurting his career.

Shlakov may have felt that receiving regular news reports was something he could turn to his advantage in Moscow. If he had an understanding with the Ambassadorial Chancery that the reports were for its benefit, that could have worked in his favor. However, possibly the only really valuable information for him personally were the warnings Grelle sent that he should tread cautiously in his dealings with the Swedish resident and with Waldemar's entourage. As it turned out, there was little Shlakov could do once his real identity had become known. His exploitation of the contact with Riga at very least enabled him to order up from abroad items which could enhance his pretensions in Moscow.

Arguably, the Muscovite authorities may have benefitted most from the Filimonatus letters, to the degree that they contained insider information, funneled through the well-developed Swedish intelligence operations in the Baltic region.[59] And this happened at a time when there may have been no regular equivalent deliveries of foreign news to Moscow. Perhaps by not hiring him, they missed out on an opportunity to learn much more. In the context of the marriage negotiations with Denmark, the focus of much of the news from Filimonatus was clearly of some value. Despite this flow of news (or perhaps because of it), the Russian authorities felt they needed more information about

59. After he had already arrived in Danzig, while still holding out hope for some kind of employment with the Russians, Filimonatus/Grelle emphasized in his letter of 10 April to Shlakov his ability to obtain information from Sweden via the intelligencers who obtained it through Livonia rather than the interdicted route via Hamburg and Denmark ('a ia s nimi dobruiu zh druzhbu derzhu chtob ... ot nikh provedyvat mochno zh [...]'; V-K II: 169, No. 74.481). However, such intelligence, which could include information from Poland, came at a price he did not have the funds to pay.

the military preparations in Livonia, which they had good reason to think were directed against Russia in anticipation of a Russo-Danish alliance. Hence the importance of the intelligence gathering by the border commanders. Foreign news, even from a well-positioned resident intelligencer, seems not to have been sufficient (or at least not trusted) in matters that might affect border security. And, apart from border intelligence operations, the Ambassadorial Chancery did have other sources providing international news.

CHAPTER 12

The *Kuranty* in Context, 1644–1648

Even though the Kremlin, perhaps suspicious of Filimonatus' eagerness to be employed as an agent, passed on the opportunity he offered, there were other options providing a substantial amount of foreign news in the mid- to late 1640s. Developments affecting the Baltic region figured prominently in the news being translated in Moscow from reports supplied by Danish and Swedish contacts. The mid-1640s was a time when perlustration of foreigners' mail figured prominently in the efforts by the tsar's government to acquire news. It seems likely that the opening of foreign merchants' correspondence in part was a response to complaints by Russian entrepreneurs about unfair competition for the profits that could be obtained from trade in Persian silk. Among the most important developments in European diplomacy were the negotiations over several years at Münster and Osnabrück that led to the treaties in 1648 which ended the Thirty Years War. While some nuances of the protracted deliberations undoubtedly escaped the attention of the policy makers in the Kremlin, newspaper reports which were being translated tracked the progress. The treaty between Spain and the Netherlands, concluded in Münster on 30 January 1648 and ending the war between these two countries, and the Osnabrück treaty were obtained and translated. Thus there is impressive evidence about the quantity of foreign news being received at least for a time some two decades before it became possible to acquire foreign newspapers on a predictable and regular basis. As the discussion which follows will detail, there are significant methodological challenges in attempting to establish how the news was obtained, its timeliness, and thus whether it could have had an impact on the shaping of foreign policy.

12.1. The Danes and Swedes as sources for news

Quite independently of what Filimonatus was writing (even if some of his messages were being delivered through the Danish officials connected with Waldemar), the Danish mission in Moscow was one of the important sources of news for the tsar's government. Peter Marselis had gone on ahead of Waldemar's ponderously moving contingent and arrived in Moscow on 27 December 1643. On 18 January 1644, he submitted to

the Ambassadorial Chancery a report from Riga, focusing on concerns in Livonia about Waldemar's trip to Moscow and the military preparations there, news which would have troubled the Russians.[1] There even had been rumors, now dismissed, about a Danish invasion that would result in Waldemar's being given Reval as an apanage. There was also news from the western front, reinforced on 21 January when Marselis submitted more reports to the Ambassadorial Chancery.[2] Information from Hamburg provided details of the Swedish preparations to invade Holstein, and news from Lübeck in the last week of December reported the conquests by General Torstenson's forces, which had crossed into Holstein a few days earlier. Presumably at some later date, Marselis gave to the Russian escorts who had been assigned to the embassy additional letters, from which the translators seem to have selected but some of the information: news from Riga, probably now dated, on Swedish military victories over the imperial forces, and a note that Field Marshal Wrangel, presumably then in his capacity as Governor General in Riga, had died there (an event which had occurred back on 10 December).

Marselis' contacts in Riga and his agent in Pskov continued to send him news, including the report about the Swedish officials blocking cross-border communications and about ongoing military preparations. Marselis turned this information over to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 9 February.[3] Obviously the Russian government now had information from several sources. Such news would have prompted the Kremlin to order its border commanders that they should tighten security and activate intelligence gathering. There is an interesting cause and effect pattern here. The important news inculded Waldemar's possible marriage coinciding with the opening of hostilities between Denmark and Sweden, Swedish military preparations in anticipation of a hostile Russo-Danish alliance, and possible Polish intervention in the imperial cause. Consequently, Russia strengthened border security in anticipation not of an offensive war against Sweden, for which preparations apparently were not being made, but rather in the face of a possible Swedish invasion.

1. V-K II: 95–96, No. 43.266–269.

2. Ibid.: 96–97, No. 43.270–274.

3. Marselis' letter of 9 February immediately precedes in the original archival scroll a newsletter whose latest report is dated 14 February and had probably been the enclosure with the next item, a letter Van den Bloch wrote to Marselis on 5 March from Pskov. Probably Van den Bloch's letter and its enclosure had been brought to Moscow by the courier the Pskov commandant sent with his own report to Moscow written on 5 March (see V-K II: 127–128; Nos. 60, 61; 139–142, Nos. 65, 66). On 22 March, Marselis handed in another news report he had received from Van den Bloch, which included reports that had been sent by the Danish king from Glückstadt and a tantalizing (but difficult to read, on account of damage to the manuscript) account of a conversation with the translator Matvei Veiger, in which he was quizzed about news he might have picked up in Moscow (ibid.: 119–122, No. 55). In the original archival manuscript this translation follows directly on a copy of a letter sent by the Novgorod military governors to the tsar reporting on security measures and intelligence gathering about events on the other side of the border (ibid.: 145–146, No. 68.406–409). That letter follows immediately in the manuscript a translation from printed *tetrati* (quires; i.e., probably a German newspaper), with no indication of how the original came into the hands of the officials in Moscow (ibid.: 116–119, No. 54). The news in No. 54 for the most part deals with events in the Baltic region and in particular those involving Denmark and Holstein.

Waldemar himself was reading the news and turning some of it over to the Russians. On 11 April he gave the *okol'nichii* Vasilii Ivanovich Streshnev, a distant relative of Mikhail Fedorovich's second wife and one of the court officials closest to the tsar, a copy of the *Particular Post und Hamburger Reichs-Zeitung* 1644/10, which the prince's courier and chamberlain Diedrich Kerkering (Karklink) had brought back from Danzig.[4] The newspaper was promptly translated in its entirety, with but few mistakes (Schibli 1988: 99–100). The most recent items were from Stettin, dated 22 and 28 February, which means that the news, published around the beginning of March, had arrived in Moscow about six weeks later. This number of the newspaper was almost entirely devoted to details about the Swedish-Danish war, with a lot of material on the naval actions in the Baltic, and a report from the Netherlands about Dutch reluctance to ally with Sweden, sentiment that, as it turned out, would grow in the spring following the defeat of a mercenary Dutch naval force by the Danes (Wilson 2009: 688).

The precise information about the receipt of this newspaper and its translation is the more interesting because of the fact that the same issue of the paper, presumably published in Danzig, or a significant part of its source text was incorporated into a long packet of news Filimonatus sent from Danzig either on 24 March or some time in April.[5] He clearly had other material, some of it dated as much as a month later than what was in the one issue of the Danzig newspaper; unfortunately, it is impossible to tell whether both the earlier and later sections of his report arrived in Moscow at the same time or separately, some weeks apart. In any event, what Waldemar's courier brought had arrived at least a few days before Filimonatus sent some of the same information. The more recent news in Filimonatus' report continued the focus on the Danish-Swedish war but also broadened the coverage of European events. Three reports that might have been of real interest in Moscow concerned the entry of György I Rákóczi, the prince

4. Ibid.: 128–131, No. 62; 388–395 (facsimile of the newspaper). An inscription on the original newspaper, which is preserved in the Russian archives, states it had been received from Waldemar, and the header to the translation also specifies the source. The inscription is not visible in the photo-facsimile appended to V-K II but is partially legible on the copy at DP Bremen. The inscription reads: '152 [-g] aprelia v 11 de(n') dal korolevich Valdemar Khrist'ianusovich' […]' Although Streshnev undoubtedly was simply fulfilling his official duties at court, he had presented Shlakov to the tsar at the time the imposter had his first official audience.

5. Filimonatus' news packet is V-K II: 131–138, No. 63. The portion of it which corresponds to the one Danzig newspaper begins on fol. 448 (the entry headed Stettin, 22 February) and ends at the bottom of fol. 452 with the item from Mecklenburg. So it is possible the section drawn from another source and containing the material of later date, which begins on fol. 453, was not part of this same packet. Since some news not from that one newspaper precedes the article from Stettin, and given the fact that the articles that correspond to those in the newspaper are not exact translations, it is possible that the whole section of the manuscript through fol. 452 derives from a different newspaper, but one that drew heavily on the same source as the Danzig one. In the original archival scroll, the news packet immediately precedes letters Filimonatus wrote early in April and on April 10, which were received in Moscow on 5 May (ibid.: 167–170, No. 74). His letter from Danzig on 24 March (received 14 April) follows the translation made from Waldemar's copy of the newspaper and precedes Filimonatus' own news packet, separated from it only by another, undated letter Filimonatus wrote to Shlakov (ibid.: 146–147, Nos. 69, 70).

of Transylvania, on the Swedish side. His forces were now attacking the imperial troops in upper Austria, causing, as Wilson puts it (2009: 696), 'considerable alarm'. There was concern over the possibility that the Ottomans would be drawn into the conflict, although that did not happen, and the Ottomans would instead turn their attention to Crete.[6]

During the remainder of Waldemar's stay in Moscow, his and Marselis' contacts abroad provided a considerable amount of news, the flow of which will be briefly summarized here. The key to their ability to maintain regular contact with Denmark and thus circumvent the Swedish blockade on the transmission of news through Riga was the establishment of a postal connection via Danzig, Königsberg and Vilna. The Danish 'postmaster' in Vilna was Bengt Focht (or Voigt), whose official duties title initially had been 'The Royal Supervisor of Couriers' (*ego korolevskogo velichestva uriadnik nad gontsy*) but who then designated himself as Royal Postmaster (*pochtar'*). As Focht explained, in writing to Diedrich Karklink, Waldemar's *dvorovoi stanostavets* ('chamberlain', 'majordomo') on 8 June 1644, the connections in both directions out of Vilna were problematic.[7] It is not clear whether the formal authorization for the couriers by the Polish authorities improved the situation.[8] On 14 October, writing to Waldemar, Focht complained about the problems with the 'Cossack' couriers.[9] On 30 June, 14 July and 1 October Marselis turned in newsletters he had received, but the reports in them were already from six weeks to more than two months old. We do not know exactly how those letters had come and whether he gave copies to the Russians immediately after they had arrived.[10] Letters written on 29 August in Königsberg from agents of the Danish ambassadors in Moscow arrived and were translated, but again with no explicit indication of their routing and transit time.[11] The translations were copied in the original archival scroll in the middle of several letters Focht had written to Waldemar and the Danish ambassador Pasberg on 14 October.[12] So it is possible that the letters from Königsberg arrived only with the packet containing Focht's mail. In a letter to Pasberg dated 19 October Focht noted he was enclosing both manuscript and printed newspapers, but complained about his difficulty in obtaining the most recent news.[13] None of the translations of Focht's letters specifies how the Russians obtained copies, which leaves open

6. The Venetian defense of Crete, which took more than two decades before it finally fell to the Turks in 1669, would be the subject of numerous reports translated for the later *kuranty*.

7. V-K II: 185–186, No. 81.331–332.

8. Ibid.: 198–199, No. 93.

9. Ibid.: 194–195, No. 88.

10. Ibid.: 172–178, Nos. 76, 77; 187–190, No. 82. Marselis undoubtedly had means other than the services of Focht to receive mail. On 25 October 1643, his agent Isaac Bukol't brought to Moscow a letter written in Livonia by V. Sharp, addressed to his son (ibid.: 57, No. 21).

11. Ibid.: 191–193, Nos. 84, 85.

12. Ibid.: 194–198, Nos. 88, 89, 91, 92.

13. Ibid.: 196, No. 90.6–7.

the question of whether they had been opened by the Russians on arrival rather than given directly to the Danes.[14]

Even though he may not have been providing regular news to the Russians at the time, the Swedish resident Krusebjörn maintained contact with the Kremlin's officials when there was official business between the two governments and when he was needing to respond to claims that he or his staff were delinquent in meeting fiscal obligations. A continuing source of concern requiring adjustment on the government level was to prevent the loss of tax-paying residents who might cross the border illegally and take up residence on the other side. In January and again in March 1644, Governor General Anders Eriksson in Riga wrote to Krusebjörn asking him to intervene in controversies over the search for such fugitives, since the local border commanders seem not to have been able to deal with the issue, as had been specified in the peace treaties between the two countries.[15] Eriksson included in his letter of 4 March (which Krusebjörn turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 5 April) a compact summary of news received from the empire and Poland. The news from Poland was reassuring in that everything was quiet. And the news from the empire also was promising, with a report that peace negotiations might get underway at Osnabrück.

Arguably the most interesting report received in Moscow in autumn 1644 about the Swedish-Danish war came not from the Danes but via the Swedish administration in Riga, understandably perhaps in view of the news. On 25 November, the Russian commandant in Pskov received from his counterpart in Livonia a printed document (*list*) concerning the war; the Pskov officials promptly sent it on to Moscow, where it arrived on 17 December.[16] The translation of what surely was this item directly precedes the cover letter from Pskov in the original archival scroll. The report is a long letter written by the Swedish commander Carl Gustaf Wrangel to a Swedish official in Lower Saxony on 17 October. It described what is considered to have been one of the most illustrious victories ever by the Swedish navy, over the Danish fleet near the island of Fehmarn in the Baltic. Wrangel's letter, which contains a specific list of the Danish ships that were captured, was published in a separate brochure in Wismar, though it may well be another edition was the one forwarded to Moscow from Pskov.[17] The battle ended Danish hopes

14. The suspicion here that the Danes' mail was being opened is reinforced by the fact that immediately preceding the translations of Focht's letters in the original archival scroll is a collection of translations and summaries of letters sent by Dutch merchants to their agents and families abroad, concerning their trade in Russia, the writers including Pieter de la Dale and David Ruts (ibid.: 209–210, No. 100). This compendium, likely produced around the time or just after the letters of Focht were translated, ends with a note about the existence of other such letters in mail the merchants had received but which the translators apparently did not have in hand ('i pro te oni gramotki chaiut chto v Posolskom prikaze'). Here the text seems to break off, but the implication is the chancery will get its hands on those letters.

15. Ibid.: 122–123, No. 56.

16. Ibid.: 206, No. 97.

17. Ibid.: 199–201, No. 94. *Außführliche Relation Von dem starcken See-Treffen* […] *zwischen Laland und Fämern vorgangen* […] Wismar, 1644 (VD17 23:317318F). The internal heading to Wran-

of naval control of the Baltic and was a significant step in forcing the Danes to agree to the disadvantageous Peace of Brömsebro the following August.

There is no explicit indication that the Swedish resident Krusebjörn took the initiative to turn over a substantial newsletter he had received on 2 January 1645 from Hendrick Gillenstern, who wrote from Nyen(skans) at the mouth of the Neva on 17 December 1644.[18] Much of the news concerned the war in the Baltic. As Gillenstern reported, imperial forces under the command of Matteo (Matthias) Gallas had marched down the Elbe in support of the Danes but were routed by Torstensson in the battle of Jüterbog on 13/23 November. Adjoining the translation of the Gillenstern letter in the archival scroll is a translation of news from Hamburg dated 14 December, listing the numerous captives that had been taken.[19] There was news of the Dutch warships the Swedes had hired; information on Baltic navigation had arrived in Reval on 23 November on a ship that had sailed from Lübeck. Gillenstern also reported on the sending of a Polish envoy to Stockholm and expressed the hope that the Swedes and Danes quickly would sign a peace. There was news of other Swedish victories, which offered some optimism that the emperor and his allies might now be inclined to make peace in the negotiations now about to begin in Osnabrück.

12.2. News via Novgorod and Pskov

The translators in Novgorod and Pskov obviously had a key role in obtaining and transmitting foreign news, as the case of Matvei Veiger illustrates. Their professional obligations meant they not only were involved in the reception of foreigners who would arrive from across the border, but that they would have frequent contact with resident foreign merchants. In Pskov, one of those merchants was Albert van den Bloch, an agent working for Peter Marselis. Newspapers he had received from Riga must be the ones brought

gel's letter (p. [3]) corresponds to what the Russians translated: "Extract Schreiben des Herrn General Major Carel Gustaff Wrangels Excell. an einen vornemen Königl. Schwedischen Bedienten in Nieder-Sachsen/ datum auff der Königl. Flotta im Schiff Smalandische Löw vor Christina Priß den 17. Octobris." A close comparison of the translation and the proposed original remains to be done. Clearly there are some differences: for example, the header for the list of ships is condensed, and probably due to an eye-skip, one of the ships on the list was omitted, while the name of another is distorted. The end of the translation, with some significant gaps, is on a damaged sheet. A more precise rendering of just the final section of the pamphlet, starting with the list of the captured ships, is ibid.: 201, No. 95. A report on the battle, which also lists the ships captured and sunk but cannot be the source for the Russian translation, is in the *Particular, Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* 1644/46. On the battle, see Ericson Wolke et al. 2009: 85–87.

18. V-K II: 207–209, No. 99.

19. Ibid.: 206–207, No. 98. Obviously the Swedes considered this victory to be a significant one, as a special celebration was mounted in Stockholm and described in an 'extra', published in Danzig as a supplement to the *Post/ Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung*, No. 2: *Zu Num. 2. Anno 1645. gehörig. Relation der abermahligen Victori* [...] *auch Eigentlicher Bericht Wie es bey Antretung Ihrer Königlichen Mayestat zu Schweden Regierung/ den 7.17 Decemb. Anno 1644. in Stockholm gehalten worden* (DP Bremen, available online). There are news articles appended, at the end of the first one an indication that a list of the captives will be published in the next number (apparently not in this newspaper; perhaps in its Hamburg source).

to Moscow by Veiger, where they were translated on 16 October.[20] Among them was *ESC* 1645/35, published in Amsterdam on 2 September, and at least one additional newspaper (possibly German, from Danzig) which has not been identified. The entire Dutch paper (with the exception of one article datelined Regensburg) was translated, with but few omissions and occasional errors. The opening item in the translation (not from that Dutch newspaper), datelined Stettin, 3 September, would have been of particular interest in Moscow, since it quotes in extenso a letter written by the Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna on 1 August to the city. reporting on the favorable outcome of the peace negotiations with Denmark, including provisions regulating the shipping through the Sound. The Dutch newspaper reported on a wide range of topics: an entry from Venice dated 11 August on the war for Crete, military news in the still ongoing conflict with the imperial forces (including a lot on Swedish moves and some involving the Danes), and even a report from Pernambuco in Brazil on the conflict between the Dutch and Portuguese dated 26 June (mistakenly dated August in the translation). So here we have a snapshot of transmission times between the inception of a news item and its receipt and translation in Moscow: from Pernambuco, 113 days; from Venice, 67 days; from Stettin, 33 days (Oxenstierna's letter, 77 days); Amsterdam, 34 days. The transit time from Amsterdam in this particular case is as fast as would frequently be the case once the international postal connection to Moscow was established two decades later, which means that an express courier must have been employed in bringing the news to Livonia and on into Russia.

The Swedish victory in 'Torstensson's War' against Denmark certainly strengthened their bargaining position in the negotiations at Westphalia (Wilson 2009: 691). Copies of the printed Swedish pamphlet which contained the entire text of the Treaty of Brömsebro (signed on 13 August 1645) arrived in Moscow separately via Novgorod (in December) and Pskov, in the latter case brought from Narva on 7 January.[21] Since there currently was no translator in Pskov (Veiger was in Moscow at the time), the authorities simply forwarded the copy they received. In Moscow it was compared with the copy sent earlier from Novgorod that had already been translated, and it was determined that a

20. A communication from Pskov about the receipt of the newspapers immediately precedes in the original archival scroll the translation made from them. See V-K III: 5, and 45–49, No. 11. The suggestion here about a possible Danzig source is based on the fact that there is one long article datelined Old Stettin, 3 September, reports from there often leading off any given number of one of the Danzig newspapers. That said, news from Stettin also appeared in Dutch newspapers of the period or could have come from one of the Hamburg papers. For example, there are the occasional articles in the Dutch *TVQ*, with a run of three numbers (No. 45, 46 and 48) in autumn 1646, each containing a Stettin article, one of them the first report (see Weduwen 2017: 297).

21. We wonder whether the Danes in Moscow would have received a copy of the treaty earlier and simply not given it to the Russians. In his letter to Waldemar from Vilna dated 14 October (V-K II: 195, No. 88.10), in discussing the news he had sent or was trying to obtain, Focht wrote 'and the announcement of what has been agreed on between the Danish and Swedish kings has now been requested both in Danzig and Königsberg' ('da obiavlenie chto mezh dattskim i sveiskim koroliami bylo, a nyne de to vo Gdanske i v Korolevtse zakazano'). In the context here, it is somewhat unclear whether the *to* ('that') refers to a copy of the agreement or one of the other news items.

second translation was not needed, as the imprints were identical.[22] As a follow-up to the signing of the Brömsebro Treaty, Queen Christina elevated her chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, to the ranks of the nobility. Her speech on the occasion (27 November 1645) was translated in Moscow from a German version, probably a separate that has not yet been located.[23] The translation differs substantially from the Swedish original of the speech, to the extent that parts are almost incomprehensible. Unfortunately, there is no evidence how the Russian translators obtained their source text.[24]

News transmitted via Novgorod could have arrived there via Pskov but also could have been obtained from Livonia more rapidly via a direct route to Narva. Where headers to translations specifically cite Novgorod as the source, we might safely assume that the material had not in fact first arrived in Pskov. Since the relevant documents interspersed with the translated *kuranty* in the original archival scrolls have not been published, more precise information is lacking, but there seem to be a number of instances where the key person forwarding foreign news was the translator Mikhail Sakharnikov in Novgorod.[25] The news translations published in V-K III (No. 20), were made from

22. V-K III: 6–7; text of the translation, 21–39, No. 8. As Ingrid Maier has established (1997: 37–41), the published original is: *Fredz-Fördragh Emellan den Stormächtigeste, Höghborne Furstinna och Fröken, Fröken Christina* […] *Så och den Stormächtigeste, Höghborne Furste och Herr, Her Christian den Fierde* […] *Vprättat och slutet på Grentzen widh Brömsebroo* […] *den 13. Augusti. Åhr 1645*. Stockholm: H. Keyser, [1645] . The translators condensed some articles but otherwise, with occasional mistakes, faithfully rendered the text. There is a separate file (V-K III: 39, No. 9) with a condensed text of three of the articles in the treaty, probably from the same translation, but with no indication of why the copy was made. As we have observed in other examples, the correspondence relating to the receipt of the news pamphlet was copied into the original archival scroll next to the copy of the translation. The treaty was also published in German translation (several editions), e.g.: *Friedens-Vertrag Zwischen der Großmächtigsten/ Hochgebornen Fürstin unnd Fräwlein/ Fräwlein Christina* […] *Wie dann auch dem Großmächtigsten/ Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Christian dem Vierdten zu Dennemarck* […] *Auffgerichtet und geschlossen auff der Gräntze bey Brömsebroo* […]. Stettin, 1645 (VD17 12:629770Z). A copy of the Stettin edition was included in a bound collection of Rhete's Danzig newspaper (see the copy in DP Bremen following his *Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* 1645/52).

23. V-K III: 52–54, No. 15.

24. On the quality of the translation, see Maier 1997: 79–80. The copy of the translation in the original archival scroll follows a 'packet' of letters sent by Christian Shimmeliar to individuals in Moscow. They were received some time in November and precede a translation of Protestant peace proposals made at Osnabrück on 10 November and a short set of excerpts from the Treaty of Brömsebro. However, the text of the speech is bracketed immediately by some other as yet unpublished texts (which may, of course, shed light on transmission of the source). At best, we can speculate that the speech was sent in a packet containing both the Protestant proposals and one of the copies of the treaty.

25. See V-K III: 5. The original archival scroll (RGADA, f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 1) includes in sequence information received from Riga in Pskov and brought to Moscow by Matvei Veiger on 16 October, documents mentioning the Novgorod translator Mikhail Sakharnikov, a letter written in Stockholm by an important translator, Onufrii Kiri (Keri), on 26 August, and with a short hiatus, a packet of letters (V-K III: 84–94, No. 24) to be discussed below. Following that packet is another mention of Sakharnikov, a document containing instructions to Novgorod and Pskov officials about obtaining intelligence and, with another hiatus, documents concerning the receipt of the printed copies of the Brömsebro Treaty, in Novgorod in December and in Pskov in early January, followed by the translation of the treaty itself. Sakharnikov turns up in these files later too. He had a long career based in Novgorod between 1636/7 and 1651 and apparently was the only Russian official there for translating

two newspapers (whose translated title, partially preserved, seems to have been '[...] what has happened in the territory of the empire and in other lands in the present year [6]154 [1646]' ('[...] chto deialosia v Tsesarevoi oblasti i v ynykh zemliakh v nyneshnem vo 154 godu') received in Moscow on 20 March from Novgorod. Immediately preceding this translation in the archival scroll was a document referring to Sakharnikov, who thus may have been responsible for forwarding the newspapers to Moscow.

It seems likely that at least the first part of this news compendium (ibid.: 71–74, No. 20.260–267) translates one number of the Danzig newspaper (published by David Rhete) entitled *Newe Wochentliche Zeitung Auß Breßlaw und sonst anderen Orten des Römischen Reichs*. That newspaper generally opens each issue with an article Breslau, as is the case with this translation, where the date is 13 February. The second newspaper source for this translated set (No. 20. 268–276) likely was another of Rhete's Danzig papers, either the *Particular Zeitung* or the *Particular Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung*, in which normally the opening article would be that of the most recent date, news from (Old) Stettin, often followed later in the same number of the paper by one or two additional articles from Stettin.[26] The translation opens on a new folio (268) with 'Vesti iz Starogo Stetina fevralia v 11 de(n')', and additional news items include (fols. 271–272) one from Stettin, 7 February. If the hypothesis of the sources here is correct, the Muscovite translators probably had copies of the two papers published within a week of each other in mid-February. It seems quite certain that another copy of the second of these papers was received in Moscow on 8 April and at that time translated again.[27] That which had come via Novgorod obviously arrived much faster, its news no more than about a month old.

Apart from Sakharnikov, another Novgorod source of news for the Kremlin was the wealthy merchant (*gost'*) Ivan Ivanovich Stoianov. With government blessing, he and his brother Semën were involved in trade with Sweden, which meant they had opportunities to travel or send their agents to Livonia and also frequented Moscow (Golikova 1998: 99–108). It seems to have been in Stoianov's interest voluntarily to hand over to

German. Had it not been for that, he might have been executed during the uprising in Novgorod in 1650 (see Beliakov 2017: 105; Beliakov et al.: 174–175).

26. There is little reason to think that one of the Dutch papers, such as *TVQ*, would have been the source here, given the context where we have another of Rhete's papers translated on the immediately preceding folios. The provenance and substance of the articles seems to fit well with what we know from extant copies of Rhete's papers, although a Hamburg newspaper cannot be excluded as the source.

27. V-K III: 69–71, No. 19.329–335, and 208–210, App. 1.310–314. Comparison of the two translations raises questions about the dates of the first two articles in No. 20, where the entry from Stettin is dated 11 February and the following one from Hamburg 4 February. In No. 19, the respective dates are 22 February and 14 February, but then for the remainder of both translations, the dates are identical. The likely explanation here is that in many of the newspapers of the period, both Julian and Gregorian dates are given for individual news items. The translator of No. 20 may well have started by choosing the Julian (earlier) dates, although the scribe of the fair copy might have erroneously written 11 February, where one would expect 12 February. The translation in No. 20 omits one article, datelined Osnabrück 30 January, which was translated in No. 19.

the Ambassadorial Chancery the news he had obtained, although it is also possible that one of his obligations (which came with receiving the privileges the wealthiest merchant 'corporation' enjoyed) was to supply news. Apart from his interest in foreign events, he is known to have reported to the Novgorod military commandant in 1648 about the events of the recent rebellion in Moscow (which Stoianov apparently had witnessed). He is recorded as having turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery printed German newspapers on 7 January 1647 and a newsletter on 15 November 1648.[28] Since the files all form a compact group in the original archival scroll with the items explicitly attributed to Stoianov, it is likely he also was the source of the originals translated as Nos. 53 and 56 (drafts, App. Nos. 13 and 15). These translations probably were from the newspapers he turned in on 7 January, as the news in Nos. 53–56 all comes from late September (only one item, from Rome) through to mid-November (news from Stettin). While we cannot be certain of all the exact sources, they were probably drawn from German newspapers published in Hamburg, Danzig or Stettin.[29] One translation (No. 56) in fact is a complete rendering of *ESZ* 1646/Secunda No. 45 (Hamburg). Three articles in No. 55 (p. 154) correspond to ones from the Stettin *Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* 1646/44 (the Milan article, dated 27 October, is back-dated to 17 October in the translation). Of course they could have been copied from a different newspaper. None of the foreign news Stoianov had obtained was particularly fresh by the time it was translated: a report from Stettin on 11 November was nearly two months old, and much of the rest significantly more dated.

12.3. Perlustration

A substantial portion of the texts published in V-K III for the middle and second half of the 1640s are personal letters with no indication that the recipients or their associates had voluntarily turned them over to the Ambassadorial Chancery. The practice of opening foreigners' letters was not new, but now seems to have become a high priority, as there is evidence it was being carried out systematically and on a large scale.[30] The Russian authorities were mining the correspondence for information, so it is important to understand what they were after and why this surge of interest. There is no single explanation, as the attention devoted to individual packets of letters seems to have varied, depending on the concerns of the moment.

The breakdown of the negotiations with Waldemar and his departure from Russia at the end of August in 1645 are the context within which the Muscovite authorities deemed it important to open mail connected with Peter Marselis and with those who had

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28. V-K III: 152–155, Nos. 54, 55; 261–264, App. No. 14; 200–201, No. 65.

29. The headers in the translations may be taken as whole or partial translations of titles: 'iz roznykh mest 1646 g(odu)' (No. 53); 'chto delalos(') v Tsesareve oblasti v roznykh mestekh v n(y)neshnem vo 155 godu' (No. 55); 'Europskie subbotnye vesti 1646 g(o) godu' (No. 56).

30. For a broader treatment of the subject which summarized a portion of the material presented here, see Waugh 2023a.

some involvement in the earlier embassies to Moscow from Holstein. There are several letters translated or summarized, it seems, at the same time, probably in spring 1645, which deal with some of the financial fallout from the Waldemar affair and the ongoing Danish war with Sweden.[31] Among the writers are members of Marselis' family and his recently released secretary, Christian Shimmeliar, who had found new employment in Stockholm. Later, on 30 August 1646, Shimmeliar also sent letters to Marselis, the translator Wolf Jakob Wyborch (Vul'f Iakovlev), and the Swedish resident Krusebjörn. These letters were opened and translated on arrival some time in November.[32] Other distinct groupings of letters include a packet of ones all dated 1 April sent by Thomas Jacques (Zhakvis) to various English merchants in Moscow, and a packet with two letters dated 31 (!) April sent from Anton van Gensberger (Gensbiargen) to David Ruts and Martin Jacobsz. Buchlingh (Biuklink). These seem to have been in a packet addressed to Buchlingh sent from Narva which arrived in Moscow on 15 July.[33] Buchlingh, who figures in other correspondence, was an agent for the important merchant Karel Jansz. du Moulin.

One such packet of mail that was opened and translated included letters whose most recent date was 29 August, the day after Waldemar's party had crossed the border on its way home. This packet contained information whose interest, at least in retrospect, was considerable and thus is worth close scrutiny. Common to the letters is the fact that the writers seem to have had Holstein (or other Danish) connections. Among the letter writers were individuals in Reval and Narva. The published information about the original archival scroll is incomplete but would seem to suggest that the packet of letters might

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31. V-K III: 15–20, Nos. 1–6. The supposition that these letters represent a single batch, translated at one time is based on the fact they occupy consecutive folios in the original archival scroll. The most recent of the letters was written in Hamburg on 4 March by Marselis' brother Leonhard; so the translations undoubtedly would not have been earlier than, say, mid-April. There is also one letter, sent from Marselis' agent in Pskov, Albert van den Bloch, to Tielman (Philimon) Akkema's son Louis on 8 June (received in Moscow on 19 June 1645), which probably is not to be connected with the other letters from earlier in the year, since it was not copied alongside them in the archival scrolls (ibid.: 20–21, No. 7). Akkema's mail was included in the big batch of foreign letters the chancery opened in 1646 which will be discussed below.

32. Ibid.: 143–147, Nos. 50–52; 251–257, App. Nos. 10–12. Wyborch had arrived in Moscow as a prisoner of war early in the seventeenth century and then had a long career as a translator specializing in Swedish and Danish (see Beliakov et al.: 79–81). The translations of Shimmeliar's letters in both the draft and fair copies are found consecutively in the original archival scroll, RGADA, f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 2, fols. 138–175. Following them (fols. 178–184, 190–194) are the translations of Queen Christina's speech to Chancellor Oxenstierna dated 27 November 1645 (V-K III: 52–54, No. 15) and the translation from a pamphlet listing the proposed Protestant terms for the peace settlement with the Habsburgs, dated Osnabrück 10 November 1645 (ibid.: 50–52, No. 13). It is tempting to hypothesize that both of those items are ones Shimmeliar supplied, but, absent the 'connecting' tissue on the intervening folios that have not been published (where there may be additional evidence), that remains speculative. The pamphlet with the proposed terms for the peace, to be discussed below, was one the Swedes would have had an interest in circulating. Further discussion of Shimmeliar's letters will be found in our Sec. 21.1.1.

33. V-K III: 94–99, Nos. 25–30 (Jacques); 100–102, Nos. 33, 34 (Gensberger); 132, No. 47 (Narva letter).

have been intercepted either in Novgorod or Pskov by the Russian translators stationed in those towns, some time between mid-October and (probably late?) December.[34]

Several of the letters comment on the imminent peace settlement between Denmark and Sweden; one of them provides a succinct summary of its important provisions.[35] The treaty had been signed on 13 August but would not be ratified until the second week in September. There are letters addressed to Dr. Hartmann Gramann, who had been the physician assigned to the earlier Holstein embassy through Moscow to Persia and then had entered Russian service.[36] He was personal physician to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich in his final days and continued for a time in the service of Aleksei Mikhailovich.

The writer of several of these letters was none other than the secretary of the Holstein embassy, Adam Olearius, who would achieve fame for his long and detailed account of Muscovy and Persia, first published in Schleswig in 1647. Olearius reported that he had contracted with a publisher for his big travel book; he solicited from Gramann a portrait to have engraved for the book and then sent a proof of the engraving for the doctor to approve. It is not clear whether the proof arrived, but Gramann's father-in-law in Reval reported that the likeness was unsatisfactory and recommended that a painter be found to produce a better one. At the end of this long array of excerpts and summaries from letters is a cryptic indication about enclosures (not clear which letter had contained them). They can be identified as copies of two booklets Olearius had produced in conjunction with his preparation of the travel book. One was an annotated summary version of the travels on to India by one of the embassy members, Johan Albrecht de Mandelslo, and the other a set of panegyric verses commemorating Mandelslo at his funeral soon after he had returned to Holstein.[37] Both of these publications (issued in Schleswig in 1645) were then appended to the first full edition of Olearius' larger book in 1647 and thus, it

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34. Ibid.: 39–44, No. 10. The scroll is RGADA, f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 1. See note 25 above for details of its content.

35. Ibid.: 43, No. 10.72–73, letter from Stockholm to David Ruts dated 26 August. It is possible there has been some loss from the original archival scroll, which results in some confusion about the date of this letter. It seems that when Ruts' correspondent in Stockholm, Anufrii Kiri, wrote on 26 August – at which time he had learned the terms of the treaty – his mention of 13 September as the date when it would be ratified was anticipating the event which had not yet taken place.

36. For a summary account of his biography, see Dumschat 2007: 620–622.

37. Olearius' book is *Offt begehrte Beschreibung Der Newen Orientalischen Reise* [....] Schleswig: Jacob zur Glocken, 1647 (VD 17 23:233209P). The two appended, previously published booklets are: *Ein Schreiben/ Des WolEdlen/ Gestrengen und Vesten Johan Albrecht von Mandelslow* [...] Schleswig, 1645, and *Klageschrifft/ Uber den allzufrühzeitigen Hintritt auß dieser Welt Des weyland WolEdlen/ Gestrengen/ Vesten und Mannhafften Johan Albrecht von Mandelslo* [...] Schleswig: 1645. The somewhat damaged Russian text which refers to these reads (V-K III: 44, No. 10.78–79): 'Da s temi zhe gramotki prislany dvoi pechatnye tetrati [...] napechatany o pogreban'e [...] enskogo komnatnogo [...] Iagana Albrekhta da tetrati o tom kak tot komnatnoi dvorianin v Perside ot golstenskikh poslov ostalsia cherez kotorye zemli on nazad priekhal.' Olearius would later publish a full, annotated text of Mandelslo's travel account: *Des HochEdelgebornen Johan Albrechts von Mandelslo Morgenländische Reyse-Beschreibung* [...] Hamburg: Guth; Schleswig: Holwein, 1658 (VD17 23:233226D).

seems, were the earliest portions of his opus that had arrived in Russia. There is so far no evidence that either booklet was translated, even though there was ongoing diplomatic exchange with Persia at the time and interest in the trade down the Volga and across the Caspian.[38] It is not clear when the collection of translations and summaries from these letters was produced.[39]

The most impressive of the files in V-K III from this period containing excerpts and summaries of the foreigners' letters draws on over two hundred letters, composed between 24 September 1645 and 31 May 1646.[40] The file contains somewhat cryptic evidence regarding its purpose and date. Clearly the compilers (presumed to be the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery) opened many individual packets of letters, so many in fact that it seems improbable they all arrived in Russia at the same time. To sift through so much material quickly would have been difficult. It seems somewhat unlikely that the mail was intercepted and simply held in the chancery, not delivered to the addressees until a decision was finally made to look at it. Not all the excerpts drawn from individual letters bear a date. Where there are dates, they generally seem to be the those when the letters were written, though in a few instances, the dates specify when a letter arrived in Russia. Letters of early date may have arrived only with significant delay or have been enclosed with letters written much later. Letters written in Riga would have been delivered through Pskov or Novgorod. Some of the letters originated in Pskov. In theory, the many letters which originated in Amsterdam could have come either through the Baltic or via the long northern route to the White Sea. However, the Baltic route seems most likely.

In addition to all these uncertainties, we cannot be sure the current file is complete as it stands. That is, possibly what was in the manuscript scroll occupying now consecutive fols. 12–61 represents only part of what was a much larger compilation. Many of the letter translations and summaries begin or end on a single sheet. Absent detailed palaeographic analysis to establish whether or not the copying took place at one time, we might assume the work on individual groups of letters could have been spread out over several months. However, as it now stands, if copied at one time in Moscow, the collection cannot antedate the first or second week of June 1646 (given the fact that one letter, from Jan van Staden to David Ruts, was written in Pskov on 31 May). Why might the work

38. A sense of how engaged the Russian government was with Safavid Persia in this period can be obtained from the listing of archival files about the exchange and reception of envoys (Rogozhin 1990: 84–85). See also our discussion in Sec. 19.6.2.

39. The latest date is in the header to one of the letters to Gramann, 6 October 1645, which may be the date when he received the letter or when it was translated. While other letters in this one file could have been translated earlier, the text of the collection would seem to suggest the material was pulled together at one time. Possibly a big packet containing all the letters had arrived in October, some of them written back in the summer, most in late August. The internal evidence suggests that at least some were routed through Riga and Reval.

40. V-K III: 84–94, No. 24. The references to letters of 24 June, 18 and 21 July by Caspar Ruts when writing to his brother David from Amsterdam on 10 October 1645 should not be mistaken for dates of letters included in this packet: they were ones David had sent from Moscow earlier in that year.

have been done then? At very least, the content of the current file suggests a context to explain why the letters would have been of interest to the Russian government.

The list of letter writers and recipients includes many prominent foreign merchants and their agents. While these statistics can be skewed by a single large packet addressed to one individual, among those most frequently receiving letters were: David Nikolasz. Ruts (32), Thomas de Swaen (27), Erdmann Swellengrebel (18), Martin Buchlingh (12), Pieter de la Dale (9), Andries de la Dale (6), Jacob van der Hulst (6), Aernout Görtsen (5), John Osborne (4), and Tielman Akkema (4). The connecting link here seems to be the Dutch merchant David Ruts, since most of the others were either directly involved in his enterprises or at very least received letters that sometimes were enclosed with others addressed to Ruts or his agents.[41] The majority of the letters connected with Ruts were written in Amsterdam, but a number also in Hamburg, Riga or Pskov. Ruts received packets of 20 letters twice and others containing 13 and 6, most of the enclosures being mail addressed to others. A second major grouping of individuals whose mail was being opened seems to be one composed of English merchants, who received at least fifteen letters from partners in Livorno (one of the major ports in Italy for shipping from the Middle East) and a number of letters from London.[42] In two of the English letters, the writers are merely communicating their safe arrival in Riga after traveling from Moscow. Several letters from Amsterdam and Hamburg mention the Archangel trade but should not necessarily be taken to indicate the correspondence traveled via that long and slow northern route. It was important for those writing back to Moscow to inform their colleagues about the arrival (or loss) of the shipments out of Russia from the White Sea. There also are some outliers: a writer in Copenhagen requests a travel pass be obtained in Moscow so he can enter Russian service and that it be sent care of an acquaintance in Danzig.

The notations by the translators make it clear they were looking for news. For example, when Thomas de Swaen received four packets containing 26 letters, the translators noted the contents concerned trade (*o torgovykh delekh*) and as well *v kotorykh vesti est' i te vypisany* ('in those where there is news it has been copied out'). Personal family matters (*o domashnikh delekh o detekh i o srodnihakh o zdorov'e*) seem to have been of no interest. Several notations indicate there was no news (*a vestei nikakikh net*). Printed enclosures, be they price sheets or newspapers, were noted, though where newspapers are specified, there is no information whether they were removed for translation. In one case, the agent Jan van Staden in Pskov writes to the 'Dutchman' Ivan (Jan, Johann)

41. On Ruts and his agents, see Veluwenkamp 2000: 99–102, 207. His daughter Maria married Jan van Sweeden, who would receive the contract to establish the Russian international post in 1665.

42. These letters formed a compact group, their summaries beginning at the top of a new sheet (ibid.: 89, No. 24.40) and ending at the bottom of another (No. 24.43). One of the writers is Thomas Jacques; among the addressees are William Reilly, Richard Adams and John Osborne. All of these men were among the correspondents of Jacques when he sent letters from Amsterdam on 1 April. His letters of 1 April (the translations are in ibid., Nos. 25–30) clearly arrived in a different packet from that summarized in No. 24.

Gosens that he can learn the latest news from the printed newspapers Van Staden had sent to David Ruts (*a budet vestei nemetskikh pokhochet vedat' i on k Davydu poslal vestovye pechatnye listki i Davyd emu dast prochest'*). Where the translators found interesting material, they summarized it. So there are many examples with some foreign news, a fair amount on military matters (for example, the taking of Hulst by the Prince of Orange on 5 November 1645), and a number of reports relating to ongoing or upcoming peace negotiations.

What may seem surprising here are not such relatively brief news summaries but rather the substantial amount of space in the translations devoted specifically to the prices of particular goods, especially, it seems, the Persian silk coming out of Russia via Archangel. There is at least a summary translation from a lading list of goods that had arrived in Amsterdam from the East Indies.[43] We cannot be certain of the exact source (whether it came from a newspaper), but there was important news in one of the letters sent from Amsterdam by Thomas de Swaen's nephew to his uncle in Moscow, apparently in late winter 1646. The letter – intercepted, opened and partially translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery – contained a report about the Manchu conquest of China from the Indies that probably had arrived with the annual Dutch convoy. This may well have been the earliest information received in Russia concerning the epochal end of rule by the Ming Dynasty. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich later would possess a translation from a published Jesuit description about this event.[44] The lading list followed in the same letter, reporting on the cargoes on the nine ships of the return Indies fleet which were expected. Twelve items in this list (that is, presumably not the entire lading list printed originally in the Netherlands) were translated with the quantities of each, and there was a further note about various cotton fabrics and wares from Siam and China that were in the cargo. The goods were: pepper, cloves, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, saltpeter, indigo of three different types designated by provenance, diamonds, and two different sorts of

43. Ibid., 86, No. 24.27. For a discussion of this translation in the context of the several other *kuranty* translations of Dutch lading lists, see Waugh 2023c. See also our Secs. 10.3 and 19.6.

44. Mancall (1971: 45) suggests the Russians must have known about the Manchu conquest before drawing up instructions for the first official Russian embassy to China in 1653, since at that point they had already adopted the title they would use for all the later Manchu rulers. However, he seems to have no hard evidence about what exactly they knew of the history; he wrote prior to the publication of the entry in V-K III. The most recent examination of Russian intelligence about China in the seventeenth century makes no mention of the text in the *kuranty* (Afinogenov 2020, esp. Ch. 1). An unofficial mission to China earlier in the seventeenth century and information obtained from interactions with Mongol rulers in Inner Asia had, however, provided some considerable descriptive material about China and enough about the goods that might be bought there to stimulate an interest in establishing trade connections (see ibid., 38–44). It is probably just a coincidence that the acquisition in 1646 of the news about the Manchu conquest coincided with Russian penetration of the Amur River valley which led to military engagements with Manchu forces. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery inventory lists 'perevod s pechatnye Nemetskie knigi o Khineiskoi voiny ot Tatar. 164-go godu' (*RIB*, 21: 2, 348), which is Martino Martini's *De bello tartarico*, known in several editions, including a German version published by the famous cartographer and producer of atlases, Joan Blaeu. See, for example: *Histori von dem Tartarischen Kriege* [...] *Durch den Ehrw. P. Martinum Martinium* [...] Amsterdam: Blaeu, 1655 (VD17 39L123644T).

silk, one specified as of Persian origin. It is entirely possible that the selection here by the agent in Amsterdam was one deliberately made for goods known to have a market in Moscow: all of those items are known to have been sold in Russia at the time.

Clearly the merchant correspondence in the first instance dealt with trade, as one might expect, but just as evident is the fact that someone in the Russian administration felt it important to keep track of what they were writing about certain aspects of it. This then offers a clue as to the possible reason why so many of these merchant letters were being carefully scrutinized in 1646.

At various times in the seventeenth century, Russian merchants petitioned their government for protection against what they saw as unfair competition from the foreign merchants. In 1627, such a petition emphasized in particular that the foreigners should not be allowed to engage in trade anywhere except at Archangel and Kholmogory, thus leaving the internal market in the hands of the Russians.[45] This is one of the early indicators of the pressures that would result finally in the decree of the New Trade Statute in April 1667, a sweeping measure imposing tariffs on all the foreign merchants' trade, which would be permitted only at border towns. Of particular relevance here is another of the merchants' petitions, submitted in 1646, which not only pointed the finger at the several foreign groups – English, German, and Dutch – but also named as particularly egregious offenders David Ruts, Pieter de la Dale, Mark Markov, Georg Klenck, Peter Marselis, and Hermann Fentzell.[46] Able to trade deep within Russia, the foreigners were manipulating prices and controlling the markets in a way that prevented the Russians from receiving a fair return for their wares. Perhaps in order to be sure the government would take the petition seriously, it emphasized how the privileges, originally granting to specific merchants freedom from customs payments, were now being abused, thus costing the treasury a substantial amount of tariff revenue. The petition explained one of the main reasons why the foreigners were able to operate in this way (*AAE* 1836, 4: 18):

> And they, sovereign, living in Moscow and in towns, travel through Novgorod and Pskov to their land five, six or ten times a year with news of what goes on in the Muscovite state, why certain goods are bought and which goods fetch high prices in Moscow, and they undertake to prepare such goods, and all this is done thanks to their frequent news and in letters where they conspire together…

We are struck here by the similarity between this complaint and that by Ivan Pososhkov over half a century later, when he denounced the foreign post for opening the way for western merchants to exploit the Russian economy. The petition was signed by many of the most prominent Russian merchants including Vasilii Shorin and Grigorii Nikitnikov, members of the richest and most privileged merchant 'corporation', the

45. First published by P. P. Smirnov in 1912, the document has been reprinted in Demkin 1994, 1: 131–134.

46. *AAE* 1836, 4: 14–23, No. 13; reprinted in Demkin 1994, 2: 99–108. Unfortunately, the published text of this petition, taken from a late seventeenth-century manuscript copy, lacks a precise date. Possibly it was presented not in 1646 but a year earlier.

gosti. Interestingly, Nikitnikov was specifically mentioned in other letters (separately from this compendium), sent from Danzig to Peter Marselis' brother-in-law Hermann Fentzell and Johann Marsau (Ivan Eremeev syn Marsov) some time in the first half of 1646. As Fentzell's correspondent Hermann van Swinderen wrote, Nikitnikov, possibly the richest of all the Russian merchants, reputedly had good Persian silk to sell at a decent price and thus might want to deal with the foreign purchasers.[47] Indeed, an agreement then was reached with Nikitnikov, pending final arrangements about payment. Evidence such as this, and that scattered throughout the compendium of the numerous other letters, would seem to prove the petitioners' point about how the foreigners' communications were enabling them to undercut the Russian merchants. Certainly the competition from foreign merchants on account of their ability to learn about market prices through the mail was thought to be a serious problem. So it is possible that merchant complaint was a significant factor in the government decision to interdict foreign mail.

In his study of Russo-Swedish relations starting in the time of Aleksei Mikhailovich, the eminent specialist Georgii Forsten cited reports by Swedish and Brandenburg agents, who wrote that it had become common practice to open and even confiscate foreign mail, and in a matter of four weeks from mid-October to mid-November 1645, as many as 400 foreign letters from Riga, Reval and Narva had been opened.[48] Forsten attributed this simply to the substantial hostility toward foreigners early in Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign. The evidence of V-K III, No. 24 suggests that the perlustration of mail continued well into 1646, and the specific content of that compendium shows that concern about foreign trade practices was one of the real purposes. The summaries of foreign political news in this compendium are quite terse, a fact which may represent accurately the content of the letters themselves. In writing about trade or in private family letters, correspondents would not necessarily devote much space to political news, leaving the recipients to read about it from enclosures of separate newsletters or newspapers. Since there are many separate translations with news over the range of dates encompassed by

47. V-K III: 65, No. 18.106. This compendium containing the letter to Fentzell includes as well translations or summaries from several other merchant letters. As is the case with V-K III, No. 24, the range of dates and page breaks coinciding with the end of letters raise questions about when the compilation was done and whether it was made at one time. The earliest letter was written in Amsterdam on 23 November 1645, the most recent one (on a separate sheet) sent from Riga to Jan van Staden in Pskov on 25 April 1646. It appears that the letter of 23 November (from Konrad Juskens in Amsterdam to David Ruts in Moscow) was one of several under a single cover, most of them summarized by the translators as dealing with trade or domestic matters that apparently were considered to be of little interest. The summaries of what was deemed interesting are quite substantial, with a focus on trade but including political news. The letter to Van Staden contained a condensed summary of the peace treaty, whose negotiation seemed near completion in Osnabrück; a letter sent from Danzig by Martin Haas (whose brother was an apothecary in Moscow) to the merchant Ivan Eremeev Marsov summarized news about the Dutch attempt to expel the Portuguese from Brazil, a venture which was not going well. The news from Brazil reported in an Amsterdam newspaper on 2 September and then translated in Moscow in mid-October (V-K III: 49, No. 11.39–40) had been more optimistic. On the Dutch in Brazil, see Wilson 2009: 732–733.

48. Forsten (1898–1899: 212) does not provide specific references for these reports and is thus vague about their date.

the letters in No. 24, it is reasonable to ask whether those news translations were made from such enclosures and can therefore be connected with specific letters. In fact, apart from the letters themselves, the amount of news translated in 1646 from sources that can in fact be identified is impressive. We even have evidence of considerable selectivity being exercised where the Ambassadorial Chancery happened to have a surfeit of news, with some duplication.

It is probably only coincidence, but three of the individuals named in the merchants' petition were responsible for the submission of foreign newspapers to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 8 April 1646. As the header to the translation indicates, Pieter de la Dale, an associate (*tovarishch'*) of Dutch merchants Mark Markov and Georg Klenck, delivered the papers, one of which can be identified as the Amsterdam *TVQ* 1646/2, published on 13 January.[49] In the absence of an extant copy of this issue, it is impossible to be certain, but the number of articles and the length of the translation seem to indicate it was translated more or less in full. The last folios (310–314 [the draft copy]; 329–335) of this news translation are from a source we hypothesize was the same issue of one of David Rhete's Danzig newspapers, which was translated for another news packet that had been received earlier – on 20 March – from Novgorod (V-K III, No. 20; see above). The translations (Nos. 19 and 20) undoubtedly were made independently of one another, and possibly not by the same person, since they differ in precision and completeness. However, by and large, the translators tried to cover almost everything in the presumed German source, rather than select only a few articles from it. Clearly the source(s) of No. 19 must have arrived via the overland routes along the Baltic, since winter conditions would have prevented maritime travel.

Returning to the large compendium of letters discussed above (V-K III, No. 24), we can begin to see how newspapers such as those submitted by De la Dale may have traveled and thus learn about the possible ways in which the scrutiny of foreign mail contributed to the acquisition of foreign news in the chancery beyond just the often brief summaries of what was contained in the foreigners' letters. One of those letters, written by Daniel and Jan Danielz. Bernons (Danil; Ivan Danilov Bernons) in Amsterdam to a Dutchman in Moscow called Ivan Volosatyi ('Hairy Jan'), has an internal date of 12 January for news about the possible loss of a ship from a trading convoy (ibid.: 87, No. 24.30). Sewn up (*zashity*) in the packet with the letter were two news sheets (*2 listka vestovykh*). The letter then noted the reception of an imperial courier in The Hague on 1 January and his imminent departure. The impression here is that the writers were reporting the latest news, received shortly before they wrote and sent their letter (in other words soon after 13 January). Immediately following the summary translation of the Bernons letter is one from Willem Bekker in Riga to Pieter de la Dale, with an accounting for the cost of forwarding an enclosed three letters to De la Dale.[50] The file then includes a letter from

49. V-K III: 66–71, No. 19. Just under the header (fol. 316) is what likely is a partial rendering of the title (*vesti iz roznykhy mest*), and there is a full translation of the colophon (fols. 328–329).

50. There is a separate sheet now filed from a scroll dated two years earlier, with the translation of

Jan van Staden in Pskov to De la Dale, about forwarding letters, specifying who was to bring them (the translators do not mention the names) and what was paid the courier. The file briefly characterizes letters to De la Dale: one from Peter Hubert and one from Arndt van Hulst in Danzig about trade, and one from Jan Vogelaer in Amsterdam, also about trade. The next letter in the file – presumably received along with the immediately preceding ones – is one from the Markovs (Mark, Jan and Daniel) in Amsterdam to De la Dale with news about the elaborate sendoff given the imperial courier on 7 January, and information that trade was poor, with peace negotiations dragging on in Münster. This section of their news concluded with information on silk prices. At this point, information about De la Dale's letter packet ends: the next folio in the file contains summary information about a different letter, sent from Van Staden in Pskov to David Ruts at the end of May.

What we seem to have here is evidence about a packet of letters sent to Pieter de la Dale from Amsterdam, which included ones addressed to him as well as one addressed to 'Hairy Jan' (presumably a known associate?). The letters were sent from Amsterdam soon after 12 January; they contained printed news sheets, one of them very likely a copy of *TVQ* published on 13 January. The packet probably traveled via Danzig (where additional letters to De la Dale may have been added to it) and then on to Riga, presumably under a cover addressed to the agent Willem Bekker. There undoubtedly were some delays en route, as is suggested by the fact that by the time the packet arrived in De la Dale's hands, a newspaper with the reports dating from February had been added. Bekker forwarded De la Dale's mail to the agent in Pskov, Jan van Staden, who in turn sent it on to Moscow. If the courier who brought the letters to Moscow was privately hired in Pskov, it is possible De la Dale received his mail directly. However, it seems more likely that the Ambassadorial Chancery first had opened the packet, read the mail, and summarized it. The enclosed newspapers might have been removed then or, when De la Dale came to pick up his mail, he might have been credited with having turned them over. We have other evidence that Russian officials would specifically request to see copies of foreign news sheets and would take them from those who complied. The newspapers (and thus, we assume, the rest of this mail packet) had made it to Moscow by 8 April.

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a cover letter by Bekker dated Riga, 17 January 1644, to Peter Marselis' agent in Pskov Albert van den Bloch. In that letter, he asks that Van den Bloch forward letters to De la Dale and notes that a local official in Riga had cautioned him (Bekker) about the recent decree, forbidding the sending of letters into Russia. The issue of the cost of delivery comes up in the letter to Van den Bloch (see V-K II: 107, No. 49). Very likely, that letter pertains to an earlier occasion when Bekker was forwarding mail to De la Dale. However, there is at least the outside chance that the document dated 1644 is referring to the same mail, translated and copied in the compendium of No. 24. Were that the case, then the date range of the letters excerpted and reviewed in No. 24 would have to be expanded considerably. That is, the whole file might be a compendium of excerpts, produced by reviewing two or three years of the chancery archive in connection with a major reassessment of the activities of the foreign merchants in Russia. In that event, the interest was not really on mining the correspondence for current political news.

So there is a possible, if somewhat hypothetical, pattern here illustrating how the merchants' letters moved, the exigencies of transportation sometimes delaying receipt of letters. Mail sent from Amsterdam by the middle of January, if delivered by express courier (or, later, when the postal network was in place all the way to Moscow), could normally have been received in the Russian capital within 30–40 days. But here we have a Dutch newspaper that seems to have arrived 85 days after it had been published, and the news about the imperial courier in Amsterdam was some days older. News could make it from Amsterdam to Riga and on to Pskov quickly, but may not always have traveled that fast. Since on arrival De la Dale's packet may have contained a newspaper we posit was published in Danzig in late February (N.S.), its news was fresher, not quite two months old.

12.4. A surfeit of news in 1646: what can be learned from a close reading of the translation files and their sources

Another set of printed Dutch papers enclosed in the merchants' mail may have taken just as long as De la Dale's to arrive. One of the archival scrolls (RGADA, f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 2) contains on consecutive folios this sequence of translations: a) letter sent from Narva by Johan 'Gazilgorst' (Haselhorst, Hazelhorst) via Martin Buchlingh to Heinrich (Andrei) Kellermann in Moscow, apparently received there on 15 July (V-K III, No. 47); b) a letter written by Anton van Gensberger in Amsterdam on 31 April (!) to David Ruts (No. 33); c) a letter from Gensberger to Buchlingh, same date (No. 34); translations from Dutch newspapers (No. 23); the large compilation of excerpts from the merchants' letters (No. 24). In both of his letters, Gensberger mentions sending the addressees printed newspapers. Moreover, as we learn from No. 24.34, Jan van Staden had sent to Ruts from Pskov on 31 May 'printed news sheets (concerning events) in German lands' (*pechatnye listki vestovye chto v Nemetskikh zemliakh*). It seems likely that the translations in No. 23 were made from one of these sets of enclosed newspapers, at the earliest around the second week in June (if from van Staden's mailing), at the latest in mid-July – assuming the mailing was in a packet addressed to Buchlingh.

The news in No. 23 was drawn from three Dutch newspapers which have been identified and which have been preserved in the RGADA: *CID* 1646/15 (published 14 April); *ESC* 1646/16 (21 April); *EDC* 1646/18 (1 May).[51] The largest part of the translation came from *ESC* No. 16. In fact on the original newspaper in the archive it is possible to see the translators' markings (little plus signs), indicating which articles had been selected and indeed are in the translation: nine of the first ten articles, omitting only one – from Münster, 16 April. Just above the colophon on the reverse of this newspaper is the translators' annotation 'translated were the needed articles, while others have occurred earlier' (*perevedeny te stat('i) kotorye nadobny a inye byli*). The translators then turned to *EDC* No. 18, selecting articles from Hamburg, Münster and London, albeit substantially condensing the news from England. Finally, at the end, the translators chose from *CID*

51. See the facsimile photos V-K III: 399–404.

No. 15 one article from Venice, the interest of which very likely was its report that the Ottomans were sending a significant fleet to combat Cossack naval attacks in the Black Sea. There are two copies of *CID* in RGADA, likely received in different foreign mailings. On one is an annotation at the top 'these articles have already been'. On the other, there is a notation *byli* ('were') and on the reverse *pereveden* ('translated'). So clearly there was something of a surfeit of news with duplication, and even absent obvious duplication, there seems to have been some perception of translating only what was 'needed', the criteria left unstated. Assuming that Gensberger's date of 31 April can be construed to mean 1 May, he might have been the one who sent the newspaper packet containing *EDC*, which was hot off the press on 1 May. If his packet arrived in Moscow only in mid-July, then the news in these Dutch papers would already have been two and a half months old.

There is some additional confirmation of a connection with Gensberger in a separate translation of *EDC* 1646/18, encompassing much more from it than just the three articles, though with some omissions and condensation of the rest.[52] The inscription on the copy of the newspaper in the archive ('this one has [already] been' – *takova byla*) may well reflect an awareness of this translation at a time when the newspaper copy we now have was received. In the archival scroll, the translation (No. 36) from *EDC* follows immediately No. 35, translated from either *TVQ* or *CID* 1646/17 (published in Amsterdam on 28 April – the translation reflects part of the colophon). The header to the translation in No. 36 signals an awareness of that other Dutch source: 'translation from another printed Dutch newssheet' (*perevod z drugovo vestovogo galanskogo pechatnogo listka*). This fact, combined with the dates of the newspapers in question, would seem to confirm that these were the papers sent by Gensberger at the beginning of May.

It is possible that a second copy of *ESC*/16 made its way to Moscow. That newspaper issue also served as one of several sources for a large compendium of news (V-K III: 55–64, No. 17), whose date and composition raise many questions at the same time that they underscore how many foreign newspapers were available to the translators in 1646. The texts in No. 17, produced in Moscow on 1 June, are found in the archival scrolls immediately after a set of news translations (No. 21) whose most recent internal date is in an item from Stettin dated 22 April with news from Nürnberg.[53]. So far the presumed published newspaper sources for No. 21 have not been identified; very likely, more than one source was used. There is no indication of how this news arrived. Following No. 17 in the original scroll is a compendium translated from newspapers, handed in to the Ambassadorial Chancery by Krusebjörn's secretary Thomas on 5 June 1646 (ibid: 78–82, No. 22). The date of the Krusebjörn compendium and in any event the unusual nature of the last part of No. 17 argue for some independent path by which the translators obtained its sources.

52. V-K III: 105–108, No. 36; 216–220, App. No. 3.
53. Ibid.: 76–79, No. 21.198–199.

No. 17 may in fact be the combination of what are really two distinct files. The first folios (206–232) arguably are nearly complete translations from two German newspapers, which, unfortunately, do not survive in extant copies to check against the Russian texts. A portion of this material (three articles, fols. 219–222) had previously been identified as coming from the Hamburg newspaper, whose two weekly editions appeared as *ODiZ* 1646/11 and *WDoZ* 1646/11.[54] Even though there is no question that the texts in those articles could have been the direct source for the Russian translations, there is an alternative argument to be made about the sources the translators used. In the middle of this section of No. 17, starting on a new sheet (fol. 216), is the translation of what surely is the title of its source: 'Ponedelnye vesti iz goroda Breslava i iz inykh mest Tsearevy oblasti n(y)neshniag(o) 154-g(o) godu', that is, *Newe Wochentliche Zeitung Auß Breßlaw und sonst anderen Orten des Römis. Reichs. Anno 1646*, published probably in Danzig by David Rhete. Every issue of that newspaper seems to open with the latest news datelined from Breslau, as is the case in this translation. It is entirely possible that the articles known to have appeared in the Hamburg newspaper simply were copied by Rhete, and it is conceivable then that one issue of his newspaper (most likely No. 14, published at the end of March) was translated in its entirety, the translation occupying fols. 216–232. The text on fols. 206–216 lacks the tell-tale translation of a newspaper title; its source may have been another of Rhete's newspapers, either the *Particular Zeitung* or the *Particular Post Hamburger und Reichs-Zeitung* (No. 13 of which appeared in the fourth week of March). The suggestive evidence here is the opening article datelined 'Iz Starogo Stetina marta v 22 de(n')' and further articles from Stettin, including one dated 21 March. As mentioned above, those newspapers of Rhete commonly opened with the most recent news from (Alt) Stettin. In general, the content of the articles on fols. 206–216 would match what one might expect in Rhete's coverage of the news.

Beginning at the top of fol. 233, the source for No. 17 seems to change, as the article is datelined London 19 January ('Iz Lundena genvaria v 19 de(n')'), as much as two months earlier than the entries that we posit came from the German papers. The next article jumps ahead to early March with a one-sentence report from Antwerp, and immediately following it on the same sheet is a short item from Hamburg where the formula for the header is unusual: 'Iz Amburga. V pechatnom listu aprelia v 11 de(n')'. This formula — first the place, then the indication 'in a printed sheet', then the date — continues right through for the remaining entries in the file up to the final two (fols. 241–242), many of them beginning at the top of new sheets, and with dates that range widely between October and the beginning April. The explanation here very probably is this: the last part of No. 17 is a compendium from a range of different sources spread over months, analogous to the compendia the translators produced from the merchants' letters and perhaps in

54. A small correction is in order here: the tabulation in Maier 2006: 457 indicates both excerpts are from *ODiZ* 1646/11, where in fact the second excerpt is from *WDoZ* 1646/11. The newspaper is the well-known one catalogued by Bogel and Blühm as Z9.

fact representing the excerpts they copied out of what they found in or enclosed with those letters. Since the latest letter in that big compendium of merchant correspondence seems to be the one sent on 31 May by Van Staden in Pskov to David Ruts in Moscow, the Dutch newspapers excerpted for No. 17 – and for that matter, the Danzig newspapers – could well have been among the ones Van Staden forwarded ('chto v Nemetskikh zemliakh delaettsa').

While we cannot identify all the sources here, what we have is suggestive of a very selective process whereby a large pile of sources was being combed for news ('a v kotorykh vesti est' i te vypisany'): a single article from Constantinople taken from *ESC* 1646/15 (V-K III, 62: No. 17.235); the opening two articles, from Stockholm and Copenhagen, from *ESC* 1646/16 (No. 17.241–242); and an article headed Hamburg, taken from *TVQ* 1646/13 (No. 17.242). The second and third of those papers have been preserved in the Russian archives. Interestingly, the translations derived from *ESC* 1646/16 are not the same as the renderings of the same articles when a larger portion of that paper was translated (see above). The news in this section of No. 17, beginning on fol. 233, contains one item on the English civil war, four items following the travels of Prince Waldemar, news from the Polish court, mentioning the reception of a Muscovite envoy there, some Swedish and Danish news (including celebration of the Peace of Brömsebro), and in the one report from Constantinople, news about the Ottomans' sending a fleet to combat the Cossacks in the Black Sea.

Another translation possibly from one of Rhete's newspapers is in V-K III: 111–114, No. 38, whose sources, printed newssheets, were sent from Pskov on 15 June 1646, along with a very substantial set of reports in manuscript newsletters from Poland. The translation from the printed sources begins with news from Old Stettin dated 6 May, then has an article from Antorf (i.e.: Antwerp) dated 27 March, followed by news from England and Paris. The source for this translation contains an extensive (but partial) list of delegates sent to the peace conference in Osnabrück. The final three articles (two from Hamburg – both dated 6 May – and one from Osnabrück, 30 April) undoubtedly are from a separate source, since they are not in the draft copy of the translation (App. No. 5). Very likely what we have here is the translation from a single issue of a German newspaper, printed on or soon after 6 May and ending with the delegate list. The delegate list is of interest, because it very likely was copied by the newspaper publisher from a much fuller list published as a pamphlet separate.

12.5. The drawn-out negotiations and the Peace of Westphalia

There are several other news translations made in Moscow between 1646 and 1648 whose sources can be identified, among the most striking examples ones from separate publications (to be discussed below).[55] While there is more that could be said about the

55. Apart from the pamphlets, among the newspaper sources about which we can be quite certain are: *CID* 1646/26, 30 June, no extant copy; see the header, V-K III: 123, No. 45.72 and 233, App. No. 7.578: 'Vesti iz Italianskie zemli da iz Tsesarevy oblasti iz roznykh mest 1646 godu', with articles dated

content of the 'ordinary news' as the Thirty Years War was staggering to a conclusion, perhaps of greatest interest here is the question of how much the policy makers in Moscow knew about the peace negotiations, which dragged on over several years before the signing of the final treaties at Osnabrück and Münster. If one can imagine there were 'regular readers' of the news being translated in Moscow, was that news (insofar as we have it in the *Vesti-Kuranty*) sufficient to have provided a sense of the course of the negotiations? To answer this requires stepping back to the end of 1641, when the first arrangements were put in place for convening the peace conference. Between then and in fact continuing after 1648 (in cases where the peace agreements had not settled ongoing conflicts), there was continual diplomatic sparring at the same time that the contending parties were trying to gain some advantage on the battlefield to lock in a more favorable peace. The newspapers in the West followed all this closely, and what they reported, sometimes in condensed summary, often was spelled out in greater detail in separates. An impressive amount of this coverage made it into the translations produced in Moscow, including the texts of final treaties.

That said, if the extant *kuranty* are an accurate indication, the coverage in Moscow was far from continuous, and even in periods when there was relatively good news coverage, its receipt and translation did not necessarily follow in the order of events. That is, reports with identical or nearly identical dates might be received weeks or longer apart, and in many cases, the most recent news arrived well before some of the earlier reports that might have helped in an understanding of the context. As the material above has demonstrated, the translators were alert to possible repetition and tried to avoid duplicating what had already been translated, but arguably such selectivity might have been more rigorous. It is reasonable to assume that keeping track of events as reported in Moscow would have been much more challenging than would have been the case for a regular newspaper subscriber in the West.

Unfortunately, no *kuranty* texts have or survived which cover the Hamburg Peace Preliminaries agreed to on 25 December 1641 by negotiators for the emperor, France and Sweden.[56] This agreement, which Emperor Ferdinand III ratified only at the begin-

28 and 29 June and an advertisement; *CID* 1648/12, 21 March (V-K III: 179–182, No. 59, the translation encompassing all of the articles, omitting only the advertisement); *ODC* 1648/29, published 14 July (V-K III: 198–200, No. 64, partial translation). The identification now available for the source of No. 59 corrects the earlier identification of *WZ App*. 1648/12 as the source for a single article on fol. 20 (Maier 2006: 457). The newspaper sources for No. 45 were given in at the Ambassadorial Chancery by the Swedish resident Krusebjörn on 31 August 1646; those for No. 59 were turned in on 1 May 1648 by David Ruts.

56. While the fragmentary nature of holdings for newspapers from this period make it difficult to trace how widely the agreement was reported, there was a brief note about it in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1642/1 [p. 4], datelined Bremen, 29 December. The article summarized with some precision that the agreement had been negotiated with the involvement of diplomats representing the emperor, the Swedes, and the French, and with some mediation by Denmark. Ratification by the emperor was still needed before the peace congress could convene in Münster and Osnabrück, the date of its opening set for 15/25 March. It would turn out that the projected start date was quite unrealistic. For a translation of the key parts of the Hamburg Peace Preliminaries, see Wilson 2010: 280.

ning of summer 1642 and King Philip IV of Spain in April 1643, set up the framework for the peace negotiations, in which France and the Catholic powers would convene at Münster and Sweden and the Protestants at Osnabrück, with a guarantee of secure lines of communication between them and with the home capitals of the negotiating parties.[57] On the face of it, this was something of an odd arrangement, since in fact the alliances in the wars had cut across confessional boundaries. The Thirty Years War was, in a sense, a series of overlapping regional conflicts, not necessarily animated by religious concerns. It was difficult to get the individual parties to submit to the idea of a comprehensive peace settlement, in the circumstance where they might hope to gain advantage by negotiating separate agreements. Thus, for example, the Swedes settled with the Danes outside of the Westphalia framework (the Peace of Brömsebro), even though the question of who would ultimately control Pomerania was one of the central issues at the peace congress. The French went into the negotiations determined not to deal with Spain. Even though both were parties to the negotiated agreements, in fact the Franco-Spanish conflict continued after 1648. The structuring of the conference created its own challenges, requiring shuttle diplomacy over the approximately 50 km distance separating the two Westphalian cities. Proposals debated in one of the two cities could never be finalized there without consulting the negotiators in the other city, and the negotiators frequently had to consult with their home governments. Considerable effort seems to have been invested in staking out negotiating positions and publishing copies of their texts. The goal seems to have been to attract support for the proposals and make it more likely that they would be incorporated into the final settlement. Although the original intent had been for the congress to open in March 1642, it began only in December 1644, delayed by the emperor's stubbornness about allowing the German Estates to be full participants, by political and military events that weakened the French position, and by the diplomatic contretemps between the French and Spanish representatives. The arrival of the delegations dragged on over more than two years.

There also were disagreements within the government ranks of individual parties to the negotiation, and, despite the large numbers of delegates, few of them were men of particular ability or tact. The principal envoy for Sweden was Johan Oxenstierna, son of the powerful chancellor, but a kind of blunt instrument for diplomacy who pushed extreme demands. Queen Christina in fact was inclined to support Johan Adler Salvius ("one of the few comparatively able men at the congress"; Wedgwood 1961: 460), who was more willing to compromise. A similar situation existed within the ranks of the French delegation. In the end, the key figure who managed to push the negotiations to a successful conclusion was the head of the imperial delegation, Maximilian von Trauttmannsdorff, a "man who showed, if not outstanding ability, at least great perseverance

57. Wilson 2009: 632. For the events – military and diplomatic – leading to the final peace in 1648, see Wilson 2009, Chs. 19, 20, and Wedgwood 1961, Ch. 11. Wilson (671–678) provides a good overview of the formal arrangements for the congress. Wedgwood deftly characterizes the personalities of key negotiators.

and great tact," who arrived only in late 1645 (ibid.: 461; FIG. 12.1). Many of the subsequent news reports mentioned his travels back and forth between the two cities. Of course, those same news reports could not have been expected to highlight the personal flaws and complicated relations amongst the negotiators.

FIG. 12.1. Maximilian von Trauttmannsdorff, engraving published in *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. 5 (1647): 958.

As the news reports frequently underscored, there seems to have been widespread hope that peace was at hand. However, the word out of Münster and Osnabrück that agreement had been reached on major issues, while perhaps accurate, often included what must have been wishful thinking that the treaties might be signed soon. And whatever was happening in the negotiations, fighting continued: news of it tended still to fill most of the newspapers. The contending parties were still hoping to gain some advantage on the battlefield before signing off on a peace agreement. Along with the optimism, there was a certain depressing resignation concerning this reality. When Andreas Schüter wrote from Lübeck to the translator Mikhail Sakharnikov in late summer 1644, he devoted much of his letter to the ongoing Swedish-Danish conflict, summarizing most of the rest with: 'And the French king still is fighting against the Emperor and against the Spanish king as before' (V-K II: 194, No. 87.617). Marselis' agent in Pskov, Albert van den Bloch, reported to Philimon Akkema on 8 June 1645 news sent to him from Amsterdam on 19 April: 'The wars continue and there is no end of them in sight' (V-K III: 21, No. 7.322). Of course, his main concern here may have been specifically the Swedish-Danish conflict, since that had a direct bearing on the maritime trade, but one senses a more general lack of optimism.

The Russian translations, still incorporating large portions of the newspapers received, are full of information about the fighting on various fronts, much of it presumably indecisive, but some battles (at least as we know in retrospect) of greater consequence for finally convincing the parties to settle. The lengthy set of translations made from newspapers brought to Moscow on 16 October 1645 by Matvei Veiger included important news about the six-month Truce of Kötschenbroda on 6 September between the Swedes and the elector of Saxony (its details not yet known) and Oxenstierna's letter to about the negotiations at Brömsebro.[58] Veiger also supplied copies of two Dutch newspapers, *ESC* 1645/35, and *TVQ* 1645/35, both published on 2 September. The news they reported from Dresden on 19 August antedated the truce and reported that Swedish military action in Saxony had not in fact yet ended. Elsewhere, the French had besieged and taken Dinkelsbühl (in Bavaria), and the Swedish forces under Torstensson, which

58. V-K III: 45–46, No. 11.20–25. This information was apparently from a Hamburg or Danzig newspaper, the lead article reported from Stettin.

had been besieging Brünn (Brno) since May, were just about to abandon the effort to take it (Wilson 2009: 697).

The truce between the Swedes and Saxony, which took the Saxons out of the war, significantly weakened the imperial cause. When the emperor proved unable to send military support to the Saxons, the elector decided to extend the Truce of Kötschenbroda and remain neutral until the war ended (ibid.: 711). The news translations preserved in Moscow stop short of reporting on the final agreement, reached on 31 March 1646, but contain information on the negotiations: a report of 1 March from During about the arrival of the negotiating parties at Eulenberg; a report from Leipzig, 7 March, about difficulties in the negotiations; a report from Magdeburg on 14 March, emphasizing the pressure that an agreement had to be reached before the existing truce expired; and a report from Stettin on 22 March suggesting that an agreement was imminent.[59]

As was typical for the newspapers of the period, initial battle reports might be based on yet unconfirmed rumor and thus not be entirely accurate. For example, a batch of printed newspapers received in Moscow via Archangel in (late?) August 1646 contained vague news from Münster dated 29 June about a major battle between the Swedes and imperial forces in which, supposedly, Archduke Leopold – presumably Leopold Wilhelm, brother of Emperor Ferdinand III – and the general Johann de Werth were killed.[60] In fact, neither of them had died, the archduke going on to become governor of the Spanish Netherlands, and De Werth continuing his career as an important cavalry commander. A report from Augsburg on 1 November, translated from *ESZ* 1646/Secunda No. 45, stated that De Werth was still very much alive.[61]

A translation made probably from a Danzig or Hamburg newspaper (published in the second half of November 1646) buried a bit of news about negotiations at Osnabrück in a substantial amount of reporting on military events. As was the case with many of the *kuranty*, large articles reporting on the English civil war were translated or summarized in extenso, even though the English events had little or no bearing on the war on the Continent. The translation included a detailed listing of the Spanish regiments that had been defending Dunkirk at the time the French finally took it on 11 October. Newspapers handed in at the Ambassadorial Chancery by Ivan Stoianov on 7 January 1647 also contained a brief notice about the capture of the city, one which might have been condensed in translation, assuming this was done after the translation of the other, longer

59. These reports are respectively: V-K III: 82, No. 22.258, the source newspapers received from Krusebjörn on 5 June; ibid.: 58, No. 17.217, the source newspapers received from Pskov on 1 June; ibid.: 60, No. 17: 227–228; ibid.: 56–57, No. 17.206–209. Other significant truces concluded short of the final peace settlement were that of Ulm in March 1647, which at least temporarily took Bavaria – allied with the emperor – out of the war (Wilson 2009: 715, 723–725) and ostensibly locked in place Swedish gains. However, in the absence of any *kuranty* texts covering the period of the negotiations, which had begun back in December, it is impossible to know whether the officials in Moscow had learned of the Truce of Ulm.

60. Ibid.: 130, No. 46.601.

61. Ibid.: 157, No. 56.377.

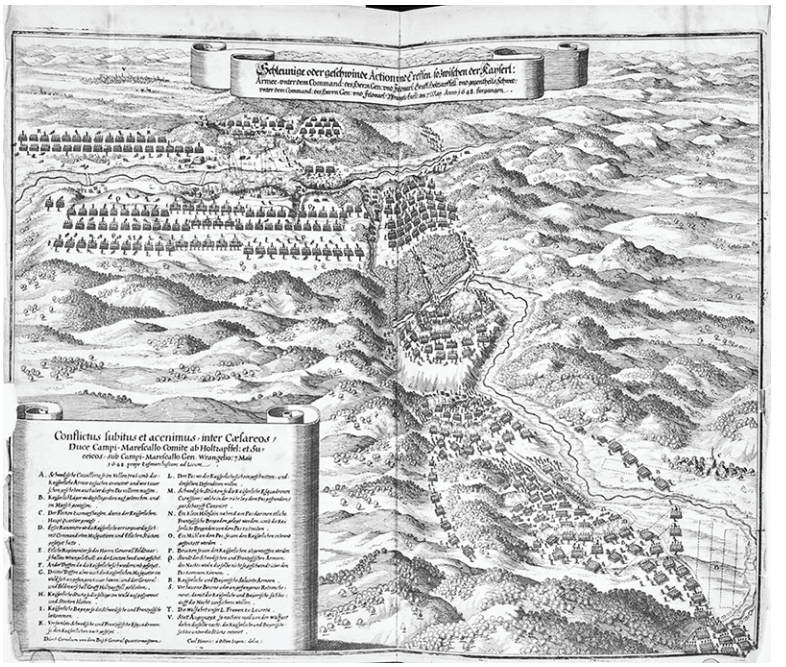

FIG. 12.2. The Battle of Zusmarshausen. Engraving from *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. 6 (1652), facing p. 317.

report.[62] The order of the texts in the original archival scroll suggests that Stoianov may have provided the newspaper used for that longer translation; it too was probably received and translated on 7 January, nearly three months after Dunkirk was taken.

Several separate news items translated in Moscow were devoted to the battle of Zusmarshausen (not far from Augsburg) on 7/17 May 1648 (FIG. 12.2), one of the last significant engagements as the imperial forces were fighting against increasing odds for survival, while the French and Swedes at times were pursuing competing strategies, hoping to secure benefits at the final peace settlement. Even though the imperial force at Zusmarshausen was defeated, "the allies had failed to destroy the emperor's last army" (Wilson 2009: 741). However, the Swedes were happy to propagandize the victory in a published pamphlet which the translator and secretary to the new Swedish resident, Karl Pomerening, turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 23 July 1648. It seems to have been translated in its entirety.[63] The text opened with a long official Swedish report on the battle, which seems to have exaggerated substantially the number of prisoners and wagons that had been taken. Following it were three additional news items and another much more modest listing of the number of captives of various ranks whom the Swedes had taken in the battle. Next in the same archival file is the translation of what we may hypothesize is one or more Danzig (or Hamburg) newspapers. Reports from Old

62. The Dunkirk news is in V-K III: 150–151, No. 53.392–393; 152, No. 54.315.

63. V-K III: 190–192, No. 62.129–135. So far, no copy of the source for this translation has been located. That the pamphlet ended immediately following the listing of captives is suggested by the fact that fol. 135 is a short one, and then a new, long news report begins on fol. 136, undoubtedly taken from a different source. It is possible, that the list of captives at the end, which itself begins on a new folio (134), was taken from a different source. Comparing statistics about battles in news reports almost inevitably highlights discrepancies. While it does not appear to be one of the sources the Russians had in hand at the time, *CID* 1648/23 (published in Amsterdam on 6 June) reported on the battle from the Swedish camp on 22 May. The listing of the captives in the Dutch report significantly overlaps with the source the Russians translated, suggesting that they had a common source of information.

Stettin dated 13 and 24 May contained additional detail about the battle.[64] There was yet another account of the battle reported in a news item from Prague on 20 May, published in a single newspaper the Swedish resident supplied to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 28 July.[65] It too included a list of the captives and booty, though the numbers differ from those of No. 62. Obviously the Swedes were anxious that Moscow continue to be impressed with their military successes; this news source contained additional reports suggesting that the Bavarian forces whom the Swedes and French had routed were in disarray. The Swedish forces soon invested Prague in July, as a newsletter handed in to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 15 November by the merchant Ivan Stoianov reported.[66] While they failed to take the whole city, they systematically plundered what they could, and the fighting continued for several days after the news of the Osnabrück peace agreement had become known (Wilson 2009: 744–745). By the time Stoianov's news had been translated, the siege was over.

Although there are many reports in the *kuranty* about the main peace congress in Westphalia, until the negotiations began in earnest, the translations contain little of real substance. Between mid-August 1643 and the end of May 1644, the period that encompasses the substantial run of news reports provided by Filimonatus/Grelle, some two dozen individual articles referred either to the Westphalia negotiations or – it can be hard to see the dividing line – to those which might bear on the prospects of a separate Danish-Swedish peace.[67] For the most part, the reports from Münster and Osnabrück merely related which delegates had arrived or were on their way. The French plenipotentiary was expected any time but kept delaying his arrival from The Hague. The Spanish ambassador was ill in Brabant. The Danish ambassador had been in Osnabrück but was called home in the expectation that negotiations with the Swedes would take place at some border location between the two countries. The Swedes were waiting for the French to come, Johan Oxenstierna not arriving until 27 March 1644. When the French ambassador arrived, he was not meeting with the Spanish envoy, leading some to be pessimistic about any possible peace settlement. The papal envoy arrived in Münster on 9 April, and both the French and imperial representatives met with him. Representatives from Hamburg, Reval and Lübeck arrived, but at least as of (presumably) mid-May, the writer from Osnabrück had to admit that he had nothing to report about peace negotiations there, since they had not yet begun.[68]

64. V-K III: 192, No. 62.136–137; 195, No. 62.142–143.

65. Ibid.: 187–189, No. 61.146–148. Judging from the translated title of the newspaper ('Goroda Breslava i iz inykh mest Rimskogo g(osu)d(ar)stva'), the source was Rhete's Danzig newspaper, *Wochentliche Zeitung Auß Breßlaw und sonst anderen Orten des Römis. Reichs*.

66. Ibid.: 201, No. 65.170–171. Even though the header specifies a handwritten newsletter ('s vestovogo pisma'), all the reports are news that was published in the Hamburg *WDoZ* 1648/32 with dates between 22 July and the most recent one, from Copenhagen, 1 August.

67. See our Ch. 11. The reports are in V-K II, Nos. 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, 30, 32, 33, 45, 46, 54, 56, 61, 63, 73 and 81, in some cases more than one in a single news packet.

68. See, e.g., the several reports in V-K II: 152, No. 73.514; 153–154, No. 73.520; 157, No. 73.536.

The Russian archives preserve in the news files practically nothing on the peace congress during the second half of 1644 and much of 1645, but contain a substantial amount of material translated in spring and early summer 1646 (including news as far back as January). While it is hard to know what the value of their contents would have been in Moscow, newspapers arrived from Pskov and were translated in mid-June.[69] There are no extant copies to compare, but one of them may have been the source for a long list of the diplomatic representatives gathered at Osnabrück, its source probably a separate pamphlet. There is in fact a much more complete published list of all the delegates at the Westphalia congress, issued, it would seem, as a piece of imperial propaganda to illustrate the response to the emperor's call for peace.[70] The larger pamphlet begins with the delegates at Münster in a kind of hierarchical order, starting with the papal envoy. Under the heading for each polity are the names of the delegates and their titles or institutional affiliations. The pamphlet is very detailed and precise about the jurisdictions represented by the envoys, specifying the status of the cities, the names of the bishoprics or other ecclesiastical institutions. Approximately half the list is the representatives of the Catholic powers and bishoprics, followed then by the representatives of the various secular principalities. At the end of the Münster section of the list are the representatives of the 'Statuum Foederati Belgij', i.e., the United Provinces. Inclusion of the Dutch contingent in Münster is to be explained by the fact the Dutch had finally arrived at the congress in January 1646, with the primary purpose of negotiating a peace with Spain (the eventual first Treaty of Münster of 1648). Given the somewhat artificial division of delegates into 'Catholic' (Münster) and 'Protestant' (Osnabrück), it is no surprise that there

69. V-K III: 111–114, No. 38; 223–226, App. No. 5. The translation begins with a long article from Old Stettin, dated 6 May, in which there is news about the Swedes having sent a written response to an imperial proposal at Osnabrück and about continuing issues regarding the status of Pomerania. The header in the translation indicates it is based on more than one printed newspaper; in fact the entry datelined Antorf (Antwerp) is a close rendering of an article printed in *EDC* 1648/18, a copy of which is still preserved in the Moscow archive. It seems possible that the news from England and France which follows on that article could have been summarized from one or more Dutch papers: for example, the news from Paris (fols. 546–547) corresponds in part to another entry in *EDC* 1648/18, but could even more likely have been derived from *OMC* 1648/18 (also published on 1 May), where a whole section of news from France is identical with that in *EDC*. It is also possible that what we have here is a consecutive rendering of news, beginning with the article from Stettin, taken from a German paper that had the same report from Antwerp. In both the draft and fair copies of the translation, the list of delegates follows the opening news reports without any indication of a break, which at least might suggest the list was included at the end of an issue of a newspaper, though a separate pamphlet source cannot be excluded. The list is not in the Dutch newspapers cited here. At the end of the list, starting on a new sheet (fol. 551), is an additional section of news that undoubtedly came from a different source, since it is not found in the draft file.

70. *Verzeichnus Deren zu Münster und Oßnabrüg bey den Allgemeinen Friedens Tractaten Anwesender Gesandten* [...] N.p., 1646 (VD17 14:006100P; other editions: VD7 3:002217M and VD17 23:287946P). The list is introduced by a rather high-blown statement of the divinely sanctioned imperial effort to bring about peace; the woodcut on the title page seems to be the imperial eagle. Presumably the list is fairly complete and accurate to the moment when it was first published, since the imperial authorities had to issue the passes for the delegates to travel to the congress. However, only the lead negotiators are here, not the dozens and hundreds of members of their staffs and servants.

was a certain amount of cross-representation. The lead imperial negotiator, who was the main mediator, Maximilian Count von Trauttmannsdorff, was also listed at the head of the Osnabrück section, immediately following on the listing of the Dutch delegates. The French, whose main delegation was in Münster, also had a representative in Osnabrück. There was a Swedish resident in Münster, although the main Swedish delegation was in Osnabrück. Absences at the time the imperial list was drawn up were nonetheless noted: no representative from Denmark (probably because he had left to negotiate with the Swedes at Brömsebro), no named representative from Saxony (but for an anonymous placeholder, Herr N.N.), no representative from Wolfenbüttel.

The delegate list obtained in Moscow covers only the representation in Osnabrück. Most of the names correspond to ones in the full published pamphlet, although some have been distorted in the Russian transcription. A few of those named in the separate pamphlet are missing, and in a very few instances, a delegate with a different name is listed, suggesting that the source here would have been a different one. The political affiliations were retained, though lacking the formal structure and layout which clarified everything in the published pamphlet. In the Russian texts, for example, the Electorate of Brandenburg seems to be a title for the next dozen or so entries, even though only the first three individuals were in the Brandenburg delegation. One of the 'subordinate' individuals in this listing is the French resident! Another of these headings in the Russian text is for the 'Free Cities', including Strassburg, Nürnberg, Frankfurt and Ulm, but also several of the Hanseatic cities (Lübeck, Bremen, Hamburg, the Pomeranian Estates, Stralsund), which were under a specific 'Hänsee Stätte' heading in the imperial pamphlet. Many of the titles or positions of individuals listed in the pamphlet are missing or have been compressed. Absent the source for the Russian translation, it is impossible to know to what degree the order and structuring of the list as the Russians presented it may reflect what was in the original (where there could have been a different layout of the names from that in the imperial pamphlet). One suspects the order in the Russian is the same, as it pretty much corresponds to that in the larger pamphlet, but simplifications, and even some adjustments in the framework of the suggested affiliations more likely were the work of a newspaper publisher, who would have had no particular interest in maintaining all the distinctions and details that were important for the emperor's publicists. The list that the Russians obtained and translated could not have provided a guide to the details of the formal structure and complexities of the empire, since it omitted the data from Münster. And few of the named individuals even in the one Osnabrück section would ever crop up in the news articles being translated in Moscow. In other words, the Russian translation was produced probably as a matter of routine, where they tended to translate often in their entirety what newspapers they happened to receive.

Apart from the arguably superficial matters of who had shown up in Westphalia, the Russian translations did include information on some of the key issues which emerged once negotiations actually were underway. Already in 1645, contending proposals and

counterproposals were being printed and distributed. Among them was a compact list of 30 negotiating points, which contained some of the more extreme Protestant demands regarding what should be included in the final settlement. Drawn up on 10 November 1645 in Osnabrück, this text appeared in a number of separate pamphlets and may as well have been reprinted verbatim in a newspaper. While we cannot be certain of the exact source obtained in Moscow or when it arrived there, the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery rendered the document in not entirely comprehensible Russian, apparently because they struggled with the fact that interspersed with the German were various Latin words and phrases.[71]

The critical issue here was the question of the 'normative year' which the negotiators would need to agree on for any final provisions regarding amnesty and restitution (see Wilson 2009: 718–722). The Catholic position, supported by the emperor, was that amnesty could be granted to any who had fought against him starting in 1630 and could keep possession of lands seized up through 1627 (the normative year), but those excluded from the amnesty would have those lands confiscated and returned to their original (Catholic) owners. In other words, the starting position here was to preserve what had been enshrined in the Peace of Prague in 1635, even though subsequent military events had rendered it obsolete.[72] In opposition to this, the extreme Protestant position, supported by the Swedes, was to insist that both the amnesty and normative year be 1618, prior to the outbreak of the war. This was the position taken in Article 3 of the draft published on 10 November. In the Russian translation of the November 10 draft, the word 'Amnistia' of the published text was rendered as *vernym delam*, which does convey the idea that matters of faith (*vera*) were the subject. Whether Russian officials could have understood the significance of this or made sense of other articles in the translation is a good question. It would have been hard for the Muscovite officials to see the connection between it and a report from Osnabrück on 30 January that most of the Protestant and Catholic negotiators had agreed they would not support the imperial proposal, the holdouts being the representatives from Bavaria and the hereditary Austrian lands.[73] However, it was still not clear what the final agreement might be.

71. The translation is in V-K III: 50–52, No. 13. While it may not have been the exact source, one very like it is *Kurtzer Extract, Deren Friedens- oder Haupt-punckten/ so von den Euangelischen im bedencken verfast und abgehandelt worden. Sampt Beygelegter Amnestia*. Im Jahr 1645 (VD17 14:085558A). As is the case with the Russian translation, this copy lacks the appended 'Amnesty' indicated on the title page, which could explain the omission in the translation of "Sampt Beygelegter Amnestia". Both the German and Russian make it clear this is a draft, not a finalized set of treaty articles ('na kotorykh stat'iakh mysliat […] dogovor uchinit' / "so […] im bedencken verfast und abgehandelt worden"). The omission of the "Im Jahr 1645" from the title page could be explained by the fact the date is included in the signature line at the end, where, as well, the translator may not have understood the "uff Martini abend" ('St. Martin's eve', 11 Nov.) or simply decided it was not necessary to include.

72. In his secret instructions to Trauttmannsdorff, the emperor had given him some leeway, if it was the only way to achieve peace, to accept 1618 as the date. For a translation of those instructions, see Wilson 2010: 284–289; for his brief summary of their essential points, Wilson 2009: 707–708.

73. The translation is in V-K III: 69–70, No. 19. 329–330.

An article datelined Münster 27 April, published in *EDC* 1646/18 on 1 May 1646, which was translated in Moscow probably no earlier than mid- to late summer, would have provided some clarification, even as it dispelled any optimism that might have followed on the earlier report. The newspaper's correspondent indicated the Swedes were refusing to compromise on their demands that the status of the Calvinist and Protestant estates (Standen / *nastoiateli*) be restored to that prior to the start of the war in 1618. As the article stated, Catholics categorically rejected this, 'and hence it is anticipated there will be much disagreement in Osnabrück.'[74] Here then was some explanation for what was in the draft of the peace terms published back in November. Muscovite officials surely would have had an awareness of the significance of 1618 and 1630 (the latter year marking the Swedish intervention that changed the direction of the war). However, it is not clear what, if anything, they would have known about the Peace of Prague (1635), which in any event had not resulted in peace, or the ill-advised earlier 'Edict of Restitution' of 1629, which had established 1627 as the normative year. Eventually, the negotiators would settle on a compromise date of 1624, which had been proposed by the Saxon delegation and thus was incorporated in the final Osnabrück treaty.

Another of the major issues taken up at Osnabrück was the question of control over Pomerania, a matter about which there would have been a much better understanding in Moscow, given the abundance of news that had been received about the military campaigns there and the Swedish effort to control the Baltic littoral. The territorial issue could not be settled merely by the peace agreement between Sweden and Denmark at Brömsebro, since some of the territories were ones to which Brandenburg laid claim. The Swedish armies had managed to defeat the imperial forces in Pomerania and in 1641 had signed a truce with Brandenburg that left the Swedes in control of the electorate's possessions in Pomerania (Wilson 2009: 628–629, 639). In 1643, the truce was extended, and Brandenburg administration readmitted in return for financial subsidies and neutrality. This was the situation that lasted until the end of the war. It was clear to the emperor that Swedish aspirations in the Baltic needed to satisfied, even, if necessary, by accepting Swedish control over the archbishoprics (Bremen prominent among them) that were considered to be under imperial protection. At the same time, there was no desire to accept Swedish control of the whole Baltic region.

A report datelined Osnabrück 28 February (but received in Pskov only on 1 June) stated that the representatives from Lübeck, Hamburg and Bremen had gone to Münster and would then return, this presumably in connection with the Pomerania settlement.[75] Two news articles from Stettin in March 1646 (also received in Pskov on 1 June) reported from Osnabrück that an agreement had been reached, dividing up Pomerania between Brandenburg and Sweden.[76] This in fact was the compromise Trauttmannsdorf

74. 'A sveiskie krepko na tom stoiat chtob nastoiateli kalvinskie i liutorinskie na tom stoiali kak bylo prezh sego v 1618 godu […] i ot tovo chaiut mnogo roznstva v Osnabriuge' (ibid.: 83, No. 23.17).

75. V-K III: 58, No. 17.215.

76. Ibid.: 57, No. 17.213–214.

had advocated as a way of checking Swedish ambitions. While it is not clear what exactly the territorial questions were, the letter Grigorii Raks wrote from Riga to Peter Marselis on 17 April (subsequently opened and translated in Moscow) suggested there was some disagreement (*nebol'shaia priatnost'*) between the Dutch and Swedes about places in the Baltic that Sweden had occupied.[77] On 25 April, Jan van Staden's correspondent in Riga wrote to Pskov that there was a preliminary agreement by which the Swedes would obtain half of Pomerania, including Wismar, Stralsund and Bremen, on the condition that they remain a fief of the empire.[78] This news arrived in a packet of merchant mail that the Russian officials translated. This was confirmed in a letter written on 23 May by Jacob van Kolen in Narva to the Swedish agent Adolf Ebersson in Novgorod (which the Russians also opened and translated), spelling out the agreement whereby the Swedes would receive half of Pomerania, Wismar and the archbishopric of Bremen, but that these territories would remain as fiefs of the empire.[79] Yet a report from Hamburg on 13 October stated that the matter still had not been settled between Brandenburg and Sweden. As late as 14 November, an article from Stettin reported uncertainty about whether Pomerania would be divided and what exactly would be the status of Stettin in the final agreement.[80]

In short, even though well before the treaties were finalized in 1648, there was news that major issues had been settled, in fact there were still obstacles before all parties might accept them. There were indications in some of the news being translated in Moscow that procedural matters and specific territorial demands were holding up the final peace, even as its settlement was nonetheless expected at any moment. News from Osnabrück on 12 February 1646 that the French had settled disagreements in Münster provided some hope; a rainbow one morning was taken as a good sign peace was at hand. However, a report from Osnabrück (via Stettin) on 21 March 1646 emphasized that there was strong resistance to the idea that French demands for Alsace could be accepted, an issue of considerable importance for the imperial side.[81] There were also disagreements amongst the Catholic and Protestant negotiators regarding Bavaria. It was expected that certain of the cities (in Bavaria?) would support the Swedish position. In short, the translation concluded: 'and in this it seems not to be a good thing.' This, of course, was still relatively early in the negotiations.[82]

77. Ibid.: 93, No. 24.56–57.

78. 'I pochitaiut ee sustavom Rimskogo tsesarstva' (ibid.: 64, No. 18.103).

79. 'Byti sustavom Rimskogo tsesarstva' (ibid.: 119–120, No. 42.414).

80. Ibid.: 149, No. 53.387–388. For the final territorial settlement between Brandenburg and Sweden, which the Elector accepted on 19 February 1647, see Wilson 2009: 717.

81. V-K III: 58, No. 17.217–218; No. 17.213–214 ('i v tom kazhettsa nedobro'). On the settlement eventually agreed on regarding Alsace on 13 September 1646, see Wilson 2009: 710–711.

82. Other reports on complications in the negotiations in 1646 include one from Osnabrück dated 21 June (V-K III: 128, No. 45) and another (translated from *CID*), dated Münster 26 June (Ibid.: 125, No. 45.78–79), both supplied to the Moscow translators by Krusebjörn on 31 August.

FIG. 12.3. The ratification of the Treaty of Münster between the Dutch Republic and Spain, 15 May 1648. Painting by Gerard ter Borch.

Despite the fact that negotiations for the Spanish-Dutch treaty had been concluded on 30 January 1648, German newspapers received in Moscow reported from Hamburg on 6 May about Dutch representatives going to Osnabrück to express concerns that matters in Flanders had not been settled. There seemed to be the possibility the Spanish forces were planning an attack.[83] Ratification of that treaty at Münster would occur only on 15 May, with its publication on the next day (FIG. 12.3). The same newspaper reported that the Swedes were still negotiating regarding Pomerania and their demands for financial compensation so as to pay off their soldiers, thus holding up the finalization of the peace treaty in Osnabrück. Uncertainties about the negotiations undoubtedly were compounded by the efforts of the disputing parties to publicize their positions and cast the best light on the agreements. Any regular reader of the newspapers would have had to sift through a lot of speculation and occasional misinformation. The task of doing so in Moscow undoubtedly would have been the more difficult: there was still no regular acquisition of news, and what was received may have been skewed on account of is having come from the interested parties in the Baltic region. Moreover, the irregularity in communication meant that news might arrive with significant delay, not maintaining the chronological sequence of events as they were unfolding.

83. Ibid.: 194–195, No. 62.141–142.

The Treaty of Münster between Spain and the Dutch Republic had been the subject of speculation soon after the Dutch envoys arrived in Münster early in 1646. A letter written in Riga on 17 April indicated that an agreement had been reached, whereby the Spanish would recognize the independence of the Dutch Republic in return for possession of some cities, but for this to be final, the Dutch insisted, would require French approval.[84] Complicating matters were marriage politics and the question of whether some lands in the Netherlands would be part of a dowry if the daughter of the King of Spain were to marry the King of France. A news report from Hamburg on 28 October stated that both Franco-Spanish and Dutch-Spanish agreements had been reached and, even if not fully worked out, were expected soon to be completed.[85] The Russian files preserve no further reports about progress toward an agreement between the Spanish and Dutch from late 1646 until the conclusion of the negotiations in 1648.

However, the text of the Treaty of Münster, which the representatives of Spain and the Dutch Republic had negotiated in January and ratified on 15 May 1648, was obtained and translated in Moscow (V-K III: 161–176, No. 58.47–89). The agreement was extremely important, since in it Spain finally recognized the independence of the Dutch Republic, thus removing a major obstacle to achieving the broader peace amongst the other parties. Given the fact that in the original archival scroll, the translation follows immediately on translations of two items handed in to the Ambassadorial Chancery by the English agent John Hebdon on 25 May, it is possible he also provided the publication used for the Russian translation.[86]

A second Treaty of Münster, settling the conflict between France and Spain, was formally incorporated into the Peace of Westphalia on 24 October 1648, along with the Treaty of Osnabrück between Sweden and the empire. We have no information whether Moscow received a copy of that Treaty of Münster. What we do have, however, are summaries in some of the *kuranty* translations about the overall settlement in the Peace of Westphalia and the celebrations at this end to the long war (see esp. V-K IV, Nos. 3, 4). Two copies of the Osnabrück treaty, as signed on 6 August 1648, but not yet the official version ratified on 24 October, arrived separately in Russia (ibid.: 13–64, No. 11).

84. See ibid.: 92, No. 24.51–52 (a letter written in Amsterdam on 7 February); 93, No. 24.55–57.

85. 'Dopolna ne dogovoreno i uchineno i vskore de sovershen'e budet' (ibid.: 148, No. 53.384).

86. The archival file is RGADA, f. 96, 1648, No. 2, pt. 1, which, according to the unpublished *opis'*, contains material associated with the Swedish resident Karl Pomerening and various news items. On fols. 34–41 is the translation of the declaration by King Charles I (published in V-K III: 159–161, No. 57), the original of which was a publication issued on 18 January. Fols. 42–46 contain the translation of the Danzig *Particular Zeitung* 1648/16, whose most recent article is dated 5 April (V-K III: 184–187, No. 60). The treaty between Spain and the Netherlands is on fols. 47–89, and the "Spanish Proxy" (discussed in our Sec. 8.31) is appended to it on fols. 89–91 along with another document, fols. 91–98. We have no information on what followed between fols. 99 and 128. On fols. 129–142 is the translation of the Swedish pamphlet about the battle of Zusmarshausen (ibid.: 190–192, No. 62.129–135), handed in to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 23 July 1648 by Pomerening's translator Thomas. It is possible Pomerening was responsible for providing the treaty pamphlet, but inclusion of various news items in the 'Pomerening file' does not necessarily indicate they all came from him.

The copy from which the translation was prepared had been provided in Moscow by the Swedish 'agent' Carl Mörner, although there is no indication of exactly when or by what route he had acquired it. The second copy turned up in Pskov in the hands of a merchant from Narva, Login Lavrent'ev. When a local merchant Fedor Omel'ianov learned of this in the merchant hall, on 7 January 1649, he reported the fact to the Russian officials, who had him obtain and deliver the printed booklet so that the government translator Efim Fenturov might translate it. However, Fenturov said he was unable to do so.[87] Consequently, on 9 January the officials sent it off to the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow, where it was received on the 17th. The next day, the experienced translator Ul'f Iakovlev (Wolf Jakob Wyborch) and his colleagues compared the two copies of the printed text and determined that they were identical. Thus, since a translation had been made already from the copy supplied by Mörner, there was no need to translate the treaty a second time.

There were various contemporary editions of the Osnabrück treaty, in Latin, German, Dutch and Swedish. Even though the editors of V-K IV had suggested the translation was from a Swedish original, as demonstrated in Maier 1997: 41–60, the source in fact was one of the German versions.[88] The translation is far from a full rendering of the text. Many of the minute prescriptions regarding individual polities and institutions were deleted or substantially shortened, presumably because they were meaningless to Moscow. In contrast, sections that dealt with Swedish gains and concessions were translated more or less in their entirety. This obviously was consistent with what the evidence analyzed above has demonstrated regarding the focus of Russian interest on news of the Baltic region and that affecting its immediate neighbor to the west. Moscow certainly had been obtaining much news as well about what was going on in Flanders, in Italy or along the Rhine, but that clearly was of secondary importance. And even the identity of many of the component parts Holy Roman Empire of the Habsburgs was surely still but vaguely understood.

The focus in Moscow on relations with Sweden was now reflected in active diplomacy, which attempted to resolve the lingering issues of borders and illegal emigration. As the next chapter will show, one of these diplomatic missions was responsible for a very impressive (and to that date unusual) effort to obtain and translate a lengthy and nearly unbroken series of news reports primarily from the German press.

87. On Fenturov, who had immigrated to Russia many years earlier and was designated as a translator for German and Swedish, see Beliakov et al.: 207–209. It appears that most of his service as a translator was in Novgorod and Pskov.

88. The original is *Friedens Instrument, Wie solches von beyderseits Plenipotentiarien Käyserlichen und Königl. Schwedischen zu Oßnabrück* […] *Nachmahls Mit Handversprechung solenniter approbiret worden. Gedruckt im Jahr Christi Anno M.DE.XLVIII*. N.p., 1648 (copy in UUB: Westin Hist.; other editions: VD 17 3:670940T; 39:126043R, etc.).

CHAPTER 13

In the Aftermath of the Thirty Years War: the Russian Mission in Stockholm in 1649

Peace treaties do not necessarily tie off all the threads loosened by long conflicts. This certainly was the case with the Peace of Westphalia, which provided the framework within which a number of important issues remained to be settled. In some instances, unanticipated problems might arise subsequent to the signing of a peace. It was to settle such problems (connected with the Russo-Swedish Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617 and a series of subsequent negotiations touched on above) that a high-level Russian embassy was sent to Stockholm in 1649. While there, it assiduously collected and translated international news reports, many of which focused on the ongoing post-Westphalia negotiations at Nürnberg (Nuremberg) concerning issues of territorial control, financial compensation and the withdrawal of troops.[1] It was not yet certain that the conflicts which had engulfed Europe really were over; if the Swedes might no longer be tied down by pressing concerns elsewhere, there might be good reason to conclude as expeditiously as possible an agreement to settle outstanding border issues and reaffirm the commitment to peaceful relations. While relations with Poland, the Ukrainian Cossacks, the Crimean Tatars and the Ottoman Empire were among the chief concerns of Muscovite foreign policy, the Cossack rebellion against Poland led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky now added to the urgency of accommodation with Sweden. The history of news acquisition while the Russian mission was in Stockholm thus not only reveals a great deal about news dissemination in northern Europe, with a focus on events in the West, but also needs to be understood in the context of concerns in the East and South, where there were other important sources the Muscovite government could tap in this era prior to the establishment of its international postal connection a decade and a half later.[2] Our

1. For the Nürnberg Execution Congress and its aftermath, see Wilson 2009: 762–773. Translated excerpts from the agreement of 21 September 1649 and the second agreement (16 June 1650) are in Wilson 2010: 326–329.

2. For the history of the mission and the treaty which it negotiated, see the excellent summary in

Chapter 14 which follows will deal with the acquisition of news about events in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Ukraine.

13.1. The organization and personnel of the Russian mission to Stockholm

The Muscovite mission to Sweden in 1649 had been preceded by an exchange of embassies. In keeping with standard practice, a Russian delegation in 1645 had informed the Swedes of the death of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, the accession of his son Aleksei Mikhailovich, and, importantly, the Russian commitment to maintaining the Peace of Stolbovo. A reciprocal embassy from the Swedes to Moscow followed, where the Swedish government raised various specific issues it felt needed attention: some that concerned trade were probably easy to negotiate; more difficult was the fact that in the decades following Stolbovo and the establishment of Swedish control around the Baltic, many now Swedish subjects had fled across the border into Russia. The fugitive issue then was the principal one which the Russian embassy in 1649 was charged to address.

The importance the Russians attached to the mission is evident in the choice of its chief personnel and the fact that the embassy was given plenipotentiary powers. That is, unlike most Russian missions abroad, which could never do more than negotiate a preliminary agreement, this one did not have to consult first with the Kremlin and was given substantial leeway about the terms that might be acceptable. The ambassadorial suite numbered more than 100 individuals. Its head, Boris Ivanovich Pushkin, was a prominent Russian noble who had resided for several years in Poland at the household of Filaret Romanov and then remained close to him when the latter returned to Russia in 1619 as the head of the Russian Orthodox Church and de facto joint ruler with his son, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich (Voronkov 1910b). On the eve of what would prove to be a disastrous war against Poland in 1633–1634, Pushkin had been sent on a mission to Sweden that was intended to secure Swedish support, hopes that were dashed by the death of King Gustavus Adolphus. Even though Filaret died in 1633, Pushkin remained close to the court; he headed the delegation sent to greet the Danish prince Waldemar when he arrived in 1644 for the negotiations concerning the possible royal marriage. Whatever his linguistic abilities beyond Russian might have been, Pushkin certainly would have acquired some knowledge of foreign cultures and an awareness of international politics prior to the mission in 1649.

Pushkin was seconded in the mission by a noble of lesser rank, Afanasii Osipovich Pronchishchev, who also had diplomatic experience from a mission to the Ottoman Empire in 1632 and subsequently over a period of years in the 1640s in negotiations with

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Kan 1956. Extensive portions of the instructions to the embassy and its final report (*stateinyi spisok*) have been published in Iakubov 1897: 93–267. The Swedish records of the negotiations have been published in *SRP* 13: 462–512. The pioneering and still valuable analysis of the acquisition and translation of news by the mission is Maier 2002, which has been drawn on extensively in what follows here but also has been revised and expanded with new material. The news translations produced by the embassy have been published in V-K IV.

the Poles regarding delimitation of the borders.[3] After his return from the Swedish mission, he would head an embassy to Poland that was attempting to settle tensions between the two states which had become acute with the Cossack revolt in Ukraine led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky. It is of some interest that Pronchishchev's son Ivan and a nephew were included in his staff for the mission to Sweden. Ivan subsequently was actively involved in negotiations with Sweden, including the Peace of Kardis in 1661, and later in his career headed missions on which he was accompanied by his son, Petr Ivanovich.[4] So this was a family of Muscovite 'Swedish experts'.

The chancery official assigned to the embassy in 1649 was Almaz Ivanov (Erofei Ivanovich Ivanov).[5] His 'first career' seems to have been in the Volga and northern trade. He then worked in Muscovite fiscal administration and was put in charge of the Novgorod *Chetvert'*, the department with fiscal responsibilities for the lands in northwest Russia which bordered on Swedish territory. He was appointed in 1646 to the Ambassadorial Chancery, the mission to Sweden one of his first international assignments, followed by missions to Poland, on one of which he accompanied A. O. Pronchishchev. He became head of the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1653, a position which he retained until replaced by Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin in 1667. As the most important Muscovite foreign-affairs official, Ivanov was actively involved in negotiations when foreign embassies came to Moscow. By all accounts, he was judged to be one of the most talented Muscovite officials. We have no definite information on his linguistic abilities, but he certainly brought to the 1649 mission experience in some of the border and trade issues which would come up in the negotiations.

The high-level expertise of those assigned to the embassy also includes the translators. We know little about one of them, Matvei Eliseev, who had been transferred to the Ambassadorial Chancery from the Apothecary Chancery and was considered to be a specialist for German, Dutch and English (Beliakov et al.: 113–114). He may well have been connected with Dutch entrepreneurs involved in Muscovite trade and just a few years previously had been assigned to an embassy to the Netherlands. The other translator assigned to the embassy, Ivan Adamov (Johann Böcker von Delden), was one of the most broadly educated and accomplished foreign-language specialists in Muscovite service, whose claim to know Latin, Italian, French, German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish in petitioning to enter service in the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1647 seems to have

3. Voronkov 1910a. Pronchishchev was not the first choice to accompany Pushkin, but a precedence (*mestnichestvo*) dispute led to the refusal by Nikita Alekseevich Ziuzin to be included in the embassy. See the letter of the Swedish resident in Moscow, Pomerening, to Queen Christina sent from Moscow 24 April 1648 (Iakubov 1897: 416). As late as 30 December, Pomerening still had not learned who would be accompanying Pushkin (ibid.: 432). Ziuzin had been an interesting choice, as his father, Aleksei Ivanovich, had played an important role in diplomatic negotiations with the Swedes at the end of the Time of Troubles. On Ziuzin, see Korsakova 1916.

4. On Ivan Afanas'evich Pronchishchev, see Korsakova 2010a; see also the entries in Rogozhin 1990 for the archival files of documents involving the Pronchishchevs.

5. For his biography, see Chistiakova and Rogozhin 1989: 92–108.

been no exaggeration (see our Sec. 7.1.2). Von Delden alone would have provided the embassy of 1649 with all the linguistic expertise it would require during its stay in Stockholm. His presence there certainly made it possible for the mission to undertake regular translation of German newspapers, documents in Swedish, and very likely some Dutch newspapers.

Preparation for the embassy had begun in late winter 1648, but its departure was delayed for another year. One reason seems to have been that the Russian government could not decide what exactly to do about the problem of the fugitives, but it also appears that the Kremlin wanted to be sure that peace between the Swedes and their enemies in the Thirty Years War had finally been achieved. As late as 7 December 1648, the Swedish resident in Moscow, Pomerening, wrote to Queen Christina that because they had doubts about peace in Germany, Pushkin had insisted he be given plenipotentiary powers to negotiate, apparently the assumption being that he needed some flexibility to offer terms that might relate to the disposition of military forces (Iakubov 1897: 431). If in fact Pushkin was in a position to insist on what for most Russian missions abroad was unusual powers, this is an interesting insight into the process of foreign-policy decision making in Moscow.

The concern over the peace negotiations in Europe certainly would help explain the selection of news the embassy would translate while in Stockholm. As the negotiations at Nürnberg dragged on toward autumn, complicated by ongoing fighting in Flanders and along the Rhine, the Russians certainly were not alone in wondering whether peace really had been achieved. No reports from the Stockholm mission would arrive in Moscow before its return in December. In the meantime, the instructions on intelligence gathering by a courier, Grigorii Kunakov, who was being sent to Poland in early October, specified along with his main assignment of obtaining news relating to the events in Ukraine that he should report whether or not the Swedes and the empire were still at war (*AIuZR* 3: 369). When Kunakov filed his report on returning to Moscow at the beginning of January 1650, he had a great deal to say about Polish affairs, concerning which see our Ch. 14. In discussions with merchants from Danzig, he learned that war between the Swedes and the empire had resumed for no reason that he was able to ascertain, even though there had been peace for a year and a half and the Germans, tired of war, were distressed at the fact a final settlement still had not come. So the Swedes were hoping that Russia would not break the 'eternal peace' that had been signed with Sweden (ibid.: 408).

13.2. News at the Swedish court in 1649

As detailed in the next section, the Russian embassy in Stockholm in 1649 was accessing the European news from the German newspapers it obtained on a weekly basis and, presumably, from oral communication it received during interactions with Swedish officials and others (for example, merchants involved in the Russian trade). Since Russian embassies sent abroad were always tasked with obtaining and recording foreign news, it is of some interest to try to assess what they did with reference to what news was being

obtained on a regular basis at the court to which they were sent. Given the important role Sweden had played in the Thirty Years War, during which significant measures were instituted to establish rapid and secure postal connections in the territories the Swedes had come to control, it is reasonable to assume the information network they controlled was one of the best in Europe. The evidence we have reviewed earlier concerning the way the Kremlin was able in at least some years of the 1640s to acquire news on an almost regular basis, in part by tapping into such networks, supports such a view. Apart from looking at all the archived reports sent on a regular basis to Stockholm by the Swedish agents in various cities (a task which is beyond our mandate here), we can gain a good overview of the government's acquisition and discussion of foreign news from the published protocols of the Riksråd, the State Council.[6]

The Riksråd met somewhat irregularly, but often several days a week. One weekly meeting normally took place on Thursdays (occasionally on a Friday), where the main purpose was to discuss the news received on a regular basis in the post from Hamburg – scheduled to arrive on Thursdays. According to a published schedule for the departures of the Hamburg post (in 1674), the departure time for post to Sweden was on Saturday afternoon.[7] Of course, we cannot be absolutely sure whether the schedule was the same already in 1649, but it seems very likely, extrapolating from the data provided by the Swedish reports to the Riksråd. These data consistently show that it took about 13 days from the time a letter was written in Hamburg until its arrival in Stockholm. A normal delivery would include the three weekly issues of the Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung* (*WZ*).[8]

The standard procedure for the meetings of the Riksråd in Stockholm was to read aloud the letters addressed to the government (normally to the queen) from the Swedish representatives located in several northern European cities. These representatives were expected to submit a report every week about local events and any other news.[9] Almost

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6. For this section, we have consulted *SRP* 13, which is one of the important sources used by Kan 1956 for his analysis of the Stockholm negotiations in 1649. Apart from the regularly kept diary of the meetings of the council, the volume contains the Swedish records of the actual negotiations with the Russian envoys, material which can be juxtaposed with the Russians' own record, submitted in Moscow in their end-of-mission report, for which see Iakubov 1897.

7. The schedule is in a booklet, allegedly published by Georg Greflinger: *Des Nordischen Mercurii Verbaesserter Wegweiser, Von Zehen Haupt-Reisen aus der Stadt Hamburg* (VD17 18:723477N). At that time, the Hamburg post to Sweden would leave on Saturday afternoon ("Die Schwedische Brife nach Schonen, Gottenburg und Stockholm gehen des Sonnabends nach Mittage aus einem gewissen Orte an der Boersche ab" – p. 91). Greflinger emphasizes that the schedule of the outgoing post was very regular, whereas arrival times could not always be taken for granted; they were reliable during the summer, but not at all during the winter (p. 92).

8. About the *WZ* (catalogued under the signature Z9), see Bogel and Blühm 1971–1985, 1: 23–30; 3: 58–61; Böning and Moepps 1996: 10–14, No. 15; Böning 2002: 26–31. Copies are now available online in DP Bremen. There is a substantial run of surviving copies, which makes it a particularly valuable resource for tracking the reporting in one of the major information centers of Europe.

9. The reports of the agents in Russia have long been studied for the often unique information they

without exception in the period of concern to us in 1649 there would be a report from Henrik Skute (Heinrich Schute) in Hamburg, dated on the day of the departure of the post from there or one day earlier.[10] En route through Elsinore, the post carrier would generally collect a letter written by the Swedish agent there, Magnus Durell. The other regular correspondents included Johan Oxenstierna, who had been the head of the Swedish delegation in Osnabrück and, with some exceptions, still wrote from there, and the Swedish resident in Münster, Mathias Björnklou. The correspondent reporting on what were now the more important negotiations in Nürnberg was the Swedish plenipotentiary there, Karl Gustav, Count Palatine of Pfalz-Zweibrücken-Kleeburg, who would succeed his cousin Queen Christina on the Swedish throne in 1654. The government also received regular letters from its resident in Amsterdam (Harald Appelboom) and the Swedish envoys in The Hague (Peter Spiering, ennobled Silfvercrona) and in Paris (Schering Rosenhane).

The protocols of the Riksråd usually provide at least cryptic summaries of the letters.[11] As the letters were read aloud to the council, the queen or individual council members might interject comments. Later in these Thursday meetings there generally would be a summary of other news obtained from 'avvisi', though what exactly those sources were is not indicated (most likely these *avvisi* were handwritten newsletters, not published newspapers). The business of the Thursday meetings might also include matters not directly related to the weekly news from abroad. While meetings on days other than Thursday would not necessarily focus on international news, in some instances there were discussions connected with the receipt of information which might have arrived by some channel other than the regular post.

Even short of providing detailed information about the content of the news which was being received, the protocols of the Riksråd are valuable to document the speed and regularity with which it was obtained and discussed and provide an exact calendar of the arrival of the post, which was also bringing in the newspapers the Russian envoys were reading and summarizing or translating. Although there could be some variation by a day or two, the transit times for the letters were: Elsinore – 7 days; Hamburg – 13; Osnabrück – 18; Münster – 19; Amsterdam – 20–21; The Hague – 21; Nürnberg – 24; Paris – 28. There were occasional letters from the prominent diplomat Johan Adler Salvius in Hamburg, and from the obscure Georg Snokisch – one letter from Benfeld, south of

contain about matters which Russian sources might not record. For the period of immediate concern here, Iakubov (1897: 407–474) published translations of the reports from the Swedish resident Carl Pomerening. Regarding the activity of one of the best informed of these agents later in the seventeenth century, see Droste and Maier 2018.

10. Skute's position in Hamburg had been secured due to the influence of his uncle Johan Alder Salvius, previously the Swedish resident there. Salvius had insisted in 1639 that Skute be the Swedish post agent in the city (Droste 2007: 226).

11. For those who would wish to see the details, presumably most of the original letters may still be found in RA (Sthlm). The editor of *SRP* 13 occasionally reports he checked an entry in the protocols against the archival letter, in the event something like an exact date was missing.

Strassburg, 25 days en route; another from Benfeld which took 33 days; one from Frankfurt that took 24 days. Among the less regular reports, there are two instances of news from Stettin taking 19–20 days and four examples of news from London taking 18 days. The protocols record discussions of news obtained from *avvisi* originating in Warsaw and Brussels, and from letters (the sender not named) which the chancellor had received from Stettin.

To a limited degree, it is possible to juxtapose these data with the time it took for news items datelined from these same cities and published in the Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung* to reach Stockholm. The Hamburg paper apparently had no direct news sources in Paris, the Hague or Amsterdam; nor does Osnabrück appear any longer to have been of interest – over the period between mid-May and late September *WZ* included only one article from that city, which arrived in Stockholm 25 days after its news was dated. The four reports it published in the same period from Münster were received in Stockholm 24–25 days after they had been written. So to receive news from those cities only after it had been published in Hamburg meant it might be up to a week older than what the direct correspondence to Stockholm reported. News from Nürnberg would appear in any of the three weekly issues of *WZ*. While not entirely consistent, the tendency was, as one might expect, that the items which were least dated by the time of their receipt in Stockholm were the ones published in the Saturday edition, just before the departure of the post. Given the priority attached to Nürnberg news, as printed in Hamburg it might lag only 2–4 days behind that which Karl Gustav reported in his correspondence. For example, on 6 September, the Riksråd read his letter dated 14 August (presumably O.S.). The issues of *WZ* received that week contained Nürnberg items dated 7/17 and 10/20 August (Tuesday issue); 11/21 August (Thursday issue); 11/21 and 12/22 August (Saturday issue). While the data contain no surprises, at first blush we might wonder about the dates of the few items published in *WZ* which originated in Stockholm and Elsinore. By the time those reports had reached Hamburg, been printed there, and then arrived back in Stockholm, a month or more would elapse, which presumably meant that such news, as conveyed via the Hamburg paper, was of little or no value at all on its receipt in the Swedish capital. Granted, as we know in the case of Russia, it is always interesting for any government to get information about how events in its own country are being presented in the international press.

At this stage in our knowledge, it is impossible to know to what degree the same Hamburg newspaper (*WZ*) which the Russians were reading might also have served as a source of information for the Swedish government. There is little reason to think that its reports from Nürnberg would have offered information not otherwise being obtained on a regular basis and containing fuller insider information that did not make it into the printed newspapers. However, as Holger Böning (2019) has argued, the German press of the period was remarkably well informed, and its publishers often issued as separates the complete texts of the various proposals and counterproposals of the negotiating par-

ties. The Hamburg paper never printed direct news from Holland or England in this period. Yet the Swedish government obviously was interested in such news, which it had to obtain either from the Swedish agents or from other news sources (handwritten newsletters, newspapers). As was the case with the newspapers themselves, the letters of the government's regular correspondents might include news that had arrived from locations other than where they were based. On 6 September, for example, Skute's letter from Hamburg (dated 25 August) covered troop reductions in Germany, the disputes involving the electorate (bishopric) of Cologne, the arrival of the French king in Paris, and war news from Flanders and England. The council received in the same mail from Spiering in the Hague (writing on 17 August) news about the Dutch alliance with Denmark, a report from London on the siege of Dublin, and a report from Brussels on the war in Flanders. He probably was responsible for sending the text of a Dutch resolution about the Sound (Öresund), although that might have come from a separately acquired copy of a Dutch newspaper. The protocols of the Riksråd create an impression that the Swedish government was very well informed and was keeping track of a broad range of international news.

We cannot assume that the interests of the Russians in Stockholm were identical with those of the Swedish government, nor could the Muscovites have expected to enjoy the same advantage of regular access to multiple and well-informed sources. However, the evidence suggests that the Russians leaned heavily on acquiring their news from the Hamburg newspaper (*WZ*), even if they also were able to obtain information from other sources with coverage of places and events that the Hamburg paper tended to slight. For the immediate purposes of the embassy, that paper's limitations as a source may not have been a particular problem. First and foremost, the embassy was tasked with obtaining news relating to Swedish policy, particularly information that might have a bearing on the outcome of the negotiations regarding the settlement of outstanding border issues to ensure the continuation of peace between the two countries. Hence the focus on news from Nürnberg was understandable, since it would indicate how quickly the Swedes might be able to withdraw their forces from Europe and where they would be able to retain Swedish control in the territories they had occupied.

Citing the evidence in the Protocols of the Riksråd, Aleksandr Kan (1956: 111–112) has suggested that the Swedish officials were well aware of the potential for using the news about the progress of the Nürnberg negotiations and the schedule of Swedish troop withdrawals to put pressure on the Russians to conclude the Stockholm negotiations expeditiously. In the meeting of the council on 30 August, Chancellor Bengt Oxenstierna said that he could arrange to have the head of the Swedish post, Johann Beijer, who also published the only Swedish-language newspaper in Stockholm, print news about the imminent return of Swedish forces, even if the reality was that the negotiations in Nürnberg were dragging on and preventing that from happening (*SRP* 13: 233). However, whether there followed some deliberate attempt to manipulate those reports is

not clear.[12] At very least, the State Council subsequently considered the issue of whether troops returning from Germany might be redeployed in the event that Russo-Swedish relations deteriorated (ibid.: 253).

13.3. 'Translated in Stockholm': what the Russian mission did in 1649

The lengthy instructions (*nakaz*) to the Pushkin embassy in March 1649 included a quite short set of the usual directives about obtaining foreign news, especially that concerning the international relations of the country to which the embassy was being sent (Iakubov 1897: 93–157, esp. 156–157). As soon as the ambassadors would cross the border into Swedish Livonia, they were to learn as much news as possible and send it back immediately via courier. Once in Riga, again they were to obtain intelligence, and before embarking for Stockholm, send back to Moscow what they had learned. Presumably the as yet unpublished archival files – which we have not seen – contain these reports.

Within days of its arrival in Stockholm, the Russian mission produced the first of its translations (or summaries) of news from the *WZ*. The Hamburg newspaper appeared thrice weekly, the Tuesday edition entitled *Ordinari Diengstags Zeitung* (*ODiZ*), its header then including the year and the number of the given issue (corresponding to the number of the current week).[13] The Thursday issue was titled *Wochentliche Donnerstags Zeitung* (*WDoZ*), followed by the year and number; the Saturday issue was *Appendix Der Wochentlichen Zeitung Von Numero*, followed by the number (*WZ App.*).[14]

12. It seems this discussion of the way the news of troop withdrawal might best be reported was not necessarily connected just with the Russian negotiations but rather related to domestic concerns, where war-weariness was evident and the government was wanting to celebrate the conclusion of the foreign commitment even short of the signing of the Nürnberg treaty. The queen explicitly directed that such a national celebration be organized (*SRP* 13: 233). We have one instance (V-K IV: 142–144, No. 34) of the Russians translating from the Stockholm newspaper the day after they had translated the news in *WZ*. Clearly this was unusual, a unique insertion preserved in the archival scroll between translations made a week apart from *WZ*. However, the translation from the Swedish newspaper, made on 10 August, antedates by nearly three weeks the meeting of the Riksråd, at which the possibility of manipulating the news had been brought up by the chancellor. Beijer's closeness to the government, which provided him with insider access to the reports it received from Swedish officials and agents, undoubtedly guaranteed that he would publish news deemed in the state's best interest without any special prompting in this case (Droste 2007: 219, 221).

13. At the bottom of the first and the last page, the word 'Prima' was added to the issue number, in the form 'Prima von No. […]'

14. Despite the absence of exact publication dates on the German papers we can specify those dates with reference to issue No. 1 in the given year. As a baseline here for any of the other issues of *WZ* which we cite, we have established that the three issues of its week 21 appeared on 22, 24 and 26 May, those of week 22 on 29 and 31 May and 2 June, etc. (all dates being O.S.). In the first week of 1649 (hence week No. 1 of the year – and of the newspaper), Monday was January 1. While we cannot be absolutely certain that the announced publication schedule was maintained, a note printed at the end of *ODiZ* 1648/28, fol. 2^{v} specifies midday for the Tuesday and Thursday issues each week: "Hinführo sollen alle Diengstag Mittag *praecise* die Ordentliche und des Donnerstags die Wochentliche Zeitungen ausgegeben werden." It would seem that up through No. 26 in 1648, the publication day for the Appendix might vary, but more often than not was indeed appended directly to the Thursday issue of the newspaper, as indicated in *WZ*, 1648/26, fol. 2^{v}: "Hiebey gedruckt *Appendix* der Wochentlichen Zeitung." However, the establishment of an early Saturday publication for the Appendix seems to have

There was no more precise indication of printing dates, which, however, can easily be reconstructed(see n. 14). For their first translations from the newspaper on Sunday, 10 June 1649, the Russians drew on the Tuesday and Thursday issues of No. 21, but not the Saturday one (which, of course, they may not have had in hand). Over the next days, on 14 and 16 June, they translated news from other sources (which we have not been able to identify), but then starting with 22 June – a Friday – and continuing with some regularity over the next weeks, the translators drew almost exclusively on the various numbers of *WZ*.[15]

TABLE 13.1: News translations produced by the Russian embassy in Stockholm, 1649, with their dates (O.S.) and identification of known sources.

The shorthand used here for the references does not repeat the year: for example, ODiZ/21 should be understood as issue No. 21 for 1649.

Date of translation in 1649	Publication in V-K IV (text No., folios, pages)[16]	Source for the translation (all the newspapers published in 1649)
Sunday, 10 June	No. 20, fols. 9–13 (pp. 100–103)	*ODiZ*/21; *WDoZ*/21
Thursday, 14 June	No. 17, fols. 14–16 (pp. 96–97	[source not identified]
Saturday, 16 June	No. 18, fols. 17–19 (pp. 97–99)	[source not identified]
Friday, 22 June	No. 21, fols. 20–24 (pp. 104–108)	*ODiZ*/23; *WDoZ*/23; *WZ App.*/23
Friday 29 June	No. 23, fols. 25–29 (pp. 109–112)	*WDoZ*/24; *WZ App.*/24
[no date]	No. 10, fols. 30–35 (pp. 82–85)	[source not identified][17]
Thursday, 5 July	No. 24, fols. 36–43 (pp. 112–117)	*ODiZ*/25; *WDoZ*/25; *WZ App.*/25; and one unidentified source

followed soon thereafter: "Der hiebey gedruckte Appendix sol alle Sonnabend früc [*sic*] außgegeben werden" (*WZ* 1648/29, fol. 2ᵛ).

15. Even though the identification of *WZ* as the source for the Russian translations discussed here is not in question, it is worth keeping in mind that news which appeared in that newspaper in part drew on some of the same sources which supplied reports to other newspapers, with the result being that often almost identical articles appeared in more than one of them. There are many articles in *WZ* which also are found in the Leipzig-based *Wöchentliche Zeitung*, published by Timotheus Ritzsch under Swedish auspices for the same period, a newspaper that as far as we know was not a source for Russian translations, at least up to the year 1672 (the last year for which we have published *kuranty*, in V-K VII). In the discussion below we use the abbreviation '*WZ*_L' for the Leipzig paper. Overlapping news items are, for instance, the following: reports from 'Oberland' and Venice (*WZ App.*/24 – *WZ*_L/95; *WDoZ*/25 – WZ_L/99; *WZ App.*/27 – *WZ*_L/107; *ODiZ*/26 – *WZ*_L/104), from Stockholm and Danzig (*ODiZ*/28 – *WZ*_L/115), and many more. Since in one or the other paper the otherwise identical articles may omit a sentence, it seems unlikely this is an issue of direct borrowing but rather reflects the fact that both used the same news service which supplied handwritten newsletters. At very least, this demonstrates how widely reported some of the news was which the Russians accessed in Stockholm, sometimes perhaps filtered through a Swedish lens.

16. The original archival scroll folios are kept in RGADA, f. 155, 1649, No. 1.

17. This translation of a pamphlet describing the execution of King Charles I indicates the original was published in Swedish, but there is no further information as to where and when the translation was made. We have included it here provisionally because it was placed in the archival scroll in the middle of the set of newspaper translations produced by the embassy in Stockholm. Both the declaration and those translations are draft copies with a good many corrections. At very least it may be reasonable to hypothesize that the Swedish original was obtained by the embassy when it was in Stockholm, but of course it could have been received in Moscow separately from the embassy. So far it has been impossible to identify an exact Swedish source for the translation (see Maier 1997: 80–81).

Thursday, 12 July	No. 25, fols. 44–45 (pp. 117–118)	*ODiZ*/26; and one unidentified source
Thursday, 19 July	No. 27. fols. 46–50 (pp. 121–124)	*WDoZ*/27; *WZ App.*/27
Friday, 27 July	No. 29. fols. 51–54 (pp. 128–130)	*WDoZ*/28; *WZ App.*/28
Thursday, 2 August	No. 30, fols. 66–72 (pp. 130–134)[18]	*ODiZ*/29; *WDoZ*/29; *WZ App.*/29
Thursday, 9 August	No. 31, fols. 73–76 (pp. 134–136)	*ODiZ*/30; *WDoZ*/30; and one unidentified source
[Friday, 10 August[19]]	No. 34, fols. 77–80 (pp. 142–144)	[source not identified]
Thursday, 16 August	No. 33, fols. 81–87 (pp. 137–141)	*ODiZ*/31; *WDoZ*/31; *WZ App.*/31
Thursday, 23 August	No. 37, fols. 88–94a (pp. 147–151)	*ODiZ*/32; *WDoZ*/32; *WZ App.*/32
Monday, 10 Sept.	No. 38, fols. 95–98 (pp. 152–154)	[source not identified][20]
Monday, 17 Sept.	No. 39, fols. 99–102 (pp. 154–156)	[source not identified][21]
Thursday, 20 Sept.	No. 42, fols. 103–106 (pp. 163–165)	*ODiZ*/36
Friday, 28 Sept.	No. 43, fol. 107 (pp. 165–166)	*ODiZ*/37
Sunday, 7 October	No. 40, fols. 108–118 (pp. 156–162)	[source not identified][22]
Friday, 19 October	No. 44, fols. 119–123 (pp. 166–169)	*ODiZ*/40; *WZ App.*/40

The regularity with which the translations were made from *WZ* is striking: in eight instances on Thursday and five times on Friday. The only exception to this pattern is the very first instance (a Sunday), where, we assume, the embassy had not yet had the

18. In the archival scroll on fols. 55–65 are news translations not connected with the Stockholm embassy, which were received and translated on 28 August (V-K IV: 118–121, No. 26; 125–127, No. 28). One of the sources (for V-K IV, No. 28) is the Amsterdam newspaper *OMC* 1649/29 (published on 13 July). Another source (for V-K IV, No. 26) is most likely *TVQ* 1649/ 28 (published 10 July). Cf. at the end, on p. 121: 'Printed in the city of Amsterdam, July 10, 1649' (no copy of *TVQ* 1649/28 has been preserved). While only V-K IV, No. 26 has a header indicating the date of receipt and translation, it seems safe to assume that both sets of translated news were based on a single delivery of Dutch newspapers, most likely via the Baltic. As is the case with the Stockholm translations, the manuscript copies of Nos. 26 and 28 are drafts.

19. The heading specifies that the original was published on 10 August, not translated then, but we have provisionally placed the translation here between the adjoining files with the translations dated 9 and 16 August. The source was apparently a periodical Swedish newspaper. Given the poor preservation of newspapers published in this period in Stockholm, identifying the exact source has been impossible, although it seems most likely it was the weekly paper published by the Swedish postmaster Johan Beijer. There is no guarantee that the translation was produced by the Russian embassy in Stockholm, but its place in the archival scroll, along with the translations made in Stockholm, makes this likely.

20. The source here could be a handwritten one. Dutch newspapers are another possibility, but none have been preserved for this period to compare. Several articles have information also found in issues of *WZ* for week No. 34, but *WZ* cannot have been the immediate source for any of these translations.

21. Although the content here is somewhat similar to that in *WDoZ* 1649/35, a different source must have been used.

22. Most of the information in this set is news from or concerning Denmark; however, the last folios (117–118) are 'from another opera' and apparently do not belong here: they contain a fair copy of the treaty between Hetman Khmelnytsky and the Polish king, a draft of which is in V-K IV: 164, No. 42.104–105 (within the news report from Warsaw, 29 August). The source for No. 42 has been established: *ODiZ* 1649/36. This translation is mentioned in No. 40 at the top of fol. 117: 'In the translation of the *kuranty* of 20 September ten agreement articles are written,' referring to the Stockholm translation of No. 42.

opportunity to arrange for a regular supply of the newspapers. It is probably significant that two of the instances where *WZ* has not been identified as the source come in the week between the first use of *WZ* and the start of the weekly translations from it on a regular basis. In only one case subsequently was there a translation (from another source) which was made on a Friday; the other instances when different sources were translated occurred twice on Monday and once on a Sunday. The explanation for this pattern is quite clear, as we learn from a note at the end of the mission's final report (*stateinyi spisok*; Iakubov 1897: 267):

> And the envoys, while in Stockholm, spoke with a Novgorodian, a merchant Maksim Voskoboinikov. They, the envoys, heard [from him] that printed newspapers are brought to Stockholm from many places every week on Thursdays, and that he, Maksim, would serve the sovereign and purchase whatever weekly printed newspapers can be obtained. And the envoys should inform him which newspapers to buy and at what cost and pay him. And from the newspapers which Maksim purchased translated compendia were made and those translations are [copied] separately in a scroll.

Since the translations themselves are the only evidence we have regarding which numbers of *WZ* were available to the translators (and, as we shall see, they selected relatively few of the articles), we cannot be certain whether they received all three issues of the newspaper every week. In five cases they drew on all three issues, in six cases on only two, and in three instances on only one issue. However, they never combined issues published in one week with those from another week. The two-week gap encompassing the last week in August and the first full week in September may indicate that no newspapers were received, but it is also possible nothing in them was deemed of interest. There is another gap for the second week of October. If they were relying on Maksim Voskoboinikov to deliver the papers as they arrived, there is always the possibility that in some weeks he was not in town to do so or was indisposed.[23]

Given the fact that there is an almost complete run of *WZ* for the period when the embassy was in Stockholm, we have the possibility of establishing rather precisely the translators' modus operandi.[24] To begin with, it is of some interest to look at simple statistics of what the newspaper was publishing in all of its issues during that period and then compare those data with what the Russians did, using the copies we know for certain they had in hand. In other words, was their selection of news representative for how the news was being covered in the Hamburg paper, or might we detect a particular interest that aligned with issues deemed especially important for Russian foreign policy?

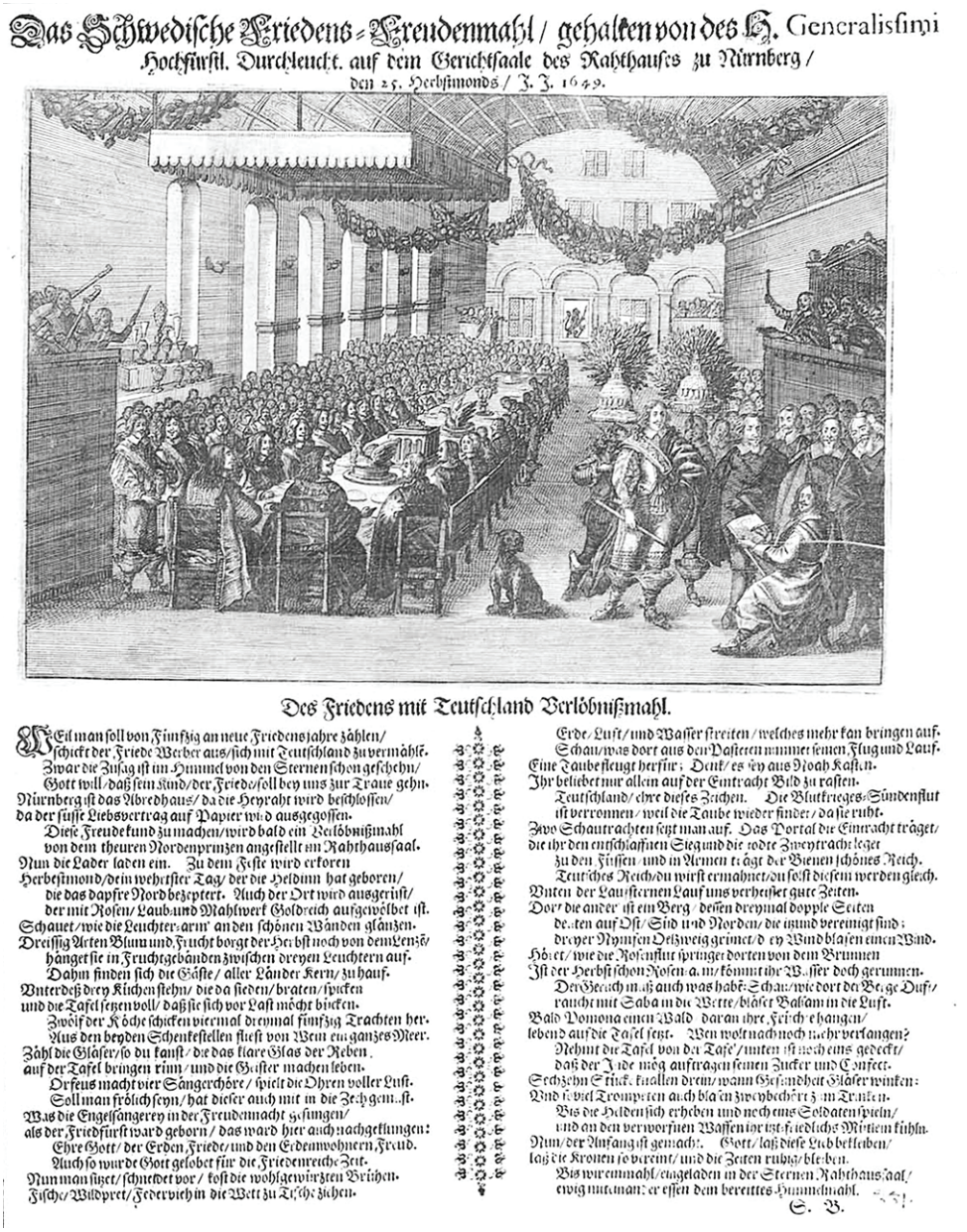
Using rounded figures, 30% of the 400 articles in *WZ* for the period 15 May to 16 Sept. were from Nürnberg, 6% Prague, 5% Venice, 4% each Regensburg, 'Oberland',

23. Apart from the fact that they must have met with the Novgorodian early in their stay, he later approached the Russians to petition assistance in trade matters (Iakubov 1897: 225).

24. We have been able to examine all three issues of the newspaper from No. 21 through No. 36, only a part of one issue for No. 37 (hence it has been omitted in the calculations here), and the Tuesday and Saturday issues of No. 40.

and Cologne, 3% Danzig, ca. 2.5 % Leipzig, Kassel, Antwerp, Elsinore, Frankfurt, Erfurt, and 'Rheinstrom'. Other locations were few in number and very infrequently cited. As the heavy concentration from Nürnberg suggests, the ongoing treaty negotiations there were at the forefront of attention. Between May and August, almost every number of *WZ* contained at least one article from Nürnberg (more commonly two or three). Headlines, of course, frequently tell us little about content; in fact, references to the Nürnberg negotiations appeared in many of the other articles as well, and issues relating to the continuing presence of armies and the terms for their withdrawal were reported from various cities. For anyone reading the news regularly, there would have been a substantial amount of repetition: expectations and hope that the negotiations were nearly at an end; yet more indications they were being held up because a key person was not in town or some delegates were balking at proposals that had been made. Formal proposals and counterproposals by the key negotiating parties sometimes occupied much of any issue of the paper or were published, it seems, as separates, by the same printer. The withdrawal of this or that regiment might have been seen as a step in the right direction, but many such reports probably were of little significance. The ongoing conflict in Flanders between Spanish and French troops (especially the siege of Liège) continued to be a source of attention. It is easy to imagine that a representative sampling of such news reports was sufficient for the Russians in Stockholm to get a decent sense of what was going on, providing them with an independent means of judging whether news their Swedish hosts may have been telling them was accurate. While what the Nürnberg congress decided was not finally implemented for months (even years in some cases), the preliminary agreement signed on 21 September was nonetheless deemed an important accomplishment, which the Swedish representative (and future king) Karl Gustav celebrated with great pomp: a triumphal arch, a banquet in the Rathaus, fireworks, and even the free distribution of wine poured from the mouth of the Swedish lion from the façade of the Rathaus. Apart from newspaper notices, the lavish celebrations were the subject of printed descriptions, paintings, and engravings (see FIG. 13.1).[25]

25. A brochure describing the celebration and the inscriptions on the triumphal arch is *Kurtze Beschreibung Deß Schwedischen Friedensmahls/ gehalten in Nürnberg den 25. Herbstmonats Anno 1649*. [Nürnberg]: Dümler, 1649 (VD17 14:001030F). The copy in the Landesbibliothek Coburg, Ta 10#9, includes as inserts two foldout engravings, which also are available as separates in more than one variant. The engraving depicting the wine fountain is *Abbildung deß Schwedischen Löwens/ 25 Sept. 1649. Jahrs bey Ihrer Hochf. Durchl. deß Herrn Generalissimi Friedenmahl/ so in deß H. Röm. Reichstatt Nürnberg hochansehlichst gehalten/ roht und weissen Wein in 6. Stunden häuflig auß seinem Rachen fliessen lassen.* [Nürnberg, 1649] (VD17 14:001034M), with verses signed J.R. The other engraving is a seating chart (including the architectural elements of the hall) for all the guests at the banquet. Its full version is *Beschreibung/ Wie bey dem von deß Herrn Pfaltzgrafen und Generalissimi Caroli Gustavi Hochfürstl. Durchleucht. auff dem Rahthauß zu Nürnberg am 25 Septemb. Anno 1649. gehaltenem FreudenFest und angestellter Mahlzeit/ alle darzu erbettene und erschienene Herren und Gesandte nach Ihrer Ordnung zur Tafel gesessen.* [Nürnberg, 1649] (VD17 75:710530X). A reduced version without the architectural elements and with only the main table seating is VD17 23:739828P.



Das Schwedische Friedens-Freudenmahl / gehalten von des H. Generalissimi
Hochfürstl. Durchleucht. auf dem Gerichtssaale des Rahthauses zu Nürnberg /
den 25. Herbstmonds / J. J. 1649.

Des Friedens mit Teutschland Verlöbnißmahl.

WEil man soll von Fünfzig an neue Friedensjahre zählen/
Schickt der Friede Werber aus/sich mit Teutschland zu vermählē.
Zwar die Zusag ist im Himmel von den Sternen schon geschehn/
Gott will/daß sein Kind/der Friede/soll bey uns zur Traue gehn.
Nürnberg ist das Abredhaus/ da die Heyraht wird beschlossen/
da der süsse Liebsvertrag auf Papier wird ausgegossen.
Diese Freudekund zu machen/wird bald ein Verlöbnißmahl
von dem theuren Nordenprinzen angestellt im Rahthaussaal.
Nun die Lader laden ein. Zu dem Feste wird erkoren
Herbstmond/dein wehrtster Tag/ der die Heldinn hat geboren/
die das dapfre Nord bezeptert. Auch der Ort wird ausgeriist/
der mit Rosen/Laub und Mahlwerk Goldreich aufgewölbet ist.
Schauet/wie die Leuchter/arm/ an den schönen Wänden glänzen.
Dreissig Arten Blum und Frucht borgt der Herbst noch von dem Lentz/
hänget sie in Fruchtgebänden zwischen dreyen Leuchtern auf.
Dahin finden sich die Gäste/ aller Länder Kern/ zu hauf.
Unterdeß drey Küchen stehn/ die da sieden/braten/spicken
und die Tafel setzen voll/ daß sie sich vor Last möcht bücken.
Zwölf der Köche schicken viermal dreymal fünfzig Trachten her.
Aus den beyden Schenkestellen fliest von Wein ein ganzes Meer.
Zähl die Gläser/so du kanst/ die das klare Glas der Reben
auf der Tafel bringen rinn/ und die Geister machen leben.
Orfeus macht vier Sängerchöre/ spielt die Ohren voller Lust.
Soll man frölich seyn/ hat dieser auch mit in die Zech gemüst.
Was die Engelsängerey in der Freudenacht gesungen/
als der Friedfürst ward geborn/ das ward hier auch nachgeklungen:
Ehre Gott/ der Erden Friede/und den Erdenwohnern Freud.
Auch so wird Gott gelobet für die Friedenreiche Zeit.
Nun man sitzet/schmecket vor/ kost die wohlgewürzten Brühen.
Fisch/Wildpret/Federvieh im Wett zu Tische ziehen.
Erde/Luft/und Wasser streiten/welches mehr kan bringen auf.
Schau/was dort aus den Casteren nimmer seinen Flug und Lauf.
Eine Taube fleugt herfür; Denk/es sey aus Noah Kasten.
Ihr beliebet nur allein auf der Eintracht Bild zu rasten.
Teutschland/ ehre dieses Zeichen. Die Blutkrieges-Sündenflut
ist verronnen/weil die Taube wieder findet/ da sie ruht.
Zwo Schautrachten setzt man auf. Das Portal die Eintracht träget/
die ihr den entschlaffnen Steg und die rodte Zweytracht leget
zu den Füssen/und in Armen trägt der Bienen schönes Reich.
Teutsches Reich/du wirst ermahnet/zu fest diesem werden gleich.
Unten der Lau sternen Lauf uns verheisset gute Zeiten.
Dort die ander ist ein Berg/ dessen dreymal dopple Seiten
deuten auf Ost/Süd und Norden/die stund vereinigt sind:
dreyer Nymfen Oelzweig grünet/da ey Wind blasen einen Wind.
Höret/wie die Rosenflut springet dorten von dem Brunnen
Ist der Herbst schon Rosen arm/kömmt ihr Wasser doch gerunnen.
Der Gerach macht auch was habt Schau/wie dort der Berge Duft/
räucht mit Saba in die Wette/bläset Balsam in die Luft.
Bald Pomona einen Wald daran ihre Frücht ehangen/
lebend auf die Tafel setzt. Wen wolt nach noch mehr verlangen?
Nehmt die Tafel von der Tafe/unten ist noch eins gedeckt/
daß der Jude mög auftragen seinen Zucker und Confect.
Sechzehn Stück knallen drein/wann Gesundheit Gläser winken:
Und so viel Trompeten auch blasen zweybechert zu im Trinken.
Bis die Helden sich erheben und noch eins Soldaten spielen/
und an den verworfnen Waffen ihr itzt friedlichs Mütlein kühlen.
Nun/der Anfang ist gemacht. Gott/laß diese Lust bestehen/
laß die Kronen so vereint/und die Zeiten ruhig bleiben.
Bis wir einmahl/eingeladen in der Sternen Rahthaus saal/
ewig mit man er essen dem bereittes Hummelmahl.

S. B.

Fig. 13.1: Broadside *Das Schwedische Friedens-Freudenmahl* … (1649), with celebratory verses signed 'S.B.' (attributed to Sigmund von Birken).[26]

26. *Das Schwedische Friedens-Freudenmahl: gehalten von des H. Generalissimi Hochfürstl. Durchleucht. auf dem Gerichtsaale des Rahthauses zu Nürnberg/ den 25. Herbstmonds/ J. J. 1649* (VD17: 23:675886F). Joachim von Sandrart produced a monumental oil painting of the banquet (now in the Museen der Stadt Nürnberg), which then was copied for various engravings, among them the

The last of the Stockholm translations (made on 19 October, from *WZ App*. *No*. 40, published 6 October) contained information about the planned banquet (V-K IV: 167, No. 44: 120–121). Since our manuscript of the translation breaks off before the end of the penultimate article, we cannot be certain whether the translation included the description of the festivities laid on by the city of Nürnberg and the Swedish delegation.[27]

The occasional news from Stockholm tended to come via Elsinore, some of it dealing with the Swedish royal family and, infrequently, items concerning the presence of the Russian embassy there. Reports from 'Oberland' (designating the Tyrolean mountain region west of Innsbruck) and from Venice were the main sources for events in Italy, especially regarding the ongoing papal war against Parma. News of the naval wars against the Turks, the siege of Heraklion on Crete, and everything else out of the Ottoman Empire normally came via Venice. To the degree that there was news about events in Poland and Ukraine, it was usually compiled in Danzig. The thirteen reports from Danzig all appeared in *ODiZ* and tended to be among the lead articles, suggesting that the publisher perhaps had them in hand before news from other locations reached him. Some 75% of the 20 articles composed in Venice appeared in *WDoZ*, whereas with only two or three exceptions, the seventeen articles from Oberland all were published in the Saturday 'Appendix', this pattern presumably corresponding to the arrivals of the mail deliveries. News from Vienna could appear in any number of the newspaper, but least likely in the Tuesday issue.

The issues of the Hamburg newspaper that we can document as sources for the Russian translations printed 250 articles. The Russians translated or summarized from 93 of those, that is, 37% of what they had in hand. The percentage of articles selected from any single issue seems not to depend on whether the Russians chose items to translate from all three issues of *WZ* in that week. For example, they drew on six of the eight articles in *ODiZ* No. 32, seven of the ten in *WZ App*. No. 32, and only one of eleven in *ODiZ No*. 32, whereas in the week of No. 28, the respective figures are one of six, two of nine, and four of eleven. Yet in the 36th week, when they used only the Tuesday issue (*ODiZ* No. 36), they translated five of the six articles – possibly evidence they did not have the other numbers of the newspaper that week. It is of some interest to see the distribution of what they translated, the tabulation here including all the most commonly datelined

rather poor rendition in the broadside shown in Fig. 13.1. The signing of the final version of the Nürnberg agreement took place in June 1650 and likewise was a subject for contemporary news publications, including an engraving of the actual ceremony and more fireworks. See Kaulbach 2013: 36, 123, 129–130.

27. The final report in the newspaper (fol. [2v]) reads: "Ein anders vom selben Dato. Heute wird das Banquet gehalten/ welches mit dem Fewerwerck viel 1000. Reichsthaler kosten wird. Die Stadt Nürnberg empfindet diesen Friedenschluß auch nicht wenig/ hat darzu 10. Stück mit der Munition hergegeben/ den grossen Sahl uffm [= auf dem] Rathhauß trefflich zieren lassen/ und die Music mit 4. Chor ohne die Trompeten und Zimpeln darzu bestellet: So wird man auch die gantze Nacht durch die Fewerpfannen brennen lassen/ und ist ein gekrönter Löwe mit einem Lorberkrantz/ in der rechten Tappen einen Oelzweig/ in der lincken aber ein Schwerdt führend/ zugerichtet/ welcher roth und weissen Wein von sich lauffen lest."

articles but omitting a few of the less numerous ones (see Table 13.2).

TABLE 13.2: Percentage of articles actually translated or summarized from issues of *Wochentliche Zeitung* (Hamburg), used by the Russian embassy in Stockholm.

Location	total articles in *WZ* issues used by the Russians (t)	number of articles translated or summarized (s)	percentage of available articles from given location (s/t)
Danzig	9	9	100.0%
Stockholm	4	3	75.0%
Venice	13	8	61.5%
Oberland	10	5	50.0%
Nürnberg	72	32	44.4%
Vienna	10	4	40.0%
Elsinore	5	2	40.0%
Frankfurt	9	3	33.3%
Prague	16	5	31.3%
Regensburg	12	2	16.7%
Leipzig	10	1	10.0%
Cologne	10	1	10.0%

By far the largest number of articles the Russians translated were composed in Nürnberg, which is not surprising given the focus of the news being printed in *WZ* and the fact that knowing about the Swedish military commitments in the West was important for the negotiations going on in Stockholm. It is striking that the Russians translated *all* of the articles from Danzig, where the subject matter was events in Poland and Ukraine.[28] How substantial and accurate that coverage may have been is an issue to which we will return in Chapter 14: Polish politics (in particular, the royal succession) seem to have been at the forefront of concerns, rather than the Cossack uprising. As we shall see, news from Poland and Ukraine about these events was reaching Moscow long before the translations made in Stockholm were brought back by the Russian ambassadors in December.

Reports from certain other locations seem to have attracted particular attention too. A high percentage of the few items that had news mainly from Sweden (both the Stockholm and Elsinore reports) were also translated, even though the information they contained would have been substantially out of date by the time the newspaper reached Stockholm. Moreover, the significant percentages of the translations from what was available from Venice and Oberland probably is an indication of the interest in the news involving the Ottoman Empire. A letter sent from Venice on 8/18 June provided details of a major Venetian naval victory over the Turks near Smyrna (today, Izmir) on 15 May and the celebrations held in Venice when the news was received there. On 12 July, the Russians

28. The data in the table derive only from the cases where we know for certain that the Russians used a particular number of *WZ*. Thus, it is possible they received other issues and simply chose not to translate anything from them. For example, we cannot know whether they deliberately skipped the articles from Danzig in *ODiZ*, Nos. 33, 34 and 35, since we have no evidence whether they received those issues of *WZ*.

FIG. 13.2. A broadside depicting the Venetian naval victory near Smyrna in 1649 that was widely reported in the contemporary press and about which a report was translated for the *kuranty*.

translated in full the report in the lead article of *ODiZ* No. 26, which clearly was a condensation of a separately printed pamphlet about the battle (FIG. 13.2).[29]

It is of some interest that in the meeting of the Swedish Riksråd on 12 July, note was made of several news reports about the Venetian victory, some coming in letters to the Crown from Swedish representatives, but at least one apparently in Latin from a newsletter written in Brussels (*SRP* 13: 176–178). If news relating to the Ottomans was a particuar focus for the Russians, Cologne news – which tended to concern events in Flanders – seems to have been of little interest to them. Although not included in the statistics above, there was but one article from London in the issues of *WZ* the Russians had, and in general there was practically nothing reported in this period in the Hamburg

29.The source for the German newspaper version clearly is the text published in *Kurtzer Bericht/ Deß herrlichen Sigs/ so der Allmächtige/ der Venedischen wider die Türckische Schiff-Armada verlyhen. Den 15. May/ dises 1649. Jahrs: Wie mit glaubwürdigen Schreiben/ den 18. Junii/ von Venedig berichtet worden*. N.p., 1649 (VD17 12:620736E), although possibly from another of the several printings of the news. An engraved broadside illustrating the battle and also including the descriptive text is *Kurtzer Entwurff deß herrlichen Siegs/ so der Allmächtige/ der Venedischen wider die Türckische Schiff-Armada verlihen/ den 15. May/ dieses 1649. Jahrs: Wie mit glaubwürdigen Schreiben/ den 18. Junii/ von Venedig berichtet worden*. N.p., 1649 (VD17 1:620690T). Another engraving of the same battle scene, but without the long text, is in VD17 12:726540H.

paper regarding the political events in England. The Russians translated the lone article from London, which related a purportedly miraculous sighting in Chester. Even though other German newspapers often printed much more about the English events, Dutch papers tended to provide fuller and more timely coverage.

These raw statistics tell only part of the story. Many of the articles published in *WZ* were compendia of short news reports received from other locations which might vary considerably in their subject matter. There would be no reason to think all of the topics in any given report would have been of equal interest. We have seen earlier how it was common in Moscow to translate newspapers in their entirety or at least to translate significant portions of them with little condensation of the material. The evidence from Stockholm in 1649 presents a contrasting picture: a high degree of selectivity. Yet this is still rather different from what we encounter later, after the international post was established and when the abundance of incoming news dictated that the translators be even more selective, often merely summarizing the sources they had. In 1649, the Russians translated essentially in their entirety 65.2% of the articles that caught their attention; in another 16.3% of the cases, they omitted but a sentence; in 18.5% of the cases, they condensed or summarized more substantially.[30] In other words, when the decision was made about the interest of any given article, it was much more likely that it would be translated completely, rather than being condensed. Impressive numbers of the many Nürnberg articles were translated in their entirety, whereas frequent mentions of the king of Hungary in some of the other reports were eliminated, as were details of events in Italy (in particular, reports about the fiancée of the king of Spain who was at the time in Milan).

Even though naturally it is of interest to see what was chosen for translation, an important perspective can be obtained by considering also what was omitted. *ODiZ* No. 25 was entirely devoted to the text of the imperial reply to Swedish proposals at Nürnberg, dated 30 May/9 June. Obviously this sparked Russian interest in Stockholm, where an earlier imperial response to the Swedes had been condensed by them (on 10 June) from *WDoZ* No. 21. As in that case, also this time they condensed a great deal of the text, rather than translate it verbatim. The Swedish proposal to which it was the response was apparently that published as one of two items in the first issue of week 23, from which the Russians translated in its entirety the opening entry from Danzig relating to Polish military preparations against the Cossacks. Yet they translated none of the Swedish treaty draft, which would have been valuable for any assessment of the imperial response.

It is generally accepted that the Russians were particularly interested in what the Western publications wrote about them, not because any of it would have been 'news' but because of the sensitivity about whether reporting on Russia was accurate and respectful. Anything the Russians thought demeaned them and impugned the honor of the

30. These percentages are only approximations, and one must also keep in mind that a 'complete' translation cannot be expected to include every word of the original.

tsar might become the subject of a formal diplomatic protest. We would think that the reports in the Hamburg newspaper which mentioned the Russian embassy to Stockholm would all have been of interest to translate. Some were, yet the most detailed of such reports, contained in a report from Elsinore dated 16/26 June and published in *ODiZ* No. 26, was not translated, although three of the five articles in that number of the newspaper were. That description of the reception of the Muscovite embassy in Stockholm was a long one, with a lot of information about the ceremonial.

Detailed analysis of the translations in any given week reveals a lot more about the Russian approach and the degree of accuracy in what they did. As an example, here is a close reading of what the translators did with two of the three issues of *WZ* No. 21 (V-K IV: 101–103, No. 20.9–13). The first report in the translation, dated 10 June, is headed 'News from the city of Danzig the 14th day of May' ('Vesti iz goroda Daneska maiia v 14 den'), which is a fairly exact translation of the headline "Dantzig vom 14. Maij" to an article on the first page of the source newspaper (*ODiZ* No. 21). The report deals with the Cossack general, Khmelnytsky, who is preparing a raid into Poland. The Royal Majesty in Poland is not yet ready for an armed encounter, but perhaps this will not be necessary since the two parties are negotiating. As the Russian translation put it: 'only they expect that there will be no battle and that they will negotiate a peace agreement' ('tolko chaiut chto boia nikakova ne budet a o miru dogovarivat'tsia budut'; V-K IV: 100, No. 20.9).

The Russians then translated 'News from the imperial capital city Vienna the 14th day of May' ('Vesti iz tsesarskogo stolnog(o) goroda Veny maiia v 14 den') from the next report in the same German newspaper under the heading "Wien vom 14. Dito". The translator added to the headline some additional information about the geography and the political significance of the city in question. About half of the German report was translated: concerning imperial troops being taken into Spanish service and a mission from the Transylvanian Prince György II Rákóczi coming to Pressburg (today Bratislava). Omitted were the parts dealing with the forthcoming confinement of the empress, planned to take place in Pressburg, as well as the ones about the convocation of a parliament in Regensburg and about a quarrel between Catholics and Lutherans. Three more news items in this Russian compilation can be traced to reports in the same number of *ODiZ*: Regensburg 8 May, and two from Nürnberg 11 May. In Nürnberg discussions continued regarding liberation of the occupied garrisons and dismissal of the foreign troops. At the end of the first Nürnberg report, there is also an item about a terrible accident, but one for which the Russian translator confused the German verb *umbkommen* (in modern orthography, *umkommen*), meaning 'to die, perish', with the word *ankommen* ('arrive'), thus garbling the meaning.[31]

31. The passages in question are:
Dieses allein ist noch zu melden/ daß vorgestern die Fürstl. Würtembergische zur Friedens Execution Deputirte vnterwegens zwischen Nördlingen vnd Oettingen von einem Wolckenbruch ergriffen/ vnd durch die Wasserfluth mit Pferd vnnd Wagen jämmerlich hingeraffet vnd versäuffet worden. Die Herrn Commissarien/ so bey dieser Fluth vmbkommen/ seynd gewesen

The next report in the Russian compilation (headed Venice, 14 May) comes from the first article in the same week's *WDoZ* No. 21. It opens with news about the Turks' threat to arrest all Venetian merchants in Constantinople and seize their property unless Venice surrenders to the Ottomans the city of Candia (modern Heraklion) on the island of Crete. In related news Turkish forces were gathering around the cities of Clissa and Sebenico. These reports about the Ottomans were accurately translated, whereas an unrelated item – a message from Rome informing readers about the pope's decision to make the following year (1650) a jubilee year – was ignored. The translators totally disregarded two communications in the same issue of the German newspaper, both dated Nürnberg, 12 May. The first of these reports, on a terrible thunderstorm, was ignored presumably because it had no international importance.[32] The second item, on the peace congress, may simply have been deemed redundant. Two Nürnberg reports had already been included from the Tuesday issue; moreover, a subsequent report in the same source, headed Stockholm 12 May, was also translated and contained a lot of information about the Nürnberg negotiations. This may have been considered enough material about German-Swedish negotiations for one Russian compilation.

The report headlined 'Stockholm vom 12. Maij' obviously was of interest to translate. It opened with a detailed account of Chancellor Magnus de la Gardie's travel plans for the near future and a short notice about consultations with a delegation from Brandenburg. Then there was a passage on the journey to Stockholm by the Russian ambassadors: 'The Russian legation heading here arrived on 25 March in Pskov, where on account of the poor condition of the road they will remain for a while and not before the beginning of May will arrive at the Livonian border.'[33] All of this was accurately translated. The Pskov item tells us something about the speed with which news spread from Russia to Germany and back. The German newspaper, printed on 22 May, contains news about the Russian delegation's arrival in Pskov two months earlier, on 25 March. The Russian translation was made in Stockholm on 10 June but would not have been seen in Moscow

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Herr Doctor Welser Costnitzischer Rath/ Herr Lerchenfeld vnnd ein Doctor vom Hertzog von Würtenberg (*ODiZ* 1649/21: fol. 2).

а о семъ еще объявляю что третьево дни князя Вюртенберского о мирном докончанье послы посланы были и какъ будучи на дороге меж Нердлинга да Октингена ис тучи водою захватило и от тово воденово потопу они послы с лошадьми и с телеги погрузъли и потонули. Господа кумисары которые пришли к тому месту по имяни доктур Велсеръ земнои думнои господин Лерхенфелдъ да доктур арцуга Вюртенберского (V-K IV: 101, No. 20.10).

32. This is not to imply that news about natural disasters was neglected in a systematic way. See, e.g., the following passage from a *kuranty* translation published in V-K IV: 206, No. 54.328: 'From the Hungarian land is news that on the 18th of this month in the city of Pressburg was a storm so severe that vineyards and fruit trees were severely damaged by the thunder.' It is likely that reports of this type were translated if more relevant news was not available.

33. The German text reads (*WDoZ 1649*/21: fol. 2): "Die Russische anhero destinirte Legation ist den 25. Martij zu Pleßkaw ankommen/ woselbsten sie wegen Vnbequembligkeit der Wege etwas subsistiren, vnnd nicht eher als zu anfang des Maij an den Liefflandischen Gräntzen angenommen werden soll." The Russian translation is in V-K IV: 102, No. 20.11–12.

until the embassy filed its final report in December! Since such a piece of information could not have any news value for the Russian tsar, the reason for translating this item must have been to show that details about the Muscovite delegation's journey were considered important enough to be reported in one of the major newspapers of the time.[34] The Stockholm report continues under a new heading: in the Hamburg newspaper it reads, in Latin, "Copia Propositionis à Cæsareanis Suedis factæ" (translated as 'Spisok s rechei chto tsesarskie liudi s sveianami govorili'; V-K IV: 102, No. 20.12). This account of a rather complicated suggestion made by the imperial German side to the Swedish delegation in Nürnberg is somewhat abbreviated in the Russian version. The Russian compilation ends, as the source newspaper does, with a communiqué from Wolfenbüttel (dated 18 May), reporting on a forthcoming meeting of representatives for all Low Saxony county towns in Braunschweig.

13.4. Conclusion

While it would be risky to generalize from this one example, the case study is revealing about what the possibilities were for Russian missions abroad to follow the news. The embassy was in a not unfamiliar capital and consisted of officials who were arguably amongst the best prepared Russian diplomats to understand current international events. Immediately on arrival, through a local contact, they in effect subscribed to one of the leading newspapers of the day. In the well-connected Swedish capital, there must have been other opportunities as well to obtain up-to-date information, apart from whatever the Swedish officials might have told them. Presumably the mission was obtaining on a regular basis more news than it deemed important to translate in full, in contrast to the situation which seems to have prevailed earlier in Moscow. The principles which we hypothesize guided the selection of news made sense and likely would have been applied back in Moscow in the Ambassadorial Chancery, if it had a similar 'subscription' to the western press. Thus, although all this represented a kind of progress for the Russian government's acquisition of timely foreign news, the efforts of the Stockholm mission still suffered from one major limitation: without regular postal delivery to Moscow, the translations would arrive back in the Kremlin only with some months' delay, when the embassy finally made it home.

34. There is one more example among the Stockholm translations in which the German newspaper provided information about the Russian delegation's activities. In *WDoZ* 1649/25: fol. 1, a news item from Stockholm dated 3 June reports about the anticipated arrival of the Russian embassy: "Die Russische Legation in vngefehr 120. Personen bestehend/ ist man nunmehr täglich allhie gewärtig/ gestalt man dann von jhrer den 8. Maij beschehenen Reception zu Niehausen auff der Gräntze/ vnd was massen sie den 3. Pfingstfeyertag in Riga angelanget/ vnd in 2. oder 3. Tagen von dannen anhero abzusiegeln vorhabens gewesen/ allbereits gute Nachricht hat/ dannenhero dann die Bürgerschafft allhier sich täglich gefast helt/ sich bey deroselben ankunfft vnd Empfang in jhrem besten Gewehr zu präsentiren." The very exact Russian translation is in V-K IV: 113, No. 24.37.

CHAPTER 14

Muscovy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1648–1649: the War for Ukraine

An examination news reporting regarding the Commonwealth and the Cossack war in 1648–1649 will broaden considerably the context for our assessment of the Russian acquisition of foreign news in the middle of the seventeenth century. The statistics cited in section 13.3 (p. 433) suggest that for the Russian mission in Stockholm this news was of particular interest. However, what the Russian envoys could learn about it simply from reading the Hamburg newspaper was limited in important ways, as an examination of that paper's coverage of events will demonstrate. And in any event, the translations made in Stockholm would have been of little value by the time they were brought back to Moscow on the return of the embassy. We must then ask what other sources of information were available to the policy makers in the Kremlin and whether there is evidence as to how they acted on the news and intelligence they were receiving. Most of that information seems to have come from the reports of the military governors stationed along the western and southern borders of Muscovy. Those reports provide an excellent idea of how the news was acquired and thus to a degree what its accuracy or value may have been. However, as this evidence which we recount in detail will reveal, the policy makers in the Kremlin must have been hard pressed to sort out from a deluge of information what was accurate. Hence it will be important to look closely as well in the next chapter at the news and intelligence obtained by two couriers in 1649: Grigorii Kunakov, who twice was sent as a courier to Poland, and Grigorii Neronov, who was sent to Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky in Chyhyryn.

14.1. The geopolitical framework: an overview

In order to understand some of the factors affecting Muscovite relations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Ukrainian Cossacks, and the Crimean Khanate, we shall begin with an overview of the situation along the borders in the late 1640s. The political geography not only helps to explain how intelligence and news might be obtained, but also to understand the limits of its value. After reviewing the geopolit-

ical factors, we provide a brief overview of the key events in 1648–1649, information about which might be deemed crucial for the policy makers in the Kremlin. With an understanding of what happened, it is possible to see to what degree reliable information about events was obtained.[1]

The treaties which had ended the conflicts with Sweden and Poland-Lithuania at the end of the Time of Troubles had established Muscovy's western borders, although some further adjustments took place in the next decades (FIG. 14.1). As we have seen already, since borders were porous, local details in some cases uncertain, and movement across them often occurred without the sanction of the governments involved, there were continuing negotiations to resolve potential conflict. The Russian mission to Stockholm in 1649 was specifically to address such matters. In the case of Poland-Lithuania, the peace settlement at the end of the Smolensk War of 1633–1634 had resulted in a number of adjustments to the border but still left some problems that were the subject of ongoing negotiation and tension. Russian garrisons were maintained in key towns, their military governors tasked with maintaining vigilance, collecting intelligence, and – as appropriate – keeping in contact with their counterparts on the other side of the border, especially if there were issues of mutual concern about security. Commercial activity across the borders continued, merchants came and went, and often the border commanders had to deal with individuals wishing to enter Muscovite service or who claimed to have other reasons to go on to Moscow. This meant that there were many conduits for obtaining news and information.

The situation along the southern frontiers was in many ways much more fluid, with a wide band of largely unsettled steppe, separating the sedentary farming communities in the north from the territories controlled by the steppe nomads.[2] The Cossack commu-

1. Fuller treatments of both Polish and Ukrainian history in this period are, for instance, in Magocsi 1996, esp. Ch. 15; for a detailed account of the events in 1648 and 1649, see Hrushevsky, 8: Chs. 8–14. A recent study emphasizing religious issues in the Cossack revolt is Plokhy 2001 (for an overview of events, see pp. 48–57). Useful details about diplomatic initiatives by Adam Kysil (Kisel'), who was in frequent contact with the Muscovite government, are in Sysyn 1985, esp. Chs. 6–7. In Ch. 1, he provides an excellent introduction to Polish political history and institutions. See also the politically focused, if now rather dated treatment in *Cambridge History* 1950, esp. Chs. 21–22. For a recent overview providing a good sense of the political issues leading to the disasters Poland would experience in the 1650s, see Frost 2003, esp. Chs. 1–2. For Muscovite relations with the Crimea, the best treatment, based on archival research, is still that of Novosel'skii 1948, esp. Ch. 8. For Crimean relations with Poland-Lithuania, see Kołodziejczyk 2011: 155–161.

2. This assessment of the southern frontiers follows in particular Boeck 2009, whose focus is the Don steppe frontier, but whose interpretive framework also can be applied to the region of the lower Dnepr. As he makes clear, the treatment of the region in traditional Russian historiography (and the maps based on it) emphasize a degree of Muscovite control extending across the steppe to the lower Don that in fact was not there. Although Muscovite interactions with the Don Cossacks often included even military support, the Don was treated as a foreign country, and the relations with the Cossacks normally were carried out through the Ambassadorial Chancery, not some department of internal affairs. Boeck further emphasizes that the interactions between the Tatars and Cossacks were not always hostile, the region forming a kind of 'Middle Ground' of interaction (to use the term of the historian Richard White).

FIG. 14.1. Map of the Muscovite border regions in the south and west and the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

nities which formed in the south comprised individuals of varied origins who had fled sedentary control and were able to make their livelihood along the southern rivers and by periodic forays against their neighbors. The two major Cossack communities which figure in the history of this period were located along the Don River and along the lower Dnepr. For our discussion here, we will focus on the latter, the Zaporozhians. Relations with the Crimean Tatars (ostensibly vassals of the Ottoman Sultan) were of particular concern for the communities bordering the steppe.

While in the sixteenth century Tatar raids had reached as far as Moscow, toward the end of that century the Russian government had begun to create fortified defenses in the south, which gradually forced the Tatars to change the focus of their raids. By the late 1640s, the last parts of the so-called Belgorod Line were in place, an actual wall punctuated by manned forts, which thus established a defensible boundary between the areas securely administered by Moscow and the regions beyond.[3] The commanders in all these border forts regularly sent intelligence reports to Moscow based on interrogation of those who would cross the frontier, be they merchants, Orthodox clerics, diplomats,

3. On the Belgorod Line, see Davies 2007, Ch. 3, and Boeck 2009, Ch. 4.

or escapees from Turkish or Tatar captivity. The reports often enclosed letters with news communicated by officials on the other side of the border.

The territories controlled by the Commonwealth extended along the left bank of the Dnepr River from Smolensk to south of Kiev. Their southern boundary was ill-defined, with no defensive bulwark such as the Belgorod Line, and thus became an increasingly attractive target for the Tatars and their allies. In the Polish-Lithuanian territories, relations between the state authorities were complicated by the fact that Polish and Lithuanian magnates had gradually been establishing latifundia ever further to the south and east, in the process dispossessing or otherwise exercising control over many of the Cossacks. Cossack forces often were employed as auxiliaries in the army of the Commonwealth and thus enjoyed certain privileges and financial compensation. However, they were treated as secondary citizens, an increasing source of discontent. Not the least of the issues involved were the policies of the Catholic Counter-Reformation and the Uniate Church (established in 1596), which oppressed the Orthodox. Religious issues, combined with economic grievances and aspirations for political autonomy, produced an explosion in 1648.

For the most part, in the decade and a half following the disastrous Smolensk War, the Muscovite government was very cautious in its foreign policy. Even though off and on it would support the Don Cossacks against their enemies in the steppe, including the Crimean Tatars, it had refused to go to war with the Ottoman Empire to help the Cossacks hold Azov, which they had seized in 1637. The commitment to maintaining peace with the Ottomans continued, even as Moscow became tempted by the blandishments of Polish King Władysław IV to engage in a war against the Crimean Tatars. In negotiations with the Tatars over issues of raids, captives, and regular financial subsidies, the Kremlin took an increasingly hard line, more or less safe now from devastating attacks thanks to the fortifications along the southern frontier. The Tatars and Russians concluded a peace agreement in 1647. In Poland-Lithuania, the lack of support from key elites for entering into a costly war in the south ultimately doomed King Władysław's plans to extend his territories all the way to the Black Sea, hoping to take advantage of what would prove to be a lengthy Ottoman effort to seize Crete from Venice.

1648 was to be a momentous year in Eastern Europe, events there having little to do with the peace settlement at Westphalia, which created the framework for finally ending the conflicts of the Thirty Years War. Provoked by actions of some of the Polish magnates – including his own arrest – the Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky (FIG. 14.2) escaped to the fortified center (the *Sich*) of the Zaporozhian host in January 1648, where the Zaporozhians elected him as their hetman. He then reached an agreement with the Crimean Tatars to join forces in attacking Poland. In rapid succession in May the Cossack-Tatar army destroyed the forces which the Commonwealth had sent against it. Stefan Potocki, son of the Grand Crown Hetman Mikołaj Potocki, was captured and died in the battle at Zhovti Vody on 6/16 May, and then the elder Potocki and the Field

Crown Hetman Marcin Kalinowski were defeated and captured at Korsun on 16/26 May. The inability of the Poles to mount effective military resistance was compounded by the death of King Władysław on 10/20 May, which meant that there was no political leadership capable of trying to meet the conditions Khmelnytsky had stated for him to end his rebellion. The Cossacks and Tatars were reinforced by disaffected peasants and townspeople and scored another major military victory at Pyliavtsi (Pyliava, southeast of Starokostiantiniv) in September. They besieged Lviv (Lemberg, L'viv in Ukraine) and threatened to march on Lublin, before the onset of winter – when no fodder could be had for cavalry horses – and the possibility of a negotiated settlement brought a pause in the fighting.

FIG. 14.2. Portrait of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky by an unknown artist.

An interregnum in Poland was a chronic weakness of the constitutional arrangement whereby the king had to be elected. In the given situation, the idea of a foreign candidate for the throne (which had often resolved the competition amongst internal candidates) received little support. However, it was only in November that Władysław's two half-brothers, Jan Kazimierz and Karol Ferdynand, reached an agreement that the former should become king. The outcome of the Polish succession was a matter of considerable concern both in Stockholm and in Moscow. Khmelnytsky saw it as an opportunity to gain a satisfactory peace settlement that would guarantee Cossack demands. When the new king's election had been confirmed by the Diet on November 10/20 and he had been crowned on January 10/20, he supported negotiation, which extended over some months but failed to bring an end to the conflict. In May 1649, a new Crimean force joined the Cossacks in besieging Zbarazh. When the Commonwelth's relief expedition was surrounded at nearby Zboriv, on 8/18 August he managed to reach an agreement with the Crimean khan. The Cossacks, having lost the support of their major ally, simultaneously signed an agreement that ended the conflict at least for the time being. The renewal of the Cossack war in 1651 would lead in 1654 to the Treaty of Pereiaslav, which created an autonomous Cossack state under Muscovite protection. The subsequent Polish war with Muscovy (and the entrance of Sweden into the conflict) would fatally weaken what once had been one of the largest political entities in Eastern Europe.

14.2. The Commonwealth in the periodical press in 1648

To focus on a single Hamburg newspaper, the *Wochentliche Zeitung* (*WZ*), may seem to be an oversimplification about how news from Eastern Europe was reported. However, the almost unbroken run of that paper preserved for 1648–1649, as well as the fact that on a weekly basis it did include reports from the east and was the major news source for the Russian embassy in Stockholm in 1649, provide a basis for comparing and contrasting the 'news in the West about the East' with what the Russian government could obtain from other sources along the borders. With rare exceptions, the Tuesday issue of the newspaper, *ODiZ*, published news from Poland-Lithuania and occasionally from Muscovy. This news most frequently was reported from Danzig (Gdańsk), although many reports also arrived from Stettin (Szczecin), and a few even originated in Warsaw. As noted already for 1649, in the overall coverage of the Hamburg paper such reports represented a relatively small percentage among the published articles, which may reflect the publishers' perception of what the readers would most want to know. However, the reports from the east are often surprising for their details and – with some exceptions – their accuracy. This discussion will also examine the degree to which Western newspaper reports informed the Kremlin about the events in the Commonwealth in 1648, since thereby one can see the limits of what could be learned from the *kuranty*.[4]

Determining the transit time for the news out of Poland to end up on the pages of the Hamburg newspaper is a challenge. The late 1640s was a period when the postal contacts between Danzig and Hamburg were in flux.[5] The imperial postmaster (Tassis) proposed in February 1648 to reduce the time to eight days (four days to Stettin and another four from there to Hamburg), which may have been possible physically but was postponed, apparently for political reasons. The Hamburg merchants were determined to maintain their postal monopoly, even if that meant continuing to use the slower wagon post (see Sec. 3.2). While the use of postal riders between Hamburg and Stettin may have begun as early as 1625, the service was apparently irregular at best. The evidence we have so far seen would suggest that once the Swedes had occupied much of the Baltic littoral in the early stages of the Thirty Years War, they had failed to improve the speed of communications. In Poland, King Władysław IV had taken steps to enhance the postal connection between Warsaw and Danzig, but what exactly that may have meant in terms of regularity and speed is not clear.

Examination of the news published in *WZ* does provide a lot of evidence about *actual* transit times.[6] There are quite consistent data for 1648 indicating that 25–26 days would

4. For broader treatments of the Western coverage about events in the Commonwealth, see Kalinowska 2014, and – specifically for the German press – Zientara 2012.

5. The basic literature on this postal route still relies very heavily on the older studies by Teubner 1926, 1927, and Gallitsch 1937. However, since they depend in the first instance on proposals about postal service, they leave open questions about their actual implementation.

6. We have examined the news out of Poland in the complete run of the Tuesday issue of the Hamburg *WZ* for 1648 through into autumn 1649, and for comparison all the Polish news in the Leipzig-

elapse for a report dated in Danzig to appear in the Hamburg paper.[7] The data for Stettin are not quite so consistent (occasional longer elapsed times), but the norm was around 20 days. Stettin is not quite half way between Danzig and Hamburg. The newspaper evidence suggests that Hamburg's mail service improved beginning in 1649. The norm for publication of news out of Danzig was now a week faster (19 days), although occasionally a few days longer.[8] However, unlike in 1648, when a substantial amount of news out of Poland came via Stettin, almost all of the news from the Commonwealth in 1649 was reported via Danzig.[9] The content of most of the Polish news, whatever the route it took in reaching Hamburg and Leipzig, suggests that it came from someone with access to the court. Of course the king was not always resident in Warsaw, though reports in the first instance originated there and in normal circumstances might take up to a week to reach Danzig. By the time the news of the Polish court made it into print in Hamburg, in 1648 it was more than three and a half weeks old, an elapsed time that improved by about but a week in the next year. If the subject was one of the battles against the Cossacks and Tatars in the southern reaches of the Commonwealth, the elapsed time would be longer, given the distances involved and the uncertainties of communication. Let us look at some specific examples.

In the first 1648 Tuesday issue of the Hamburg paper, published on 4 January (O.S.), a report out of Danzig dated 20 December in a sense previewed what would be the focus of Polish news in subsequent months: the king was seriously ill with various conditions that the report specified, and threats from the Turks and Tatars in the south had required that reinforcements be sent to defend the approaches to Kraków. Over

based *Wochentliche Zeitung* for the same period. The Tuesday issue of the Hamburg *WZ* (entitled *Ordentliche Zeitung* in 1648 and, starting in 1649, *Ordinari Diengstags Zeitung*; both here referred to as *ODiZ*) is the one in which the Danzig and Stettin reports appeared. Even though *WZ* printed no date other than the year, it is possible to calculate for each issue the date when it was published. The uncertainties in calculation of transit times come from the dates in the headlines of the individual news reports. Some of them include both Julian (O.S.) and Gregorian (N.S.) dates (10 days apart), but many have only a single date, rarely designated as either O.S. or N.S. We posit that where there is a single date, it most likely is in the calendar used at the location whence the report came. Thus, for example, Warsaw and Danzig should be N.S. dates, whereas Stettin or Stockholm use O.S. See Kranhold 1967: 49, 232 n. 11; Grotefend 1982: 26–27. However, there may be exceptions where the news agent did not adhere to the local calendar. There also is at least the possibility that the newspaper publisher altered the date in a report, although on the whole it seems that he printed the dates of the reports unchanged.

7. As a check on the consistency of the data, we have also run the statistics for several other cities from which news regularly appeared in *ODiZ*. In 1648, reports from Stockholm and Venice regularly would be published in 25 to 27 days. Reports from Nürnberg would appear most often in 19 or 22 days.

8. News from Nürnberg now began to appear in print either 15 or 12 days after it had been written. Also, though the evidence is scanty, the mails from Stockholm were now a week faster than they had been. At least some of the reports from Venice might now be published a week faster too.

9. In 1648, *ODiZ* published Polish news in 33 reports from Danzig, 25 from Stettin, 3 from Warsaw and one from Trachtenberg (Żmigród, in Polish Silesia). In the first 36 weeks of 1649 (and as well week 40), there were 32 reports out of Danzig, two out of Stettin, one each from 'Poland' and Warsaw, and one long report about the coronation in Kraków, which was the subject of a separate publication in German.

the next weeks, the king's illness continued to dominate the news, as his condition was interfering with planned travel to Vilna and his ability to meet with visiting diplomats. He recovered some, as a Danzig report dated 7/17 January (published on 1 February O.S.) indicated, but there were widespread fears that his death would spark civil strife over the succession and might invite Swedish intervention, given the king's dynastic claims to the Swedish crown. A Tatar raid not far from Kraków also was reported. All this alarming news probably explains the newspaper's unusual reportage out of Warsaw (via Danzig, 7 February) of ominous heavenly wonder-signs – a comet and a hand holding a saber, whose significance only God could know.[10] In the following week's news, another report via Danzig (dated 14 February) related that the king had refused to listen to his brothers' advice not to try to travel in Lithuania, justifying the decision by his obligation to visit that part of his realm and the plan to meet the French ambassador there. It is clear from these reports that their author was tracking very precisely where the king and his entourage were. On 15 May, the report from Danzig cited a letter from Vilna dated 29 April (N.S.?), relating that following a festive banquet mounted in his honor by the Grand Marshal of Lithuania, Prince Alexander Radziwiłł, the king had set out to return to Warsaw so as to be there for the celebration of Pentecost, but an attack of fever had forced him to return to Vilna. Two weeks later in an article datelined Danzig 29 May the newspaper reported his death in Merecz (today Merkinė in Lithuania), a town halfway between Vilna and Grodno.

Not surprisingly, the Hamburg paper's correspondents at least initially were less fully informed about events on the Commonwealth's southern and eastern frontiers. For the most part, the reports in January (transmitted through Kraków) about the Tatar danger are cryptic. One of the first specific reports relating to the Crimeans (in an article datelined Stettin, 27 January) concerned the Tatars and the Don Cossacks, and the fact that the Crimean khan had broken off negotiations with Moscow by refusing to accept the Kremlin's offer of the usual 'tribute'. The Russians were anticipating a major Tatar attack. Even though Khmelnytsky's rebellion had begun back in January when he escaped to the Zaporozhian *sich*, the first mention in the Hamburg paper of unrest among the Zaporozhians was in a report written in Danzig on 13 March. It attributed the revolt to a lack of Polish payments to them (a longstanding issue, but hardly the only cause) and indicated that the Polish frontier force commanded by the Field Crown Hetman Mikołaj Potocki had been dispatched against the Cossacks. Two weeks later, the Danzig report of 27 March told how the rebellion had grown and an attack on the Cossack camp by Potocki's forces had been repulsed with a loss of 400 men. This report, probably based on a dispatch Potocki had sent to the king, provided detail regarding which of the commanders were killed or wounded. There were no further reports during April, but the 8 May newsletter from Danzig, focusing mainly on the king's movements in Lithuania, con-

10. Reports about supranatural events were relatively rare in the regular newspapers by this time, although natural phenomena such as comets might be noted, usually simply with the qualification that only God might know their significance. See our discussion in Chapters 20 and 21.

tained a single sentence about how the Cossacks were now joining forces with the Tatars across the Dnepr, news that was confirmed in a separate report from Stettin, 4/14 May. A week later, the news from Danzig seemed to be optimistic that Potocki's force could deal with the situation. If anything, the Poles were more concerned about reports of Muscovite troop movements, which they hoped to forestall through negotiation.[11]

But the Danzig report of 29 May, while dominated by the detailed news of King Władysław's death and the immediate responses to it, included at the end information about the Cossacks' defeat of the army commanded by Potocki's son. The details were vague (the location was given as the 'lower Dnepr'), but the news made it clear that this was a total military disaster. It was the battle which took place at Zhovti Vody on 6/16 May, some six weeks before the news reached Hamburg. For the first time, in the following week's news, the Danzig report published in Hamburg suggested that the Cossack movement was a more complicated matter, involving the support of the Orthodox in Poland who were reacting against Jesuit persecution. Albeit somewhat garbled, a report out of Trachtenberg – Żmigród, in Polish Silesia – dated 18 June (presumably N.S.) described the extent of the Polish army's defeat at Korsun on 16/26 May, opening the way to Lublin and Kraków.[12] Even if the battle's location had been named, it would have been impossible for readers to know exactly where it had taken place.[13] A Danzig report dated 9/19 June was more accurate and was emphatic about how Poland was now in

11. Although the documents published in *PKK* 1, Sec. 3, are but a small and somewhat random sampling, they provide some idea of the internal communications in Poland regarding events at the battle front in the south. On 9 May (presumably N.S.), *pan* Grodziński, the governor of Kodak, wrote in desperation to Mikołaj Potocki for supplies and reinforcements after receiving a report from two musketeers who had been sent with supplies to a small fort at Kamennyi Zaton, only to find it had just been taken and its garrison massacred (ibid.: 22–24, No. 5).

12. A report from *pan* Czerny in Bila Tserkva to the Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński, written on the eve of the final disaster at Korsun, 25 May (N.S.), described the desperate situation of the Polish forces (*PKK* 1, Sec. 3: 25–26, No. 6). On 31 May, Adam Kysil, writing from his estate at Hushcha to the interim head of state, the archbishop of Gniezno, depicted in flowery prose the disaster that was now upon the Commonwealth following the battle of Korsun (ibid.: 27–42, No. 7). The letter is partially self-justification (claiming he had advised the late king not to send an army into the steppe against the Cossacks), partly advocacy of a number of important steps now needed, including shoring up the relations with Moscow and Istanbul. He notes that thanks to his own pleas, the tsar had sent a sizeable force down near Putivl. However, with the news of the Polish military disasters, the Russians elected not to engage in the fighting. The Cossacks now were in control of most of Ukraine, and many of the local population were joining in the uprising. A letter sent from one of the Lviv nobles to a courtier (in Warsaw?) on 4 June contained a quite detailed description of the events encompassed by the battles of Zhovti Vody and Korsun, colored with rhetorical flourishes of epithets against the rebels (ibid.: 51–58, No. 10). He noted that on the eve of the Korsun battle, Potocki had not had any report from the detachment commanded by his son for more than 20 days, suggesting that deep in the steppe in the middle of the conflict, communications were unreliable. While we have no indication here of when these letters would have been received, it seems safe to assume the attempt was made to deliver them expeditiously, keeping the key Polish commanders and members of the government informed.

13. The location and exact date of the battle are not indicated in this report though it seems certain the battle is the one at Korsun. The report states the Polish commander Mikołaj Potocki was beheaded and his son captured, whereas in fact Potocki père was captured and his son had been lost ten days earlier at Zhovti Vody (see Hrushevsky, 8: 408).

the worst crisis it had faced in over a century: everywhere was hue and cry about the danger. The report correctly summarized Cossack demands, among other things, that they be included in the registry which guaranteed them privileges and that the Orthodox have religious freedom. A deputation from them would present the demands at the upcoming Diet. Subsequent reports provided details of the mustering of forces in Poland. The first mention of Khmelnytsky by name was in a Danzig report of 1/11 July. Several of the demands he was presenting to the Poles were listed: freedom of religion, removal of the Jews, political and fiscal autonomy, and a substantial increase in the number of registered Cossacks.

To the degree that the news reports may have been based on dispatches from the battlefront, they often contained some detail. However, battlefront news everywhere in Europe tended to be limited by the narrow perspectives of participants or the understandable desire to put a positive spin on what actually happened. With the failure of negotiations following the Cossack victories in the spring campaigns, serious military confrontations resumed in late summer. *WZ* reported at the end of August that the Poles had been victorious in the vicinity of Starokostiantyniv on 16/26–18/28 July, although more sober assessments suggest the extent of the success was exaggerated by them (Hrushevsky, 8: 457–459). Over some weeks, reports in the newspaper would mention tensions between Khmelnytsky and one of his commanders, Maksym Kryvonis (Krziwanos, Krivonos), without really clarifying the fact that Khmelnytsky may have been trying to restrain his subordinate in order to encourage the Poles to negotiate. One of the rumors, which made it into the newspaper, was that he had arrested Kryvonis and had him shackled to a cannon in punishment.[14] Internal politics of the Cossack revolt seem to have been but vaguely understood by the writers of such reports, though this should hardly surprise us.

The last major battle in the 1648 campaign was at Pyliavtsi (today Pyliava, Ukraine) where – after a week or so of skirmishes – on 13 September O.S. the Cossack and Tatar force routed the Polish army, led by the most prominent of the Commonwealth's commanders, Crown Hetman Jeremi Wiśniowiecki, Władysław Dominik Zasławski, and Aleksander Koniecpolski, all of whom fled the disaster (Hrushevsky 8: 468–476). While the preliminaries and then the rout itself made it into the Hamburg press and the subsequent Cossack siege of Lviv was reported, details such as Wiśniowiecki's having abandoned the defense of Lviv in order to be present at the electoral parliament in Warsaw were omitted (e.g., *ODiZ* 1648/43, 46, 47).

The Cossacks and their allies continued to ravage the south and spread alarm in the heartland of the Commonwealth, where peasant unrest too had become a major concern. However, the news reports rarely went beyond generalizations about Cossack 'mu-

14. See *ODiZ* 1648/38, report from Stettin 31 August; 1648/41, report from Stettin 24 September. Cf. Hrushevsky (8: 452–453), who states the rumor also had been reported by the important official Adam Kysil, at the time a key figure in the negotiations. Yet Kryvonis seems to have continued his military undertakings, with or without Khmelnytsky's approval.

tiny' and the destruction of towns and crops. The eastern border regions of the Commonwealth (about which the Russians were able to obtain a great deal of information) were *terra incognita* for the Western newspapers which, however, devoted a great deal of attention to the Polish election. A regular reader of the Hamburg news out of Poland in this period would have been able to obtain just from its reports a reasonable sense of the conflicting interests going into the Diet, where the key issue was which of the brothers, Karol Ferdynand or Jan Kazimierz, would be elected. The news also highlighted the interest of the Transylvanian Prince György Rákóczi in winning the Polish throne for his son Zsigmund.[15] Karol Ferdynand's agreement on 4/14 November to support his brother, as well as the election on 7/17 and then the official proclamation on 10/20 were accurately reported in the Hamburg paper (*ODiZ* 1648/49). A florid description of the ceremonies (*Extract Schreibens* – apparently an eyewitness account), datelined Warsaw [10]/20 November, was printed the next week (*ODiZ* 1648/50). Khmelnytsky had favored the candidacy of Jan Kazimierz as most conducive to achieving a settlement in line with the Cossacks' demands. Negotiations followed: the newspaper reported precisely the arrival of Cossack emissaries and their reception by the new king (*ODiZ* 1648/51, 52). However, the reports about the Cossack demands seem to have understated the complexities that were going to lead again to a collapse of negotiations.[16]

14.3. The evidence in the *kuranty*

Given the absence of any regular supply of Western newspapers and presumed gaps in what has been preserved in the archives, the texts of the Russian *kuranty* for 1648 may provide a very incomplete picture of the news being obtained and translated in Moscow from Western newspapers. Nonetheless, before turning to the information Moscow was obtaining from its border commanders, it is worth looking at what the surviving (and published) *kuranty* in this period reveal. We might hypothesize from this limited evidence that the newspaper reports would have been less important than what the Russian government could learn from other sources.

On 1 May 1648 (O.S.), the Ambassadorial Chancery received from the Dutch merchant Davyd Mikolaev (David Nikolasz. Ruts) a copy of the Amsterdam-based *CID* 1648/12, which had been published on 21 March (N.S.), that is, somewhat over seven weeks prior to its translation in Moscow.[17] The paper contained but the briefest report relating to Po-

15. *ODiZ* 1648/47, report from Stettin dated 2 November.

16. For the Polish election, with an emphasis on the perspective and interests of the Cossacks, see Hrushevsky, 8: 500–509. As he notes, some of the demands were presented to the king orally, and there are different written versions of them. Whatever Khmelnytsky's personal proposals to the king may have been, the hardening of negotiating positions on both sides ultimately doomed the negotiations to failure (ibid.: 508–514).

17. V-K III: 179–182, No. 59.19–25. The issue of *CID* which was translated is so far available only through SLUB in Dresden and has not been added to the database in Delpher. The second half of this packet of news received from Ruts (ibid.: 182–184, No. 59.26–33) is translations from the Amsterdam newspaper *ODC* 1648/12, published on 17 March, none of the articles relating to the news out of Poland.

land, an item datelined Hamburg 14 March (N.S.) mentioning great Turkish and Tatar war preparations and the Poles' response for their defense.[18] It is hard to know exactly what the source was for the Dutch paper. Such news would have originated in Poland some time back in February. By the time it reached the Kremlin, via the circuitous route through Amsterdam, it must have been more than three months old and in any event was so vague as to be of little value.

German newspapers also were occasionally being received in Moscow in mid-1648, including ones published in Danzig. On 25 May 1648 the English merchant John Hebdon supplied the Ambassadorial Chancery with an issue of the Danzig-based *Particular Zeitung* (V-K III: 184, No. 60.42). On 28 July the Swedish resident (Karl Pomerening) handed over an issue of another printed newspaper, *Newe Wochentliche Zeitung auß Breßlaw vnd sonst anderen Orten des Römisch Reichs* 1648/22, presumably also published in Danzig.[19] In neither case was there news about the important events in Poland. In fact, newspaper publishers in Danzig had not been allowed to print any news from Poland and neighboring regions ever since 1619, presumably because the city council was eager to avoid conflicts with the Polish authorities, in case the royal court would feel it had been publicly offended.[20] This peculiar situation changed only after the Swedish-Polish war of 1656–1660 (Kranhold 1967: 100). However, news concerning Poland was at least occasionally printed in anonymous pamphlets, for instance, by David Friedrich Rhete, the publisher of the Danzig newspaper.[21]

18. The Dutch text (*CID* 1648/12, verso) reads: "De groote Preparatie van de Turcken ende Tartaren continueeren/ ende in Polen daer tegens alle preparatie gemaeckt warden." The Russian translation is: 'Pro turskoe i tatarskoe velikoe gotovlen'e eshche vesti est' i chto v Polshe protiv togo gotoviat zhe sia' (V-K III: 181, No. 59.23). The date of the news from Hamburg presumably had been converted to N.S. by the publisher, a practice that seems to have been common for the Dutch newspapers (see V-K VI/2: 45).

19. V-K III: 187, No. 61.146. According to Kranhold (1967: 79, 81), this paper was most likely a 'sister' of the other Danzig paper *Particular Zeitung*, published on Saturdays by one and the same publisher, Georg Rhete. Bogel and Blühm (vol. 1, 1972: 135–136; vol. 3, 1985: 90) follow Kranhold and place this newpaper in Danzig, albeit with a question mark: '[Danzig: Rhete?]'. In the system used by Deutsche Presseforschung in Bremen this paper has the signature Z91. The translations from these two Danzig issues are in V-K III: 184–189, Nos. 60 and 61; for the identification of the sources, see Maier 2006a: 457.

20. Karl Heinz Kranhold (1967; 83–108) discusses this peculiar phenomenon in great detail in his chapter devoted to the so-called 'Polnische Novellen' ('news from Poland', not necessarily in the Polish language, as other scholars have asserted). Of course the ban on publishing news out of Poland could not be enforced for the writers of the newsletters in Danzig which were the source for the articles in Hamburg newspapers.

21. See the title pages of three such pamphlets in Kranhold 1967: 277–279, Figs. 24–26 (from 1656–1657), examples of what he terms 'Polnische Novellen'. Our examination of imprints most likely produced by Rhete's press in Danzig (whether or not there is direct attribution to him or the city) suggests that very likely all three of these pamphlets came from his shop. While his No. 24 is not registered in VD 17, the one depicted in Fig. 25 is (VD17: 23:317688T). It contains three news items: Tauchel 29 Oct., Kaliß 21 Oct., Elbing 3 Nov.; the first two very clearly pro-Polish. The pamphlet depicted in Fig. 26 (VD17 1:087042E) seems to be very similar, and even though there is no place of publication, clearly is one of Rhete's imprints. The contents are very pro-Polish, the text at the end condemning the Swedish enemy. In his upbraiding the Danzig government in May of 1656 for their failure to support

On 19 July officials in Moscow recorded the translation of a letter which had been sent by a Riga German, 'Vol'mar Rotguzhan' (Wolmar Rothausen?), to a Dutchman in Pskov, one 'Iagan Fanstat' (Jan van Staden?).[22] Rotguzhan summarized news about a wide range of events, including brief mentions of a major Swedish victory (presumably the Battle of Zusmarshausen on 7/17 May) and the conclusion of the peace between the Dutch and Spanish (the first Treaty of Münster, which had been ratified on 15 May). There also was optimistic news from England about a possible peaceful settlement of the differences between King Charles I and his enemies. The bulk of the letter, however, was devoted to events in Poland: the death of King Władysław at Merecz (which had occurred on 20 May N.S.), with the indication that on his death bed the king had designated his brother Karol (Ferdynand) as his successor, although an electoral diet was yet to take place. Rotguzhan noted accurately that the archbishop of Gniezno was technically the head of the government during the interregnum. There was news of the battles against the Cossacks, whose rebellion was related to religious issues. The Zaporozhian Cossacks and their Tatar allies launched a surprise attack which did a considerable amount of damage. However, there was optimism that the Commonwealth armies would be able to drive them off. Apparently Rotguzhan had not received news of the military disasters at Zhovti Vody (16 May N.S.) and Korsun (26 May N.S.). It was expected – presumably wishful thinking – that 100,000 men would be raised to combat the rebellion. So there was much here of substance, albeit cast in a somewhat rosy light, which readers of the newspapers in Hamburg would already read in greater and more accurate detail by the

Sweden in the war against Poland, King Karl X Gustav mentioned insulting publications, presumably ones similar to these (see V-K V: 111, No. 29.32). In an effort to placate him, the Danzig authorities claimed to have sought out who published the offending works, which were confiscated and burned (ibid.: 113, No. 29.33–34). The Russian government in the 1650s was vigorously demanding the same satisfaction regarding what it claimed were insulting Polish imprints and in fact did not hesitate to mention them when explaining to other states its justification for going to war against Poland. See Sec. 15.5 and Jansson and Waugh 2023.

22. *AIuZR* 3: 231, No. 221. Iagan Fanstat presumably is the same individual who is mentioned in several other letters as Ian/Iagan van Staden. Those letters contain information he had received in Pskov from his merchant contacts in Riga and was forwarding to his correspondents in Moscow, among them David Mikolaev and Thomas de Swaen (see V-K III: 64, No. 18.103; 85, No. 24.21; 87, No. 24.33; 88, No. 24.35). It seems likely that one 'Eganko Fedorov fan Stade' is this same Jan van Staden. In June 1646 he sent directly to Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Naschokin a Dutch newspaper which he had received from his boss (*khoziain*), Vilim fan da Blok (V-K III: 115, No. 39.452). At the time it seems Van Staden was not in Pskov, but Ordin-Naschokin was, probably in connection with border delimitation issues to which he had been assigned. Presumably there is a great deal more news which was being received in Moscow out of Riga through Pskov and Novgorod (in yet unpublished archival documents). A hint of what might be found in such material is in the interrogation of a former soldier in the Polish army, a Lithuanian resident of Kraków, who decided to go to Riga and after some weeks there showed up at the Russian border in Neuhausen (Novgorodok, near Pechory) to offer his services to Moscow (see *AIuZR* 3: 9–10, App. No. 9). The Pskov *voevoda* sent him on to Moscow on 28 May, and Almaz Ivanov personally interrogated him in the Ambassadorial Chancery on 7 June. The soldier reported news of a major Swedish victory over the imperial forces (presumably the Battle of Zusmarshausen) and on the strengthening of Riga's defenses by the Swedes in the expectation of a Russian invasion. He had no significant news out of Lithuania but did note that in Poland at the minute there seemed to be no major political strife amongst the elite.

second half of June. Rotguzhan could have received his news either directly out of Poland or via German newspapers, which in either case would have had the news about the king's death earlier than any reports about the military disasters in the south.

Within five days after the receipt and translation of his letter, the Ambassadorial Chancery received more Western news reports. On 23 July, a Russian translation was made from a Swedish publication turned in by the Swedish resident Pomerening, containing a detailed account of the Battle of Zusmarshausen of 7/17 May and some additional items.[23] Pomerening had apparently received the news from a courier, Anders Fraas, who had arrived in Moscow on 20 July O.S. with a message from Queen Christina dated 31 May (Iakubov 1897: 421). In the report he wrote to Stockholm on 6 August, Pomerening noted that he had met with the officials in the chancery on 22 July to tell them about the queen's letter (ibid.: 424–425). It is reasonable to assume that was when he gave the Russians the material they translated on the following day. The Swedish imprint apparently had no news about events in Poland.

The archival scroll continues, starting on a new fol. 136, with translations from other Western news sources.[24] One of them is a report dated Danzig 3 May N.S. (fol. 140) concerning the intention of the king to meet the French Ambassador Vicomte d'Arpajou (in Russian 'de Garpauv').[25] The other translation with Polish news in the same archival scroll was a brief report from Danzig, 28 May N.S., about the death of King Władysław IV: 'Last Friday, on the 22nd of this month, the Polish king died from a severe fever (*ognevaia bolezn'*) in a small town called Merets (Merecz), fourteen miles from Vilna, on his way from Vilna to Warsaw.'[26] This news out of Poland – first via the letter

23. V-K III: 190–192, No. 62. It is possible that the original was the weekly newspaper that had been appearing in Stockholm since 1645, *Ordinarie Post Tijdender*, but there is no extant copy to check.

24. The translation of the 'Swedish brochure' obtained from Pomerening appears to occupy only fols. 129–fol. 135 in the archival file, the subsequent folios 136–145 containing translations most likely from two issues of the Danzig-based *Particular-Zeitung* (Z67 in Bogel and Bluhm's catalogue), a paper that usually had news from 'Alten Stettin' as its opening article. (There are no extant copies to check against this Russian translation.) Since the scroll containing this news is in the Swedish affairs files, it is reasonable to suppose that the sources for these translations may also have been provided by Pomerening, and at very least that they had not been received any earlier than the Swedish publication he handed over on, presumably, 22 July.

25. The news of the king's departure from Vilna and plan to meet the French Ambassador had been reported in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1648/19 (published 9 May) in an article datelined Stettin, 20 [/30] April, citing information received via the post from Danzig.

26. V-K III: 191, No. 62.133. The report of the king's death, communicated from Danzig on 29 (not 28) May, also appeared in the Leipzig *Wochentliche Zeitung* No. 97. As Kranhold (1967: 214–217) has shown from a textual comparison, the likely source for the Leipzig report was a newsletter written by Jochim Christoff Benckendorff, Brandenburg's resident in Danzig (?), who was also an informant of the Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna. The Stockholm archives contain a manuscript of Benckendorff's newsletter with the same date. Since the date of the king's death on 20 May was widely reported accurately, it is not clear why the translated report in the *kuranty* gives it as 22 May. In the meeting of the Swedish Riksråd of 5 June, Oxenstierna read a letter from Danzig with news of the king's death in Poland: "Sädan las Her R. Cancellern op ett nytt bref af Pels infrå Dantzigh om Kongens dödh uti Poland" (*SRP* 12: 336). The news seems to have been of little interest, as the meetings during the next weeks focused on other matters. On 23 June, a big packet of mail was recorded as having been re-

Rotguzhan wrote in Riga and then via the newspapers supplied, we think, by Pomerening – was already more than two months old by the time it was translated in Moscow.

The last of the *kuranty* translations from 1648 with Polish news was produced on 29 August and, like the item just discussed, had been preserved in Swedish affairs scrolls. There is no indication of who had provided the chancery with the original, which turns out to have been a copy of the Amsterdam *ODC* 1648/29 (published on 14 July N.S.). In it, an item datelined Vienna 22 June included information from Hungary, according to which either the senior Rákóczi or his eldest son was one of the candidates for obtaining the Polish crown, with Swedish support. However, the paper and the accurate Russian translation explicitly noted this news had not yet been confirmed.[27] In another newsletter (from Lübeck, 28 June) there was information which the paper specified as *false*, concerning a supposed Russian invasion of Swedish-held Ingria – apparently reported in a previous issue of the newspaper: 'That the Muscovites should have invaded [Swedish] Ingria is not true, and that they are planning to occupy the fortress of Memel [today Klaipeda] was also nothing other than rumor' (*ODC* 1648/29). That same report from Lübeck at the very end included a sentence with news from Poland: 'In Poland they do not know about the whereabouts of Prince Casamirus,' Jan Kazimierz, the future but not yet elected king.

Of greater import was an article in the same issue, reported on 30 June from the Elbe River ("Vande Elve-stroom"; i.e., 'from Hamburg'), summarizing news originally sent from Warsaw, Stettin and other cities regarding the unrest in Poland.[28] The report seems to have conflated the two Cossack victories of Zhovti Vody and Korsun and related that Prince Karol Ferdynand had donated a large sum of money for the raising of an army, a move clearly connected with the politics of the succession which were being discussed between the Commonwealth's field marshals and the archbishop of Gniezno in anticipation of the Diet (which was to open on 27 July). Much the same report about Karol Ferdynand's donation and the upcoming election was in an article from Stettin 16 June, published the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1648/27 (on 4 July) – however, with the significant difference that the original Stettin report in *ODiZ* stated the donation was explicitly with the *quid pro quo* that Jan Kazimierz was to be elected king. Details about the Cossack victories had appeared in the Hamburg paper in the previous week, so the article in the Dutch paper (*ODC*) was most likely based on printed newspapers from Hamburg, reporting events that had taken place in Poland in late May and early June. Whereas such news would have been known in Hamburg already within some short weeks, by the time the same news reached Moscow – via an Amsterdam newspaper

ceived, including a letter from Pelse in Danzig dated 23 May, one from Helmese in Riga dated 11 May, and one from Slifz in Danzig dated 22 May (ibid.: 353–354).

27. The Russian translation, in V-K III: 198–199, No. 64.163, is quite exact, not omitting any words from the original (rather adding some more).

28. The report from the Amsterdam paper was translated in its entirety in Moscow (see V-K III: 199, No. 64.164).

which had relied on one printed in Hamburg (!) – it was more than three months old.

14.4. The reports from the Muscovite border posts

It seems reasonable to conclude that news about events in the Commonwealth translated in Moscow from the Western press in 1648 would have been of rather limited value for the makers of Russian foreign policy, even if the newspapers' sources were generally reliable (and in dubious cases inaccurate rumor was explicitly corrected). On the other hand, there was a steady stream of information sent with little delay to Moscow by its border commanders (*voevody*), charged with collecting intelligence from various people who had arrived from the towns of the Commonwealth or crossed the sparsely inhabited steppes. The information varied in quality, and it also contained some unverified and inaccurate rumor. In a sense the reporting in the East was the reverse of that in the West: the strength of the reporting in Hamburg was its information about the Polish court, the king's death and the politics of the interregnum; the news on the events in the Ukrainian borderlands tended to be superficial, at best. In contrast, what Muscovy could learn of court politics in Poland through its border commandants was rather limited, quite a bit of it demonstrably wild rumor. However, the Kremlin was apparently much better served when it came to news about the events especially in the eastern (trans-Dnepr) territories of the Commonwealth, areas from which little news ever made it into the Western press. These were, after all, the regions of greatest interest both for the immediate concerns over border security and because events there might draw Moscow into a major conflict that it would prefer to avoid.

In his pioneering overview of the intelligence value of the military governors' reports, Nikolai Ogloblin (1885: 367–370) suggested a gradation in their accuracy and value depending on the identity of the people who related the news to the Muscovite officials. Without exception, those who came across the border into Muscovy (or were deliberately sent over it to gather intelligence) reported in the nearest garrison town, whose commandant would forward to Moscow the record of the oral interview, sometimes additional written documents or even send the reporting individual. Generally a report was written on the same day the news was received; however, that did not necessarily mean it was sent off immediately. Since there was no regular postal service, couriers were used, and the transit times could vary considerably. Ogloblin felt that the most reliable information was that reported by merchants, who would generally have been experienced observers with a professional interest in being well informed and no particular reason to tell anything other than the facts as they had learned them. They would have had good connections among their colleagues and a decent idea of what would be important for the Muscovite government to know. In descending order of reliability were reports received from escaped captives (especially those long resident in captivity might have a lot of worthwhile information), spies (the more experienced ones might be of real value, although their reports might be skewed in the expectation of material reward), and finally refugees or immigrants, whose reports might be shaped to curry favor.

Clearly these distinctions are not ironclad and Ogloblin's judgments may be disputed, but his classification is worth keeping in mind as we assess the documentary evidence. One consideration which may apply to any of the informants is their ethnic or religious affiliation. It seems more likely that spies dispatched by the commandants would be Orthodox and might seek out fellow Orthodox and – in the territories where they were the main population – Lithuanians. The commanders also received letters from their counterparts or from other officials involved in negotiations that might relate to border issues. As with the information transmitted orally in interrogations, such written evidence could not necessarily be accepted on face value but for confirmation would have to be compared with evidence obtained from multiple sources.

The analysis here is based on an extensive set of published documents, albeit one that by no means should be deemed complete.[29] Even if the body of evidence might be enlarged with more material from the archives, this selection from the published record is more than sufficient to demonstrate the importance of the reports submitted by the border commanders. In most cases, since the news pertained to foreign affairs, the reports were sent directly to the Ambassadorial Chancery (*Posol'skii prikaz*), although copies then would be provided to the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*). On receiving the reports, the Ambassadorial Chancery would communicate them to the tsar and the Boyar Council. The annotations on the documents specify when they were received in Moscow and who brought them. Frequently following the annotation about the news having been read to the tsar and boyars there would be an indication of what the tsar had decided after hearing the news. Unlike in Sweden, where the protocols of the Riksråd include a record of the actual discussions among monarch and ministers, the Muscovite evidence is more limited: the annotations summarize decisions made or decrees issued, not any discussion that preceded them. However, we thus at least have evidence about what news was reported at the highest level of government. And even if we may lack copies of the original decrees which followed, verbatim quotations from them may be found in subsequent reports from the commandants who had received them.

The reports we have examined for 1648 come mainly from the first eight months, with gaps and only a few documents from September through December. The greatest frequency of reporting was for May, June and July, the peak coming in June (18 reports).

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29. We have relied here on the documents in *AIuZR* 3 and in *AMG* 2. Many of those documents were republished (apparently from the archival manuscripts) in *VUR* 2, where there is as well some important, previously unpublished material. There are other published documentary collections pertaining to the events in Ukraine in this period, in which there surely is additional evidence which may be consulted. For the discussion here, we have focused only on the documents with news of particular relevance to the Cossack uprising and Poland. Many documents also deal with cross-border issues of local significance, such as immigration or internal affairs. We have not attempted to include material from Voronezh, where the focus was on the Don and lower Volga regions and relations with the Don Cossacks.

The following Table 14.1 illustrates the distribution of the nearly four dozen reports by point of origin.

TABLE 14.1. Distribution of reports by border commanders, with an indication of the transit time from their locations to Moscow.

Point of origin	Number of reports	Transit time to Moscow
Belgorod	5	8 to 26 days, median 14
Briansk	3	9, 6 and 20 days
Iablonov	2	once 11 days, once uncertain
Khotmyzhsk	8	5 times in 10 days, twice in 18, 1 uncertain
Putivl	12	from 8 to 20 days; 4 times in 9 days
Sevsk	9	from 5 to 22 days; half in 8 days or less
Trubchevsk	2	11 and 13 days
Velikie Luki	3	twice 9 days, once 7 days
Viaz'ma	3	twice 3 days, once 2 days

Some of the towns (Viaz'ma, Briansk, Putivl) were important for their location on the routes connecting to particularly important towns on the other side of the border. Trubchevsk had come under Muscovite control only recently in one of the border adjustments to the earlier treaty settlement – despite the opposition of some of the Lithuanian magnates.[30] Sevsk and Putivl were of particular importance as military command centers. The high number of reports from Khotmyzhsk may be a reflection of the diligence of its commandant, but it can also be explained by the fact that this fortress anchored the western end of the Belgorod defensive line, where it abutted with the international border between Muscovy and the Commonwealth.[31]

Lacking direct contacts with the Polish court, the ordinary informants of the Muscovite officials who reported about the end of King Władysław's reign seem to have relied heavily on unverified and often quite erroneous rumor.[32] It is not as though there was

30. For details, see Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 124; Sysyn 1985: 133–134.

31. Later in the seventeenth century, after Left-Bank Ukraine and Kiev had come under Moscow's control, Sevsk became the major staging point for operations in the south; communications between Kiev and Moscow passed through the town. Belgorod was the most important node for operations relating to the Crimea; the regular exchange of envoys between the Crimea and the Russia took place south of it, at Valuiki (Cyrillic: Валуйки).

32. There is an intriguing possibility that in 1646, perhaps in conjunction with a major Russian diplomatic mission to Poland, the Kremlin had received a proposal from a person resident in Warsaw that he serve as an intelligencer for the Russian government; see the manuscript inventory for RGADA, f. 79 (Polish Affairs), *Opis'* 1, 1646, fol. 155^{v}, No. 11, listed under April – May 1646: 'Translations of Polish letters received from Warsaw from the correspondent Iakov Sidovskii concerning Polish news and his loyal and diligent services to the Russian state and concerning the payment to him of the reward (*zhalovan'ia*) which he earned.' Conceivably the two privileges issued by King Władysław on 18 April and 18 May (which are in No. 10 of the file) are documents this Sidovskii had sent. It would be interesting to learn from the yet unpublished archival files whether he was 'hired' and continued to send information. There may be a parallel here to the efforts by Laurentius Grelle (who wrote to Russia under the pseudonym 'Justus Filimonatus') to be hired as Moscow's intelligencer in the Baltic region (see above, Ch. 11).

a total absence of better informed individuals with whom the border commanders had contacts. The well-connected palatine of Kiev, Adam Kysil, from a prominent Orthodox Volhynian family, had a lengthy record of service in the Commonwealth, among other things having become "an expert on diplomacy with Muscovy" and establishing personal relations with many Muscovite officials (Sysyn 1985: 77). He was a confidant of the king and an ally of the Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński, who was supporting Władysław's goal of establishing an alliance with Muscovy in order to wage war against the Turks and Tatars – in the face of opposition from most of the Polish and Lithuanian magnates. By the second half of the 1640s, Kysil was an acknowledged leader of the Orthodox Ukrainians, who had a great deal to gain by supporting the king's foreign-policy goals. Chosen to head the Polish mission to Moscow in 1647, Kysil was pursuing the king's policy despite the fact that this ran contrary to the instructions he had from the Diet. The mission failed due to wrangling over titulature and the fact that the Russians were more interested in negotiations for adjustments of border issues (there was a serious problem with runaways) than in launching a war in the south. In fact, they had separately negotiated a peace treaty with the Crimeans. Once back home Kysil continued to agitate for joint military operations with the Russians, even though the agreement in Moscow about reaffirming the peace treaty between the Commonwealth and Muscovy contained only a carefully worded defensive alliance and the explicit indication that neither party was to provoke the Tatars or Turks.[33]

Much of his correspondence was addressed to Prince Iurii Dolgorukii, the *voevoda* in Putivl, who forwarded the letters to Moscow and received instructions about how to reply. Kysil wrote about a planned Tatar invasion that had been headed off by Polish forces and about how the Ottoman sultan was forbidding the Tatars to provoke a war with either the Commonwealth or Muscovy (since the Ottomans were now engaged in their war against the Venetians in the Mediterranean). One of Kysil's letters, which Dolgorukii had received in mid-February, contained detailed numbers of the various military regiments which constituted the Commonwealth's forces, the suggestion from this presumably being that the situation had arrived when a joint attack on the Crimea might be expected to put an end to the Tatar threat.[34] It is difficult to know how much of what

33. See Sysyn 1985: 135–139. Kysil summarized the terms of the alliance in a letter he wrote to the Putivl *voevoda* Iurii Dolgorukii on 26 February N.S., in which he was still pushing the idea of close military cooperation (*AIuZR* 3: 127–128, No. 133).

34. For Kysil's correspondence and the cover letters forwarding it to Moscow during January through March see *AIuZR* 3: Nos. 107, 111, 112, 124, 128, 133–136, 146, 149, 163, 164, 166, 182, and *AMG* 2: No. 316. It is of some interest to compare the two versions of what Dolgorukii reported when he wrote to Moscow on 19 February after receiving a letter from Kysil the previous day. Dolgorukii's original report (*AIuZR* 3: No. 146) was sent to the Ambassadorial Chancery (where it was received on 7 March). On it are annotations, addressed not to the issue of relations with the Tatars but rather concerning another matter: Kysil was in the process of sending to Moscow the grave marker that had been placed on the tomb of Tsar Vasilii Shuiskii, who had died in Poland after being taken there during the Time of Troubles. The officials in Moscow were arranging the accommodations for those bringing the grave marker. A copy of Dolgorukii's report was received in the *Razriadnyi prikaz* on 10 March

he was writing exaggerated the situation, although clearly this was not just dispassionate reporting but rather a conscious effort to prod the Russians into action.

Dolgorukii shared Kysil's letters with other border commanders, who then sought additional intelligence. On 29 January a Colonel Nikolai Zaretskii based in Hadiach (west of Belgorod on the Commonwealth side of the border) sent to Timofei Buturlin, the *voevoda* in Belgorod, news about the Tatar and Nogai incursions and solicited information about where they had gone after being driven off in the Poltava region (*AIuZR* 3: 114–115). Apparently this was the response Buturlin received on 1 February after sending an intelligence-gathering mission to Hadiach. In reporting this and sending the letter on to Moscow, Buturlin explained the chain of correspondence which had led to the mission to Haidach: news communicated originally by Kysil to *voevoda* Prince Iurii Dologorukii in Putivl had been sent through the commanders in Rylsk, then Volnov and finally Khotmyzhsk to Buturlin, who in turn sent a Cossack off to Hadiach with a letter to *pan* Stanisław Broniewski to try to ensure that the Tatars would not come into Muscovite territory undetected. Buturlin's report, addressed to Nazar Chistyi and Almaz Ivanov, the chief secretaries in the Ambassadorial Chancery, was received in Moscow on 26 February (ibid.: 117–118). The annotation on the document indicates that it simply was to be pasted into the scroll (the ongoing record of current documents). If it was not read to the tsar, possibly the reason was simply that the report out of Hadiach had little new in it.

A week earlier, Moscow had received a report from the *voevoda* in Khotmyzhsk, Prince Semen Bolkhovskii (written apparently at the end of January), about news brought by Lithuanian merchants concerning the preparations of Jeremi Wiśniowiecki to march against the Nogais and Tatars. Upon receiving that news, the Khotmyzhsk *voevoda* had sent off an intelligence-gathering mission, but it had not yet reported back. The report from Khotmyzhsk, received on 17 February, was read to the boyars.[35] On 26 February (presumably O.S.), Bolkhovskii, citing one of Kysil's letters to Dolgorukii in Putivl, wrote directly to Kysil requesting further news (*AIuZR* 3: 146–147).

The Crimean alliance with the Zaporozhians (about which more below) obviously tested the willingness of the Russian government to follow through on its commitment to the defensive alliance Kysil had negotiated in 1647. In early May 1648, there was a deluge of information reaching Moscow which made it clear the Crimeans were aggres-

(*AMG* 2: No. 316), with the annotation at the end that the same document was in the Ambassadorial Chancery, and with a further annotation about the decision made in response to the report. This copy contains a section with numerical details about the Polish forces which is not in Dolgorukii's original report. Most likely that information had been copied into the report from Kysil's original letter, which Dolgorukii had merely summarized. Presumably the *Razriadnyi prikaz* would have had a particular interest in such details, since it was responsible for the staffing of the Russian military.

35. *AMG* 2: 192. It is possible that the substance of this news related more to events that would affect the Don region, as several additional documents which follow in *AMG* would seem to suggest. The question of Nogai (as opposed to Crimean Tatar) involvement seems to have been of particular interest.

sively involved. In a long letter to Nikifor Pleshcheev, the *voevoda* in Putivl, on 1/11 May, Kysil laid out the justification for the Russians to send military aid in accordance with what had been agreed on in the treaty (ibid.: 188–190). While there is no notation specifying when that letter, undoubtedly forwarded to Moscow immediately, arrived there, we may assume it would have been received no later than a report the Belgorod *voevoda* Buturlin had written on 3 May regarding the Cossack and Tatar danger.[36] There is an annotation on Buturlin's report stating that the tsar, on hearing it read, issued an order to write to the king and to Kysil, evidence of the close attention the tsar was giving to the news. However, as subsequent documents demonstrate, in Moscow there was still no willingness to be drawn into the conflict in Ukraine.

14.5. The Russian government's intelligence regarding the death of King Władysław

The border correspondence increasingly was filled with news about the Cossack rebellion, which was intertwined with rumor and news about the king and then eventually accurate reports about his death. Before looking more closely at the news regarding the Cossacks, we shall first examine what was reported about King Władysław. Given the frequency of Kysil's exchanges across the border, it may seem somewhat surprising that he seems not to have been the one first to inform the Russians about the final weeks and death of Władysław. The explanation could well lie in a conscious desire not to communicate news that would undercut the goal of launching a successful anti-Tatar campaign.

As we have noted earlier, even back in December 1647 news reported to Hamburg about the king had focused on his illnesses and by mid-winter had included ominous concerns that his end might be near. The news also tracked his movements, where he had insisted on going to Vilna in Lithuania, but then, as reported in late April, had taken ill while headed back to Warsaw. The report of his death appeared in one of Hamburg newspapers on 13 June, less than a week later than the date when the tsar probably had first received the same news, albeit from a different source. On the whole, there is good reason to think the news about King Władysław's death as published in Hamburg was reasonably accurate, which then raises interesting questions about the obviously false reports reaching Moscow shortly before the king died.

The documents we have seen clearly present an incomplete record of the news received in the Kremlin regarding King Władysław in the period leading up to his death in May 1648. As early as 2 June, Almaz Ivanov, one of the two chief secretaries of the Ambassadorial Chancery, had sent to the *voevoda* in Briansk, Prince Nikifor Meshcherskii, the tsar's instruction that an intelligence mission be dispatched into Lithuania to

36. *AIuZR* 3: 190–191. Buturlin's report arrived in Moscow on 16 May. Urgent communication from Putivl in this period might take at most a week, as we know when its *voevoda* forwarded to Moscow a letter received from Jeremi Wiśniowiecki on 14 May. Wiśniowiecki's letter was sent directly to the Ambassadorial Chancery, and the cover letter from Pleshcheev was received in the *Razriadnyi prikaz* on 21 May (see *AMG* 2: No. 336).

learn by clandestine inquiry 'where the king is now and whether he has disagreements with the Dietine magnates and if so, regarding what, and what conflicts they have with the Cossacks.'[37] Meshcherskii received this order on 15 June, and the agents he promptly sent off to Starodub returned on the 18th with the news the king had died and his brother (Jan) Kazimierz had assumed the throne. Mescherskii's report to Moscow with this news and other important information, which will be discussed below, arrived in Moscow on the 23rd, days after news of the king's death had arrived via other channels.

It is possible from other documents to suggest what might have prompted sending the instruction on 2 June. There seems to have been a deluge of rumors about the king which may have reached Moscow prior to that date. Three reports, each from a different border commandant, arrived in Moscow on 6 June, transmitting essentially the same rumors (but with some different details). While the ultimate origin of the rumors is not specified, these reports provide interesting evidence about the paths of their transmission. The oldest of the news had been obtained in Pryluky (Priluka) on 12 May by an Istanbul Greek, Iurii (Georgios?) Konstantinov, who then had travelled across the border to Putivl, where he was interrogated on 21 May. The Greek reported he had heard that Mikołaj Potocki, the Polish field hetman who was commanding a force that was attempting to put down the Zaporozhian rebellion, had written to Jeremi Wiśniowiecki, asking for him to send help. As Potocki allegedly explained, news had been received that the king was about to arrive in Kiev with a force of 150,000 Poles and Lithuanians to attack Potocki and Wiśniowiecki for their having disobeyed royal orders. On this news, the Polish magnates and the Jews had fled from the Left Bank towns across the Dnepr. Pleshcheev, the Putivl *voevoda*, then added other information he had received about Potocki's campaign and the defeat at Zhovti Vody. Not yet knowing what might happen next, he ordered Putivl merchants heading across the border to gather additional news.

In Trubchevsk on 27 May, a minor noble (*syn boiarskii*), Iakov Bulatov, a serviceman based in Briansk, reported that in May (date not specified) he had been sent with a message to the local Polish commandant *pan* Pęczynski in Chernihiv. He met with him in Nizhen (Nizhyn, Nezhin, Nieżyn) on the road to Kiev southeast of Chernihiv, where the Pole told him there had been a council (*duma*) in Poland directed against the Lithuanians, in which the Poles hatched a plot to kill King Władysław. One of the Poles, a 'flag-bearer' (*chorąży*) from Rozhansk, east of Grodno, had warned the king, who then fled to Smolensk and was expected to arrive any day now by boat in Kiev. It was expected that once he arrived, there would be a major conflict between the Poles and Lithuanians. The news went on to describe (somewhat inaccurately) the Cossack defeat of Potocki's army at Zhovti Vody, this information transmitted prior to the outcome of the subsequent battle at Korsun. On receiving this news, the Trubchevsk *voevoda* sent off another *syn boiarskii*, Tit Tigniev, to Starodub (the nearest major city) and other towns to learn whether the information was true, but he had not yet returned.

37. *AIuZR* 3: 217; *AMG* 2: 228.

The third of the reports received in Moscow on 6 June was one sent on 28 May by the *voevoda* in Sevsk. He reported a deposition taken down from a townsman, who had been in Konotop and on his way back on the 27th, just short of the border in Hlukhiv (Glukhov), had heard additional news. The townsman, Ivashko Ignatov, had arrived at the merchant court (*gostinyi dvor*) in Sevsk, whose head (*golova*) Bezson Tonkoi reported his arrival to the local government office. So Tonkoi and an undersecretary were sent to interrogate Ignatov, specifically to ask him about news of what was now happening on the Commonwealth side of the border between the Poles and the Cossacks. Ignatov told them that about three weeks earlier, when in Konotop (on the route between Sevsk and Kiev) he had heard that Władysław was in Smolensk, but it was not known whether he was still there or had already arrived in Kiev. The word was that Potocki had solicited help from Wiśniowiecki, but the latter, advised by Kysil not to send it, had demurred, the result then being the defeat at Zhovti Vody. In this telling, the revolt headed by the Cossacks and Tatars directed against the Poles and Jews occurred because the Poles were aiming to rebel against the king. The latest news from Hlukhiv (obtained on 27 May) reported further progress of the Cossack forces, who allegedly were headed toward Kamenets. Wiśniowiecki had been in Pryluky but had fled across the Dnepr. The word was that the Lithuanians were not supporting the Poles.

Two days after this report had arrived in the Military Appointments Chancery and been read to the tsar (who ordered the sender to take precautions and that instructions be sent as well to Putivl for news), a report arrived from Semen Bolkhovskii, the *voevoda* in Khotmyzhsk, with information recorded in two separate depositions. One was from a *syn boiarskii*, Tit Chertov, who had been sent to Lithuania on 22 May and returned on the 27th with a letter from a local official, the *voit* of Hadiach. The news concerned Crimean attacks near Poltava and the fact that the Polish garrison at Hadiach had fled, thus abandoning the town to the Cossacks, who were reported to have achieved another major victory over the Poles and sent the captive Polish officers off to the king. A separate deposition, taken from townsmen who had been in Hadiach and had arrived at the Lithuanian court in Khotmyzhsk, indicated that Wiśniowiecki was still holed up in a monastery near Pryluky and that Potocki was in the town of Krylov beyond the Dnepr. These merchants also reported 'reliable news' that the king soon would arrive in Kiev, though for what purpose was not known. A *syn boiarskii* brought the news to Moscow, where he was paid five rubles by the *Razriad*, and the tsar ordered as well that a directive be sent to Khotmyzhsk to be on high alert (*zhit' s velikim berezhen'em*).

As Mykhailo Hrushevsky (8: 370–371, 392–394) wrote long ago, these reports about Władysław were among the rumors and legends that were already circulating in the borderlands regarding the origins of the Cossack rebellion. The region involved here encompasses areas where clearly there was local anger directed against the Polish magnates and the Jews. Some of the Cossacks who were joining the rebellion were from these areas. That there was resistance among the Polish and Lithuanian magnates against the

king's effort to mount a war against the Tatars and Turks was apparently well known. That he was actively prodding the Zaporozhians to provoke such a war seems likely, but much less probable was the possibility that he was actively conspiring with the Cossacks against his recalcitrant magnates. Whether the rumors originated with the Zaporozhian leader, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, is unclear, but he himself told a Muscovite courier, Grigorii Klimov (whom the Cossacks had intercepted on his way to Kiev with a letter to Kysil), that the Poles were responsible for the king's death, because the monarch had conspired with the Cossacks against them in support of Orthodoxy.[38] Khmelnytsky claimed to have seen proof in a letter the king had sent to his predecessor as hetman. Whether or not there is believable evidence of a plot against the king's life, the notion that he had fled to Smolensk and was on his way to Kiev is a myth.[39] Yes, he had gone to Lithuania, perhaps to shore up his support amongst the Lithuanian nobles, but at the time referred to in the reports the Russians received in early June, he was in fact deathly ill in a town on the road between Vilna and Grodno. That Wiśniowiecki was poised with an army to help Potocki in his campaign seems to have been the case, but news of the Cossack victories indeed led him to flee westwards instead. In the wake of the Cossack victories, Kysil would at least claim he had advised against Potocki's campaign in the region of Zaporizhia (Zaporozh'e), but whether he explicitly advised Wiśniowiecki not to help Potocki is uncertain.[40]

Exactly when and how the Kremlin first learned of the king's death is not indicated in the documents we have seen. The Russian government had heard about the disagreements between the king and the magnates and the rumors about a plot to kill him by 6 June, and it seems to have known of his death two days later. On 8 June, the tsar sent instructions to Viaz'ma that the officials there immediately send an intelligent person across the border to learn whether the king was alive or had died, and if so, when and in what circumstances and where he was buried.[41] Also it was important to learn where the queen now was and what was anticipated in Poland. If the king was still alive, what were his relations with the magnates, and which of them were the most powerful in the circumstances? Immediately on receiving this intelligence, the Viaz'ma officials were

38. *AIuZR* 3: 216, the deposition of Grigorii Klimov (a resident of Starodub) in the Ambassadorial Chancery on 16 June. The document does not state exactly when Klimov met with Khmelnytsky, but it obviously would have been after the battle of Zhovti Vody and probably after that at Korsun. So presumably the meeting occurred some time early in June. Khmelnytsky was already relating how the Cossacks had taken a lot of the Left-Bank territories that formerly had been under the control of Kysil, Potocki and Wiśniowiecki, and the hetman was directing Klimov to report to his superiors that the Cossacks now wanted to coordinate with Muscovite forces against the Poles (see the comments on Klimov's report in Hrushevsky, 8: 345, 371 n. 16, 393).

39. The rumor that the magnates plotted to poison the king and ultimately succeeded in doing so lived on (ibid.: 394, notes 89, 90).

40. Ibid.: 399.

41. *AIuZR* 3: 211–213. At very least, as the material here demonstrates, the news of the king's death had arrived in Moscow some weeks before two Polish couriers informed the tsar in an official communication from the Polish magnates. See the reference to that letter in the tsar's message to the Polish magnates in *AIuZR* 3, App. No. 21.

to send it to the secretary Almaz Ivanov at the Ambassadorial Chancery. In responding to this directive of 8 June, on the 10th the *voevody* reported information received from several sources. A peasant on a Viaz'ma estate of the boyar Nikita Ivanovich Romanov related on the 8th how he had been sent on 31 May to Dorogobuzh (about half way on the road to Smolensk, on the Lithuanian side of the border), where a Jewish tax collector told him that the king had died back in March and named in his place Waldemar (to whom an invitation was thus sent), explicitly excluding Jan Kazimierz from the succession. Additional information from this obviously unreliable source included news that the rebellious Cossacks had killed Jeremi Wiśniowiecki while seizing the cities he had controlled. Fearing now a war with Muscovy, the Poles and Lithuanians were strengthening the defenses of Smolensk and other cities. This much of the report may have had some substance, since rumors of a possible Muscovite invasion seem to have been widespread. Another of Romanov's peasants reported having heard similar news from a Lithuanian merchant from Mogilev on 4 June. After hearing this news and receiving the tsar's instructions, the Viaz'ma authorities dispatched a *syn boiarskii* to Dorogobuzh; he reported back on the 10th. Several of the local officials there confirmed that the king was dead but could not specify where or how he had died, where he was buried, and where now his queen was. They had heard that the king had designated his brother-in-law, the *kniaz' Anborskii* as his heir (this presumably would have been Philipp Wilhelm of Neuburg, Elector Palatine), but the magnates instead were supporting Waldemar – that is, the Danish prince who had been considered as a husband for Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich's daughter. The decision, of course, would be made by the Diet which was convening in Warsaw. A further report came from two Dorogobuzh peasants who had arrived in the Lithuanian Court in Viaz'ma, but they knew nothing beyond the fact the king had died and his widow was in Warsaw. Having received this still conflicting and inadequate information, the Viaz'ma authorities had sent a townsman to learn more. The Viaz'ma report, written on the 10th, arrived on 12 June in Moscow, where it was read to the tsar and boyars.

A day later, another report, sent on the 11th from Viaz'ma, arrived. While still somewhat vague on details, it contained none of the erroneous rumors about the date of the king's death or the possible connection with disaffected magnates (*AIuZR* 3, App. No. 10). The Viaz'ma *voevody* reported how on the 11th a Viaz'ma resident informed them that two days earlier he had been a guest in a village near the border, when a person attached to one of the Lithuanian magnates arrived with the news that the king had died 'on the eve of the feast of the Ascension, on Wednesday', but where was not known. The date as given here was accurate, since Ascension Day – a Thursday – fell on 21 May N.S. in 1648. A separate report, received on the same day from one of the patriarch's peasants who had been in Minsk in connection with collecting of a debt, included the same date and some additional information: the king (and his wife) had been in Vilna and he died while on the road some 15 *versty* out of town on the way to Warsaw. His body had been

taken to Warsaw. Both informants stated that there was some idea of inviting the Danish prince Waldemar to assume the throne. However, the Polish magnates apparently were opposed, and in any event the decision was to be made at the Diet. At the end of the Viaz'ma report was a brief mention of the Cossack victory over the Polish forces, the conflict, according to this report, concerning religion. The report from Viaz'ma was brought to Moscow by a musketeer; the annotation on the manuscript indicates it was read to the tsar and boyars.

While the transmission of news from the Vilna region via Viaz'ma was probably the most direct and fastest possible route for it to reach Moscow, a report from Sevsk about the king's death arrived at the Kremlin on the same day, 13 June. On 5/15 June, a Colonel Jerzy Poniatowski wrote from Novhorod-Siverskyi (Novgorod-Severskii) to the *voevoda* in Sevsk, who received his letter two days later, on 7 June (*AIuZR* 3: 204–205). In a rather flowery tribute, Poniatowski lamented the king's death and assured his counterpart of the intention to continue cooperation to combat the Cossack and Tatar danger. The original text of this letter (which contains a lot of West-Russian elements) does not correspond exactly to what ostensibly is the quotation from it, as reported by the Sevsk commandants to Moscow (ibid.: 205–207; *VUR* 2: 30–32). In the version of Poniatowski's letter received on the 7th, which they cite, the date of the king's death is indicated correctly as 20 May (N.S.; no date had been given in the original). Interrogation of his courier, a noble, 'Voitekh Krasovskii', confirmed the king's demise (some three weeks earlier). In his deposition, Krasovskii mentioned the fact that since the king's only son had died in the previous year, the succession was open. According to Krasovskii, the magnates did not want Jan Kazimierz to succeed; allegedly the Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński had written to Poniatowski about the desirability of the tsar's assuming the Polish throne and taking control of all the Left-Bank Ukrainian lands and Kiev. Krasovskii insisted that all the local elite in the Siversk region wanted to become subjects of a state that would unite Poland and Muscovy under the tsar's rule. The Sevsk officials made it clear in their report that they had sent a noncommittal response but affirmed that they would continue to exchange information relating to the Tatars and Cossack rebels. On receiving this news on the 13th, the tsar ordered that the Sevsk *voevody* send an intelligence mission across the border to learn the truth of all this news, and that the agent should carry out the mission secretly.

Thus, since Władysław had died on 10/20 May, the Kremlin had the news within a month – approximately the same amount of time it had taken for the news to be sent west out of Poland and printed in Hamburg. Whether the tsar and his advisers believed the first reports is another matter. As we can see in subsequent documents, they continued to solicit and receive information. Even once satisfied that Władysław indeed had died, tracking reports concerning succession to the Polish throne – a historic concern in Moscow – would continue to be essential. In the past, encouraged especially by Orthodox in Lithuania, Russian rulers had been candidates for the Polish throne. However,

the subsequent history here suggests that, based on the news which kept arriving from Poland during the interregnum, the tsar may have seen very clearly that his candidacy in 1648 would go nowhere. There is little evidence in the news about the electoral Diet that it was even seriously considered.

Muscovite documents contain additional information about the way the news of Władysław's death spread. On 17 June, the tsar and boyars heard a report sent on 9 June by Nikifor Pleshcheev, the *voevoda* in Putivl (*AIuZR* 3: 210–211). Much of it was devoted to a detailed account of the recent Cossack victories from Putivl merchants who had returned from across the Dnepr in Kostiantyniv (Starokostiantyniv/Konstantinov, located about halfway between Kiev and Lviv). A Chernihiv clerk (*pisar'*) who arrived with them in Putivl reported having learned of the king's death while in Lublin some six weeks earlier. The implication was that the unrest involving the Cossacks now was somehow a consequence of the king's death. Additional intelligence, focusing on the Cossack uprising, was obtained via a mission sent to Kostiantyniv by the local officials at Nedryhailiv (southeast of Konotop and east of Pryluky).

On 19 June, a report from the *voevoda* in Velikie Luki, not far from the northeastern border of Lithuania on the road to Pskov, arrived in Moscow (*AIuZR* 3: 213–214). On 4 June he had dispatched to Nevel and Ozerishche, just across the border, a merchant who then returned with intelligence on 11 June. Apart from relating, as had other reports, that in Lithuania there was some fear a Russian attack might be in the offing, the news provided some of the most detailed, if not necessarily accurate, information so far received concerning the king's death. The information, obtained in Ozerishche from 'a *szlachcic* Korsak and other Lithuanians', confirmed the king's death on 17 May at Merecz (the date here wrong, the location correct).[42] Even though the local sentiment was that (Jan) Kazimierz be elected, on his deathbed the king had expressed his preference that a candidate be found outside of the Commonwealth. The Diet would convene some time after St. Peter's Day (29 June N.S.), but it was not known where. Military preparations were being undertaken along the border in anticipation of a possible Muscovite attack. After hearing this report, the tsar ordered that instructions be sent to gather further and accurate intelligence. On the 20th an annotation was added that his order had been dispatched as well to Viaz'ma, the source of several recent reports, and Pskov, which was a central collecting point for cross-border communications.

For the history of the Cossack rebellion and the relations between Khmelnytsky and Moscow, of considerable interest is the hetman's letter to the tsar written on 8 June in Cherkasy (not far from Chyhyryn on the Dnepr), in which he summarized his recent victories over the Commonwealth forces. It is likely this letter was a follow-up to his

42. On 21 June, a letter addressed to the Velikie Luki *voevoda* dated on the 15th from Hieronym Korsak, a military lieutenant governor of Polotsk, arrived in Moscow (*AIuZR* 3: 214). The letter contained nothing about the king and succession issues but rather focused on matters of border security and rebels who might be violating it. It is possible the writer is the same Korsak mentioned in the intelligence report, but that he had already returned to Polotsk after the meeting in Ozerishche.

meeting with the Muscovite courier Grigorii Klimov recounted above. Khmelnytsky stated that he is ready to serve the tsar; he affirmed that intention in a letter on the same day addressed to Zamiatnia Leont'ev, the *voevoda* in Sevsk (*AIuZR* 3: 208), who then forwarded the letters to Moscow, where they arrived on 19 June. In part by way of explaining his offer to serve the Russians, Khmelnytsky mentioned the death of the king, about which he had learned from Prince Władysław Dominik Zasławski and from Adam Kysil.[43] Unlike in his conversation with Klimov, the hetman did not repeat the story that Władysław had been killed by the Poles. The argument here emphasized not so much Cossack grievances but rather, in order to appeal to the tsar, the need to mount a force to defend the Christian religion against its enemies. Khmelnytsky's letter seems to have 'crossed in the mail', as it were, with an intelligence mission Leont'ev had sent out on the 9th, which had gone as far as the village of Ostroh (today Ostroushky, specified in the source as a suburb of Novhorod-Siverskyi) and then returned two days later, reporting Cossack and Tatar news but with nothing about the death of the king (*AMG* 2: 224–225).

On 8 June, the *voevoda* in Trubchevsk, Nikifor Nashchokin, wrote a report which arrived in Moscow on 20 June.[44] In it he related the deposition taken from a priest who on 3 June had gone across the border to Pochep, where he heard from the local magnates – a *pan* Stankevich, a *pan* Moloshittsikov, and *voit* Karpach – and 'from many Lithuanians' that King Władysław had died 'only one week ago'.[45] The same *pan* Jan Stankevich came to Trubchevsk with a petition about a debt he claimed the priest owed. When interrogated, Stankevich stated there was an expectation on the Lithuanian side that the Russians would take advantage of the king's death to invade. He provided some detail, not all of it accurate, about Władysław's having taken ill in Vilna, leaving town to be treated at Kgrodtskoe/Grodtskoe, and dying at Novgrod/Novgorodok-polskii.[46] He

43. A Muscovite courier, sent on 7 June from Khotmyzhsk with a letter to Kysil and with instructions to learn the latest news about the Tatars and Nogais and other affairs, was present in Chyhyryn when a messenger arrived from Kysil to inform the hetman that the king had died and to urge the Cossacks to make peace with the Poles. The report erroneously indicated the king had been buried in Lublin. The king's brother Kazimierz was favored to succeed to the throne. This report, written in Khotmyzhsk on 23 June on the return of the messenger, also included news of the battle of Korsun, and a letter from Khmelnytsky addressed to the *voevoda* urging him to join in fighting the Poles. The packet with the letters reached Moscow on 10 July. The Khotmyzhsk *voevoda* had also sent copies of this information to Belgorod, and the *voevoda* there had forwarded the news along the Belgorod Line to Iablonov, whose *voevoda* dutifully then also sent it on to Moscow (see *AMG* 2, Nos. 355 and 358, the latter also in *VUR* 2, No. 24).

44. *AIuZR* 3: 208–210; *AMG* 2: 226–227.

45. The printed copies of the report in *AIuZR* and *AMG* differ in some details. The version in AMG 2: 227 states that those who supplied information in Pochep were pan Stankeevich, pan Moloshitskii, voit Karpach and 'other foreign individuals' (i.e., not Lithuanians). It is not clear whether the printings were based on the same original or rather were from the separate copies in the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery and Military Appointments Chancery. The nineteenth-century Russian editors of such documents are known to have 'Russianized' some of the originals if they contained non-Russian linguistic features, and, of course, proper names may not always have been clearly written. Presumably, Stankeevich/Stankevich would have been Stankiewicz in Polish.

46. Stankevich probably had in mind Navahrudak in today's Belarus, the site of a significant castle,

also reported that while the Poles wanted (Jan) Kazimierz as king, the Cossacks and Lithuanians – who were now collaborating – did not and were fighting to have Cossack privileges restored in accord with the previous agreement that had been reached with the king. There were yet more reports confirming the king's death and indicating that now in Pochep, Starodub and other towns measures were being taken to defend against expected Cossack attacks. At the end was a cryptic statement that the Polish and Lithuanian forces were fighting the 'Swedish *nemtsy*'. Apparently copies of the Trubchevsk report were sent directly both to Nazar Chistyi and Almaz Ivanov in the Ambassadorial Chancery and to the heads of the Military Appointments Chancery. The tsar's response on hearing the information was to send a directive to be on high alert.

The instructions sent on the 20th to Viaz'ma over the signature of Almaz Ivanov show clearly how the most recent news had been assimilated in Moscow.[47] Intelligence was to be obtained now on the circumstances of the king's death (clearly accepted as a fact), where it had occurred, and what was now anticipated about the succession – would his brother (Jan) Kazimierz succeed or would someone be elected from outside Poland and how soon. Information also was to be sought about the reasons for the Cossack rebellion, the identity of the Commonwealth's military leaders (the crown hetmen), and whether the 'Belorustsy' had joined the Cossacks.

In response to such orders, border commanders continued to send intelligence to Moscow. Even before the return of the four merchants sent as agents to Smolensk on 22 June in response to the instructions from Moscow, the Viaz'ma commandants reported news obtained from recent arrivals (*AIuZR* 3: 223–225). On 26 June, the boyars listened to a report sent from Velikie Luki with news obtained by a townsman dispatched with wares (presumably so he could pass as a merchant) to Nevel and other Lithuanian cities on the 15th (ibid.: 221–222). He returned on the 20th in the third hour of the day with the information learned in Nevel and Ozerishche from two nobles (*shliakhtichi*) and 'many other Lithuanians' that the king indeed had died on Ascension Day in Merecz. However, other Lithuanians said that Prince Wiśniowiecki had killed him, though the reason was unknown. His body, accompanied by his wife, had been taken to Warsaw, where it was embalmed but not yet buried. Allegedly his brother (Jan) Kazimierz was favored to assume the throne, although on his deathbed Władysław stated his preference was for his brother-in-law (the queen's brother – his name not known by the informants) to be invited from France. The war between the Cossacks and Poles continued; in Lithuania, cities were being fortified, but due to Lithuanian unwillingness to support the Poles, no troops were being sent to help them.

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and Grodno, but the former is not on the route the king would have traveled and at some point would have been known alternatively as Novgorodok-Litovskii. Grodno, on the other hand, is on the likely route from Vilna which would have passed through Merecz, the actual location where the king died.

47. *AIuZR* 3: 223–224 (instructions quoted in No. 212, a report from Viaz'ma, apparently written on 22 June, presumably O.S.). The annotation on the document specifies it was received in Moscow on 14 June, probably a misreading or misprint for 24 June.

Clearly myths and misinformation about the king's death continued to circulate well after the facts ought to have been known. A Zaporozhian who arrived at Vol'noe on 22 June wanting to enter Muscovite service provided garbled information on the origin of the Cossack revolt and news that the king was planning to come to Kiev in order to convert to Orthodoxy (*AMG* 2: 231). The Khotmyzhsk *voevoda* received news on 14 July from a captive who had been taken by the Tatars a couple of years earlier and had been in Zaporizhia with a Tatar mission coordinating with the Cossacks (ibid.: 231–232). This escaped captive related the rumor that the Poles had killed the king. The widespread belief in such rumors and the fact that so often they made it into the intelligence reports being forwarded to Moscow can be explained by the fact that the information was being obtained from Lithuanians or those sympathetic to the Lithuanians and Cossacks who had no love for the Poles and in noteworthy cases were leaders or supporters of the Cossack revolt. At least to a degree, the identity of those acquiring the news may confirm Ogloblin's observations about which informants tended to be most reliable. He probably underestimates the reliability of what many of the intelligence agents (that is, spies) reported. However, even the best informed and most objective of them, whose interlocutors in Lithuania were responsible officials, had no way really to distinguish fact from fiction – all they could do was relate what they had been told.

If one traces the routes taken by those who arrived on the Russian side of the border or were sent off into the Commonwealth to obtain intelligence, it is obvious that most of the information was coming from the towns of the Left Bank and from ones quite close to the Russian border. These were areas where the Cossack revolt had already gained adherents and from which the Poles and Jews had been expelled or simply fled.[48] As Hrushevsky (8: 440–442) has noted, apart from unconfirmed and misleading rumors, such reports provide evidence not found in other sources about how soon the rebellion had spread through the Left-Bank territories. For the Cossacks, to suggest that the king had actually supported their demands was important for gaining adherents and staking out a negotiating position that might eventually be incorporated into an advantageous peace settlement. Khmelnytsky was astute enough to know the value of using the rumors, even though it can be quite certain he was well enough informed to know when they had no substance.

The Muscovite authorities who received such information had good reason to want confirmation whether it was accurate, and – once the basic facts of the king's death were certain – to continue collecting news about the political situation in Poland, which naturally was going to complicate the election of a new king. We shall examine later how a mission sent to Warsaw in October was tasked with being sure to obtain all possible information concerning the election.

48. A partial list includes Dorogobuzh, Nevel, Ozerishche, Pochep, Starodub, Novhorod-Siverskyi, Hlukhiv, Konotop, Nizhen, Pryluky.

14.6. Reports of the first major Cossack victories

Whereas many reports about the Cossack rebellion are too vague to permit checking for their accuracy, the first two major Cossack victories, at Zhovti Vody and Korsun, are well documented and clearly attracted considerable attention. The dissemination of this news provides a good idea about how well the Muscovite government was informed concerning the upheavals in Ukraine and the Commonwealth.

Almost any report from the southern border regions was likely to include news about possible Tatar or Nogai attacks and events in the Ottoman Empire that might have a bearing on them. Information about the Cossack rebellion and the possibility they might provoke a conflict with the Tatars and Turks began to arrive in Moscow around the end of March or beginning of April, in a letter sent by Kysil, dated 28 March N.S., whose main focus was some of the ongoing border issues and the dispute which had arisen over the tsar's titulature.[49] Kysil informed the Putivl *voevoda* Prince Iurii Dolgorukii about Khmelnytsky's flight to Zaporizhia with a band of as many as 1,000 Cossacks. The Russian commandant expected that this force might coordinate with the Don Cossacks in launching a naval provocation against the Turks. Kysil's other letters from around this time suggested that there was no explicit news of impending Tatar attacks.

However, on 10 April, upon receipt of the news in Moscow, several boyars wrote to Kysil about a report the Russian ambassador in the Crimea had sent, suggesting that the situation was about to change (*AIuZR* 3: 180). On 5 March, the ambassador had learned from a captive about a Cossack proposal that the Tatars join with them in attacking Poland.[50] Military preparations were underway (involving also the Nogais). A famine in the Crimea had created a pressing need for the Tatars to raid in order to survive economically. The boyars asked Kysil to forward this news to the Polish court, hoping that the Poles might be able to persuade the Cossacks not to participate. A somewhat different version of this news, with some important additional detail about the actual numbers of Tatar forces, arrived in Moscow on 16 April, brought from Belgorod by a just-ransomed captive, Danilko Chicherin(ov), who had arrived at the border post on 7 April.[51] Chicherinov was first interrogated in Belgorod (his deposition was copied into the letter the *voevoda* had him carry to Moscow), and we can assume he was deposed again when he had arrived in the capital. His tale makes interesting reading for the drama of how he was captured, sold, then ransomed by the Russian ambassador and escorted north, only to be captured by Cossack 'bandits' before escaping to Belgorod. There is good rea-

49. *AIuZR* 3: 166–167. Kysil generally dated his letters very precisely according to the Gregorian calendar, in this case specifying 'leta Bozhogo narozhenia 1648, mesiatsa marta 28 dnia Rymskim chislom.'

50. Hrushevsky (8: 391–392) considers this information to have been accurate. The information obtained later in Poland by the courier Grigorii Kunakov, even though based on semi-legendary oral tales, contains some elements which also help to explain the Tatar decision to join with the Cossacks. For detail about Kunakov's reports see our Chapter 15.

51. *AMG* 2: 200–202; *VUR* 2: 19–21.

son to think that he was not inventing things, and what he reported about the Tatar preparations for a campaign was taken very seriously in Moscow. While in Bahçesaray, the Tatar capital, he had learned from his fellow captives (who knew Tatar) about the arrival of Zaporozhian envoys. The latter has asked the khan to send forces in support of the Cossack campaign against the Poles, and the khan had already sent a force of some 6,000.[52] There was famine and lack of fodder in the Crimea, which had been hit by the plague. This information presumably helped to explain the decision to send a raid north with the hope of obtaining booty and captives. Danilko Chicherinov's information was cited in the instruction issued by the tsar on 21 April: that all the border commanders be informed of the likelihood of a Tatar attack and undertake serious preparations to ward it off and keep people from being captured (*AMG* 2, 202–203). Such instructions were sent out the next day, April 22, at the same time that an order was issued to other military governors to be mustering the troops that would be sent down to the Belgorod line to bolster its forces (ibid.: 203–204). The Belgorod *voevoda*, Timofei Buturlin, was given especially stern instructions, under threat of punishment for disobedience, to respond immediately on news of any impending attack and to bring all the local population into the fortified city to protect them. Detailed instructions issued on 8 May to Prince Aleksei Ivanovich Buinosov-Rostovskii and to Stepan Mikhailovich Vel'iaminov, appointed to be the commandants in Iablonov on the Belgorod Line, convey a sense of urgency about the security of the southern frontier. The instructions emphasize the need for frequent and accurate communication of news and intelligence (*AMG* 2: 205–211).

While Moscow clearly was taking the news seriously, in his response on 24 April/4 May to the boyars' letter of 10 April, Kysil at least conveyed the impression he was confident the threat from the Cossacks and Tatars was going to be controlled (*AIuZR* 3: 184–185). Without providing details, he mentioned that the Commonwealth forces were already in the field, where they could head off the Tatars (although Moscow's military assistance still was desirable), and that only Khmelnytsky and some of the Zaporozhians had failed to confirm their allegiance to the king. Kysil even hoped things would soon be settled enough so he could leave for Warsaw to see the king. His letter arrived via Sevsk in Moscow on 9 May O.S., three days after the Polish army's disaster at Zhovti Vody and a week before the rout of the Polish forces at Korsun. If Kysil had been guardedly optimistic when he wrote his letter, within a few days the military situation had become dire, as he and other important magnates now informed the Muscovite commandants. In fact as early as 1 May (N.S.), writing from Krasnoe, the local *starosta* reported to Pleshcheev,

52. Novosel'skii (1948: 395) cites the unpublished reports in the Crimean Affairs files, in which the information coming from the Crimea made it clear that the Crimean khan was in fact deliberately disobeying orders from Istanbul that he send forces to the Ottomans to assist in their war against Venice. Apparently some of those attached to the mission in the Crimea returned to Moscow in April with additional information about the Tatar preparations for a campaign. See the report from Belgorod to Moscow dated 3 May, citing instructions from Moscow that referred to the news, *AIuZR* 3: 190–191. The Russian mission in the Crimea subsequently reported the return of the Tatars with the captives taken in the Battle of Korsun (Novosel'skii 1948: 395).

the *voevoda* in Putivl, the massing of a Tatar force near Chyhyryn and its coordination with Khmelnytsky's army (ibid.: 188). On 1/11 May, writing to Pleshcheev from Hoshcha (Goshcha, some 250 km west of Kiev), Kysil reported that when besieging the Cossacks at Zhovti Vody, the Commonwealth forces had come under attack by a large Tatar army on 2 May N.S., with the outcome of the battle not yet known. This news prompted Kysil again to call on the Russians to honor the terms of the defensive treaty and send military assistance. Pleshcheev obviously was being deluged with such reports, another one – written in Pryluky on 10 May (presumably N.S.) by Jeremi Wiśniowiecki – indicating that a force of some 40,000 had gathered, whose destination was not yet known (ibid.: 191). Pleshcheev forwarded a copy of Kysil's 1/11 May letter to the *voevoda* in Khotmyzhsk, who received it on the 14th O.S. (ibid.: 203–204) and sent Wiśniowiecki's letter on to Moscow, where it arrived on 21 May after both the key battles had taken place (*AMG* 2: 214). In Khotmyzhsk, the response was to send an intelligence mission back to Kysil to obtain further news about the Tatars (but no mention here of the rebellious Zaporozhians, possibly because they had not figured in the defensive alliance and its agreement about sharing military intelligence).

What may have been the earliest and largely accurate information received in Moscow about the battles of Zhovti Vody and Korsun arrived on 26 May in a report sent on 19 May by the commandants in Sevsk.[53] The intelligence was obtained from one Petrushka Vasil'ev, who some years earlier had been captured and taken to the Crimea and then had managed to escape from a nomad group that had gone up along the Dnepr in search of pasture, when locusts had devastated the fields in the Crimea. In the Commonwealth town of Pereiaslav (on the Left Bank southeast of Kiev), he learned of the gathering in Zaporizhia under Hetman Khmelnytsky of 'Cossacks and many independent Lithuanians', who then took the town of Kodak and killed the Poles. In response Crown Hetman Potocki sent his son with a force numbering some 4,000 against the Cossacks, who now had joined with Tatars and Nogais. Khmelnytsky's forces captured the Potocki regiments; a new agreement between the Tatars and Cossacks specified they would attack Polish towns and kill the Poles but leave the ordinary 'Belorussians' alone. Following on this, Potocki with a large force marched against the Cossacks and Tatars. As Vasil'ev was travelling on, he heard that the Cossacks and Tatars had besieged the crown hetman's forces. And when Vasil'ev arrived in Nizhen there was a rumor (*slukh*) that Khmelnytsky had taken Potocki and destroyed his army and that the Tatars – having defeated the Poles – were now heading for Muscovite territory, which would confirm what Vasil'ev had heard in the Crimea about the khan's plan to attack Muscovy with a large force. What was now a major internecine struggle had been provoked when Potocki had sent his troops against the Cossacks and Tatars, in the process destroying Chyhyryn, Kryliv, and other Cossack towns.

53. *VUR* 2: 21–22; *AMG* 2: 216–217. The publication of the text in *VUR* notes the report was received on 26 May, whereas the copy published in *AMG* says it had been received a day earlier. In the absence of other evidence, we assume that the 26th is the correct date.

In Vasil'ev's deposition, we obtain an excellent idea of how fast news might spread and along what routes. The distances here are very rough straight-line approximations; actual distances traveled on the ground would have been greater. The battle of Zhovti Vody on 6 May (O.S.) occurred on the other side of the Dnepr, approximately 160 km from Pereiaslav, where Vasil'ev heard the news. He was already in Pereiaslav when news had arrived there of the battle. He then travelled north some 80 km to Nizhen and heard there the rumor that may have been about the Battle of Korsun (16 May, some 130 km away; from Nizhen to Sevsk, where Vasil'ev was interrogated on 19 May, is another 100 km). Thus, the news of the first battle reached the closest Russian commandant two weeks after it had taken place, and the report about the second battle – unconfirmed, but the rumor obviously was true – would have had to travel almost unbelievably fast to arrive in Sevsk within but three days after it had occurred. From Sevsk to Moscow in a direct line is some 450 km (by road today, about 550 km). The report sent out of Sevsk on the 19th arrived in Moscow at the Military Appointments Chancery in a week and was immediately communicated to the tsar and the boyars. So the news about the combined Cossack-Tatar victory at Zhovti Vody travelled presumably more than 800 km in three weeks, and the first report about Korsun – some 100 km closer to Moscow – took only about ten days. The notation on the report indicates it had been brought by one Fedor Klimov, a resident of Starodub. Couriers for sending urgent messages to Moscow often were horsemen from various small cavalry detachments employed in the southern defenses, but we have no further information about Klimov and can merely suppose that he rode fast and without any significant break.

Other reports sent on to Moscow in late May included what seems to have been fairly accurate information about the events preceding and including the two significant battles. For example, the Belgorod *voevoda* Timofei Buturlin wrote about information he had received on 26 May (*AMG* 2: 218): a Pole who had arrived at one of the outposts near Belgorod on the 23rd knew about the battle at Zhovti Vody, provided statistics about the size of the Cossack and Tatar forces, and reported both the siege of the Polish force at Korsun and the fact Wiśniowiecki was supposed to be on his way with a relief force, though some of the Cossacks in his regiments were defecting to Khmelnytsky. Although this report reached Moscow rather quickly, on 2 June, the destruction of the Polish army at Korsun was already history. The report by the Sevsk commandants sent on 28 May (which arrived in Moscow on 6 June) was unequivocal in its description of the Cossack victory at Zhovti Vody, albeit perhaps not entirely accurate in detail, and seems to have been somewhat vague in its description of what apparently was the battle at Korsun (ibid.: 219–220). The source of the information was a townsman who had been in Konotop. His information about King Władysław clearly was wrong (see above). Of some interest was his report that Stefan Potocki and the son of Koniecpolski, a member of his force, had written to Jeremi Wiśniowiecki requesting help, but Wiśniowiecki – advised not to go by Kysil – had thus not come. At least in self-justification after the fact, as we

know from other documents, Kysil claimed he had opposed the disastrous campaign. The news obtained in Konotop indicated Wiśniowiecki had been in his town of Pryluky and from there had fled across the Dnepr to Poland. Since Pryluky and Konotop are not too distant from one another, and both on or near the main road between Sevsk and Kiev, there might have been some substance to this news.

How garbled accounts of the battles could be is evident in a report written on 8 June by Nikifor Nashchokin, the *voevoda* of Trubchevsk, which we have noted above in discussing the news of the king's death. On arriving in Trubchevsk on 3 June, a priest Ivan related how in Pochep he had learned from several of the local notables not only about the death of the king but also about the Cossacks' victories, in which the Zaporozhians were said to have captured and killed (Mikołaj) Potocki, (Jeremi) Wiśniowiecki, and (Aleksander) Koniecpolski. Also, the word was that they had captured the son of Wiśniowiecki and sold him to the Tatars.[54] Obviously much of this was deliberately misleading propaganda or wishful thinking regarding men who for Lithuanians were among the most hated of the Polish magnates. Koniecpolski apparently was not involved with the defeated armies, the elder Wiśniowiecki had turned around and retreated before ever arriving on the scene, and his son (later – in 1668 – to be elected king of Poland) likewise had fled. What we have here illustrates Jean-Noel Kapferer's (1992: 54, 60) general points regarding the origin and spread of rumors: "Rumors arise when information is scarce"; "All rumors are the product of fact and imagination"; "Rumors can also be provoked, their objectives varying from deliberate misinformation to a search for sensationalism."

In contrast to the report from Trubchevsk, information received in Putivl by Nikifor Pleshcheev was substantially more detailed and reliable. On 30 June, Lithuanian merchants were interrogated about the news they had learned in Nizhen three days earlier from individuals who had been at the camp of Mikołaj Potocki (*AMG* 2: 221–222). The report contains rather precise details about the campaign leading to the disaster at Zhovti Vody, one result being that a large Cossack force abandoned the Commonwealth and joined Khmelnytsky's army. The report traces the movement of the army led by the senior Potocki along with Kalinowski and Sieniawski to its destruction at Korsun on 16 May (the date of the battle accurately given). The victorious Cossacks then agreed on dividing up the captives with the Crimeans, and Khmelnytsky (obviously not yet having learned of Władysław's death) wrote off to the king about reaching a settlement that would restore Cossack privileges. Wiśniowiecki's movements are described in some detail too: he had marched from Pryluky to Pereiaslav where, on learning of the battle, he retreated post haste to Chernihiv (Chernigov), many of the Lithuanian and Cossack troops in his force deserting to Khmelnytsky. The Polish officials had fled from the Left-

54. The report provides only the surnames of the magnates, but their identities as indicated here seem to be quite certain. Erroneous rumors about Wiśniowiecki seem to have been quite common in the aftermath of the Cossack victories. A report obtained in Viaz'ma on 8 June stated that he had been killed (*AIuZR* 3: 212).

Bank towns, leaving them in the hands of the local merchants and peasants. The peasants were now joining Khmelnytsky's forces. Additional reports from soldiers and some Polish nobles who had fled in the direction of Putivl told of depredations by the Cossack rebels and thereby a possible threat to Putivl. The tsar and boyars heard this news on 7 June.

Such information from men who had been close to or involved in the action and could have talked with military couriers sent to obtain reinforcements might be detailed and precise. In contrast, what Pleshcheev learned some ten days later (9 June) from several Putivl merchants who had been in Kostiantyniv, some two hundred *versty* from the Dnepr – about half way between Kiev and Lviv – was surely less accurate.[55] There they heard from all the Lithuanians ('oto vsiakikh Litovskikh liudei') that Khmelnytsky had defeated a Polish force of some 7,000 men (an exaggeration) under Potocki's son, whom the Tatars took captive. In a second battle Khmelnytsky and his Tatar allies had captured the elder Potocki, Kalinowski, and Sieniawski. Potocki had died in captivity and his son had been executed, whereas Sieniawski was ransomed for 20,000 gold pieces and Kalinowski remained in captivity. Khmelnytsky now was in Bila Tserkva with some 12,000 troops, and an even larger Tatar force was nearby on the Right Bank. However, at the same time that Khmelnytsky was recruiting adherents on the Left Bank, he was warning the Left-Bank residents about the Tatar danger. Poles and Jews were being attacked and fleeing the Left-Bank cities, but in Poland no forces were being raised to oppose the rebellious army. A secretary from Chernihiv who had arrived in Putivl with the merchants had told them news he heard while in Lublin about the king's death and the upheavals, with the – erroneous – detail that Jeremi Wiśniowiecki had fled up the Dnepr with 4,000 men to Smolensk. Another report (from agents who had been sent off to Kostiantyniv) related that a force Khmelnytsky had sent to that city had killed one of the local commandants. Pleshcheev sent his report on to Moscow, where it arrived on 17 June and was read to the tsar and boyars.

Khmelnytsky's own letter addressed to the tsar from Cherkasy on 8 June, which arrived in Moscow on the 19th, reported both victories (*AIuZR* 3: 207–208).[56] He wrote

55. *AIuZR* 3: 210–211; *AMG* 2: 223–224; *VUR* 2: 37–39. Proximity to events would not necessarily mean accurate reporting, given the possibility of bias and propaganda. However, it seems safe to assume that those more distant from events might have limited knowledge – and perhaps less interest. This can be seen in the report sent from Viaz'ma (received in Moscow on 13 June), which had but a cryptic reference to the Cossack uprising and their having killed more than 7,000 Poles (*AIuZR* 3, App. No. 10).

56. For details about the campaign and the two battles, see Hrushevsky 8: 401–411. In his letter of 8 June, Khmelnytsky wrote that he had intercepted the tsar's courier carrying a message to Kysil. The courier was Grigorii Klimov of Starodub, possibly the brother of the Fedor Klimov who had been involved in courier service from Putivl. Grigorii Klimov reported in a deposition in the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow on 16 June how he had been intercepted by the Cossacks and interrogated by Khmelnytsky, who had read the tsar's letters to Kysil (*AIuZR* 3: 215–217). Somewhat curiously, when back in Moscow Klimov said nothing specific about the two Cossack victories but did provide quite a bit of information about what followed upon them with Khmelnytsky's detachments spreading out across Left-Bank Ukraine.

accurately that the Polish force, led by Commissioner Szemberg and the young Stefan Potocki, was totally defeated and its commanders captured at Zhovti Vody.[57] (Other information confirms that Stefan Potocki, captured and seriously wounded, soon died, and Szemberg may have been tortured and brutally executed by the Cossacks.) And then, reported Khmelnytsky, at Korsun, Mikołaj Potocki himself and the field hetman Marcin Kalinowski were among the captives in the hands of the Tatars. The Polish force 'was utterly destroyed.' As Hrushevsky (8: 403) wrote, the Poles had apparently treated the campaign 'as some kind of noblemen's outing.'

The evidence here demonstrates that starting as early as 26 May, and certainly no later than 7 June, the tsar and his advisers had learned rather precisely about the two Cossack victories, well before they heard the news from Khmelnytsky himself. Of course, they also were receiving a lot of inaccurate rumor, but presumably were in a position to sift from it any useful information. Surely the news of the military disasters reached the Polish government in Warsaw without undue delay (probably colored by an effort on the part of those reporting to diminish their own responsibility). However, understandably, the coverage of the event in the Western newspapers was cryptic, if more or less accurate. The Hamburg *ODiZ* 1648/24, published on 13 June, included in its article from Danzig 29 May a great deal pertaining to the king's death, but (on p. [2]) only one long sentence on the battle of Zhovti Vody, indicating the location accurately enough as "Rußland unten am Nieperstrom". The force led by Potocki's son had been entirely killed by the Cossacks and their Tatar allies. If no relief force would come soon – and such was not expected – all would be lost. The next report out of Danzig, dated 5 June and published on the 20th, included ominous news about the great danger now from the Cossacks, reinforced by 30,000 Tatars, who had totally defeated the Commonwealth army (a reference to the battle of Korsun?). All the Orthodox in 'Upper Poland' who had grievances were now joining the rebellion. *WZ App*. 1648/26 (published 1 July) included in a report from Trachtenberg 18 June a somewhat garbled account, apparently referring to the battle of Korsun and relating that Potocki had been beheaded and his son taken captive. The Cossack and Tatar army was on its way to Lublin, and a force of 40,000 Tatars was threatening Kraków. It seems likely here that the two Cossack victories had become conflated in the report in a way similar to what had occurred in at least one of the reports that made it to Moscow. Rumor, rather than eyewitness accuracy, appears to have been the source of the news. While for readers in Hamburg it probably sufficed simply to hear about the serious military situation in the southern part of the Commonwealth, for the policy makers in the Kremlin a much more precise accounting of the conflict on the other side of its western borders was critical. The Russian news and intelligence network clearly was able to provide it, even if mixed with erroneous and imagined reports that may have taxed the abilities of those who heard and read them in Moscow to discern

57. Stefan Potocki was the son of Mikołaj, the crown hetman, who is referred to in the document as *pan* Krakovskii, his title as the castellan of Kraków.

the truth. This meant that it was also imperative for the Kremlin to obtain, if possible, more detailed information from the Commonwealth and especially from the circles of government in Warsaw.

CHAPTER 15

News of the Commonwealth and the War: the Analytical Reports by the Courier Grigorii Kunakov

In normal circumstances on the death of a monarch, governments which had had friendly diplomatic exchanges with him would dispatch a letter of condolences with the wish that good relations continue. Russia's relations with Poland following the end of the Smolensk War had settled, and there had been frequent communication to adjust border issues peaceably. There had been exchanges in connection with the initiatives of King Władysław IV to try to draw Muscovy into an alliance against the Tatars. So a mission expressing condolences on the king's death was to be expected. However, its departure from Moscow was delayed, presumably not simply because of the uncertainty about the Polish succession and the outbreak of the Cossack rebellion.

What may seem like a rather muted response to the news coming in from the borders (primarily, be on high alert and obtain additional news) in part may be explained by the fact that Moscow itself was in crisis. Starting on 1 June, protests and then a major riot erupted, aimed by the mobs against some of the highest government officials on account of what was considered to be unbearable taxation, in particular a salt tax. The rioters killed a number of nobles and departmental secretaries, among them Nazar Chistyi, who was held responsible for the salt tax. He had been one of the two senior secretaries in the Ambassadorial Chancery receiving the news reports about events in the Commonwealth and Ukraine.[1] The unrest in Moscow spread to other Russian cities. The Swedish resident Pomerening, whose reports are among the best eyewitness accounts of the Moscow uprising, explained that a planned Russian embassy to Sweden had been delayed in part because of the riots.[2] We can assume other diplomatic initiatives such as one to Poland would also have been postponed for the same reason.

1. Mikhail Dmitriev Volosheninov, an experienced secretary who had been associated with the Ambassadorial Chancery since 1634, now joined Almaz Ivanov as the principal recipient of the news from the southern and western borders. Apparently Volosheninov had particular expertise on Poland. He had been involved in negotiating the Polianovka treaty at the end of the Smolensk War; in 1646, he was sent to Poland for its ratification. For a summary of his career see Demidova 2011: 123.

2. See Iakubov 1897: 417–425, especially Pomerening's letters dated 6 July and 6 August 1648. The Swedish residence in Moscow was burned by the rioters. The unrest made it impossible for Pomerening to send out his reports on his regular biweekly schedule, since no reliable courier was available.

In the period between roughly mid-June and the second half of August, reports about the spread and successes of the Cossack rebellion, such as those analyzed in the previous chapter, continued to arrive in the Kremlin. Khmelnytsky continued to intercept messages sent from Moscow to Kysil, and then would complain about what he saw as signals of Russian support for the Poles. When a group of monks arrived from Dorogobuzh at the border near Viaz'ma on 3 August, they told the local authorities – more or less accurately – about the Battle of Korsun and the Cossack occupation of much of the Left Bank, including the area around Starodub (*AIuZR* 3: 237–239). Sent on to Moscow, the monks were interrogated in the Ambassadorial Chancery on 22 August, where they provided additional news about the failure of the electoral Diet in Poland to agree on a candidate, since the magnates wanted neither of Władysław's brothers, and the deceased king had expressed a preference for a foreign candidate (ibid.: 239–240). The failure of the Diet intensified the political paralysis in Poland that prevented mounting any effective campaign against the Cossacks.

The apogee of Cossack success in the late summer was the decisive victory over the Polish army at Pyliavtsy on 11–13 September. It opened the way to Zbarazh, Lviv, Zamość, and central Poland.[3] The Commonwealth forces – led by Zasławski and Wiśniowiecki, who continued to feud over primacy – 'came forth in extraordinary luxury and ostentatiousness, which would long be recalled in reproach for such arrogance on the part of the nobles' (Hrushevsky, 8: 470). The result then was predictable: after some initial success, the poorly situated Polish camp was overwhelmed, the chief magnates managing to flee before the rest of the army was destroyed. Although now having to head off defections inspired by the huge amount of booty that was being distributed, within two weeks the victorious forces were besieging Lviv, which Wiśniowiecki was happy to abandon to its fate. After the Cossacks exacted a huge amount of tribute and plundered the countryside around Zamość at the end of November, there was a lull in the fighting, while Khmelnytsky began to negotiate with the newly elected King Jan Kazimierz.

The publication of the kinds of archival files we have been citing is fragmentary for the last months of 1648. This means it is difficult to know for certain when news of the last major campaigns in Ukraine arrived in Moscow. Two reports were read to the tsar on 1 November, in which there was news about the battle of Pyliavtsi. The more reliable of the two came from two artillerymen, who had been sent on an intelligence mission from Sevsk on 6 September. In Nizhen on 1 October, they were able to talk with Cossacks who had been wounded in the battle and returned to the Left Bank (*VUR* 2: 77–78). For the most part, what they related seems to have been accurate, including the information that Zasławski and Wiśniowiecki had fled. But there was nothing about the subsequent

3. For a detailed treatment of the late summer campaign, the Cossack victories and their aftermath, resulting in a truce that ended the Cossack siege of Zamość, see Hrushevsky, 8: 468–497. For those who may be mystified by the toponym Pyliavtsi, as Hrushevsky explains (p. 473), that is the form commonly used in the contemporary sources about the battle instead of the modern Pyliava or Pyliavka. The location of that village is on the river Pyliava, today known as the Ikva.

events. The Sevsk report with this news also included information obtained from another military man, who told the Russians that the inhabitants of the Left Bank and Kiev were all wanting to come under the tsar's suzerainty. The second of the reports, received in Moscow on 30 October, came from Briansk, where a musketeer and two peasants, sent off with goods in order to pose as merchants, returned on 11 October after visiting Pochep, Starodub, and neighboring towns – that is, in the territories somewhat farther removed from the main east-west routes to Kiev and the Left-Bank territories that were home to many of the Cossacks. The news was accurate enough about there having been a decisive Cossack victory, but mixed in was rumor – perhaps wishful thinking – that none other than Adam Kysil had been captured and tied to a cannon. In fact, although he had joined the Polish army not long before the battle (having failed to negotiate a truce with Khmelnytsky), as had the other Polish magnates, he managed to escape capture.[4] According to this report, Khmelnytsky wrote that while he now was headed on to Warsaw, his brother was to occupy the towns in the Starodub area. In response on hearing this information, the tsar simply ordered that the border commanders be vigilant and, as they learned news, forward it to Moscow.

15.1. Grigorii Kunakov's first mission to Poland

Presumably by late autumn, the government in Moscow had a reasonably accurate and detailed idea about the events in the Commonwealth. Hoping to avoid being drawn into the conflict over Ukraine, the tsar was anxious to reassure the government in Warsaw and persuade the Cossacks to accept a peaceful settlement, without waiting for the end of the interregnum. The tsar's letter, addressed to the Polish senators, opened with condolences on the death of the king and then focused on the desire of the Muscovite government that a peaceful settlement be reached with the Cossacks (*AIuZR* 3, App. No. 20). The mission to the Commonwealth was in a sense a low level one, the ostensible primary purpose being that the courier Grigorii Kunakov deliver the tsar's letter. At the time Kunakov held the rank of secretary (*d'iak*) in the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*) and had a long record of previous service in the Muscovite bureaucracy.[5] In one assignment in 1648, he had served under the important noble and *voevoda* Bogdan Matveevich Khitrovo at Atamar, a fort on the defensive line that was being strengthened on the eastern steppe frontier against nomad attacks.[6] His first assignment as a diplomatic courier to Poland was in November 1646, when he carried a letter from the tsar to King Władysław.[7] His two subsequent missions to the Commonwealth in 1649

4. Hrushevsky, 8: 475; Sysyn 1985: 158.

5. The most thorough treatment of Kunakov's career is Lukichev and Morozov 1994: 137–141. For his earliest service appointments see Demidova (2011: 303), although she misdates the likely year of his death. See also Jansson and Waugh 2023. During the final stages of its brief existence, Kunakov headed the *Zapisnoi prikaz*, the abortive effort under the Privy Chancery to write official history.

6. See *DR* 3: 102. Located east of Saransk, the capital today of the Republic of Mordovia, Atamar was built as part of the extension of the Belgorod defensive line in the direction of the Volga.

7. See Bantysh-Kamenskii 3: 125; *AIuZR* 3: 273 (No. 242). The as yet unpublished file for his mission

provide impressive and detailed testimony about his ability as an intelligencer. There is no evidence in his reports that he had to rely on a translator – it seems likely that he may have known Polish. In any event, he was not accompanied by a large staff.

The extant, damaged copy of a draft of Kunakov's instructions (lacking the beginning), finalized on 25 December 1648, directs him to fend off any Polish queries about military collaboration by indicating such was not in his competence and could be decided only in Moscow (*AIuZR* 3, App. No. 19). Were he to be intercepted en route by the Cossacks, he was to state that his assignment was focused on maintaining peace and that a separate mission would be sent to encourage the Cossacks to negotiate a settlement. The instructions contain material that had been drafted earlier, with blank spaces left to insert the name of the courier once he had been selected. There also were sections added specifically at the last minute. One of them was to be encrypted for secrecy, since it was deemed politically sensitive. Interestingly, more than a month after the Polish interregnum had ended with the election of Jan Kazimierz, the tsar's government had not yet learned the result. If indeed there still had been no decision, the secret instructions thus specified that Kunakov could listen to and encourage any sentiments that the tsar's candidacy for the Polish throne would be considered. The suggestion here seems to have been such a situation was somewhat unlikely, a conclusion that could have been reached in Moscow on the basis of the various earlier intelligence reports about the prospective candidates for the Polish throne. Even though Moscow had been receiving 'invitations' from Cossacks and Lithuanians to assume rule over them, it is likely that the Kremlin was not yet entertaining seriously such expressions of loyalty. Kunakov's instructions also included a section about what he should do if approached by individuals whom the Russians considered to be traitors.

The section of the instructions regarding intelligence gathering was added presumably at the last minute and thus was not simply a cutting and pasting of standard verbiage for envoys being sent abroad. At the top of the list was to learn as much as possible about the causes for the uprising in Ukraine, the current state of the conflict, which cities had been taken by the Cossacks, details about the battles and numbers of casualties on both sides. Intelligence was to be obtained about the Polish military leadership, the size of the army and the extent to which it included foreign mercenaries. Kunakov was to learn whether there were any initiatives toward a peaceful settlement. As far as the political situation in the Commonwealth was concerned, he was to find out whether the Polish clerical and lay senators were meeting and what their relationship was with the Lithuanians. Were the Lithuanians joining the Poles in fighting the Cossacks, and if not why? Had they agreed yet and elected a king, and if so, when would he be crowned, and what would he do about relations with the tsar? The instructions then came back to the Cossack problem. Where now are the Cossack forces, and are the Crimeans still there with them? Who are the commanders, and how many troops are there? Are there peace negotiations and if so

in 1646 is listed in the manuscript inventory of RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1646, fol. 157, No. 22.

on what terms? Is there diplomatic exchange with other states, and in particular, have the Poles turned to Sweden in order to obtain help against the Cossacks and Tatars? All this information was to be obtained clandestinely, written down precisely without any personal opinions added. Kunakov was to keep his record secure while on the road and – along with any letter from the Polish senators – hand it in at the Ambassadorial Chancery to the state secretaries Mikhail Volosheninov and Almaz Ivanov. Kunakov was supplied with a bundle of sables which could be used to pay informants.

Kunakov left Moscow on 29 December and was in Viaz'ma two days later. On the morning of 2 January he arrived across the border in Dorogobuzh, where he was provided with transport to Smolensk the following day. In Dorogobuzh he was able to learn from the local officials and his escort that the Polish election was over, Jan Kazimierz elected king on 8 December (N.S.).[8] The local Dorogobuzh commandant had been in Warsaw at the election and returned to his post on 24 December. He reported that there had been a conflict of opinion, with some supporting Karol Ferdynand, but ultimately, under the pressure of knowing that leadership was needed quickly to deal with the Cossack rising, the throne was settled on Jan Kazimierz. The Swedish envoys who were present (among many different foreign delegations) had supported that choice. The new king took an oath to reaffirm peaceful relations with both Moscow and Sweden. The coronation was set for January, with the expectation the king would initially send a letter to Moscow reporting his election and then, after the coronation, would send a full-fledged embassy. So much then, for the secret portion of Kunakov's instructions dealing with the possible candidacy of the tsar.

Kunakov's report on the Cossack revolt compressed a great deal, suggesting it had arisen simply because of a dispute between Khmelnytsky and Potocki, where the latter had seized the Cossack's estates and taken his family captive.[9] It also listed many cities now supposedly under Cossack control, described in general terms the depredations inflicted on the local populations, and referred to what must be the Battle of Korsun, the one detail being that Potocki and various army leaders had been taken off in captivity to the Crimea. Jeremi Wiśniowiecki was now the crown hetman. With the election over, a Diet would convene to consider how to raise a force to put down the Cossacks. Local defenses in Dorogobuzh and Smolensk were being strengthened out of fear of a possible Russian attack. Kunakov was not able to learn whether the new king was still in Warsaw or had already gone to Kraków, leaving open the question of where the courier could expect to find him. Before leaving Smolensk, Kunakov sent back to Viaz'ma the small de-

8. The date is wrong: the election had occurred on 7/17 November.

9. This seems to be an example of mixing fact and fiction. The vice-*starosta* of Chyhyryn, Daniel Czapliński, was apparently the person who had seized Khmelnytsky's estates and abused his family (Hrushevsky, 8: 381–383). In any event, to attribute the rising simply to personal grievances is a considerable oversimplification. Ludwik Kubala (1880: 197) took a rather dim view of the report from Dorogobuzh: 'Kunakov's relations are full of false news because he writes everything he was told; they could, however, serve to provide Moscow with an idea about public opinion.'

tachment which had accompanied him over the border; it was a Viaz'ma musketeer who then brought his initial intelligence report to Moscow on 8 January, where it was read to the tsar and boyars. Of course much of the report's content about events in Ukraine was too vague and dated to have been of value. There was little here to differentiate this report from the ones which commandants had been sending, based on intelligence obtained from short missions across the border to nearby towns.

Possibly the vagueness of that first report was deliberate, for fear it might be intercepted. Before he left Smolensk, Kunakov sent in cipher a much more detailed account, in which – while initially referring to religious disputes lying at the root of the rebellion – he elaborated on the story about Potocki's treatment of Khmelnytsky. Their sons had studied together in Kiev, exchanged threats, and Potocki's son arranged to have the younger Khmelnytsky waylaid, murdered, and the body cut to pieces. The elder Potocki then seized Khmelnytsky's wife and daughter (the implication being: took them into sexual slavery). After defeating the Polish forces, Khmelnytsky had the young Potocki – here named Peter – executed before his father's eyes as revenge. In a subsequent battle, the mercenary forces of the Commonwealth, led by *pan* Dominik (Zasławski), were defeated. A high-level delegation from the Commonwealth then agreed on a truce with Khmelnytsky 'in the current autumn' to last at least through the election. However, Wiśniowiecki, at the head of another army, violated the agreement and attacked the Cossacks, military engagements continuing until a week before Christmas. While it is difficult to sort out the truth of some of this (clearly there are some fictional exaggerations), the last part of the report, laying out several important negotiating demands which now were being presented to the new king by the Cossacks, would have been of particular interest. Kunakov managed on 9 January to have this coded report carried back to Viaz'ma with a *iamshchik* who had transported him; he had instructed the messenger to keep the coded text safe and hand it over to the Viaz'ma *voevoda*. The latter sent it on to Moscow where it arrived on the 14th.

This seems to have been the last report Kunakov was able to send for the duration of his mission. He arrived in Kraków on 2 February. For the rest of what he learned, the Kremlin had to await his return on 30 March 1649, when he filed his end-of-mission report (*stateinyi spisok*), reported orally to the tsar, and handed over the letters the king and the Polish senators had addressed to the Muscovite ruler.

The *stateinyi spisok* (*AIuZR* 3: 256–277, No. 242) illustrates well Muscovite diplomatic etiquette and what the modern observer might characterize as narrow obtuseness on the part of the Kremlin's envoys.[10] There was the usual Russian insistence that in a formal reception, the Polish dignitaries all rise and doff their hats when inquiring about the tsar's health. If, as Kunakov was told, the archbishop of Gniezno was too old and ill

10. Cf., however, Hennings 2016, whose book emphasizes the way in which court culture and diplomatic protocol in many states during the seventeenth century often meant that negotiators devoted what would seem to be an inordinate amount of time arguing over matters such as titulature and ceremonial procedure.

to stand and in any event normally received visitors while sitting, that was no excuse. He could be propped up by attendants… Of course, since it was impermissible that any other foreign diplomat be present, the Polish plan that the papal nuncio would attend was rejected out of hand. Confronted with the fact the Poles now had a king, but that the letter he carried was addressed only to the senators, Kunakov resisted the idea he should follow the king to Warsaw and take back to Moscow a letter from him addressed to the tsar: what he needed was a response from the senators and that alone. Nonetheless, he did travel to Warsaw on 9 February, even though he kept insisting he could not be received by the king. The Poles then threatened not to let him leave unless he would carry the king's letter and receive it directly from him. A torturous round of negotiations ensued regarding titulature, both sides citing precedent. Kunakov obviously had been supplied with information about exchanges with Poland going back at least to 1587 (ibid.: 270, 271). He even stated an opinion about where the archbishop of Gniezno's seal should be applied on the letter the Poles finally agreed to send to the tsar from the senators. Under protest, Kunakov agreed to a reception by the king. However, when the monarch stood and doffed his cap while asking about the tsar's health but failing to use all the tsar's titles, Kunakov protested. So the king stood again and read off the titles while repeating the ceremony. The Poles must have been glad to see Kunakov on his way. His intelligence report, in which he inserts observations about unrest and devastated towns encountered on his way to and from Russia, helps us to understand why the journey of an estimated 1150 km took more than three weeks. He left Warsaw on 3 March, was in Słuck on the 4th, Bełsk on the 9th, in Slonim and Nowogródek on the 11th, in Orsha on the 20th, and reached Viaz'ma on the 25th.

Even though it might seem Kunakov spent his month at the Polish court simply arguing over protocol, in fact he seems to have been very diligent about carrying out the intelligence assignment he had been given. He wrote up the information in a systematic, long narrative under several headings: 'On the Cossack War'; 'On the King's Election'; 'On the Coronation'; 'On the Traitors' (*AIuZR* 3: 277–307, No. 243), and also included chronologically organized entries for what he learned en route to and from the Polish capital. So, significant portions of the document are a remarkable effort to systematize into a narrative the information, no matter how accurate all of it was. He occasionally names who had provided specific news, but he also suggests in a general way that he must have obtained some of it from books which he is bringing back to Moscow.[11] The books relating to the interregnum, the election and the coronation likely are the ones listed in the inventory for the Moscow Polish affairs files for 1648 and 1649: a 'Ritual

11. 'And how after King Władysław the archbishop of Gniezno assumed royal authority (*zasedal na maestate korolevskom*) and was governing the kingdom together with the senators, and how the convocation was being carried out, and the election and the oath of the royal envoys, and the king's oath, and concerning the royal coronation, and about the post-coronation Diet and similar affairs – the courier [i.e., Kunakov] has brought to the Sovereign Tsar and Grand Prince Aleksei Mikhailovich of all Rus to Moscow books on all this' (*AIuZR* 3: 292).

followed for coronation of the Polish king'; a printed 'Diet (*konferentsiia general'naia*) of all Polish and Lithuanian ranks which took place in Warsaw, and the election diet of Polish King Jan Kazimierz there'; probably also the 'Translation of the oath taken by Polish King Jan Kazimierz at the time of his coronation'.[12] We have additional evidence about books he acquired and delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Their fate, to be discussed below, is an interesting supplement to what more commonly is known about the influx and translation of publications from Poland in Muscovy. A detailed analysis of Kunakov's intelligence report is impossible without extensive work in Polish collections. Short of undertaking such a study, we shall offer some preliminary observations about his report, his sources, and the value of what he accomplished.

First of all, apart from the books just mentioned, what were his sources? For the longer, more syncretic sections of the report he tells us very little beyond the fact that he consulted many individuals. For example, introducing his long description of the coronation, he says 'concerning it the courier [Kunakov] inquired by all means among many individuals who attended the coronation; what the courier was able to learn about the coronation ritual (*chin*) is in this composition (*zapiska*)' (*AIuZR* 3: 289–290). However, he also occasionally names highly placed officials. At one point where he is relating what he learned about the intention of the new king's government to send an embassy to Moscow – and, as it turned out, the problems that arose in determining who would be sent – he cites the fact he had discussed the subject privately (*vtaine*) with Kazimierz Montrymowicz (Montrimovich), who was a secretary of the Lithuanian chancery (ibid.: 270). Kunakov's ambassadorial report of the negotiations suggests that Montrymowicz was his main contact person. At one point they discussed some disputed matters of protocol in private and Montrymowicz showed him a letter 'in secret' (*tainym obychaem*), which was possible 'on account of previous acquaintance and brotherly friendship' (*po prezhnemu znakomstvu i po bratskoi druzhbe*). There are some other, generally vague

12. In the inventory for RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1648, fols. 161^{v}–162, the documents of scroll No. 49 pertaining to Kunakov's mission include: No. 11, his instructions, end-of-mission report, and the official letters he brought back (covering the dates from December 1648 through into March 1649); No. 12, a compilation of passages in earlier exchanges where the tsar's titles were improperly rendered; No. 13, the ritual of the coronation ceremony; No. 14, the printed account of the general diet and the election diet (listed under 16 July). Note that an election diet had been convened in summer but failed to reach a decision; so the one which finally succeeded was a new convocation in October and November. The same archival *opis'* (1649, fol. 163) lists as No. 2 for 1 January a translation of the oath the king took during the coronation ceremony. At the time the original inventory was compiled, the documents about Kunakov's mission and the three subsequent reports had been in a scroll No. 39, where the final item was a file on the arrival of a Polish courier back earlier in July 1648. The translation of the oath was in a scroll No. 40, following a collection of reports from border commandants and preceding a file about the reception of a Polish courier in April and May. So it is possible that the source for the translation of the king's oath arrived in Moscow via some as yet unspecified route. However, it seems most likely that the source was one of the books to which Kunakov referred, and the date of 1 January in the inventory derived from an internal date in the text. Assuming these documents are still in the archive (where the old scroll numbers do not necessarily correspond to the current archival shelf marks), it would be useful to compare them with Kunakov's report. For the identification of the books, see Jansson and Waugh 2023: 168, 177 n. 14.

indications that Kunakov was able to call on previous acquaintance to achieve what he wanted.

Another of the highly placed chancery officials with whom Kunakov met was a referendary (*referendarz*, a legal adviser to the king) Francyszek Isajkowski, who informed Kunakov orally about negotiations with the Cossacks in the context of a discussion about Polish relations with Muscovy (ibid.: 304–306). The *referendarz* stressed in this conversation that he was speaking freely 'out of friendship', not representing officially either the king or the senators. Of course, such claims could suggest no particular closeness or honesty but rather be a rhetorical device to persuade the listener that what was being related was true. Although less frequently mentioned, Marcin Starczewski – a church canon from Gniezno who was also a crown secretary and held the position of referendary – may have been one of Kunakov's important contacts.[13] Whether or not such officials supplied detailed documents is not indicated, but clearly Kunakov managed to obtain copies of official diplomatic documents (probably by bribing some functionary). He notes, for example, that he was able to obtain from the Crown Chancery 'by subterfuge' (*promyslom*) copies of the missives exchanged between the Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński and the Ottoman pasha of Silistria and between the king and the Crimean khan, and that he brought those documents back to Moscow.[14] A number of places in his report refer to specific documents which must have been deposited in the Crown Chancery, suggesting that Kunakov had some kind of regular access to such material.

Officials of lesser status who provided Kunakov with information included a royal bailiff (*komornik*) Zygmunt Sviatskii (Święcki?) in Warsaw, who told him that the haste to elect Jan Kazimierz was due to the belief that Muscovy was getting ready to attack Smolensk and was agreeing to support Khmelnytsky in return for obtaining a great deal of the Left-Bank lands (ibid.: 306). The alleged Muscovite preparations to attack Smolensk were reported as well by one of the individuals assigned to escort Kunakov back to Russia. Not all of the informants were government officials. Toward the end of the description of the election Diet, where he provided information about how King Jan Kazimierz had supposedly received support from a contingent of troops sent from Sweden, Kunakov notes that on 26 February a merchant, Ezuf Milchkov, arrived in Warsaw from Kraków and was staying in the same courtyard as he. Milchkov told him about the arrival of Swedish mercenaries from 'Prussian towns' on 17 February and that they were being lodged for two weeks in Kraków, whence they were to go on to Vilna (ibid.: 287). In Orsha, just to the west of Smolensk, on 20 March, Kunakov heard news from townsmen about attacks on the Orthodox by a Prince Lukomskii, who then had crossed the border

13. Marcin Starczewski is mentioned, for instance, in *AIuZR* 3: 285, but Kunakov does not say explicitly that he had received any news directly from him. For a short biography of Starczewski see Aleksandrowicz and Chłapowski 2003–2004.

14. *AIuZR* 3: 294. The documents themselves are published in ibid.: 244–245 as Nos. 235 and 236. The first item – No. 235 – contains the specific notation that Kunakov had delivered it in Moscow on 29 March 1649.

to Briansk before returning to Orsha and preparing to march south into the Siverian region to avenge the killing of his brother. It is hard to know how much of this may have been true or whether it was colored by Orthodox Lithuanian hostility to the Poles.

The opening section of Kunakov's report, 'On the Cossack War' (*O Cherkaskoi voine*), must have provided the Kremlin with the most comprehensive account of its origins and the events to the beginning of 1649. However, it is important to stress that much of this was history (not necessarily factual), not news, by the time Kunakov received it, and all of it was history by the time his report arrived in the hands of the Russian government. The starting point for the narrative is Khmelnytsky's personal history: his relations with the Polish magnates, the various personal affronts and attacks he suffered, and the fact that the late King Władysław had taken his side against his tormenters. As Hrushevsky – who studied the text carefully and compared it with a range of other sources – notes, the text relies on oral accounts in which much is popular Cossack mythology, while, on the other hand, some of this material surely is factual and provides unique evidence.[15] Some details may convey a sense of the actual causes for the rebellion but cannot be confirmed and may be merely contrived justifications. Władysław's alleged support for the Cossacks is surely exaggerated and his motives distorted in this telling, even if there is a kernel of truth in it. There are obvious rhetorical flourishes, where Cossacks in the Polish army sent to put down the rebellion mutinied, took the Poles captive and joined Khmelnytsky: 'And it is said Bohdan received them joyously, and many spoke with tears about the Christian faith. And it is said Bohdan Khmelnytsky ordered that the remaining Poles be beheaded, saying there is no reason for the enemies of God and persecutors of Christians to live!' (*AIuZR* 3: 280). Details in the story of how he negotiated Tatar support are suspect, even if it was true that a large Tatar contingent was part of his army at Zhovti Vody. In narrating the events around that battle, Kunakov cites Cossack sources (*po tem zhe Cherkaskim vestem*; ibid.: 281), confirming that such sources likely were the basis for the earlier part of his narrative. The account of the battle contains much precise – and probably accurate – detail, including the information that Potocki's son was taken captive but died two days later from his wounds. Similarly, the account about the battle at Korsun suggests an eyewitness source. The viewpoint then shifts to the Polish response with the meeting of the Diet in Warsaw to raise a new army and the measures that ensued. Fast forwarding to the battle of Pyliavtsi, Kunakov provides a colorful description of how Alexander Koniecpolski fled the field on foot, disguising himself in a peasant's clothing.[16] This section ends with an exchange of envoys between Khmelnytsky and the electoral Diet, the initial mission from Warsaw rebuffed by him with a request that a new mission be sent, headed by Adam Kysil. In response, Khmelnytsky sent new envoys who were received with great respect (*chest'*) by the senators. The official as-

15. See Hrushevsky, 8: 350, 360, 371 n. 14, and passim (see index).

16. *AIuZR*: 283. Hrushevsky (8: 475) repeats this story without comment, where it is but a small vignette appended to the more expansive accounts of the disaster based largely on Polish sources. In Kunakov's telling, there is little of real substance on the battle.

signed as their escort (*pristav*) was Zygmunt Sviatskii, who very likely was Kunakov's source for some of this information (ibid.: 284).

The next section of the report, on the election (*O olektsyi korolevskoi*), opens with a general statement about the venue and the dates of the deliberations from 6 October through 17 November (N.S.). There is considerable detail about the debates over the question of whether either Karol Ferdynand or Jan Kazimierz could in fact be considered, since both had taken holy orders, and once they had done so, some insisted, their decisions could not be reversed. The *referendarz* Marcin Starczewski cited the authority Paweł Piasecki, the bishop of Przemyśl, to the effect that Jan Kazimierz could not simply abandon the Jesuit order.[17] Starczewski then was bribed by Jan Kazimierz to withdraw his objection. According to Kunakov, Khmelnytsky wrote in support of Jan Kazimierz, with whom the Cossack leader felt he could negotiate a peace.[18] Cossack support for his candidacy, which offered the prospect of ending the war, may well have had some influence on the election outcome. The recruitment of Swedish support by Jan Kazimierz also may have been a factor: he had written off to Sweden, and Queen Christina apparently did send a regiment that camped near Warsaw. Complicating the political calculus was an allegation that Władysław had expressed a wish for the Transylvanian Prince Rákóczi to be elected, the latter offering as encouragement the promise of sending a large army at his own expense. The narrative concludes by telling how the two Polish candidates managed to reach an agreement so that Jan Kazimierz be elected, with Karol Ferdynand confirming his allegiance by taking an oath in the Church of St. John adjoining the royal castle in Warsaw. While clearly a lot of the give and take in the Diet never made it into this story, it nonetheless seems to convey the essence of the sides taken in the contentious discussions and the manner in which the election was finally settled. The information here about the Diet thus seems to correlate with that contained in the reports which made their way into the Western newspapers. As with the account about the Cossacks, it is likely that Kunakov's sources were largely oral, although it is also possible he drew details from a written account in one of the books he acquired.

After the report about the election, Kunakov shifts his focus to the ensuing negotiations with the Cossacks, pitting the new king, who seems sincerely to have been hoping for peace, against the magnates, who were allegedly intent on gaining revenge against the Cossacks for their betrayal and all the damage they had inflicted on the Commonwealth. The account about efforts at negotiation has been compressed and simplified for rhetorical purposes, building on the idea that the king, as opposed to the magnates, was

17. While Piasecki is best known for his *Chronica gestorum in Europa singularium*, published in Kraków in 1645 (with a second Kraków edition in 1648 and an Amsterdam edition in 1649), presumably the printed book to which Starczewski referred was his authoritative tract *Praxis Episcopalis*, whose most recent edition in Poland appeared in 1643 (see Estreicher 24: 232).

18. Hrushevsky (8: 500–506) provides a good description of the debates in the Diet and what can be established about Khmelnytsky's position on the candidates. Apparently, there is no explicit confirmation for Kunakov's statement that the hetman sent a written declaration to the Diet in favor of Jan Kazimierz, though there were at least rumors circulating regarding his support (ibid.: 504).

supporting the Cossack claims.[19] According to Kunakov, the king first sent an envoy with the mace of authority to confirm Khmelnytsky's position as hetman. However, there were disputes over the form of the king's accompanying letter, and the hetman threw the mace on the ground as a sign of his displeasure, demanding that the king sent an apology for the past treatment of the Cossacks. Then the account skips to an embassy headed by Adam Kysil, who – allegedly unbeknownst to the Senators but acting under the king's instructions – presented the mace and the other insignia of office.[20] When the senators learned of this, they insisted with incisive rhetoric that there could be no accommodation with the Cossacks. Kysil met with Khmelnytsky in Chyhyryn and other towns, where the hetman presented a list of ten demands: the restoration of Orthodox rights, a ban on the Uniate church in the specified territories, administrative and military spheres of control territorial control including de facto Cossack and Orthodox autonomy in the trans-Dnepr region and Kiev, where Jews would be forbidden. The negotiations in fact failed, the hetman denouncing the Poles in a bitter tirade. Kunakov did not include that outcome in his report.

The list of demands actually seems to correspond to ones documented from other sources.[21] The Hamburg *WZ* published somewhat cryptic reports about these negotiations as they were proceeding, probably based in the first instance on what Kysil was writing back to the king in Warsaw.[22] One of the reports included a list of four Cossack demands that the Diet was considering, their substance at least consistent with other versions of the negotiating points.[23] In the Hamburg newspaper version, the emphasis was on Cossack demands for genuinely autonomous status, something that was spelled out in a number of the articles reported by Kunakov. On 27 March (*ODiZ* 1649/13), in an article datelined Danzig 19 March, the Hamburg paper reported that the negotiations had failed completely. This news was printed just a few days before Kunakov arrived back in Moscow to file his own report concerning the negotiations. More than one of the news articles published in Hamburg also included information that Khmelnytsky was negotiating with the Turks and Muscovy for support to continue his war in Poland.

19. For a detailed analysis of the actual negotiations, see Hrushevsky, 8: 506–514, 529–543.

20. That the king sent the insignia without consulting the senators seems to be fact. Hrushevsky (8: 533) describes the public ceremony celebrating the occasion, as documented from other sources. For the diary on the Polish mission (in Polish with modern Russian translation) see *VUR* 2: 104–122 (No. 47).

21. In the diary of the mission kept by its secretary, there is a listing of five points presented by Kysil to Khmelnytsky as the basis for a possible agreement; see *VUR* 2: 111 (Polish), 120 (Russian translation). The substance of the first four of them corresponds closely to points 1–3 in the list presented by Kunakov; the fifth one is simply an indication that further negotiation would have to wait until spring.

22. See, for example, *ODiZ* 1649/9 (published 27 February), article datelined Stettin 15 February: "Von dem Bratzlawischen Woywoden Herrn Kielskel [*sic*] were die Nachricht einkommen […]" In some of the reports, the newspaper stated explicitly that there was conflicting information about the negotiations.

23. *ODiZ* 1649/8, report from Danzig, 12 February (the issue was published 20 February).

The Muscovite government generally was very interested in learning about the rituals of other courts, among them celebrations of events concerning a royal family, ambassadorial receptions, and coronations. The coronations in Poland undoubtedly occupied a special place, particularly since there were occasions on which the Russian ruler had pretensions of himself or one of his sons acceding to the Polish throne. So Kunakov's description, drawn as he tells readers from conversations he had with eyewitnesses to the event, was certainly deemed valuable in Moscow, even though the coronation had taken place some two and a half months prior to the receipt of this report. It is of some interest to contrast Kunakov's report about the coronation with a news item published in the German newspapers (at some length, compared to the ordinary articles they published). The Hamburg and Leipzig *Wochentliche Zeitungen*, which often printed similar articles, included the same lengthy formal description of the event, focusing on the chronology, the procession, the names of the dignitaries and where they were positioned, and the most important formalities regarding the conferring of the regalia.[24]

Kunakov's description of the event contains many of these formal elements but focuses in much more expansive detail on the rituals within the cathedral. Unlike the German reports, his contains quotations from some of the invocations and the formal speeches, and he seems to have been much more interested in describing religious ritual such as the anointing of the newly elected monarch. Regarding the ceremony the next day (18 January) at the Rathaus, dismissed by the German papers in a sentence, Kunakov describes the venue, the position of key attendees, and the largesse that was distributed. On the 19th, there was another gathering of the Diet, at which the king received the oaths of all the representatives of the provincial diets. So Kunakov's description really provides a more complete overview of the key ceremonies, even if he does not include as many names of the dignitaries as do the German newspapers. He leaves such detail, it seems, to the books on the election and coronation that he states he is bringing back to Moscow.

Clearly it was more important for him to shift the attention in his report to a description of the meeting of the Diet that extended through the end of January, since it took up key issues of foreign relations and the domestic crisis in Ukraine. The report then contains several pages describing the domestic and foreign politics, about which he had managed to obtain some of the diplomatic correspondence of the Chancellor Ossoliński with the Turks and Tatars. He describes the competition for the appointment to be crown hetman (the commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth armies) between Jeremi

24. On 8 February 1649 the Hamburg *WDoZ* 1649/6 published the description in an article datelined Kraków, 20 January, following two articles of normal length (from Lyon and Augsburg). The Leipzig paper devoted the entirety of its No. 25 to the report. There also is a separate with apparently the same text: *Eigend. und ausführliche Relation, Welcher gestalt Ihr Königl. Maj. zu Pohlen und Schweden Johannes Casimirus, Anno 1649 den 14 Januar. mit hochansehnlicher Pracht und Königlichen Ceremonien in die Stadt Crakau Ihren Einzug gehalten* [...] N.p., [1649] (presumably Danzig; on-line at https://cbdu.ijp.pan.pl/4810/). Estreicher (18: 429) lists another edition, published in Danzig by Georg Rhete's widow.

Wiśniowiecki and Władysław Dominik Zasławski, in which Wiśniowiecki emerged as the winner.[25] On 24 February, the Lithuanian Hetman Janusz Radziwiłł sent a report to the king which Kunakov apparently was able to see, since he provides details of its content on the military operations. While on the road returning to Moscow, Kunakov continued to obtain substantial information about Kysil's negotiations with Khmelnytsky. In Slonima and Nowogródek on 11 March (O.S.) he learned details of the shaky truce (well short of any real peace) that Kysil had finally managed to negotiate with the Cossacks on 22 February (N.S.) in Pereiaslav. As Kunakov reported, the truce involved more than just an agreement about no attacks by either side across a territorial line. However, it seems that to some extent, his information conflated what was actually agreed on with some of the as yet intractable demands Khmelnytsky presented if there were to be a real peace settlement.[26] After summarizing the agreement, Kunakov provided some details of the exchange between Khmelnytsky and Janusz Radziwiłł, whose actions had provoked particular ire on the part of the Cossack leader. Kunakov noted that the news of the truce had not yet arrived in Warsaw at the time he had departed from there.[27]

The final section of Kunakov's report, titled 'On the Traitors', opens with a detailed account about the fact that he had been approached by two men who apparently had fled into the Commonwealth and were now pleading their cases to return to Russia. While emphasizing that he was careful not to encourage them in any way, he was told some stories of probably questionable accuracy regarding their involvement with the Danish Prince Waldemar when he was in Moscow and then as part of the Muscovite detachment accompanying a Swedish embassy. All of this, of course, was at best ancient history by 1649. Another of the displaced Russians who approached Kunakov reported how he had

25. A report sent from Sevsk to Moscow on 21 February (received on 1 March) related that Wiśniowiecki had been named crown hetman, but with no suggestion of the political struggle detailed in Kunakov's report (*AIuZR* 3, App. No. 27). According to the information reported by a merchant from Słuck, the Polish army under Wiśniowiecki and Zasławski had marched on Bar, Chudniv and Ostroh and defeated the Cossacks there. There had in fact been an attack on the Cossacks in Bar, though probably not by the main Polish army (Hrushevsky, 8: 538). As related in the Sevsk account, Khmelnytsky's response was simply to continue gathering forces to attack the Poles. Hrushevsky emphasizes that when news of the attack reached Khmelnytsky, he was furious and treated this as a declaration of war precluding any possibility of a peaceful settlement with the Poles.

26. For the difficult final stages of the negotiation, see Hrushevsky, 8: 536–544, with a summary of what was actually agreed on (p. 542). Kunakov's information seems to have erred in the date, which apparently was 24 February. The reports published in the German newspapers in this period contained sketchy information about the difficulties and ultimately the failure of the negotiations on account of the renewal of hostilities over Bar. See *ODiZ* 1649/11 (article datelined Danzig 1 March); 12 (Danzig 12 Mar.); and 13 (Danzig, 19 Mar.). The three issues were published on 13 Mar., 20 Mar., 27 Mar. The last of these speculated that Khmelnytsky was becoming ever more powerful, was negotiating with Ottoman, Muscovite and Wallachian envoys, and had personally gone to the Crimean Khan for further support. There is at least some truth here in the breadth of the diplomatic initiatives he was launching.

27. Kunakov left Warsaw (traveling to Kraków before heading home) on 3 March. According to Hrushevsky (8: 544), the envoys to Khmelnytsky probably returned to Warsaw on 10/20 March. So it is possible that the details of the truce were reported to the king only then.

been in service in Kraków but then did not receive the promised remuneration. The convoluted story involved the Uniate churchmen in Smolensk and their policies against the Orthodox, and the informant concluded with some general information about Tatar support for the Cossacks.

Without transition, Kunakov then shifts to the information he was given by the *referendarz* and other officials in Warsaw, with some further details about Kysil's negotiations and a plea transmitted from the king that the tsar consider supporting the Commonwealth's battle to put down the Cossack rebellion.[28] Clearly the Polish official was trying to pump Kunakov in order to learn what exactly the government in Moscow knew about the rebellion. The envoy responded that in the previous summer and autumn, since he had been off on distant service, he had not heard any of the news about the Cossacks and the Tatars. Kunakov's contacts among the Polish officials supplied him with the information alleging that Russian forces were gathering for an attack on Smolensk, which was being fortified in anticipation of that possibility.

15.2. Reporting on the Zbarazh campaign and the Zboriv agreement

Since the Russian embassy to Sweden headed by Boris Ivanovich Pushkin (discussed in our Ch. 13) had left Moscow some weeks before Kunakov's return, they could not have known what he had learned.[29] Up to the point of its departure, Almaz Ivanov, who was assigned to the mission, would have been seeing the reports coming in regularly about the events in Ukraine and thus would have had a clear understanding of the key events there and elsewhere in the lands of the Commonwealth. Presumably his background and knowledge would help explain the regular selection and translation of the reports from Poland, while in Stockholm. There is no need here to follow every detail of how those events were being reported between late March, the sending of Kunakov on another mission to Poland in early October, and the end of the Russians' stay in Stockholm late in that same month. However, it is useful to see how key events were being reported to Moscow and compare that information both with what had been published in Hamburg and what the Russians in Stockholm were learning from the Hamburg newspapers.

The truce which had been negotiated in February expired on 13/23 May. Despite continuing efforts at negotiation, the resumption of hostilities was inevitable, given the repressions undertaken by the Polish magnates who had begun to return to their estates (Hrushevsky, 8: 552–566). In mid- to late May the several Commonwealth forces

28. Possibly this final section of the intelligence report (the published copy from a manuscript that breaks off before the end) represents material that logically belongs earlier in the end-of-mission report with its sequential account of the meetings with the Polish officials. Without an examination of the manuscripts, it is impossible to know whether there has been some mixing of folios which the editors of *AIuZR* failed to correct.

29. Aleksndr Kan (1956: 104) says that the mission had received additional instructions while still in Pskov on 1 April. However, Kunakov had filed his report only two days earlier in Moscow. Their routes would not have crossed to have made possible any direct, personal communication.

enjoyed substantial successes against the Cossacks, which the reports out of Warsaw via Danzig to the Hamburg newspaper were happy to highlight.[30] However, the third of these reports, translated by the Russians in Stockholm, contained ominous news about the growing extent of the rebellion and the gathering of Tatar forces supporting the Cossacks. The next reports, datelined Danzig 11 July and 23 July – which the Russians also translated – indicated that there was little information about the whereabouts of Khmelnytsky and the Cossacks, but a major Tatar force was now threatening the Polish field camp.[31] While there had as yet been no major battle, the atrocities committed on both sides foreshadowed a bloody outcome. The king was waiting near Lviv for the arrival of the mercenaries he had hired.

The intelligence reports obtained by the Muscovite border commandants in this same period seem to have been filtered through a 'Cossack lens' that might emphasize Polish threats but ignore Cossack defeats and even might exaggerate or invent Cossack victories. The main arena of the renewed hostilities shifted to Zbarazh (Zbaraż), where the Polish army with contingents led by Wiśniowiecki, Koniecpolski, Zasławski, and Zamojski came under siege at the end of June.[32] A dispatch from Sevsk sent on 9 June (received on the 15th) contained information from agents sent across the border on 30 May. The agents reported that a Lithuanian force (this would have been the one com-

30. *ODiZ* 1649/27 (report from Danzig 19 June, published 3 July); 28 (Danzig 27 June, published 10 July); 29 (Danzig 9 July, published 17 July). The second and third of these were translated by the Russians in Stockholm (V-K IV: 129–130, No. 29.54; 133, No. 30.71). The Russians in Stockholm supplemented news about events in Poland published in the Hamburg newspaper with reports drawn from other, not yet determined newspaper sources. On 5 July, for example, they had translated reports out of Danzig (dated 7 June) and Stettin (4 June) regarding decisions at the Polish Diet for raising an army, about Khmelnytsky's various diplomatic initiatives to secure the support of the Tatars, Turks, and Muscovites, and about a Polish embassy to Rágóczi to reaffirm peaceful relations between the two countries (V-K IV: 116, No. 24.42–43). In the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow on 28 August, a translation made, it seems, from a Dutch newspaper included two items relating to the events in Poland. The first, datelined Warsaw 2 June, was a report – perhaps wishful thinking – that the Cossacks were inclined to extend the truce since they could not expect significant support from the Tatars, whom the sultan had forbidden to aid the Cossacks (V-K IV: 118, No. 26.55). A second, brief item (No. 26.59), datelined Hamburg 3 June, more accurately reported the gathering of forces near Kostiantyniv, with two Polish armies, one led by king, marching against them. The colophon at the end of this translation is Amsterdam 10 July, the apparent source being *TVQ* 1649/28. However, the dates of the translated articles are enough earlier to suggest the sources for the Polish news may have been different, something that cannot be checked for want of extant copies. Possibly the date of the Hamburg report erroneously is given as June and should be July. It is possible that some folios are missing, as there seems to be a break in the manuscript between fols. 56 and 57. In any event, by the time these translations were made in Moscow, the news was considerably dated.

31. These issues of the Hamburg paper were published on 24 July and 31 July, respectively.

32. For details on the Zbarazh campaign and the subsequent peace agreement signed at Zboriv, see Kubala 1880: 103–168, with a documentary appendix 168–183; Hrushevsky, 8: 568–597. Hrushevsky notes (568 n. 212) that Kubala's detailed treatment, while valuable, is unduly reliant on Polish sources and needs to be balanced with information that provides a Ukrainian perspective, much of it available only in the intelligence reports being received in Moscow. Zbarazh, where the conclusive events of the campaign unfolded, is somewhat short of 50 km east of Zboriv (the Muscovite intelligence reports suggested the distance was some 35 *versty*, which would be 37 km); Zboriv is some 85 km east of Lviv.

manded by Janusz Radziwiłł) had taken Loiv (Loyew/Lójeŭ, now in Belarus) from the Cossacks, but the latter had taken Kamianets-Podilskyi and were preparing to send support to the forces of the Transylvanian ruler György II Rákóczi, with whom an alliance had been signed (*AIuZR* 3: 322–323). The alliance was a fact, but the indication that it had resulted in the Transylvanians actually sending an army seems to have been fictive (Hrushevsky, 8: 560, 567, 614). King Jan Kazimierz gathered an army and allegedly had already arrived in Lviv – in fact, apparently he did not leave Warsaw until 24 June N.S. (Kubala 1880: 129). Monks – who arrived in Putivl on 5 June – reported about the Polish military buildup in late May, although how accurately is a serious question (*AIuZR* 3: 314–316). It was alleged that the pope had sent some 40,000 troops, and there was information that Rákóczi's force, which had been fighting the Poles for three weeks, had written in desperation to Khmelnytsky to send a relief army. For what it was worth, this report arrived in Moscow on 20 June.

While clearly such reports contained elements of accurate news, another one received in Moscow a few days later, on 24 June, was largely fantasy and in any event hopelessly out of date (*AIuZR* 3: 324–326). It illustrates the point Ogloblin (1885: 369) had made about the information received from refugees being the least reliable. A Cossack who claimed to have been with the Zaporozhian forces but then obviously was hoping to find a safe refuge in Muscovy showed up in Viaz'ma on 19 June. He provided a lurid description of how Khmelnytsky in the previous year had captured Potocki's son and had him gradually cut to pieces over a period of days (this would have been after the battle of Zhovti Vody). Then, in this telling, in a battle near Kostiantyniv (Piliavtsy?), Kalinowski had been killed and the elder Potocki captured and impaled to death – in fact, they were captured and later ransomed. There was also information on how Wiśniowiecki had sent toward Kiev a force which had been surrounded and many of his troops killed. A big force of Cossacks was now gathered at Bila Tserkva, but where it was headed was not known. The informant indicated he did not know to what extent outside mercenaries (*nemtsy*) might be in the Polish forces, beyond a few Courlanders who were with the king.

Reports arriving in Moscow in July from Putivl and Sevsk conveyed a substantial amount of information on military preparations on both sides in anticipation of what was expected to be a major Polish offensive.[33] Among the informants were merchants who had been in Kiev in late June, a monk who had been there, and dragoons who returned to Sevsk after missions that had taken them to Novhorod-Siverskyi. Among the military engagements reported was a victory gained by Khmelnytsky's forces in relieving a garrison attacked by the Poles near Mezhybizh (Medzhibozh, Międzybóż), some 40 km south of Kostiantyniv. However, it seems that the significance of the event was exaggerated; Khmelnytsky was not yet there with the main Cossack force (Hrushevsky, 8: 565–566). One of the more detailed reports, sent from Sevsk on 7 July and received in Moscow on the 16th (*AIuZR* 3: 330–332), contained information from several dra-

33. *AIuZR* 3: 328–332, Nos. 263–265.

goons who had been sent on intelligence missions and had returned on different days, their reports confirming one another. Not all the news was about Cossack successes: there was now a major threat from Janusz Radziwiłł's Lithuanian force headed to Novhorod-Siverskyi. Since the agents had reported that some of the inhabitants of the affected regions were considering taking refuge by fleeing to the Crimea if Muscovy would not receive them, the question posed by the commandants was what to do if the refugees showed up at the Russian border. However, the published file does not contain the response by the tsar. On 5 August, the Putivl commandants reported considerable detail about the battles around Zbarazh, according to information received from an agent Petr Litvinov, who had been sent back to Khmelnytsky on 23 July (ibid.: 336–337). He reported via a courier from Kiev on 28 July that a messenger from Khmelnytsky had arrived there with details of how the Cossacks had seized the Polish field camp outside of the town which they had besieged but not yet taken, and that a Polish relief army had been defeated. There was no news of the whereabouts of the king. The other important news, which the courier from Kiev had learned there, concerned the battles around Loiv, where Radziwiłł's Lithuanian force had beaten off a Cossack relief army. In response, Khmelnytsky was sending a second relief force, though with what result there was still no information. This report, received in Moscow on 16 August, seems to have been quite accurate. It would turn out that the Lithuanian losses at Loiv were crippling for Radziwiłł's offensive, forcing him to retreat, even though Radziwiłł tried to portray the events as a great victory (Hrushevsky, 8: 567).

It is worth emphasizing that the concerns of the border commandants extended beyond just obtaining intelligence about the war in the Commonwealth lands. A striking example is in a letter the Putivl commanders sent to Khmelnytsky on 21 August, complaining vigorously about how their counterparts on the other side of the border had demeaned the tsar by omitting some of his titles in correspondence, and how people had illegally been entering Muscovite territory and occupying land there (*AIuZR* 3: 338–339). Even though the hetman berated the Muscovite couriers who brought the complaint to him, accusing them of being spies and threatening to attack Muscovy because it had refused to send military aid (ibid.: 353), he replied apologetically in a letter from Chyhyryn on 9 September, explaining that the local commander's lapse was due to the fact that he was a simple, illiterate man ('bo est' cholovek prostyi i ne pis′mennyi' – ibid.: 344). The issue of titulature would continue to complicate relations with Poland at a time when, from our modern perspective, we might think there were much more important matters demanding attention.

In contrast with the substantial detail (if possibly reflecting a Cossack bias) in the reports arriving in Moscow in July and August, the reports reaching Hamburg at approximately the same time, filtered through a Polish lens, tended to be vaguer or more speculative. The Hamburg-based *WZ* reported how serious the plight of the Polish army

was, surrounded on 10 July by a huge Cossack and Tatar force.[34] The king had issued several calls for the raising of forces to arrive in Lublin by 11 August and had sent a contingent in response to a desperate plea for help from his general Andrzej Firlej. However, evidence from other sources suggests the call for mobilization fell short of what was really needed, and in any event, the troops could not have been expected to arrive in time to save the rest of the army.[35] This report was dutifully translated in its entirety by the Russians in Stockholm on 23 August. A subsequent report in the Hamburg newspaper – datelined Stettin 1 August but indicating the news had come via Danzig – provided some additional details of the desperate situation of the Polish forces. The next week's report, dated Danzig 13 August, included conflicting information: the king had raised the siege, or – as it turns out, more accurately – the king's army had failed to arrive and was bogged down some miles away. The subsequent report from Danzig 20 August cited the most recent letter from the king's field camp dated 4 August (presumably N.S.) with news that the force had moved in order better to relieve the besieged.[36] Possibly some renewal of the truce was possible, and a major battle thus could be avoided. The article then cited news from the front received by the queen in Warsaw, indicating that the Cossacks and Tatars had lifted the siege and were moving off, ostensibly because there was considerable disagreement amongst the hostile forces. We know, of course, that this was wishful thinking, probably in fact Polish propaganda to boost morale (Hrushevsky 8: 576). The article concluded on a doubtful note that the accuracy of this was still to be confirmed. In Stockholm, even if they had seen this news, the Russians translated none of these three issues of *WZ*.[37]

The news which they did translate on 20 September from the next week's Hamburg paper told of the abrupt conclusion of the campaign.[38] There were two reports, the one from Danzig dated 24 August relating the movement of the king's force from Toporiv to Bilyi Kamin on the 18th (N.S.), the successful repulse of an attack on his camp, but the dire straits it was in because of insufficient food.[39] The besieged garrison under Andrzej

34. *ODiZ* 1649/32 (published 7 August), article from Danzig 22 July.

35. Hrushevsky, 8: 575. It seems that the king had a difficult time obtaining quickly any accurate information about what was going on at Zbarazh (Kubala 1880: 131), a fact which may help explain how the news reported via Danzig on occasion would include conflicting information or simply state that there was as yet insufficient information about some key event.

36. These three newspaper reports are in *ODiZ* 1649/33 (published 14 Aug.); 34 (published 21 Aug.); and 35 (published 28 Aug.).

37. It is possible that none of the three weekly issues of *WZ* numbered 33–35 were obtained by the Russians, since there are no extant translations from any of them. Otherwise, it would seem odd that nothing in three weeks of the newspaper caught their attention. Of course translations might have been made which are no longer extant.

38. *ODiZ* 1649/36 (published 4 Sept.). The Russian translations are in V-K IV: 163–164, No. 42.104–105; a second copy of the truce provisions is in ibid.: 162, No. 40.117, explicitly identified as being from the translation of the newspaper made on 20 September.

39. The date in the newspaper article is misleading: the 18th is when the peace agreement was signed, not when the march occurred.

Firlej was now desperate, having repulsed several attacks. So the king was detaching some of his troops in haste to relieve it. The next article in the paper, datelined Warsaw 29 August (N.S.), quickly summarized the heavy losses on both sides, though worse for the Poles, which led to Khmelnytsky's agreeing to terms and the signing of a peace, whose ten articles were listed in summary form. There is nothing here about the fact that while at Toporiv, the king had issued proclamations to the Cossacks that he was deposing Khmelnytsky and appointing a different hetman.[40] Nor is there detail about the sudden and desperate negotiations, in which first a separate agreement was signed with the Tatars. The nearest town of Zboriv is not mentioned, even though in subsequent historiography the agreement is specified by its name.[41]

As published in the newspaper, the provisions of the truce provide a reasonable but very condensed summary of what was actually in the final agreement. We know from a published archival document what the Cossacks demanded, and we have the text of the final agreement, embodied in the form of a royal declaration by the king.[42] The agreement confirmed that there would be now 40,000 registered Cossacks, that privileges of the Orthodox Church be restored (although the king insisted that the fate of the Uniate church – which the Cossacks had wanted to eliminate entirely – was still a matter for negotiation), that Jesuits and Jews be excluded from territories under Cossack control, and the Cossacks be given the privilege of making alcoholic beverages, albeit only for their own consumption. Magnates who still held estates in the areas now to be under Cossack administration were not to be allowed to oppress their subjects; there was to be a general amnesty. The one article listed in the newspaper which apparently was not in the king's declaration concerned the payment to be made to the Tatars along with the provision they would be allowed to hold two hostages as a guarantee. This was part of the agreement between the Poles and Tatars, not of the agreement with the Cossacks. Of course, the agreement still had to be ratified by the Diet and was expected to meet with opposition from the Senators, as suggested in an article from Danzig, 22 September – one of the last to be translated by the Russians in Stockholm before their departure.[43]

As is apparent from the reports about Zbarazh and the Zboriv agreement received in Moscow, what Khmelnytsky was to claim for propaganda purposes and most of his followers believed was that the Poles had agreed to Cossack demands for significant concessions of territories that had come under Cossack control on the Right Bank of the

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40. A copy of the Polish text of this decree is in *PKK* 1, No. CXXXVI.

41. For details, see Hrushevsky, 8: 578–597; Kubala 1880: 143–156.

42. Hrushevsky, 8: 589–590; 593–595.

43. *ODiZ* 1649/40 (published 2 Oct.), the translation made on 19 October (V-K IV: 166, No. 44). As the subsequent history of negotiations between Moscow and Warsaw would reveal, when pressed by the Russians to observe the terms of the Zboriv agreement with the Cossacks, the Poles even went so far as to deny angrily that there never was such an agreement and that the only one concluded at Zboriv had been with the Tatars (Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 590). In a technical sense, the 'personal' form of the king's declaration to the Cossacks could have provided a justification for this position.

Dnepr and all the way to the Dnestr. In fact, no such concessions had been made (Hrushevsky 8: 602). Thus the somewhat cryptic rendering of the treaty terms in the report published in Hamburg (where details of territorial administrative control are absent) may have been more accurate than what the Muscovite agents were first reporting back to their superiors. In other respects, however, Russian intelligence seems to have contained a lot of precise detail about the military events that preceded the negotiations.

Starting in mid-August, the Kremlin was receiving information about the battles around Zbarazh, where the Polish garrison was besieged for more than a month (the siege lifted only after the signing of the Zboriv peace agreements). A report sent from Sevsk on 27 August and received in Moscow on 5 September provided the government with its first information that such an agreement might be possible (*AIuZR* 3: 340), since the king's relief force had been defeated, and Khmelnytsky was said to be willing to negotiate. This news came from a merchant who had been sent out to gather intelligence on 24 July. He had learned about several Cossack victories from conversations in Kiev and Pereiaslav, and reported back in Sevsk on 27 August. Five days later, on 10 September, news sent from Putivl on 31 August reported that peace had in fact been concluded (ibid.: 341–342). Khmelnytsky was said already to be in Berdychiv (about halfway between Kostiantyniv and Bila Tserkva), Wiśniowiecki – who had been in Zbarazh – and the other Polish leaders had returned to Poland, and the Tatars and Nogais also had gone home. The report also contained the inaccurate Cossack version of territorial concessions by the Poles, allowing Cossack control of extensive Right-Bank territories as far westward as the Sluch River. The communication thread for this news might explain why it contained a Cossack slant, even if otherwise much of the information seems to have been accurate. On 30 August, the commandants in Putivl received a letter sent on the same day, presumably by express courier, from an official in Nedryhailiv (Nedrigailov), some 60 km to the south. He reported that a minor noble from Nedryhailiv had returned from Kostiantyniv, where he was engaged in purchasing salt. There in the market some Cossacks were telling anyone who would listen that they had been in Khmelnytsky's camp when the peace was concluded. On 31 August another letter arrived in Putivl, sent from Kobyzhcha (ca. 190 km from Putivl and 80 km from Kiev) by an intelligence agent, who had met there on 25 August several Zaporozhian Cossacks on their way home and learned from them about the peace settlement. In the first instance, Muscovite intelligence was learning about the Cossack victory and the peace from the oral accounts of Cossacks, accounts which were second or third hand by the time they reached Muscovite officials some three weeks after the events. These reports arrived in Moscow ten days to two weeks later. News of the final battles and the peace took almost exactly the same time to get to Hamburg and be published as it did to reach Moscow.

The Kremlin received additional detail about the battles and the peace more directly from individuals who had been in Khmelnytsky's camp. On 23 July, the Putivl *voevoda* had dispatched a mission headed by Petr Litvinov to seek out Khmelnytsky and obtain

direct intelligence.[44] Writing back from Kiev on 28 July, Litvinov reported among other news the arrival there of a letter, in which Khmelnytsky informed the local commandant that he had taken the Polish camp at Zbarazh, but that the siege of the city was still underway. Litvinov travelled on to Zbarazh, where he met with the hetman on 14 or 15 August and within a day left with him, accompanying his contingent back east as far as Pavoloch. In enumerating what he learned – presumably from Khmelnytsky – about the terms of the peace agreement, Litvinov noted the important provision that the Commonwealth was to appoint its own officials over the urban population in towns otherwise included in territories assigned to the Cossacks. At the same time, however, Litvinov reported that those Cossack territories were to include areas on the Right Bank (as indicated above), even though that was not part of the agreement.[45] Lending some credence to the accuracy of what Litvinov recorded from his meeting with the hetman is the detail that when the Cossack *yesaul* (officer; aide-de-camp) who was present stated the Cossacks now would attack Muscovy in revenge because it had not provided military support, Khmelnytsky intervened and insisted that in fact he was ready to serve the tsar. However, Khmelnytsky then emphasized that had Russian support been provided, the Tatars never would have been able to take many of the Orthodox captive. When Litvinov left Zbarazh on 15 August, the Polish garrison there under Wiśniowiecki was still waiting for the last of the Tatars to leave, so that it would be safe to abandon the castle and head home. Litvinov learned that, as they were on their way home, the Tatars in fact had taken some thirty Lithuanian cities and made off with their captives. The belief expressed by the *yesaul* about Cossack intentions to attack Muscovy seems to have spread widely, as it was reported by other Muscovite agents in subsequent weeks. That the Tatars had plundered much as they returned to the Crimea was a fact, but in some later variants the blame for this was laid at the feet of the Polish king, who – lacking sufficient funds to pay the agreed-on tribute – had allegedly given them permission to do so. Litvinov's report was obviously considered significant enough so that the Putivl commandant had him deliver it in person to Moscow, where on 15 September the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery took an oral deposition. In it, Litvinov provided additional detail about the depredations of the retreating Tatar forces. He also reported that he had learned from conversations with Cossacks that the Tatars wanted to hand over Potocki and Kalinowski (who had been captured in the previous year) in return for ransom.

Another of the more detailed accounts by an eyewitness who had been with the Cossacks at Zbarazh was recorded in Putivl on 10 September (and received in Moscow on 20 September; *AIuZR* 3: 345–348). A Lithuanian doctor (*lekar'*) from Pryluky had been with the Cossacks treating the wounded and then showed up in Putivl on a mission to

44. *AIuZR* 3: 336–337; *VUR* 2: 243–245.

45. Apart from this issue, where the official Cossack line about the territorial provisions apparently substituted their demands for what the Poles actually agreed to, Hrushevsky (8: 569–570 n. 219) seems to suggest that Litvinov's account was probably more accurate than what many of the other accounts about the campaign had reported regarding the size of the Cossack and Tatar army.

buy grain. His deposition provided details on the numbers of the forces, the commanders, and outlined the main events in the fighting. In summarizing the provisions of the treaty, as had Litvinov, he included the Cossack version of the territorial provisions. This is yet another indication that 'in Ukrainian circles, this representation of the issue was universal' (Hrushevsky, 8: 598). While much of what the doctor reported seems to have been reliable, he also obviously was transmitting what might reasonably be considered unverifiable and misleading rumor. A long section of the report describes an acrimonious series of exchanges, whereby the rank-and-file Tatars protested the fact they did not get a share of the tribute which the Poles were providing. As a result, the king and Khmelnytsky contrived to let them raid various towns and take captives, where secret agents were to open the gates to let the marauders in.[46] In particular, these were towns that had been in the possession of Wiśniowiecki and other magnates who then had failed to obey the king and had proceeded on their own to attack the Cossacks. In this telling, obviously incensed by the devastation of towns he had expected to repossess, Wiśniowiecki accused the king of complicity and threatened to attack him, forcing him to ask the Cossacks and Tatars for help. However, Khmelnytsky refused, stressing that his forces and the Tatars were already on their way home. It was expected that there would continue to be a conflict between the king and those who had withstood the siege in Zbarazh (pleading in vain for the king's help). There were other reports that Wiśniowiecki was marching against the king because the latter had allowed the Tatars to seize and burn cities (*AIuZR* 3: 351–352). Two messengers sent by the Putivl commandants to Khmelnytsky in late August seem to have been particularly receptive to rumors (ibid.: 352–354). On their way back, while in Kiev, they had heard from a merchant acquaintance that the Cossacks indeed were preparing to attack Putivl as revenge for having received no Russian support and that Rákóczi was marching on Kraków. Many Lithuanians told these messengers that Wiśniowiecki had even managed to kill the king on account of his perfidy with the Tatars. None of this was true. However, what we see clearly here is how widespread were the rumors, presumably having found fertile ground amongst those who harbored resentment against the Poles that the Zboriv agreement clearly could not mollify.

15.3. Kunakov returns to Poland

As these reports were arriving, the Muscovite government was preparing to send Grigorii Kunakov on another mission to the Commonwealth. His official purpose was simply

46. Hrushevsky (8: 599) cites this account as an example of the resentment created by the king's alleged complicity in allowing Tatar attacks on towns the Cossacks thought were now to be under their control. What is not entirely clear here is whether the king in fact gave the Tatars carte blanche to exact their 'payment' in this way. In any event, even though Hrushevsky admits that such accounts often were overlaid with 'a variety of fictitious details' and that the doctor's account in particular was a 'fantastic tale', he feels that the essence of it is confirmed by more sober accounts relating to the events. Kołodziejczyk (2011: 160) notes that the Poles gave the Tatars 'tacit consent' that they be able to take their captives along as slaves and could 'even keep collecting them on their way home.' This 'humiliating condition' could not be written into the Polish document.

to deliver a message from the tsar to the king, alerting the Poles that a properly constituted Russian embassy would soon be sent. As with his earlier mission, Kunakov was to gather intelligence. His instructions dated 3 October enumerated twelve specific topics about which he was to provide a written report, point by point (*AIuZR* 3: 368–369). For the most part, the topics were ones where clearly the Kremlin was wanting to follow up on the news reports it had been receiving about Commonwealth and Cossack affairs: the disputes between the king and the magnates, the terms and viability of the Polish peace agreement with the Cossacks, the deployment of Commonwealth forces in Ukraine and the identity of their commandants, the Polish agreement with the Tatars and the facts about Tatar attacks on Commonwealth towns, Polish foreign relations and reception of foreign ambassadors, whether or not there was conflict between Polish and Lithuanian senators, the location of key Commonwealth officials, including Adam Kysil. The final two points, probably low in the hierarchy of what Kunakov could be expected to learn, concerned the state of the conflict between the Ottomans and the Venetians, and whether the Swedes had concluded peace with the Habsburgs and withdrawn their army from imperial territories. Undoubtedly it is no coincidence that on 3 October the Kremlin also dispatched a formal diplomatic mission to Khmelnytsky (to be discussed below). At the end of December, it would bring back within a day or so of Kunakov's own return from Poland intelligence which supplemented in important ways what Kunakov had been able to learn.

Kunakov left Moscow on 6 October, arrived across the border in Dorogobuzh on the 14th and in Smolensk on the 19th.[47] Although delayed by some difficulties with the local officials, he arrived near Warsaw on 26 October. However, complications with his reception and in particular a dispute with one of the Polish officials forced him to travel onward to Minsk, arriving there on 6 November. It was only on 23 November that he finally was escorted into Warsaw, where he was housed in the merchant court in the new suburb. The king received him, in the presence of all the senators (whom Kunakov lists by name and title), on 26 November, obvious care having been taken to observe protocol in a situation where presumably the government (if not its local officials) deemed maintaining good relations with Moscow to be of real importance in a period of national crisis. In his end-of-mission report, he elaborated on the complaint he launched with court officials about the poor treatment he had received from local administrators on arriving in Poland. But otherwise, he delivered the tsar's letter and received the king's reply, which was carefully checked to ensure the tsar's titles were accurate.[48] Kunakov

47. For his end-of-mission report, see *AIuZR* 3: 382–392, No. 300.

48. What Kunakov tells us about the checking of the letter is of some interest regarding the linguistic capacity of the Polish officials. He was assured that care had been taken to ensure the accuracy of the tsar's titles, at the pain of death to any official who might commit an error. So the secretary Kazimierz Montrymowicz was relied on to check the text which had been drafted by a certain Cześeika, since, as the *referendarz* explained, 'he knows but poorly Russian script' ('on Russkogo pisma malo znaet'), and thus he had to rely on Montrymowicz in everything. Here the antecedent to the pronoun '*on*/he' is not clear, although presumably it refers to the scribe Cześeika.

did not linger, leaving Warsaw on 5 December and arriving in Moscow on the 29th. Early in his mission, he was able to send back reports from Dorogobuzh (received 23 October) and Smolensk (the latter in cipher, sent on 22 October), but the Russian government had to wait until his return for the rest of his intelligence.[49] The information he gathered was impressive for its extent and depth, but not necessarily always accurate. His report makes for fascinating reading and is vividly written, often spiced with direct speech (invented or accurately recorded?). Even though arguably his informants colored the information with their own political views, there is much here which would have provided the Kremlin with insights into the recent campaigns, the peace settlement and Polish politics. Since this still seems to have been a period when Moscow did not yet have an informant among the officials in the Commonwealth, Kunakov's report undoubtedly was especially valuable. Moreover, to Kunakov's credit, he also acquired in 1649 a number of Polish publications, which at least had some potential significance for broadening Muscovite cultural horizons. As it would turn out, the Ambassadorial Chancery made limited use of them, a fact that of itself is also of some interest.[50]

While in Dorogobuzh, where the authorities were trying to isolate him from contact with the local population, Kunakov nonetheless was told reasonably accurate information about the peace settlement with the Cossacks and the plans for the upcoming Diet. At the same time, there were a lot of rumors (unfounded) about a possible Russian attack, which had caused many of the local population to flee and also seem to have contributed to the hostile reception Kunakov received on first crossing the border. There was a rumor that Khmelnytsky was preparing to lead a big Cossack delegation to Moscow. There was an influx of refugees from other parts of the Commonwealth that had been devastated by the war. This topic came up again in the report from Smolensk, which indicated a large number of refugees was headed to the border, hoping to get to Briansk. Otherwise probably the most significant news he had gleaned in Smolensk was that the Lithuanian representatives at the Diet were unlikely to agree with the Polish representatives, who were pressing for vengeance against the Cossacks. A renewal of the conflict seemed likely.

Kunakov must have had access to information from highly placed officials in Warsaw. The escort assigned to interface between him and the government, Petr Sviatskii (Święcki?), provided him with some confidential information about Jeremi Wiśniowiecki's alleged close ties with the Transylvanian prince. Sviatskii was credited specifically with passing on information about what he heard in the Polish diplomatic chancery.[51]

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49. The reports from Dorogobuzh and Smolensk are in *AIuZR* 3: 370–375, Nos. 291, 292. For the end-of-mission intelligence report see ibid.: 392-408, No. 301; *VUR* 2: 299–317, No. 133.

50. For details about the books, see Jansson and Waugh 2023: 171–172; 178, notes 30–35. Summary information will be provided below.

51. 'A skazyval gontsu pristav Petr Sviatskoi vtaine…'; 'Dekabria v 4 den' skazyval gontsu pristav Petr Sviatskoi, chto togo dni govorili v Posol'skoi izbe povetnye poslove….'; 'To de v Posolskoi Izbe slyshal on Petr Sviatskoi sam' (*AIuZR* 3: 400, 406).

Another likely source for such material might have been the secretary in the Lithuanian chancery, Kazimierz Montrymowicz, who, as we have already seen, had interacted with Kunakov on his previous visit and because of his knowledge of Russian was brought in to confirm the accuracy of the titulature in the king's letter to the tsar. Montrymowicz told Kunakov about the concern on the part of the king and the senators that the failure of the recent Polish embassy to reach an agreement in Moscow might portend a break in relations between the two countries, something the Commonwealth officials were anxious to avoid at all cost. Another source for a major section of the report was a Vilna merchant: 'And in Warsaw the Vilna merchant Danilo Plukhovskii told the courier [Kunakov] in secret and under oath what he had heard from many senators in confidential discussions.' Kunakov defended Plukhovskii's reliability: 'And that merchant Danilo is of the pious Christian faith [Orthodoxy] and serves the referendary Francyszek Isajkowski and is always around the senators and told this to the courier with many solemn oaths' (*AIuZR* 3: 404–405). The fact that he was Orthodox seemed to be some assurance of his reliability, which did not preclude his having to swear an oath as to his truthfulness. He was a source for information about the Cossacks, at least some of the material on the disputes within the Diet over the peace settlement, and for the news concerning how much the authorities were worried about a possible conflict with Moscow, especially if Khmelnytsky placed himself under Russian protection. Kunakov was approached by two Danzig merchants who petitioned him to intervene with the tsar on their behalf regarding a shipment of potash and smalt that had been confiscated. While he refused to help, citing his instructions which narrowly defined the purpose of his mission, he nonetheless reported what information they had provided, probably most of it rumor they had picked up in Riga (ibid.: 407). Kunakov reported hearing directly from a Tatar, who worked for the powerful Lithuanian vice-chancellor Kazimierz Leon Sapieha, that Khmelnytsky had minted money in his own name and was preparing to resume the conflict. The Tatar claimed direct knowledge of this ('a vedomo de emu Tatarinu, pro to dopriama'), since his employer was now gathering and training forces (ibid.: 408). More generally, Kunakov clearly listened to anyone who seems to have had information: along the road, various officers and nobles came to him and reported the depredations of the Cossacks, the inevitable failure of the Diet to conclude peace, and the expectation the Poles would send an embassy to Moscow to conclude an offensive alliance against the Cossacks.

The first section of Kunakov's intelligence report (*Zapiska o vestekh*) was a long account about the final stages of the Zbarazh campaign, the battle, the negotiation of the peace settlement, and its immediate aftermath. The genre as an integral narrative is similar to those of the thematically organized sections that Kunakov had submitted in his report from his previous mission. Thus this is not simply a loose or random collection of odds and ends of 'news' (in the way that many contemporary newspaper articles tended to be), but rather an effort to provide a coherent summary, with appropriate historical background, and a sequential, chronologically organized narrative. Whether Kunakov

may have based the material at least in part on a single such narrative source is not clear, although it is possible he simply constructed the report from what one of his informants told him.

The text is certainly the most substantial treatment of the subject which the Kremlin would have received by the end of December 1649. There was interesting detail about the efforts of the besieged to get the king to send help (Wiśniowiecki's role arguably is exaggerated in this telling). As the king was preparing to leave Lublin with the relief force, news came indicating that the besiegers had been reinforced with the full Cossack and Tatar army. However, the Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński persuaded his monarch that the intelligence was false, and thus the army marched on to its ultimate destruction when, as it turned out, the intelligence had been accurate. This information may have been colored by the disaffection supporters of Wiśniowiecki had because he had been passed over by the king for the post of crown hetman. It seems that the king and his chancellor were anxious that written copies of the texts of the agreements not be widely distributed, presumably to forestall opposition to them. As the narrative goes on to state in no uncertain terms, once the terms became known, there was an outcry from both the Polish and Lithuanian magnates against the king and especially against Ossoliński for having betrayed the Commonwealth. Some even were calling for the chancellor's death (ibid.: 398). It seems possible that some details about the negotiation reflect the biases of those who would vociferously oppose acceptance of the agreements when the Diet met in November. The arguments against the agreement presumably would have been inflamed by the information, presumably accurate, that the Crimean khan had played a key role in persuading Khmelnytsky that he had no choice but to conclude peace too.[52]

Even though the officials in Moscow would have to wait nearly a month and a half for Kunakov's report, on 16 November they had received from the Putivl commandants another detailed account of the final battles at Zbarazh and the peace negotiations (ibid.: 409–416, No. 303). The narrative is presented in the form of diary entries, focusing on the period from 12–20 August. The cover letter sent with this account indicates clearly how it was obtained.[53] On 24 September, an intelligence agent was sent across the bor-

52. Hrushevsky (8: 583 n. 28) found at least one inaccuracy in Kunakov's chronology. Also, he characterizes as rumors circulating in Warsaw after the fact Kunakov's account of Khmelnytsky's efforts to persuade the khan not to conclude a separate peace. Yet in Hrushevsky's view, the substance of the report regarding the importance of the khan in the negotiations seems to be accurate (ibid.: 583, 588 notes 38, 40).

53. Hrushevsky (8: 579 n. 18) erroneously surmises this account was 'probably brought from Warsaw by Grigorii Kunakov.' While he even quotes from it (ibid.: 585–586), he also writes that 'the Muscovite translation of the journal is faulty: in places it cannot even be understood' (n. 33). One passage mentions a letter the king sent to the hetman, but 'it is related in so muddled a fashion as to be incomprehensible' (583 n. 29). While it is true that the text oversimplifies and condenses the exchanges and may be at fault especially in its single-sentence summary of the reply sent by the king to Khmelnytsky, the criticism should not be extended to the document as a whole, which is quite readable. The editors of *AIuZR* 3: 416 note that there are several longer and shorter archival versions of the Zboriv agreement of the king and the Cossacks, written in Muscovite hands.

der to learn about the peace that had been concluded; he returned on 28 October. In the town of Borzna (about halfway between Konotop and Nizhen), the hegumen of a monastery read to the agent a written account of the negotiation and then, on request, provided the agent with an exact copy of it, which the commandants forwarded to Moscow. The text is in 'Belorusskoe pismo' with appended copies (described as being in 'South Russian [i. e. Ukrainian] hand') of both the agreement with the Tatars and the king's declaration, which served as the official text of the peace with the Cossacks. With but minor excisions, the text of the agreement with the Tatars accurately renders its presumed Polish original.[54] A note appended at the end states that the document did not specify any of the monetary payments to the Tatars that had been negotiated and thus provides a summary of the most important terms. The Ukrainian version of the king's declaration to the Cossacks (that is, the peace agreement) seems to be an accurate rendering of the text.[55]

The form of the report resembles what was common in seventeenth-century news brochures or newspaper accounts, quoting in extenso an eyewitness journal or diary from the front, followed by the documentary text. In this case, the source undoubtedly was a Polish diary of the siege known in at least one manuscript copy, but presumably one that circulated in other copies as well.[56] Attesting to the fact that the battle and the peace settlement were deemed important news is the existence of at least two German separates, one of them including the peace agreements but neither with the same description of the events leading up to them.[57] Both the report received in Putivl and Kunakov's account certainly were much more accurate and objective about the military disaster than was the official Polish narrative, which was the source for news publications abroad and tried

54. Kołodziejczyk 2011: 954–958 provides a critical text of the Polish original and an English translation. He notes that the original document is missing, but he has been able to use several manuscript copies. There also is a published version from some other, unidentified copy in *PKK*, 364–365, No. XCIII. For a summary and analysis of the document, the khan's response to it, and the other terms that were negotiated, see Kołodziejczyk 2011: 159–161.

55. See the translation in Hrushevsky 8: 593–595, based on his critical text.

56. See *Dokumenty* 1965, 270–273, No. 104, a 'Diariusz ekspedycji przeciwko Kozakom', published from a manuscript in the Radziwiłł collection of the Warsaw Archive of Ancient Acts. The Ukrainian version is not an exact rendering of that Polish text but generally is very close to it. The Polish diary, at least in the form we have it, does not include the copies of the treaties. Hrushevsky (8: 579 n. 18) lists the diary text, which he knew from the publication in *AIuZR*, as one of several accounts of the battle.

57. Separates about the war and the peace settlement include the following two items: *Gründliche und Denckwürdige Relation Der newlichen Cosaken-Revolte Wider Die Cron Polen/ Vnter Commando Gen. Chmielnicki,* [...] *Von Anfang bis zur newlichen/ (Gott sey Lob!) unverhofften Friedens-Composition* [...] N.p., 1649 (VD17 23:310893S). A different report on the battle is *Kurtzer Summarischer Bericht/ Was im Monath Augusto dieses Jahres zwischen den Parteyen Königlicher Polnischer Seiten/ und den Cosaken sambt den Tartarn in Reußland und deroselben gegent biß zu erhaltenem Frieden passiret und vorgelauffen* [...] N.p., 1649 (VD17 23:310865N). The first of these is really a commentary (with scriptural citations), not a news account, though it does have the texts of the peace agreement. The second is a somewhat cryptic diary, possibly based on a fuller version of what was sent in Ukrainian or Belorussian to Moscow. The complete pamphlet is not yet accessible online to make possible a closer comparison.

to portray the Zboriv campaign and agreement as 'an outstanding achievement by the king'.[58] Even though we cannot be certain without further archival research, it is possible that the Putivl report provided the Muscovite government with its first full texts of the two key documents negotiated at Zboriv.

Following his description of the Ukrainian campaign and peace, Kunakov turns to the meeting of the Diet (the section of the report titled 'O seime'), which had begun its deliberations on 22 November (N.S.) and continued in session after the Russian courier had left town.[59] So he could report only on the proceedings up to that point: the political intrigues and infighting were preventing the king and his chancellor Ossoliński from obtaining an agreement to accept the Zboriv peace terms. As related by Kunakov, there was significant opposition by the Lithuanian delegates at the Diet. They declared they had not wanted to join the military campaign, and by being drawn into it, they had incurred substantial economic losses, for which they were not being compensated. In reading this, one should keep in mind, of course, that Russian intelligence from the Commonwealth often was filtered through a 'Lithuanian Orthodox lens', as Kunakov's own comment about the Vilna merchant cited above suggests. Later, in the 1670s and early 1680s, a secret agent in the Commonwealth who was providing the Russian government with regular reports was an employee of a Lithuanian magnate, and Lithuanian magnates often would communicate with the government in Moscow directly rather than through official Commonwealth channels (Kochegarov 2008: 33 and passim).

Another significant emphasis in Kunakov's report about the Diet related to Prince Jeremi Wiśniowiecki, who arrived in Warsaw with an impressive suite, allegedly had enlisted the support of the Transylvanian Prince Rákóczi and clearly was seen as leading the opposition to the king and his chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński. Kunakov's informant provided him with quite a bit of information about Wiśniowiecki's actions over the previous year, details of his military support from Rákóczi, and even a marriage alliance that would solidify that alliance. Quite apart from the question of whether an accommodation with the Cossacks was in the Commonwealth's interest, Wiśniowiecki had come out in opposition because he felt he had not been properly rewarded for his service. The king had denied him the office of crown hetman, wanting to give it instead to Stanisław Lanckoroński, who had the chancellor's support. At the Diet, Wiśniowiecki argued he should be the official commander of the Commonwealth's military and would lead it to victory over the Cossacks and Tatars (even though the evidence of the Zbarazh debacle,

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58. Hrushevsky, 8: 597, referring to J. Pastorius, *Relatio gloriosissimae expeditionis…* (N.p., 1649).

59. A monograph on this Diet – albeit one we have not been able to consult – is Łucja Cześcik, *Sejm warszawski w 1649/50 roku* (Wrocław etc., 1978). Sysyn (1985: 175–180), with his focus on the important activities of Adam Kysil, provides a summary of what transpired between Zboriv and the Diet's ratification of the peace agreement. One of the most contentious issues at the Diet concerned the religious question of what would happen to the Uniates, a subject that does not receive any attention in Kunakov's report. Possibly the explanation for that silence is the fact that Kysil arrived at the Diet to advocate regarding the religious settlement only about the time Kunakov was on his way out of town.

where he was nominally in charge of its defense, hardly could have inspired confidence). According to Kunakov's report, this claim enjoyed wide support amongst the nobles and townsmen, who were openly declaring they were prepared to revolt and support Wiśniowiecki against the king and his chancellor. Both the chancellor and Adam Kysil, who had played key roles in the negotiations at Zboriv, were deemed to be traitors. The king and even his predecessor Władysław were complicit in plots to destroy the nobility and undermine the freedoms guaranteed by the constitution. This certainly was heady stuff, emphasized in the narrative by what purported to be direct quotations of statements by the opposition nobles. Ossoliński was now so universally despised that he was concerned for his family's safety. He was planning to send his children and his treasury to Danzig for safety, and allegedly was thinking of taking refuge with Khmelnytsky.

Clearly there was much here which may have been exaggerated or inaccurate. At very least, the fact that Kunakov departed before the Diet had reached any decision meant the picture he painted was potentially misleading. Despite the fierce opposition, the Diet eventually did confirm the peace, although it would refuse to enter its decision as a formal constitutional decree. However, since neither side in the conflict was really satisfied by the agreement, renewed conflict was inevitable. Kunakov concluded his report with additional information on the disposition of forces. Of particular interest was the position of the Lithuanian hetman Janusz Radziwiłł, who had settled with Khmelnytsky separately from the Zboriv agreement and thus was not trusted by the Poles. Kunakov had but a cryptic response to the question in his instructions about Ottoman relations with Venice – the war continued, with the pope providing support for Venice. And as far as Sweden was concerned, word was that its war against the Habsburgs had broken out again, but no details were known as to why. The section of his report devoted to the information he learned from the Vilna merchant Danilo Plukhovskii included quite a bit of detail about events in Ukraine, where Khmelnytsky was being pressed by his followers to renew the war against the Poles. Plukhovskii also told the Muscovite courier about the concerns in the Commonwealth to ensure that Moscow would not support the Cossacks, which then made successful negotiation with the imminent Muscovite embassy to be of critical importance. These concerns were reinforced by what the clergy were divining from their 'books of magic' ('po volshebnym svoim knigam'), which foretold that in 1650 there would be a heavenly sign – two eclipses each of the sun and moon – predicting that the Commonwealth would perish and the Greek faith would prevail over the Roman faith.[60]

60. The editors of *AIuZR* publish immediately after Kunakov's intelligence report a 'Short record of various separate facts pertaining to the Cossack war with the Poles' (*AIuZR* 3: 408–409), with a note that this anonymous work, copied in a 'Muscovite' hand, was appended to Kunakov's report in the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery and probably was brought by him from Poland. This interesting document, several of its thirteen short entries with news relating to military matters and obtained in Lviv, really contains nothing to associate it with Kunakov. One of the more interesting of its notes, which coincides to a degree with something Kunakov reported, is this: 'The Germans published recently guidebooks (*praktiki*), that is printed books of astrologers, in which they divine that the present Kazimir is

The intelligence Kunakov could obtain in Warsaw thus clearly had its limitations, reflecting the biases of his informants and the fact that even the most objective reports would not necessarily contain accurate detail. For all his diligence in gathering intelligence, he could not have expected to provide detailed and accurate information about what *in fact* was happening in Ukraine. While Kunakov was on his mission, of course the flow of reports coming to Moscow from its border commandants continued, that intelligence too with its own limitations. There is no need here to review all those reports (a number of which can be read in *AIuZR* 3, and *VUR* 2). One, however, received in Moscow on 22 October, is of interest for what it reveals about the intelligence networks and the sharing of information. And a second report, from a formal mission sent to Khmelnytsky at the same time Kunakov was dispatched, provides substantial detail that was directly communicated by the hetman himself and some of his close confidants. These two documents offer some indication of how intelligence from the south was an essential supplement to whatever might be obtained from the central lands of the Commonwealth.

15.4. The intelligence mission sent from Vol'noe

The *voevoda* assigned to Vol'noe, located apparently right next to the border at the end of the Belgorod line, sent a long report to Moscow on 11 October.[61] Acting on instructions he had received back on 18 September, he sent an intelligence mission off to Chyhyryn which had just returned, after delivering to Khmelnytsky intelligence about Crimean affairs received in Vol'noe and requesting from the hetman reciprocal news. The mission brought a letter from Khmelnytsky confirming that he had told the Crimeans not to attack Muscovite territory but admitting that he had no control over the Nogais who were roaming in the steppe. Polish envoys had arrived in Chyhyryn where Khmelnytsky received them. The Vol'noe intelligencers were invited to dine with the envoys and the hetman and thus could report on their conversation, which concerned the sending of a mission to confirm the peace agreement with the Cossacks. The Vol'noe mission also picked up news from a Lithuanian priest in Chyhyryn that Jan Kazimierz had married and continued to observe Catholicism (at least one of the unreliable rumors Moscow had received earlier suggested he was planning to convert to Orthodoxy). In his conversation with the Poles, the hetman informed them that he had written off to the king of Hungary (by this was meant the Transylvanian Prince Rákóczi) telling him that on account of the peace signed with Poland, the agreement with the Hungarians for support was off.

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the last king in Poland, and that Aleksei of Moscow will attain the same fame as Alexander of Macedon' (p. 409). There was also a report of a pretender claiming to be the tsarevich of Kazan, who had turned up in Kiev showing a seal on which was embossed his title and had been asking Khmelnytsky for help. This may be a garbled reference to Timofei Ankudinov, a pretender to the Muscovite throne, whom Khmelnytsky would refuse to extradite to Moscow in 1650.

61. *VUR* 2: 287–291, No. 123. While there are many small towns named Vol'noe in Ukraine, presumably this is the one located at 50°25′40″ N. and 35°23′15″ E, to the SW of Khotmyzhsk. There is a brief entry on it in Semenov 1862–1885, 1: 543–544.

As a result, the Hungarians had gone home. An officer with the Cossacks informed the Vol'noe intelligencers about the hostility between the Polish king and both Wiśniowiecki and Radziwiłł. Wiśniowiecki was still at Zbarazh with a large force, requiring Khmelnytsky to retain a sizeable Tatar contingent until the peace agreement was confirmed. Another officer reported that at the instigation of the Ottoman sultan, there was a plan that Khmelnytsky and the Tatars were preparing to march against the Nogais.

Even though it is not clear how much of this information was to be trusted, the report is of some interest for the fact that the Vol'noe *voevoda* seems not to have been receiving all the support and instructions he wished from Moscow. For example, he had not been told, if he had to write off to his counterparts across the border, whether he should refer to the new King Jan Kazimierz in their titulature. So, lacking instructions, he was still referring to the now deceased King Władysław. And the most recent directive from Moscow, dated 23 September, informed him he should *not* be sending intelligence missions across the border, since that task now devolved upon the commandant in Putivl. This, he argued, made no sense for Vol'noe, since its location meant it could obtain news from across the border rapidly, and in any event he had to communicate with his counterparts on the other side about various disputes involving the merchants who traded there from Vol'noe. It was essential he have his own intelligence, especially any news of possible Tatar attacks, and not have to wait to receive it via Putivl, which was some 200 *versty* distant.

15.5. Grigorii Neronov's mission to Khmelnytsky

Exchanges with the Cossacks in this period most frequently seem to have been indirect, in the sense that communication would be between border commanders rather than by direct communication between Khmelnytsky and the tsar. With the Cossack military successes and the peace agreement which enhanced the position of Khmelnytsky, even if he was technically still in the service of the Polish king, there was a new context in which direct diplomacy was increasingly important. Khmelnytsky had already written to the tsar, affirming that he had no intention of attacking Muscovy. However, given rumors to the contrary, and in particular, concerned about the possibility that Tatar attacks on Muscovy might now resume, the Kremlin dispatched a formal mission to Chyhyryn. It was headed by Grigorii Oref'evich Neronov, identified by the hetman as a *dvorianin*, but his career so far has been impossible to trace. His second on the mission was a junior secretary of the Military Appointments Chancery, Grigorii Bogdanov, still early in what would be a long and distinguished career in government service (rising to the rank of state secretary; Demidova 2011: 74). In 1649–1650 Bogdanov would be sent on a mission to Lithuania and twice on missions to Khmelnytsky; his later service involved participation in missions to Courland, Sweden and Poland.

While the narrowly stated purpose of Neronov's mission was to deliver a letter from the tsar to the hetman, the instructions anticipated possible discussion of what the Kremlin considered were some important subjects (*VUR* 2, No. 117). The tsar wanted a

guarantee that the Tatars were being restrained from attacking Muscovite territory. The Cossacks might complain about Moscow's refusal to send military aid in the war against the Poles, but the Russians still were bound by their peace treaty with the Commonwealth. The Russians had at least responded positively in allowing cross-border trade, especially in territories that had been devastated by the fighting, where there were serious food shortages. The specific intelligence the mission was to gather included learning about the exact terms of the peace agreement with the king and details about the losses on both sides in the recent conflict. It was important to learn about the current disposition of the troops – whether the armies had dispersed and headed home or not. While Neronov seems not to have been given specific guidance on the matter, Khmelnytsky angrily (*serdito gorazdo*) raised in the discussions about his Tatar alliance the fact that the Don Cossacks had attacked his Crimean allies, which meant that now, having secured peace with the Poles, the Cossacks and Tatars were preparing to move against the Don Cossacks (*VUR* 2: 269–270). Neronov countered that the tsar had no control over what the Don Cossacks chose to do and emphasized that when the Poles had approached the tsar to support the Commonwealth against the Zaporozhians, he had refused. The hetman actually apologized for his outburst and agreed he would try to make peace between the Crimeans and the Don Cossacks. When Neronov questioned whether Khmelnytsky could get the Tatars to listen to him rather than obey the Ottoman sultan, the hetman insisted that the Tatars no longer were taking orders from Istanbul. Moreover, assuming that the peace with the Commonwealth was ratified by the Diet, the Cossacks with their Balkan allies might attack the Turks, who had been weakened by their losses in the war against Venice. In the letter to the tsar, which Khmelnytsky gave Neronov to take back to Moscow, the hetman provided assurances that he would settle the matter between the Tatars and Don Cossacks (*VUR* 2: 293). However, as he told Neronov, he was relying on the Russian envoy to transmit orally the other details of the discussions, which he did not want to put into writing.

The substance of these exchanges was at the core of Neronov's intelligence report, in which he emphasized the fact that the shared Orthodox belief of the Cossacks and Russians provided a kind of guarantee of the hetman's promises. He reported information that some of the Tatar forces still roamed in the northern part of the steppe, presumably so that they could rejoin Khmelnytsky's forces should the peace with Poland not be ratified. Khmelnytsky's chancery head (*pisar'*) Ivan Vykhovsky (Vygovskii) gave the Russian envoy a Ukrainian copy of the peace treaty with the Poles and told the Russian that Adam Kysil had been in Kiev, providing assurances that the terms of the treaty would be observed. Khmelnytsky also had received an envoy from Jeremi Wiśniowiecki, who was wanting to regain some of the towns which he had lost to the Cossacks. However, the hetman insisted that settling the matter would have to wait for the conclusion of the Diet. The Cossacks had informed the Ottoman sultan that they stood behind the Tatars in the event that the Ottomans decided to punish them for their disobedience. Given

this assurance, the Crimean khan had refused to turn over to the Ottomans his captives Potocki and Kalinowski and share any of the other booty that had been acquired in the recent campaign. Anticipating a renewal of hostilities, both the Commonwealth and the Cossacks with their allies already were gathering their forces. As the recent campaign had shown, the Cossacks and Tatars could be confident of success. The report contained information on the Cossack mission being sent to Warsaw to be present at the Diet and on another mission, sent to the Crimea. In conclusion Neronov reported that the devastation of the local economy and the continuing threat of Polish repression was encouraging many in the population to hope for Russian protection. Following his instructions, Neronov appended to his narrative an exact accounting of the distribution of gifts to the Cossacks and individuals along the way who had provided support or intelligence. He had been given a supply of sables to use for such purposes.

In a world where personal contacts and trust were often deemed the main guarantee that promises would be kept, Neronov's report may have inspired some confidence in Moscow that at least for the foreseeable future the southern borders would be secure, even if the tsar had made it clear he still had no intention of providing military support to the Cossacks. If Khmelnytsky's word could be trusted, the report cast doubt on intelligence forwarded from border commanders about some imminent attack by the Cossacks, and the Ambassadorial Chancery now had some information about Khmelnytsky's diplomatic initiatives. The reassurance regarding the Don Cossacks – who were important 'clients' of Moscow – was significant. All this said, it is important to appreciate how long it took for Neronov to complete his mission and report. He had left Moscow on 5 October, arrived in Putivl on the 23rd and reached Chyhyryn only on 19 November. His first meeting with Khmelnytsky was on 22 November, and he left for the return trip on 27 November, arriving in Putivl on 19 December and finally in Moscow on 30 December. Well before he returned, back on 16 November, the Ambassadorial Chancery had received what seems to have been accurate translations of the Zboriv peace documents. Thus the copy of the king's agreement with the Cossacks which Neronov had acquired was irrelevant.

15.6. Reflections on the value of foreign news in diplomatic reports

Our analysis of news acquisition by the Muscovite government in 1648–1649 focused initially on the diplomatic mission to Stockholm in 1649, of particular interest for its regular acquisition, selection and translation from one of the important newspapers published in Hamburg. Analysis of this material provides a window not only into the interests of the Russian diplomats (and by extension, we assume, their superiors in Moscow) but also a measure of the degree to which news from Eastern Europe made it into the Western press. Accurate as some of that news was, by itself it could not have given the policy makers in the Kremlin a solid understanding of the real crisis which had unfolded in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and had the potential to threaten the

security of the Muscovite state. This then poses the question of what other sources the tsar and his ministers were tapping in order to learn exactly what was happening in Poland politically and about the growing rebellion which spread through much of Ukraine and was finding even broader support throughout the state. The frequency with which reports arrived in Moscow from the commanders on the western and southern frontier is impressive, although the considerable variation in the reliability of what they learned must have presented a significant challenge to the recipients in the Kremlin who wanted to know what *really* was happening. Short-lived intelligence missions across the border certainly had their limitations. Diplomatic missions had the potential to provide correctives and learn the facts, although much depended on the abilities of the envoys and the degree to which they could cultivate reliable informants. Whether or not any such information would be of particular use very much depended too on how quickly it was received. Whether and how it then was used is, of course, one of the central concerns here.

Three Muscovite diplomatic missions which have been of particular interest to us returned to the Russian capital within weeks of each other in December 1649. The first to return was the mission headed by Boris Pushkin that had been sent to Stockholm, which had arrived at Pechory near the border west of Pskov on 23 November but may not have reached Moscow until 20 December.[62] Having left Viaz'ma on 29 December in the evening, Grigorii Kunakov probably arrived in Moscow on the 30th – by an interesting coincidence the day when Grigorii Neronov returned from his mission to Chyhyryn. So here we have in the news reports of the three missions a snapshot for a quite narrow chronological window of what the Ambassadorial Chancery might have learned from them, what the strengths and weaknesses of that information were, and the degree to which the reports complemented one another. While these missions were able to send to Moscow some news gathered when they were on the way abroad, they had no means of communicating regularly once well cross the border. All of the detailed intelligence they were about to obtain could be communicated only upon return, filed with their end-of-mission reports. Thus, only what they had learned on the eve of departure for home might be relatively recent when it reached Moscow.

The Stockholm mission accomplished its primary task of negotiating the border disputes and reaffirming the peace treaty with Sweden. Even though its diligence in mining the Hamburg newspaper stands out when compared with what we learn about other efforts by the Russian government to keep informed from the Western press, the delay in receiving the selected translations would have rendered most of them to be of little use. The focus of much of the news on the negotiations at Nürnberg surely was of interest, but even if current, what was essential to know – whether Sweden's long conflict on the

62. The full text of the end-of-mission report or other documents should contain the arrival date. One of the archival files with documents pertaining to the embassy gives a terminal date of 20 December (see the inventory, RGADA, f. 96 [Swedish affairs], *Opis'* 1, 1649, fol. 104, No. 2). Presumably the report would have been filed without delay on their return, which in any event would be unlikely to have antedated, say, the second week in December.

Continent was finally settled – was a matter that could easily have been distilled without getting lost in the details. The Nürnberg settlement was being celebrated not long before the Russians left Stockholm and thus ceased to have regular access to the Hamburg papers (or whatever the Swedish government officials might have told them). Yet the settlement reached at Nürnberg in September 1649 still seems not to have resulted in a de facto resolution of all the tensions and military confrontations. In fact many issues remained to be negotiated, with a second treaty concluded only in June 1650. Even though cryptic, what Kunakov would learn in Poland in response to the question in his instructions about Swedish-Imperial relations suggested that the conflict was ongoing for reasons he could not tell. The Russians in Sweden translated most, but not all of the articles published in the Hamburg paper with news out of Poland, news which seems to have come from a reliable source at the Polish court. However, what the newspaper told about the rebellion that was shaking the Commonwealth often was very generalized, being far removed from the action in the south and filtered through a Polish lens.

Much more detail regarding the events in Ukraine and involving the Cossacks and Tatars was to be had from the regular reports of the border commandants. However, to a considerable degree the perspective on what they received was that of Lithuanians or Cossacks hostile to the Poles, and all too often unverifiable and unreliable rumor distorted the information. Interestingly, even given the relative proximity of those border observation points to the places where much of the action was occurring, by the time the intelligence agents returned and their news made it to Moscow, it might be just as dated as news from Poland was for readers in Hamburg or Stockholm. A formal diplomatic mission such as that by Neronov might be expected to provide more authoritative information, but it was unreasonable to assume Khmelnytsky would be totally honest in what he told the Russians. What Neronov reported, apart from the hetman's reassurances, contained little that the Kremlin would not have already known from other sources, even though there was much more detail and substance to the information than what made it into the Hamburg press. From Putivl to Chyhyryn and back to Putivl took Neronov nearly two and a half months, with another week and a half for him to arrive back in Moscow. The round trip by Kunakov, with its somewhat circuitous delays, took just as long. The ability of an envoy to supply key information was limited by when he left the host polity for home. Thus, neither of these envoys could report on whether the Diet had ratified the peace. The information obtained in Chyhyryn contained only the assurances Kysil had provided in Kiev that the agreement would hold, and the Cossack envoys to the Diet were not even yet there. The news from Warsaw was hardly cause for optimism about the outcome of the Diet's deliberations, given the strong hostility the king's agreement with the Cossacks had provoked. Only with some difficulty did the king get the Diet to ratify the agreements. Certainly the difficulties he was encountering in the Diet, as Kunakov had emphasized, would have alerted the tsar that the peace might be short-lived. As Neronov reported, the next phase of open conflict seemed imminent.

There is always the possibility that the quality and depth of the intelligence such diplomatic missions gathered was a function of the experience and prior knowledge of those who staffed them. In this regard, it would seem that the mission to Stockholm, as a high-level embassy, had a particularly capable staff, one that was diligent in arranging for a regular news source and was careful in selecting from it what might be important. However, for the most part, given the somewhat narrow focus of the negotiations on border issues, those discussions were not conducive to exchanging information on broader European political issues. While we know little about Neronov's qualifications, his instructions and end-of-mission report suggest that he had been provided with ample background and instructions for the mission and was careful to follow his orders. His mission too was in a sense quite narrowly focused, but it did at least involve direct concern over key issues of stability along the southern and western frontiers. His responses to what those instructions specified about news gathering are, however, rather cryptic, compared to the way Kunakov responded to his directives about intelligence gathering in Poland.

Kunakov's reports in many ways are exceptional, when compared even much more broadly with what most Muscovite envoys communicated on their return from abroad. Surely one reason for his success in obtaining information on his two missions in 1649 was the fact that he had on one prior occasion already been to Poland and seems therefore to have established contacts which could serve him in good stead when he returned. But there is more here, which has to be a function of the breadth and depth of his interests, reflected in his writing coherent narratives about events, containing some historical perspective and displaying an analytical mind. For the most part, he was not just cutting and pasting short summaries of what one or another informant told him, although he did some of that too. In addition, evidence for the breadth of his purview lies in the fact that he brought back to Moscow a number of substantial publications, presumably because he sought them out. They suggest he knew something about what could be of interest, and of interest not necessarily because it might contribute to Russian knowledge of political or military news about a foreign country. Arguably, he occupies a significant place amongst those who at mid-century contributed to Russian knowledge of Polish publications, even if, as it turns out, the use the Diplomatic Chancery made of the books he acquired may seem to us disappointing.

15.7. Kunakov and Polish publications in Moscow: implications for the broader cultural transformation of late Muscovy

The ability of the Muscovite government to shape foreign policy depended on much more than the acquisition of current news about other states, their diplomacy and wars. A substantial body of scholarship has explored the ways in which the acquisition and translation of foreign books in Muscovy had the potential to change the cultural orientation of the elite. Books that we might categorize as 'history' or 'geography', to use modern categories of knowledge, certainly were important. However, there could be

many other genres of writing which could help provide an understanding of the culture in foreign countries and at least in theory thus would have broadened the perspectives of those who formulated foreign policy at the Muscovite court. In addition to their obligation to provide intelligence about current events, at least some Russian envoys were also actively obtaining foreign publications of other kinds and bringing them back to Moscow. Grigorii Kunakov was one such individual, whose contribution to the range of Polish publications that reached Moscow can be documented and seems to have been significant.[63]

As we have seen in other cases, the inventories of the diplomatic files in the Moscow archive, compiled in the early nineteenth century by Nikolai Bantysh-Kamenskii, may provide evidence that makes it possible to connect individually listed items with one another. That is, to the degree that Bantysh-Kamenskii listed and numbered items sequentially in the order in which they had been pasted into the original archival scrolls, proximity of those items may suggest a connection between them. However, this is by no means an absolute rule. In his organizing and registering of the archival documents, in some cases he seems to have repositioned individual items, especially if they contained dates that would place them even in a different year or a file for a different country. The same kind of process also seems to have operated back in the seventeenth century. The chancery functionaries might paste a document into a scroll simply in the sequential order in which it had been received. Alternatively, they might include it in the files for the country of origin, since that way its subject matter might ensure that it could more easily be located for reference. It is important to keep these general considerations in mind as we explore the evidence regarding the Polish books we connect with Kunakov's activities.

There seems good reason to suppose that even on his first mission to Poland he acquired and brought back some books. Listed in Bantysh-Kamenskii's archival inventory for what is now f. 79 (Polish affairs) is a file (No. 22) containing the documents specific to Kunakov's mission, their date range 22 November 1646 until 26 February 1647.[64] The next item (No. 23), dated just December, is an excerpt about an agreement for the coordinated Russian and Polish military actions against the Crimean Tatars. The next two items (both missing their beginnings) are No. 24, 'Translation of the Polish constitution of 1646' and No. 25, 'Translation from a printed ceremonial on the entry into Warsaw of Ludovika Maria, Princess of Mantua, and on her marriage with Polish King Wladyslaw'. All of these texts (Nos. 22–25) apparently were in a single scroll – No. 34 – at the time Bantysh-Kamenskii inventoried them. While only a comparison of texts could provide real proof, it seems most likely that the translations listed as Nos. 24 and 25 were respectively from *Konstytucye Seymu walnego Koronnego Sześcniedzielnego Warszawskiego Roku Pańskiego M.DC.XLVI dniá 5 miesiąca Decembrá* and *Ingres*

63. The material in this section complements Jansson and Waugh 2023, which focuses on the identity of the books Kunakov acquired and discusses what is known about their translations.

64. RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1646, fol. 157, No. 22.

tryumfalny do Warszawy Nayiasnieyszey Ludowiki Maryi de Gonzage… w roku 1646. dnia 10 Marca…[65]

The normal practice in Poland was to publish a 'constitution' summarizing the results from each meeting of the Diet, the date of the one here coinciding with the period of Kunakov's mission. This was not the first or last instance in the seventeenth century when the Ambassadorial Chancery obtained copies of these constitutions.[66] At very least here we have a reasonable hypothesis that Kunakov could have brought the sources for these two translations back to Moscow in February 1647. We know that a tattered copy of the published Polish Constitution for the Diet of 1646 seems still to have been in the archive containing the books of the Ambassadorial Chancery in the eighteenth century.[67] On his next mission to Poland, Kunakov acquired other publications printed by Elert in Warsaw. The Polish constitutions were studied carefully in Moscow, since they contained the formal record of the decisions by the Diet. Later, in negotiations with the Poles at Vilna in August 1656, the Russian envoys cited a Polish constitution as an indication of obligations undertaken at the Diet by the king, which the Russians now were claiming needed to be carried out.[68] In subsequent negotiations at Vilna in 1658, the

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65. Both of these were published by Piotr Elert in Warsaw, 1646 (see the entries in Estreicher 20: 53–54 and 17: 233). It also would be important to see Kunakov's end-of-mission report, which has not been published, since it may well contain some notation referring to the books in question and in any event would be of interest for his intelligence report. Zawadzki (2002: 371–373) reprints the text of *Ingres tryumfalny*.

66. The manuscript inventory for the Polish Affairs *fond* lists a number of files containing either copies of the constitutions of the Polish Diets or information about their proceedings. RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1: 1639, fol. 138, No. 4, dated 16 November (the date of the beginning of the Diet?) lists: 'Copy from the transcript of the six-week Diet which was in Warsaw'; ibid., 1641, fol. 141, No. 8, dated 28 November: 'Arrival in Moscow from Poland of the merchant of the *gostinaia sotnia* [a privileged corporation] Aleksandr Bayev; his deposition about news there and translations from the constitution of that year which he handed over and other notes which had been provided him by the Hungarian correspondent'; a possibly related text, ibid., 1640, fol. 139^{v}, No. 5: 'List of the senators, magnates, bishops, castellans, officials and other ranks.' The Russian mission to Poland in 1653 acquired a copy of the 'konstitutsiia nyneshniago 161 goda' (Belokurov 1898: 34). The archival inventory (RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 177^{v}, No. 5) lists 'May 19. Constitution with a translation of the two-week Diet which took place in Warsaw,' which must be either the translation or the original of *Konstytucye u uchwała seymu walnego Koronnego dwuniedzielnego w Warszawie, roku pańskiego MDCLV dnia 19 Maia odprawionego*. Warsaw: Elert [*1655*] (cited by Estreicher 20: 55). There also is a Kraków edition published by the heirs of Andrzej Piotrkowczyk jr. The inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1659, fol. 193, No. 11 lists: 'June. Printed constitution of the Warsaw Diet,' and No. 12 '10 June. Translation of the constitution of the Warsaw Diet.' RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1661, fol. 198, No. 11 lists: '11 May. Printed constitution of the Warsaw Diet, missing its beginning and end.'

67. 'Polish constitution of 1646 in Polish, entirely tattered [*vetkha*]' (Belokurov 1898: 40–41, No. 28). He suggests, probably erroneously, that this entry may refer to a different book surveying Polish constitutions published in 1644.

68. See *RUD*: 161. The inventory for what the Russian mission took to Vilna lists it as a 'Polish constitution, beginning from King Sigismund Augustus in 1550 up to Jan Kazimierz in 1649' (Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 174). So far we have been unable to identify a Polish imprint with exactly this content. The book in question is part of a very large collection of materials from the Russian archives which the negotiators had taken along to Vilna.

Russian mission learned about the agreement reached at that year's Diet regarding the tsar's succession to the Polish throne.[69]

Russian interest in and exposure to Western court ceremonial and commemorative events was longstanding and worth some comment in order to contextualize the possible appeal of the booklet about the marriage of Maria Louise of Gonzaga to King Władysław IV which had taken place some months prior to Kunakov's mission. Marriage politics in the seventeenth century were important in international relations and a matter of serious concern for potential allies or adversaries. One of the more interesting episodes of the actual participation of a Muscovite envoy in a Polish marriage ceremony involved Afanasii Vlas'ev, who was in Kraków in 1605 during the betrothal ceremony for the pretender Dmitrii and the wedding of King Sigismund III to Constance of Austria.[70] The marriage of Sigismund's son and successor King Władysław to Archduchess Cecilia Renata in 1637 reaffirmed the close ties between Warsaw and Vienna, much to the consternation of France. While no Russians attended the wedding, the Russian embassy headed by Stepan Proestev, which left for Warsaw in February 1638, was charged with bringing wedding gifts to the king (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 3: 120). They were in Poland for the festivities at the closing of the annual Diet, attended an opera performance, and may have been responsible for bringing back to Moscow, where it was translated, a publication celebrating the marriage.[71] It covered both the proxy wedding in Vienna in August 1637, the bride's ceremonial entrance into Warsaw and the wedding there on 12 September with details about the wedding presents the couple received.[72] When Cecilia Renata

69. The Diet of 1658 dealt with a number of issues relevant for Russian foreign policy (Floria 2010: 388–392; Kobzareva 1998: 217). The negotiators at Vilna learned about its decisions from a Russian courier who had been in Warsaw and was returning to Moscow at the end of July. The proceedings of this Diet apparently were translated soon after their receipt in Moscow. See the archival inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1658, fol. 191^{v}, No. 14: '15 August. Translation of the convocation of the Warsaw Diet'.

70. Martin 2021: 120–126; Jensen et al. 2021: 30–31.

71. On the attendance at the opera, see Jensen et al. 2021: 33–34.

72. The manuscript inventory, RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1638, fol. 137^{v}, No. 11 describes the text: 'Opisanie poezdki polskogo korolevicha Kazimera brata polskogo korolia Vladislava chetvertogo v Venu dlia priniatii v supruzhestvo oznachennomu koroliu korolevy Renaty Sitsilii, tut zhe opisanie vsego tseremoniala korolevina priezda iz Veny v Varshavu i venchaniia v Varshave s korolem, i davannykh im podarkov.' There were several contemporary publications in Latin and in German about the marriage, but so far we have not found one in Polish, and none of the extant booklets would seem to match precisely what the Russians translated. Obviously we would need to see the text in the archival file to judge. In terms of its scope, covering fully the Austrian part of the ceremonies and the journey, the most extensive account is in a long German verse, attributed to Hans Jacob Schülpli: *Kurtze/ Eygentliche und Warhaffte Beschreibung/ Waß sich verloffnen 1637. Jahr bey abholung der Durchleuchtigsten Großmächtigsten Fürstin unnd Frawen/ Frawen Caeciliae Renatae, Zu Polen und Schweden Königin/ [et]c.* [...] *So wol allhie zu Wienn/ als auch in wehrender Raiß nacher Warschaw/ zugetragen* [...] Vienna: Rickhes, 1638 (VD17 12:637727Q). There is a German prose narrative, known in two different printings: *Kurtze Relation und Beschreibung deren ding/ so sich bey deß* [...] *Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Vladislai Quarti Zu Pollen und Schweden Königs/ [et]c. Und Der Durchleuchtigisten/ Großmächtigisten Fürstin und Frawen/ Frawen Caeciliae Renatae* [...] *Als beeder Hochzeitlichen Personen Königlichen Ehrentag verloffen*. N.p., 1637 (VD17 12:189755H; for

died in childbirth in March 1644, the king immediately sent a messenger to Moscow with the news (ibid.: 122).

On 25 August 1645 (O.S.), another messenger from Warsaw arrived to inform the Russians that the king was preparing to marry Marie Louise, Princess of Mantua, who had been considered earlier but rejected in favor of Cecilia Renata (ibid.: 124). By all accounts Marie Louise (rechristened Ludwika Maria) was one of the most influential women at the seventeenth-century courts.[73] Well prior to the death of Cecilia Renata, she had maintained Polish connections via Władysław's brother and the future Polish king, Jan Kazimierz. Her marriage to Władysław represented a diplomatic coup for the French and thus seems to have attracted a great deal of attention. Soon after Władysław's death in 1648 she married Jan Kazimierz, and down to her death in 1667 she played an active role in Polish politics. The interest we have already noted on the part of the Russians concerning where the queen was immediately after Władysław's death suggests that already at that point they had some appreciation of her importance.

It is likely that a text, yet unpublished, in the Polish Affairs files describes the entry of the Polish mission into Paris to celebrate Marie Louise's wedding contract (in November 1645), an event that was depicted in at least one contemporary engraving.[74] She then processed via Danzig to Warsaw for the actual wedding on 10 March 1646. Her progress was followed in the newspapers, including ones translated in the *kuranty*. The Amsterdam *TVQ* 1646/2, published on 13 January 1646 (N.S.), reported her reception in Harderwijk (east of Amsterdam) on 9 January and departure for Zwolle on the 11th. The Dutch merchant Pieter de la Dale delivered this newspaper to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 9 April (O.S.), when it was translated.[75] On 5 June, the secretary of the Swedish resident Krusebjörn delivered to the chancery printed news sheets (presumably in Dutch), which were duly translated, with a report from Danzig dated 8 February about the arrival of an honor guard and large suite of nobles headed by the king's brother Karol Ferdynand (identified simply as the prince Karl), in anticipation of Marie Louise's arrival at a convent outside the city on the 11th. It was now set that the wedding festivities (*vesele*) would take place in Kraków after Easter. The formal marriage ceremony was in Warsaw on 10 March (N.S.); Easter that year was on 1 April. Of course this news arrived in Mos-

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the other edition, in Straubing by Haan, VD17 12:653316T, with the possibly erroneous date on the title page, 1673 instead of 1637). This prose account deals only with the final stages of the entry into Warsaw and the ceremony and festivities but does not include anything like a listing of gifts.

73. See Kalwat 2011; Frost 2013.

74. The entry in the inventory (RGADA f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1645, fol. 152v, No. 20), under 3 November 1645, reads: 'Description of the ceremonial entrance of the Polish envoys into the city of Paris.' The possible Polish source for this text (a translation published by Elert in Warsaw) is in an appendix to Zawadski 2002: 364–370. For a copy of the engraving, with the space for the descriptive caption left blank, see https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.41800.html.

75. The translation is in V-K III: 66–69, No. 19.316–329, with the text about Marie Louise (referred to simply as the Polish queen) on p. 69, fol. 328. There is no extant copy of *TVQ* to check, but the translation includes a complete colophon which confirms that it was the source.

cow well after the wedding had taken place.[76] Another belatedly translated report from Danzig, dated 16 February, described in general terms her reception by the king's brother Jan Kazimierz and all the leading burghers, and a curious 'secret' meeting arranged between her with the elector of Brandenburg and his attendants, who wore disguise so as not to be recognized.[77] A second article in this set of translations, datelined Danzig 1 April, reported the Muscovite envoy's presentation in Warsaw of gifts and appropriate congratulations to the king (fol. 240).

FIG. 15.1. Bartolomäus Milwitz, Entry of Queen Marie Louise of Gonzaga into Danzig, 11 February 1646.

Danzig seems to have gone overboard in celebrating Marie Louise's arrival, the festivities including the erecting of processional gates with displays of the heroes of Classical Antiquity and abundant panegyrics in Latin verse.[78] Contemporary paintings attributed to Bartholomäus Milwitz depicted her procession into the city [FIG 15.1]. The Dutch engraver and cartographer Willem Hondius, who lived in Danzig, produced engravings of the processional gates. We have no evidence to suggest that any of the Russian officials in Moscow would have learned the details of all the

76. V-K III: 79, No. 22.245. The officials in Moscow receiving the foreign news might have been puzzled about the expectations that the marriage even could take place. A report from Danzig dated 7 February (its source and date of receipt in Moscow not specified) stated that the king was seriously ill and had to abandon a planned trip to Malbork, presumably to meet his bride coming from Danzig. The report suggested that the news would not be a source of joy in Danzig, although it might be in Warsaw, apparently because there was open discontent amongst the magnates. See V-K III: 76, No. 21.196.

77. Assuming the heading at the beginning of V-K III: 55–64, No. 17 applies to the entire translation, it was made on 1 June from printed news sheets received from Pskov. The sources included the Hamburg *WZ* and the Dutch papers *ESC* and *TVQ*. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to identify the source for the Danzig report (p. 63, fols. 237–238), though it seems most likely to have been a Dutch newspaper.

78. The most substantial publication about the Danzig reception, which includes descriptions of all the imagery and inscriptions, is *Kurtze Beschreibung und Entwurff alles dessen was bey … Frewlein Ludovicae Mariae Gonzagae/ Hertzogin zu Mantua und Nivers* […] *geschehenen Einzuge in die Königl: Stadt Dantzig/ sich denckwürdiges begeben/ und zugetragen* […] Danzig: Rhete, [1646] (VD17 23:233947N). The prolific Rhete publishers in Danzig produced other works celebrating the occasion. See VD17 23:323489A and VD17 32:675606T. For the contemporary images, see Jarosław Pietrzak, "Francuzka w Polsce: Wjazd Ludwiki Marii do Gdańska w 1646 r. z okazji jej zaślubin z Władysławem IV", online at https://www.historiaposzukaj.pl/wiedza,wydarzenia,370,wjazd_ludwiki_marii_do_gdanska.html.

pomp, their information perhaps limited to the short descriptions in the newspapers. However, it is possible that some of the foreign merchants in Moscow, who had agents in Danzig, would have known more. Numerous contemporary publications reported the future queen's arrival in Warsaw and celebrated the wedding, one being the *Ingres tryumfalny* cited earlier. Whether that was the exact source for the translated text about her entrance into the city and the wedding is uncertain. At very least we can be sure the Kremlin did obtain a description of the events in the Polish capital, whether or not Kunakov was the one responsible for acquiring it.

In March 1649, returning from his second mission to Poland, Kunakov brought several books. One of them was a copy of *Dwor cesarza tureckiego* (The Court of the Turkish Sultan), a popular work derived from an Italian original, whose Polish translation by Szymon Starowolski provided the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow with what was arguably its most extensive description of the Ottoman court and capital. The book was translated by Ivan Maksimov, at the time the only Polish-language specialist on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery, who would be assigned to the important embassy to Poland headed by Grigorii Pushkin in 1650. Several other Russian translations of Starowolski were produced during the seventeenth century.[79] Even though *Dwor* does not deal with the larger administrative structures in the Ottoman Empire, it contains a lot of detail about the palace and its functionaries and a physical description of the city as well as some of its important architectural monuments. Its explanations of Muslim religious observances are generally respectful in tone. In his introduction and dedication to the book, Starowolski emphasized the value of travel to various countries for someone who would then return home and play an important role in government.[80] He justified his choice of an Italian source by indicating that Poles who had been in the Ottoman Empire had not observed the customs and institutions there as closely as had the Italians. Presumably an analogous rationale could have been adduced for the decision to render the book into Russian, although there was a long history of Russian missions to Istanbul and there were frequent reports arriving in Moscow from clerics, merchants, and former captives who had been there.

Very likely Kunakov's acquisition of the book and its translation in Moscow can be explained by the heightened concern to avoid being drawn into a war against the Ottomans and the steady stream of news about the Turks being obtained from various

79. On Starowolski's work and its translations, see Waugh 1972: 221–238, 414–423, 606–632; Małek 2018; Jansson 2019a, 2019b. Jansson's Uppsala dissertation will provide a new and authoritative treatment of the material. See also Nikolaev 2008: 97–101 for a bibliography listing manuscript copies of the translations. Baranowski (1950, Ch. 16) situates Starowolski's book in the broader context of Polish knowledge about the Turks in the seventeenth century.

80. At one time a secretary to Crown hetman Jan Chodkiewicz, who died in the battle of Cecora in 1620, Starowolski became a cleric in the Kraków cathedral. His widely ranging publications included panegyrics about victories over the Turks, and he even translated from Latin one of the earliest collections of apocryphal letters of the sultan. As we shall see, copies of such apocrypha were already being obtained in Moscow in the 1640s. For bibliography of his publications, see Estreicher 29: 186–215.

sources. News of the coup in Istanbul which overthrew Sultan Ibrahim and brought to the throne Mehmet IV in early August 1648 probably would have arrived in Moscow before Kunakov's departure for Poland at the end of the year.[81] The coup was mentioned briefly in a report datelined Venice 3 September in the Amsterdam *ODC* 1648/39. The coup was reported in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1648/ 39 (printed 26 September) and 41 (10 October; articles from Venice dated 1/11 and 15/25 September). Possibly the source for the Venice report of 1/11 also served for a report dated 11 September from Venice in the Leipzig *Wochentliche Zeitung* 1648/152. The Leipzig paper included additional mentions of the coup in a couple of other numbers. However, none of these newspapers seem to have made much of the political upheaval, given the focus of their news about the Ottoman-Venetian war for Crete. The extant *kuranty* for this period have gaps for the key dates when any such reports might have been received and translated in Moscow. On 29 December 1648, the Ambassadorial Chancery received from the Dutch merchant Jacob van der Hulst a copy of the Amsterdam *OMC* 1648/48, published 24 November, from which a report dated Venice 4 November contained news of continuing political upheavals in the Ottoman capital in the days or weeks after the actual coup (V-K IV: 75, No. 7.210–211).

A second book brought back from Poland by Kunakov in March 1649 was a eulogy to King Władysław IV, published in 1648 by Jan Alexander Gorczyn.[82] Ivan Maksimov was responsible for its translation, apparently produced as part of the preparation for the Pushkin embassy to Poland, which departed from Moscow on 8 January 1650. A collection of excerpts from Polish publications which that mission was to take along included selections from Gorczyn's book (*AIuZR* 3: 437). Since Gorczyn had drawn on a number of standard histories, despite its heavily panegyrical tone, his work presumably would have added to Muscovite knowledge about Poland.[83] Naturally the authorities in

81. A Muscovite envoy in Istanbul, who had been detained there by the Ottoman officials, was allowed to leave on the accession of Sultan Mehmet IV in August; however, he did not make it back to Moscow until December 1649 (Smirnov 1946, 2: 93). So far we have not found any reports sent to Moscow from the south with news of the coup, but the published records are very incomplete.

82. *Pamięc o cnotach, szczęsciv, dzielnosci, naiasnieyszego y niezwyciezonego monarchy Władysława IV* [...] Kraków: Bertutowić, 1648. On Gorczyn, see *Bibliografia* 1963–1965, 2/2: 206–208. Gorczyn later was one of the publishers of the first (and short-lived) Polish newspaper in 1661. A file of the newspaper, *Merkuriusz Polski*, for January through July 1661 has been preserved in the Russian archives, along with the issues of the seventeenth-century Dutch and German newspapers which were the primary sources for the *kuranty*. However, there is no indication of when and how the Polish newspaper issues were obtained. See the typed inventory, RGADA, f. 155, *Opis'* 2: fols. 1–3.

83. Kunakov is also credited with having acquired in Poland (during which of his missions is not specified) an important historical work by Paweł Piasiecki, *Chronica gestorum in Europa singularium recentiorum, ad annum Christi 1646*. Kraków, 1645 [published in 1646]. Apparently a full translation of it was made into Russian, and there is a collection of translated excerpts whose focus was on the Polish intervention in the Muscovite Time of Troubles and the effort by King Sigismund III to place his son Władysław (the future King Władysław IV) on the Russian throne. Unlike with the excerpts from Gorczyn, there is no evidence that those excerpts were among the 'insulting' texts taken along to Warsaw by the Pushkin embassy in 1650. What had happened to the copy of Piasiecki acquired by Kunakov is uncertain, since the government instructed the embassy headed by Prince Repnin-Obolenskii to

Moscow would have been interested in whatever claims the book might make that would be unacceptable and demeaning. However, there is ample evidence that the Russian government had been anxious to learn the exact details regarding the death of a king who at one time had been a claimant to the Russian throne and with whom there was now some history of interaction, once he had succeeded his father in Poland. It is worth remembering that when Kunakov left Moscow at the end of December 1648, the Kremlin still was waiting for confirmation about the results of the election Diet.

Whether or not foreign governments addressed the tsar with his proper titles was a constant concern in Moscow and often the subject of acrimonious exchanges in diplomatic relations. Many documents listed in the Polish Affairs files of the Ambassadorial Chancery contain complaints lodged against the Commonwealth's border officials in their exchanges with their Russian counterparts.[84] The local officials involved may not have known the proper forms or simply may have deemed the matter unimportant, even though Moscow took it seriously. There also are compendia drawn from such documents and other correspondence, presumably pulled together as evidence that diplomats could present to the officials of the Commonwealth to demand that the oversights be corrected.[85] The Russians consistently claimed that such offenses were contrary to the provisions of the Polianovka peace treaty, signed at the end of the Smolensk War in 1634. Apart from titulature, references to Muscovy in foreign publications also were scrutinized for possible instances where they were deemed offensive. These could involve descriptions of past events or contemporary news reports. The Polish mission to Moscow in August 1649 had failed to obtain confirmation of the existing peace between the two states when the negotiations collapsed over a dispute concerning the tsar's titles. Kunakov's mission to Poland in autumn was to inform the Poles about the impending arrival of a high-level Russian mission, headed by Grigorii Pushkin, which would make another attempt to confirm the peace treaty. On its agenda too was the issue of titulature and allegedly offensive references to Russia in Polish books.

Poland in 1653 to acquire a copy of the book. For the history of the book in Russia, see Belokurov 1898: 33–34; Lukichev and Morozov 1994: 139–140; Bulanin et al. 2004; Nikolaev 2008: 85.

84. The handwritten inventory for RGADA, f. 79 (Polish Affairs), *Opis'* 1, for almost every year starting in the 1630s includes descriptive, somewhat formulaic entries, for the documents relating to border communication, where one of the subjects invariably concerns the omission or incorrect rendering of the tsar's titles. For example, 1638, fol. 136, No. 2: 'Otpiski v Posolskoi prikaz ot raznykh rossiiskikh porubezhnykh s Polsheiu gorodov voevod [...] o chinimom s polskoi storony propusk v gramotakh titula gosudareva [...]' For such files in subsequent years, see fols. 138, 139, 140, 142, 145, 154.

85. In the same inventory for RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1635, fol. 129^{v}, No. 18, covering 27 October 1635–1650, 'Rospis' gramot polskogo korolia Vladislava i polskikh voevod prisylaemym k Gosudariam...s pokazaniem propisi ili nespravki gosudarevykh titulov uchinennykh posle vechnago mira.' Presumably this document was created for the Pushkin embassy to Warsaw in 1650. For a text that probably was created to be taken by the next Russian mission to Warsaw in 1653, see ibid., fol. 130^{v}, also under 1635, but with a header indicating a date range of 1635–1652: 'Vypiska o oshibkakh v gosudarskom titule poliakam sdelannykh.' Listed under 1645 (fol. 153) is what seems to have been a major compilation of such evidence: 'Rospis' 76ti listam pisannym s 1638 goda ot polskikh i litovskikh pogranichnykh voevod k rossiiskim voevodam, v koikh pisan gosudarev titul nespravedlivo i s oshibkami.'

On 1 January 1650, Kunakov handed in (presumably to the Ambassadorial Chancery) five books 'printed in Polish with Latin' (*pechatany po Pol'ski s Latynskim*) which a document lists along with the notations as to whether they contained anything pertaining to the Muscovite state.[86] Probably the notations had been quickly added by the translator(s) in the chancery, the work done in the week prior to the departure of the Pushkin embassy. The books were the following:

- Wojciech Cieciszewski, *Expeditia Zoborwska, Szczęśliwie dokończona. Przy obecnośći rycerstwá Obozow, Zborowskiego y Zbaraskiego* (Warszawa: Elert, 1649).
- P. Vi. We. *Lekarstwo na uzdrowienie Rzeczypospolitey. Z Uniwersałem Poborowym ná zbytki utráty y niepotrzebne wystáwy domowe* (Kraków: Kupisz, 1649).
- Woyciech Cieciszewski, *Obrona Pokoiv V ludźi dobrych ználeźiona, W dźień Wszytkich Swiętych, W Kośćiele Fárskim Wárszáwskim* (Warszawa: Elert, 1649).
- *Wyprawa Plebanska Albertusa Ná Woyne…Teraz świeżo Wydrukowana* ([Kraków], 1649).
- *Albertus z Woyny… Teraz świeżo Wydrukowany* ([Kraków], 1649).

The two booklets by the Jesuit Doctor of Theology Wojciech Cieciszewski are sermons, or the equivalent religious tracts. The first, for the 15th Sunday after Pentecost (5 September 1649, N.S.) celebrates in Liviv the 'fortunate' conclusion of the Zboriv expedition, in the presence of the soldiers from the Zboriv and Zbarazh camps. The second of Cieciszewski's booklets is a sermon delivered on All Saints' Day (1 November) in Warsaw, based on the beatitude 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (Matthew 5:9). Presumably the intent was to encourage ratification of the Zboriv peace. There seems to be little here that could have been of much interest in Moscow. Whoever annotated Kunakov's list identified only one passage in *Expeditia* as somehow relevant for mentioning Muscovy. In *Obrona*, apparently nothing was of interest: 'And there is nothing concerning the Muscovite state written in this booklet.' The annotator of Kunakov's books also found nothing relevant to Muscovite concerns in *Lekarstwo*, which is a reprint of a satirical exposé of the ostentatious extravagance of the nobility, published in 1603 by Piotr Wężyk Widawski.[87] The two Albertus booklets contain comical verses about a fictitious parish peasant who was conscripted into the army to fight the Tatars and then bumbled his way through the war, in the process avoiding any fighting, living off the land by stealing and boasting about his deeds. He is a Polish version of the Good Soldier Švejk or, in a rather benign way, Falstaff's Pistol and Bardolph. It is no surprise that the annotators of Kunakov's list found nothing in the books that seemed offensive to Muscovite honor.

86. *AIuZR* 3: 416–417. The list describes the books as 'tetradi', which was a standard kind of reference for quires or pamphlets. Although six *tetradi* are mentioned, two of them in fact refer to the first book by Cieciszewksi. So there is no 'sixth title' here, only five.

87. On Widawski, see the bibliographic entry in *Bibliografia* 1963–1965, 3: 387; for details of his biography, see Kraushar 1894, 1: 87–152, a major part of which is extended quotation from the 1603 edition of Widawski's book: *Exorbitantiae albo o rzeczach w każdym królestwie i we wszelkiej rzeczypospolitej szkodliwych, na które ani prawa, ani winy żadnej nie masz* (Krakow: Łazarzow).

This list of books acquired in Moscow on 1 January 1649 from Kunakov raises some questions: Why these books? Disparate as they may seem in genre and content, is there anything they have in common? Why was the list with its annotations compiled? Is there any evidence that they were saved or used subsequently? Here, in the absence of hard evidence, we can but hypothesize. The books do have something in common: their publication at a time when the Polish army had been destroyed by the Cossacks and Tatars, the state was in disarray, its possible survival in question, and political disagreements amongst the magnates threw into question whether any peace agreement could be ratified, much less hold. Since we do not know exact publication dates, we cannot be certain whether the reeditions of Widawski and the Albertus books antedated the Zboriv peace, but what is important is that those editions and the two sermons all represent responses to the crisis, whose extent clearly was evident by the time Kunakov arrived in Warsaw. The ill-advised ostentatious luxury of the magnates as they headed off into the steppe to battle the rebels and their allies surely was well known and in many circles blamed for the military disaster. The finances of the state were in shambles, with the Lithuanian representatives in the Diet making the case that they had been set upon economically and not reimbursed for their losses. Apart from the irresponsibility of the magnates, peasants were in revolt, and even a comic depiction of a peasant soldier might find an audience looking for someone to blame. The historical comparisons with earlier military failures in fighting the Tatars would have been meaningful to Polish readers. Arguably the books would have been of interest for Kunakov as evidence of how different elements in Polish society were responding to the crisis.[88] He might have gone off to a bookshop himself to purchase them, but it also is possible he was given them by one of his contacts, who took a dim view of the current situation and was involved in the as yet unresolved polemics in the Diet. That the books contained nothing of particular interest to the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow is not surprising, since their content related to a particular internal situation in the Commonwealth. One could hardly expect Muscovite officials to have sought in the critiques specific to Polish military failure and societal malaise analogies that might equally have been applied to Muscovy.

Once obtained and at least skimmed for any obvious references to Russia, the books must have been put aside and forgotten. Sergei Belokurov's (1898) careful study of the books of the Ambassadorial Chancery and other Muscovite collections has turned up no evidence of these titles. The more recent work of Sergei Nikolaev (1989a, 1989b, 2008), the leading expert on Polish books and texts in Muscovy, likewise has found no evidence; he has, inter alia, combed manuscript collections.[89] Was no one in the Moscow chancery interested enough in Polish verse and satire to have valued the Albertus books (or the

88. Sergei Nikolaev (1989b: 36) makes this point slightly differently, with reference to Kunakov's instructions about learning whether and what conflicts existed between the king and the magnates and whether the Polish and Lithuanian magnates disagreed.

89. Nikolaev (1989b: 35 n. 12) found one instance of a reference in *Wyprawa* to Russia, which seems to have been missed when the books were reviewed in Moscow at the beginning of 1650.

somewhat less amusing Widawski)? The only thing that seems certain is that, absent any passages deemed insulting to the tsar or his realm, with one exception (Cieciszewski's *Expeditia Zoborwska*), the books were deemed irrelevant to the preparation for the Pushkin embassy, which set out a week after the books had arrived in Moscow. However, other Polish publications were relevant to that mission.

The mission in 1650 was headed by Grigorii Gavrilovich Pushkin, a member of the court elite who had a long record of relevant experience (Voronkov 1910c). He had been the military governor in Putivl and in Briansk and was involved in the various commissions that met with the Poles to negotiate border issues after the end of the Smolensk War. His diplomatic service included the Russian missions to Warsaw in 1644 and to Stockholm in 1646. In August 1649, he was one of the negotiators assigned to meet with the Polish embassy that had come to Moscow (*DR* 3: 130). His second in the 1650 embassy was his brother Stepan Gavrilovich, who also had experience involving receptions of Commonwealth diplomats in Moscow (Korsakova 1910c). One of Stepan's sons served in a junior position with the embassy.[90] The secretary for the mission was Gavrila Leont'ev, who had been on an embassy to Poland back in 1638 and, like the two Pushkins, had a long record of government service (Demidova 2011: 315). One of the junior members of the Pushkin embassy was Ivan Timofeevich Fustov, who had an unpleasant experience heading an embassy to the Crimea in 1639, and in 1647 had been appointed to a position in one of the forts on the Belgorod defense line in the south.[91] He would have provided the Pushkin mission with expertise in dealing with the Tatars. The translator was Ivan Maksimov, at the time the only translator for Polish listed on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery.[92] So, what we have here is more evidence regarding the development of a professional cadre of officials who could be called on by the Kremlin for important foreign missions. The mission had several tasks: congratulating Jan Kazimierz on his accession to the throne, reaffirming the provisions of the 1634 Polianovka

90. For a list of most of the key personnel on Pushkin's embassy to Poland in 1650, see *DR* 3: 140, where the date given for its departure is 29 November 1649. However, in fact it did not leave Moscow until January.

91. The record of Ivan Timofeevich Fustov's service included a substantial payment authorized by the Ambassadorial Chancery for 'Crimean and ambassadorial service' (*Boiarskaia kniga* 1999: 139–140). He had been one of the two Russian emissaries who arrived in the Crimea in January 1639, at a low point in Muscovite relations with the Tatars. The Russian ambassadors and their staff were imprisoned and tortured for refusing to pay the 'tribute' which the Tatars expected, were threatened with being sold into slavery, and gained their release only after borrowing money to pay substantial bribes (Novosel'skii 1948: 272–274). In May 1647, Fustov was appointed to a post at Tsarev-Alekseev fort (later renamed as Novyi Oskol) on the Belgorod defensive line (*DR* 3: 60, 63). In September 1649, along with Stepan Gavrilovich Pushkin, he was in the advance party of the tsar's annual pilgrimage to the Trinity Monastery for the celebration of St. Sergius of Radonezh (ibid.: 135). After his return from the mission to Poland, Fustov again served in one of the forts along the southern defensive line (*AMG* 2: 306).

92. Jansson 2019b. On Maksimov's participation in the embassy, see the quotation from the final report of the mission by Belokurov 1898: 32–33, which mentions as well *dvorianin* I. T. Fustov and undersecretary V. Mikhailov. The latter is probably the Vasilii Mikhailov who was transferred from the Military Appointments Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1647 (see Beliakov 2017: 317).

treaty – including discussion of some of the still outstanding border issues – pressing the Poles about the extradition of the pretender Timofei Ankudinov, and demanding that offenders in the use of the tsar's titles be punished.[93] Not only did this last mean raising once again the way in which border commandants had failed to use proper titulature, but it also involved complaint about books published in Poland. The Russians came armed with documentary compilations of offending incidents, offending passages from the books in question, and they even brought copies of the original books.

The compendium which Pushkin presented to the Poles with the translations of excerpts deemed offensive by the Russians has been published under the heading '1650. Excerpts in translation of passages from four books published in Poland which are insulting for the Muscovite government and people.'[94] Since the translations of the titles are quite full and precise, there is no doubt about what these Polish books were:

1. Jan Alexander Gorczyn, *Pamięc o cnotach, szczęsciv, dzielnosci, naiasnieyszego y niezwyciezonego monarchy Władysława IV…* (Kraków: Bertutowić, 1649).
2. Ewerhard Wassenberg, *Gestorum Vladislai IV Pol. et Suec. Regis. Pars 1. Principem Panegyrice Repraesentans… Editio secunda correctior* (Gdańsk: Hünefeld, 1643).
3. Wojciech Cieciszewski, *Expeditia Zoborwska, Szczęśliwie dokończona. Przy obecnośći rycerstwá Obozow, Zborowskiego y Zbaraskiego* (Warszawa: Elert, 1649).
4. Samuel Twardowski, *Władysław IV Krol Polski y Szwedski* (Leszno: Vetterus, 1649).

The list says nothing about how the first three books were obtained. As already established, we know that both the Gorczyn and Cieciszewski are the books which Kunakov had acquired. While we have no such evidence for the Wassenberg book, it is reasonable to hypothesize that it too was obtained by Kunakov, presumably on his second mission to Poland; that is, he would have brought it back along with Gorczyn's book, which cites Wassenberg frequently as one of its sources. The translated excerpts from Gorczyn and Wassenberg are lengthy and include precise page references to the Polish and Latin originals. This would suggest the compilation of excerpts from those two books was not done in haste at the last minute. The passages from Gorczyn most likely were copied from the full translation of his book, which we assume was produced some time after March 1648, but before the end of the year. In contrast to the excerpts from Gorczyn and Wassenberg, there is but one short passage taken from Cieciszewski, one that also is found in the January 1 list of the books Kunakov acquired. It would have been easy to copy from that at the last minute, during the week before the Pushkin mission left Moscow.

93. For the history of the mission, see Kubala's long essay (1880: 185–230) and Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 558–564.

94. *AIuZR* 3: 437–444, No. 313. The editors indicate that there are two archival copies, one an original draft, where the entry for each book is written in a different hand. The nineteenth-century archival inventory of the Polish Affairs documents lists what appears to be a copy of the same document: RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1648, fol. 161, No. 7. Presumably the erroneous filing of the document under 1648 was the work of the archivist, Bantysh-Kamenskii, whose description refers to three of the four books, missing the very short excerpt from Cieciszewski. Since one of the books was obtained by the Pushkin embassy, the document as published cannot antedate 1649.

FIG. 15.2. Engraved title page and p. 8 of Samuel Twardowski's *Władysław IV*. The marginal note on p. 8 (circled), about Wladyslaw's having been elected tsar for 15 years, apparently was the main reason the page was cited as offending the tsar.

The heading for the excerpts from Twardowski's book specifies that the Polish original had been obtained in Warsaw by the Pushkin embassy, a fact which is confirmed by the report on the negotiations there. When the envoys lodged their complaint about the insulting publications, claiming that such books with their offensive references were being disseminated widely in Russia, the Poles were quick to point out that the Twardowski book had been published but a few weeks previously and could thus not yet have made it to Moscow (Kubala 1880: 208). In the Russian compilation of the offending passages in this sizeable book, references are to folios in each section, not to page numbers (as is the case for the passages taken from the other three books). Even though, as Nikolaev argues (1989b: 34), the book must have been read through in its entirety to select the offending passages, we have to wonder whether that 'reading' was a very close one. Many of the passages could have been identified from marginal 'subject' notes printed next to them, and the 'translations' often seem to be no more than quick summaries, in some cases accompanied by the suggestion that the perceived insults were too embarrassing to repeat (see FIG. 15.2). In short, it seems likely that, on acquiring the Twardowski volume once in Poland, Pushkin's translator on the mission went through it in haste, the goal being to identify at least a few pages that could be torn out and burned dramatically along with the other books in which the Russians found offensive comments.[95] Since

95. The end-of-mission report of the embassy, in describing the book burning, suggests that there was more than one book published in Leszno which they had obtained and denounced to the Poles. However, the only Leszno edition for which we have concrete identification was Twardowski's book. See Belokurov 1898: 32–33 n. 2.

the original books, taken to Warsaw by Pushkin, then came back with him to Moscow, the copy of Twardowski which is recorded as having been preserved in the library of the Ambassadorial Chancery likely is the very one which the embassy had obtained in 1650.[96] We have no evidence though that this work by one of the most prominent of Polish Baroque poets had any influence beyond the role it was asked to play in Muscovite diplomacy.

When the Russian embassy lodged its complaint about the offensive rendering of the tsar's titles and the demeaning passages in the books, the Poles responded initially by saying that the ambassadors surely were exceeding their instructions and had concocted the issue as a means of obstructing the negotiation of more important matters. In regard to at least one of the passages the Russians adduced, the Poles pointed out that they had mistranslated the descriptive term used for Patriarch Filaret, which just showed that the problem was not the books but the Russians' failure to take seriously learning Polish and Latin. The colorful Russian response was: 'We don't consider Polish and Latin writing to be marvels' ('my pol'skikh i latinskikh pis'm sebe v dikovinu ne stavim'). There simply is no wish to study them, since Slavonic is the language of the one true Orthodox faith, and in any event, the Russians are fully cognizant of diplomatic protocol.[97] The accusation about the Russians' ignorance of Polish and Latin came up in another exchange, when the Poles asked why the Russians had even bothered to obtain the books about which they were complaining, when they could not read the languages. The curious and inaccurate response to this by the translator, Ivan Maksimov, was that the books had been sent them from Stockholm (Kubala 1880: 210).

After much acrimonious discussion, the two sides reached an agreement that that there be a ceremonial burning of books and offending pages from them in the main public square of Warsaw. In their end-of-mission report, the envoys claimed that the Poles had confiscated and burned the entire print runs of the books, an exception being made for the Twardowski, from which only selected pages had been torn out and burned.[98]

96. Nikolaev (1983: 177) lists a second copy, which was in the library of Sil'vestr Medvedev and then in the library of the Synodal Typography No. 4135.

97. Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 562–563.

98. Belokurov 1898: 32–33. Surely there is some exaggeration here about how thorough was the destruction of the books. Presumably the Poles did only just enough to satisfy what were really excessive Russian demands. If anything, it seems that the whole affair increased the sales of Twardowski's book (Nikolaev 1989b: 34). The Poles had every reason to try to head off a rupture of relations with Moscow, at least until success could be achieved on the battlefield. When the Commonwealth army managed to defeat the Cossacks and Tatars at Berestechko on 28–30 June 1651, the king sent a courier Stanisław Golinski to Moscow in August 'with news [...] about the defeat of the Crimean Tatars and the Zaporozhian Cossacks.' It seems likely that Golinski would have brought the printed Latin pamphlet about the battle, which the Russians then translated. See the archival inventory, RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1651, fol. 168, Nos. 8, 9. The printed original for the translation, which remains unpublished, undoubtedly was a copy of *Relatio gloriosissimae victoriae Serenissimi Principis et Domini, Domini Joannis Casimiri Poloniae et Sveciae Regis potentissimi, de Hano Crimensi rebellibusque Cosacis ei foederatis die 30 Junii 1651 apud Beresteczko obtentae*. Warszawa: Elert., 1651 (online at https://cbdu.ijp.pan.pl/id/eprint/4920/). On the pamphlets about Berestechko, see Zawadzki 2002: 176–177.

The Russians had conceded to the Polish insistence that to destroy such a work about the glorious deeds of Kings Sigismund and Władysław would provoke an outcry in the Commonwealth.

Yet the government in Moscow would not let the matter rest. Subsequent embassies to Warsaw in 1652 and 1653 again complained about improper rendering of titulature and insulting publications.[99] In 1653, the embassy headed by Prince Repnin-Obolenskii apparently took along the same books and several others: another Lesno edition, a book containing the compendium of Polish constitutions, and two other works whose authors still need to be identified.[100] All of these books were drawn from the collection in the Ambassadorial Chancery. While in Poland, the 1653 mission was also tasked with obtaining a number of publications: several of the important histories, an annotated Polish publication of the Bible, and a couple of dictionaries. Most were purchased in Lublin and Lviv, along with a copy of the latest edition of the Constitution; all were then deposited in the Ambassadorial Chancery (Belokurov 1898: 33–34). The alleged insults to the tsar's honor by the Poles continued to be invoked by the Russian government, when justifying its decision to declare war against Poland in the mid-1650s.[101]

Much has been written about the book-burning incident in Warsaw, which seems to have made a considerable impression and was recalled in later years even by visiting diplomats who were in Poland. On the face of it, there could hardly be a better example of Muscovite obscurantism and obstinacy. However, the Russians were not the only ones to defend their sovereign's honor vigorously, even to the extent of risking a breakdown of diplomatic relations by demanding that offending publications be banned and those responsible for them punished. What might better be emphasized here is what the story tells us about how diplomats, who would always be charged with obtaining intelligence might take advantage of opportunities to acquire publications that arguably had little to do with current affairs. The Muscovite diplomats, even those who seem to have been of low status and possibly lacking in the educational qualifications to appreciate all that came into their hands, were enterprising in this regard, whether or not they had specific

99. Solov'ev, bk. 5 [vol. 10]: 581–582, 588, 590.

100. Belokurov (1898: 33–34) seems to be suggesting that all of the volumes Kunakov had acquired – as well as the titles that for certain had been taken to Warsaw by the Pushkin embassy – were taken along by Repnin-Obolenskii in 1653. This seems unlikely, given the fact that some of the Kunakov titles had been dismissed as having no passages relevant to the protest concerning offensive publications. The unpublished records for the 1653 embassy might clarify this.

101. For example, in December 1654 Iona, the Metropolitan of Rostov and Iaroslavl, wrote to the archimandrite of the important St. Cyril Beloozero Monastery about the initial successes of the war and mentioned the tsar's proclamation at the end of 1653 which had referred to the insulting Polish books (*AAE* 4: 118–119). See also the listings in the archival inventory, RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1653, fol. 110^{v}, Nos. 5, 6. Russian missions sent to Sweden, France, Denmark and Holland all were to explain the hostilities with Poland in part by referring to 'the complaint against the Polish king and his subjects in their printing in books and in letters of evil disgraceful and slanderous statements about the Russian rulers and the whole tsardom.' The Russians negotiating with the representatives of the Commonwealth at Vilna in 1656 about a possible peace settlement were supplied with several of the same books and the other documentation about the alleged Polish insults (see our Sec. 16.6).

instructions regarding book buying. Kunakov emerges as a particularly interesting example, given the impressive way in which he composed his intelligence reports and the specific evidence of how many Polish publications he brought back from his missions to Warsaw.

There still has to be much evidence in the diplomatic files which will help to broaden our understanding of how the Muscovite officials sent abroad served as intelligence agents. Analysis of such material may also deepen our understanding of the cultural horizons of the Russian diplomatic corps. The details about the Polish publications expand the repertoire of what was available in Moscow in the middle of the seventeenth century, at a point when a considerable effort was underway to obtain publications from the Commonwealth. What Kunakov acquired in some cases certainly was translated, in other cases at least skimmed through. The only use made of most of these books was to comb them for a few passages that could be used as ammunition in making demands of the Poles regarding the tsar's honor. So these are not of the same significance as the encyclopedic histories or geographies which would have served as basic reference works in the chanceries and might inspire analogous Russian works. Nor are these the works that we might best characterize as *belles lettres*, which became hugely popular in translation. Nonetheless, the books are evidence about aspects of Polish culture which might otherwise have remained beyond the ken of the Muscovite diplomatic elite.

CHAPTER 16

On the Eve of the Establishment of the Foreign Post: the *Kuranty* and Other Foreign News in the mid-1650s

In the first decades of the seventeenth century, with but rare exceptions, the Muscovite government had no regular mechanism for obtaining foreign news. This was not for lack of interest: envoys were expected to acquire intelligence, but they were dispatched at infrequent intervals and usually could file reports only when returning home. While the emergence of the periodical press and the existence of a postal network for its distribution soon made it possible across Europe to follow the news on a regular basis, Muscovite access to the newspapers was unpredictable. Foreign news thus might already be obsolete by the time it arrived, and there were major gaps in coverage. Events that directly affected the security of the state certainly were of concern, but the frequent intelligence reports submitted to Moscow by border commandants varied considerably in accuracy and tended to be limited in their geographic purview. So long as the aspirations of Muscovite foreign policy were limited and in situations where there were no immediate military threats, the policy makers in the Kremlin could live with these limitations in their knowledge about foreign events. Such was the case for the most part in the decades from the 1620s through the 1640s, when – with the exception of the Smolensk war of 1633–1634 – the Muscovite government had tried to avoid direct involvement in foreign conflicts. However reluctantly, it had to live with only minor adjustments to the peace settlements with Sweden and Poland-Lithuania at the end of the Time of Troubles. It refused to be drawn into the maelstrom of the Thirty Years War or a conflict with the Ottoman Empire during the crisis following the Cossack seizure of Azov in 1637.

However, this passive posture in foreign relations changed dramatically in the 1650s with the warfare in Eastern Europe, involving the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Sweden, and the Tsardom of Muscovy – conflicts which reshaped the balance of power in Eastern Europe and had important implications for the foreign policy of other European states. Arguably in this rapidly changing landscape of international relations, the tsar's government would have wanted to regularize its acquisition of foreign news.

The history of the *kuranty* in this period seems to suggest that in fact there was little change; if anything, they seem to have been of little importance for government decision making. Yet this impression is somewhat misleading because the *published* volume of the *kuranty* for this period (V-K V) is but a poor indicator of how much foreign news was being obtained.[1] There is ample evidence to document the high priority given to foreign news in decision making, even if, paradoxically, mistakes resulted when such news was deliberately ignored. To examine the *kuranty* in the broader context of foreign news acquisition for the period from the early 1650s to the mid-1660s, as this chapter and the following one will do, is essential for understanding the decision to establish the foreign post. We are fortunate for this period to have the substantial detailed studies of Russian foreign policy by Boris Nikolaevich Floria (2010, 2013) and Elena Igor'evna Kobzareva (1998), to which readers can turn for a systematic, archivally based examination of the processes of decision making. Our treatment therefore is a summary one with some illustrative examples.

16.1. The shaping of Russian foreign relations in the 1650s and 1660s

We should be cautious in attributing to Russian monarchs long-term visions of empire or even more specific foreign-policy goals such as gaining an outlet to warm-water ports. However, clearly the Russian government did not resign itself to accepting the territorial losses and blows to its self-defined role as a Christian power, which it had suffered during the Time of Troubles. In time, those setbacks would be reversed, and in the process the expanding Russian empire would replace Sweden and Poland-Lithuania as the power to be reckoned with in Eastern Europe. The Cossack revolt against the Commonwealth in 1648 was the catalyst for the revival of an activist foreign policy in the region. Since the first priority was to deal with Poland-Lithuania, this dictated the settlement (at least temporarily) of differences with Sweden in the negotiations of 1649 in Stockholm. However, subsequent missions to Poland in part seem to have been animated by a deliberate effort to provoke a war. The opportunity to gain control over part of Ukraine proved too tempting to ignore; the result was a war between the Muscovite state and the Commonwealth that lasted from 1654 to 1667 (with a brief hiatus of a truce in 1656–1658).

Russian relations with its two neighbors were intertwined, since the Swedes also declared war on the Commonwealth and came close to dismantling it. The Muscovite-Swedish War in 1656–1658 (which was settled by the peace of Kardis in 1661) was intended to take advantage of the Swedes' being preoccupied in Poland, an opportunity which opened possibilities for Moscow to take portions of Swedish Livonia and gain an outlet on the Baltic.[2] Much of the Russian diplomacy in this period was directed

1. One of the main reasons for the fact that V-K V is the smallest – and weakest – of all published volumes is the fact that Vladimir Georgievich Dem'ianov was the only compiler; moreover, Sergei Ivanovich Kotkov, who had been an assiduous and meticulous editor of the four previous volumes (V-K I–IV), had died in 1986. For more on this volume, see our discussion in Sec. 1.3.

2. There is a substantial literature in Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and Swedish on both the military

at neutralizing potential allies of the Swedes and the Poles or at achieving at least a temporary settlement with one of the belligerents in order to create a coalition against the other. This meant it was important not only to have accurate knowledge of Swedish and Polish-Lithuanian affairs but also to engage with the rising power of Brandenburg-Prussia, with Denmark (a traditional enemy of the Swedes), the English and the Dutch (for whom the Baltic trade was important), and with France and the Habsburg empire, who competed with one another for alliances and influence in Poland and Sweden and were happy therefore to proffer either support or mediation for the warring parties. Neutralizing the Crimean Tatars and the Ottomans was also important. The pace and success of diplomatic negotiations depended on the rapidly changing military fortunes of the belligerents and on the perceptions of decision makers shaped by 'news', some of it accurate, some of it deliberately misleading or ill-informed – perceptions that also reflected preconceived notions which might have become obsolete as events unfolded.

In the leadership of every contending party, there were substantial disagreements about policy, which might give rise to conflicting intelligence and thus hinder the ability to obtain an accurate assessment of possible actions. The constitutional structure of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth meant that there were many competing interest groups: the powerful magnates not always of one mind with the lesser nobles (*szlachta*); some Lithuanians supportive of Muscovy, others supportive of the Poles; some Cossacks in Ukraine willing to compromise with Poland competing with others for whom the only option was war against the Poles and possible submission to Moscow. To a considerable degree, whatever the Kremlin could learn about Commonwealth affairs was filtered through an anti-Polish lens via Lithuanian magnates or Cossack informants. A further complication for Muscovite decisions lay in the tsar's own officials, where there were personal rivalries as well as policy differences.

16.2. The creation of the Tsar's Privy Chancery and its impact on the acquisition of foreign news

The rich documentation in the Muscovite sources for this period (much of it still unpublished) reveals a great deal about foreign-policy decision making that for earlier periods tends to be opaque. The formal language of decision making generally indicated that 'the boyars consulted, and the tsar decreed'. There is in fact substantial evidence of regular meetings involving the tsar and the boyar council (or at least key members of it),

and political events of this period. Floria (2010, 2013), on whom we rely heavily, cites the most important of these works. See also the detailed study of Russian, Swedish and Polish relations between 1653 and 1655 by Zaborovskii 1981, who uses extensively Swedish and Polish sources. Kotliarchuk (2004, 2006) examines Swedish relations with Ukraine and with Lithuania. Both he and Kobzareva (1998) have made good use of the Swedish sources. Solov'ev's treatment of the period (bks. 5, 6 [vols. 10, 11]) is still valuable for its lengthy quotations from Russian archival documents. An excellent summary in English is Frost 2014: 156–191, and on the Commonwealth in the 'Second Northern War' (1655–1660), Frost 2003. Hrushevsky (vols. 9 and 10) provides details of events in Ukraine, concerning which there is also a useful overview in Bez'ev 2015: 31–105. For the military campaigns, see Stevens 2007: 147–186; Babulin 2018; Kurbatov 2018, 2019; Lobin and Smirnov 2021.

where various news and intelligence reports would be read aloud. Notations on documents might specify what instruction was to be sent out, containing the tsar's decision. However, there were other situations where consultation and advice to the monarch might involve fewer individuals – or, conversely, where for an initiative that required the marshalling of major resources (for instance, to fight a war), the government would convene a 'Land Assembly' (*Zemskii sobor*), at which the attendees would be presented with a government proposal requiring formal approval. The most important institutions that would provide the tsar and his counsellors with intelligence were the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*) and the Ambassadorial Chancery (*Posol'skii prikaz*). Either of them might report directly, and there was a procedure whereby communications from regional military commanders sent to the *Razriadnyi prikaz* would also be copied to the *Posol'skii prikaz*.

At the beginning of the war in Poland, a new institution was created, the Sovereign's Privy Chancery (*Prikaz Velikogo Gosudaria tainykh del*), which altered significantly the channels for news transmission and the processes of decision making.[3] The catalyst for the creation of the Privy Chancery was the onset of the war, since the tsar (unlike his predecessors) had decided to lead the Russian army personally on a campaign conceived of as an Orthodox crusade (FIG. 16.1). This meant being away from the central government apparatus in Moscow, necessitating that he have some institutional means of coordinating and effecting decisions across a range of tasks that often devolved on separate departments without direct royal intervention. Clearly an important factor here too was the personality of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, who, in contrast to his father, elected to take a more activist role in running the state.[4] Thus, over the next years, a wide range of activities the tsar deemed particularly important came to be managed through the Privy Chancery, even after the tsar had ceased personally to lead the army. One of the most important functions of this chancery was to gather information, a task which might be carried out through missions by members of the staff or might involve requiring officials to submit reports directly to the tsar via the chancery. This could mean circumventing the *Razriadnyi* and *Posol'skii prikazy*, with the consequence that intelligence might not always be shared between departments.[5] Furthermore, it opened the possibility that the advice being given the tsar might be at odds with what the specialists in the other chanceries would recommend. The most important example of how this arrangement could

3. The still fundamental studies of the Privy Chancery are Gurliand 1902 and Zaozerskii 1937.

4. See the biographies by Longworth (1984) and by Kozliakov (2018), the latter providing a detailed chronicle of his reign.

5. See Gurliand 1902: 293–299, although he emphasizes that there was no fixed pattern about what, as a matter of course, would be shared with the other relevant departments or what the tsar might choose to deal with directly, often not informing them. The list of files which had been kept in the archive of the Privy Chancery and only in 1677 were transferred to the Ambassadorial Chancery is impressive, many of them connected with the diplomacy during the years of the war against Poland (see *RIB* 21: 345–365). This does not mean, however, that the Privy Chancery had unique copies of them; presumably other copies were in the files of the Ambassadorial Chancery. Many of the files listed in this inventory are connected with the activity of Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin.

FIG. 16.1. The pious (*blagochestivyi*) Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich as military leader, an iconographic portrait emulating engravings of his contemporaries, shown here for comparison (clockwise from lower left: Count Nikolaus Zrinyi, Elector Johann Georg I of Saxony, Emperor Leopold I, Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria, King Jan III Sobieski).

affect foreign-policy decision making involves the activity of one official in particular who enjoyed the tsar's trust, Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin. Analysis of his activity (to be treated in Ch. 17) illustrates especially well the relationship between the acquisition of news and the process of decision making. As the government official perhaps best informed about international politics in this period, he exercised considerable influence, even though, as it turned out, not all the policies he advocated were realistic or successful.

The creation of the Privy Chancery not only affected the ways in which written news reports were communicated within the Muscovite bureaucracy but also how they were preserved in the archives. The Privy Chancery was closed at the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1676, the contents of its files inventoried, and the documents turned

over to the other government departments to which they were deemed to pertain. As we indicated earlier in this book, those files included many copies of often much older documents pertaining to Russian foreign policy, copies of ambassadorial reports, and long runs of the translations of foreign news (the *kuranty*). Annotations on some of the *kuranty* translations reveal that their sources had been obtained via the Privy Chancery or members of its staff.[6] It is likely that other news sources sent to the tsar by his agents likewise had gone to the tsar's personal office first, rather than having been sent to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Once translated, copies of the reports were sent back to the Privy Chancery and stored there, even though presumably copies would also have been kept in the Ambassadorial Chancery. By no means all of the foreign news sources were collected and transmitted in this way, many also coming directly to the Ambassadorial Chancery.

Many of the long runs of the *kuranty* as currently preserved in RGADA, f. 155, have served as important sources for the V-K publication series and are in fact the same archival scrolls inventoried in the Privy Chancery archive in 1676–1683, though the scrolls now have been separated into their component sheets, which may no longer preserve the exact original order. However, there also are translations of news sources kept in other archival deposits today, grouped according to the country to which they pertain and organized as we now have them when the archives were being inventoried and put in order at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Those same archival collections preserved many important news reports, some in languages other than Russian, and some in the original foreign imprints. Furthermore, compilations of excerpts from runs of archival documents were being produced in the seventeenth century, some of them now to be found in the V-K series and drawn from the foreign relations files or collections of miscellaneous documents (such as those in f. 141, which is a large documentary catch-all). While Russian scholars working on Muscovite foreign policy (notably Boris Floria) have attempted to examine the full range of these various news sources, and Stepan Shamin has presented reasonable hypotheses about the codicological history of the news compilations, it is unlikely that we will ever be able to reconstruct exactly the history of how the preserved documents arrived in their current form. Without that history, there will always be uncertainties regarding when and whether many items of news could have had any impact on foreign-policy decisions. What we can demonstrate is the necessity for further archival work to supplement the published documentary collections relevant to the study of foreign news in Muscovy. The example of V-K V and the first years covered in V-K VI (i.e., roughly the 1650s and first half of the 1660s), to which we now turn, will illustrate not only the challenges of working with the published texts but also show how much other material awaits examination in the archives.

6. For examples, see V-K V: 118, No. 32.2; 125, No. 36.16; V-K VI/I: 120, No. 23.47; 131, No. 25.82; 149, No. 33.55; 199, No. 53.193, etc. See the convenient tabulation by Stepan Shamin of the headers for *kuranty* published in V-K VI/1: 53–59. Of course, where there is no explicit indication, we can but surmise about the path of transmission.

16.3. The *kuranty* and other sources of intelligence

The coverage in V-K V is particularly problematic, on account of editorial decisions about which archival files to use and the limitations in analysis both of the internal evidence of the texts and the palaeographic features of the often damaged and confused manuscripts.[7] Even if we focus our attention only on published newspapers and separates, what we have to work with is arguably an underrepresentation of how much news was actually obtained. Were we to have more complete packets of the translations, locating their sources would still be difficult, because there are major gaps in the preservation of Dutch and German newspapers for the same period.[8] There are a few instances where the sources seem to be German newspapers, most of them two of the regular ones published in Hamburg, including our now familiar *WZ*. In several additional cases, we may posit a German source, given the focus and provenance of individual news entries. There is an impressive amount of space in the translations devoted to news about the Anglo-Dutch War, where likely much of it derives from Dutch sources. However, it is certainly possible that some of this news came via German newspapers which had translated and republished the Dutch reports. Maier (2006a: 459) lists three Dutch separates and one German pamphlet among the sources for the translations. The Dutch ones all relate to the events of the Anglo-Dutch War, and the German pamphlet contains a letter sent by Swedish King Karl X Gustav to Danzig in the context of the Swedish war against Poland. However, as will be shown below, there were many other separates being obtained in Moscow in this period.

Dutch newspapers must have been the sources for some other news packets, even if we now cannot identify exactly which ones.[9] In one case, however, it has been possible to

7. On these problems, see Maier and Krys'ko 1997: 304–305, and – in greater detail – Shamin's analysis in V-K VI/1: 20–23. The various notes by the compiler of V-K V (Vladimir Dem'ianov) suggest that in certain cases he was well aware of the problems with some of the manuscripts but for some reason failed to do the sensible thing such as reordering misfiled folios to produce a properly edited text. Just the raw data (without taking into account the various corrections, which do not really fill major gaps) provide a sense of how fragmented is the published collection for the period from 1650 to 1664. V-K V contains 43 separate 'news packets', with one additional packet added (as No. 0) at the last minute before the book was printed. Of the total of 44 items, seven include news dated by the compiler from autumn 1650 to April 1651, fifteen contain news dated from February through December 1652, one item is dated 1654, one in the spring of 1655, seven items cover the period from December 1655 through July 1656, five items encompass July and August 1658, and six cover April 1659 – January 1660. In V-K VI, eight numbered news packets include reports dated February–September 1660, one has reports for January–March 1661 (previously included in error under 1652 in V-K V), two numbered packets cover April–August 1662, and two packets June–July 1664. Although the editorial team which took over the publication of V-K VI after Dem'ianov did a lot to correct the deficiencies in the approach taken for the earlier volumes of the series, the selection of material in that volume still was constrained by Dem'ianov's work, which was already in place.

8. For a tabulation of identified possible sources for V-K V see Maier 2006a: 459. We have been able to supplement that list and have at least some reasonable hypotheses about cases which cannot be confirmed from any extant collections. See our Sec. 1.3.2 for details about the preservation and accessibility of the Dutch and German newspapers.

9. The source for the translation published in V-K V: 30–32, No. 6, which was turned in by the mer-

reconstruct the scattered folios containing a largely complete translation from a Dutch paper (*ODC* 1652/52, published in Amsterdam on 24 December 1652), whose chance survival has enabled us to compare it with the Russian texts.[10] Of particular interest here is the fact that the lead item in the newspaper is a fictive threatening letter by the Ottoman sultan, which circulated in a wide range of copies and different versions in Muscovy, almost all derived from Western publications.

The fragmentary and apparently chaotic preservation of the archival manuscripts means that for the most part it is impossible to judge how selective the translators were. Although we have an example such as this one (*ODC* 1652/52), suggesting that most of

chant Heinrich Kellermann (Andrei Kelderman), most likely is one or two issues of the Amsterdam *TVQ*, as suggested by the apparent translation of the source title: 'Vesti iz roznykh mest n[y]neshnego 1651 godu' – 'News from different places of this year, 1651'. At the same time, Kellermann gave the Ambassadorial Chancery a copy of a Dutch pamphlet with the speech of the English Ambassadors to the States General (V-K V: 33–34, No. 7). There is no extant copy of *TVQ* for the period when the news in No. 6 most likely would have been published (ca. late April), but the dates for the articles are ones which would appear in that newspaper. Since the translations include partial colophons from Dutch newspapers, it is fairly certain that V-K V: 41–45, No. 11 derives from them, even if we cannot confirm this due to the absence of extant copies. One of the sources here would have been *ODC* or *OMC* 1652/22, both of which were published on 28 May, the date indicated in the Russian translation. V-K V: 60–68, No. 15, draws on more than one source, one section derived from a Dutch separate about naval news. In another part of this 'packet' the translation includes at least one article which may have come from *ODC* 1652/31, and a decree by the Dutch States General. The publication of such decrees was common in in some of the Dutch newspapers at the time, but would be less likely to have appeared in a German one that accessed Dutch sources. V-K V: 97–99, No. 25 specifies in its title that the source is Dutch printed 'tetrati' ('quires'); however, this 'packet' most likely also contains translations from German sources. On this packet, see also note 50 below.

10. This example illustrates the problems created by the chaotic preservation of bits and pieces of *kuranty* translations in RGADA, f. 141 (*Prikaznye dela starykh let*), 1652, Nos. 122 and 123. Many of the folios are damaged, their ordering and chronology mixed, and thus, in the publication of V-K V, they have been grouped into 'packets' which in fact do not individually represent any single packet of news that was received and translated at a specific date. For the composition of RGADA, f. 141, No. 122, see Shamin's analysis in V-K VI/1: 20–23, which provides codicological data of watermarks and handwriting. In this V-K edition, all the texts from the archival unit No. 123 were rearranged as follows (indicated here are the folios of the archival scroll, their publication numbers in V-K V, and the dates of the news reports): fols. 1–3 (No. 17; 14, 20 July); 4–5 (No. 20; 16, 18 Apr.); 6–11 (№ 16; 9–29 July); 12–29 (No. 12; 18 May–7 July); 30–37 (No. 14; 13–24 June); 38–53 (No. 13; 1 June – 23 July); 54–63 (No. 11; 16 Apr.–8 May); 64–69 (No. 21; 14–27 Aug.); 70–102 (No. 18; 19 July–27 Aug.); 103–106 (omitted in V-K); fols. 107–128 (No. 15; 20 June–24 Aug.); fols. 129–147 (No. 20; 26 July–16 Dec.); fols. 148–157 (No. 22; 15–25 Dec.); 158–171 (No. 19; 22 July–19 Dec.). While some of these groupings with a wide range of internal dates may correspond to specific packets of news that derived from different newspapers published over a series of weeks, the files in the archival collection (f. 141) seem to have been but a catch-all for odds and ends of material assembled here at some late stage during the inventorying and arranging of the archive. As Shamin has noted regarding No. 122 (V-K VI/1: 21), the mixing of folios apparently had occurred prior to the inventorying of the *kuranty* between 1676 and 1683, following the death of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. In the example here of the translation from *ODC*, the pieces have been published in V-K V in Nos. 19, 20, 22 and 23 (from f. 141, 1652, No. 123, fols. 159–161, 165, 162, 163, 146–147, 149–151). Some parts of this translation are in interfiled duplicate copies, with one additional duplicate section now in f. 155, 1652, No. 1, fols. 6–9. Folios ending in the middle of a sentence suggest that there are missing folios which contained part of the translation of a given newspaper.

a single newspaper issue was translated, in other cases where it seems we can identify a source, only one or two articles can be traced to it, even though there may well have been more, now lost. Hence, what we have may or may not provide an accurate sense of what news was of particular interest: some of the 'packets' as published in V-K V have a definite focus: the Anglo-Dutch War, Swedish and Polish affairs, and – perhaps surprisingly – the *Fronde* in France. Understandably, the translators would have selected the material pertaining to Sweden and Poland, an emphasis which in fact parallels that of some German newspapers of the period, which devoted considerable space to the wars in the Baltic and in Poland. In any given week, the Hamburg *WZ* might include several reports from Stettin, Danzig, Riga, Warsaw, Kraków, etc.[11] Such news tended to be filtered through a 'Baltic' lens of those caught between the competing larger states, or through a Polish lens of reporting from the royal court, regarding the meetings of the Diet or military events in the south. Dutch newspapers also covered the East European news, but not, it seems, so thoroughly; most likely their reports from that region were drawn from some of the German papers. Otherwise, the range of their coverage tended to be much broader than what the Kremlin seems to have deemed important. Could it be that the archival files of RGADA f. 141 are not just randomly preserved pages thrown together for filing, but the remains of what were consciously culled selections of the translated news items which were of greatest interest and were therefore brought together for ready reference? On occasion Ordin-Nashchokin seems to have supported his advocacy with the tsar of certain foreign-policy positions by pulling together just such selections, rather than simply submitting the full texts of published and manuscript news reports.[12]

11. While some copies of this Hamburg paper were obtained in Moscow in this period, we should not assume it was the main German newspaper source for *kuranty* translations. We cite its coverage in part simply because there is a nearly complete run of the published issues, whereas other German newspapers which may have been used in Moscow are very incompletely preserved. To give some examples of the coverage in *WZ*: the three issues of week 30, 1655 (*ODiZ* 30, *WDoZ* 30, *WZ App.* 30), covering from the end of June through July, contain 28 articles, of which eight (29%) are from Baltic and East European locations, including five from Stettin; the issues of week 10, 1657 (*ODiZ* 10, *WDoZ* 10, *WZ App.* 10), with news from the second week of February into the first week of March, contain 24 datelined entries, of which 17 (71%) were from Baltic and East European cities with news regarding the wars involving Poland and Sweden; the ones of week 49, 1659 (*ODiZ* 49, *WDoZ* 49, *WZ App.* 49) contain 32 articles, of which only eight are from Baltic and East European cities (25%), although several others contain related news (e.g., about diplomatic initiatives involving the contending parties).

12. One explicit example is V-K V: 134–137, No. 42, which bears the titles 'Copied from quires (*tetrati*) which the council noble (*dumnyi dvorianin*) Afonasei Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin sent', and (on another fol.) 'News from overseas and from various places of the current year [7]168 [1659], October 21'. It contains 23 short, numbered paragraph summaries. V-K V: 133–134, No. 41 (the manuscript now in f. 155) may be another of his collections of summaries, with a header indicating it was 'vypisano iz roznykh podlinnykh vedomov' ('copied from various true reports') and with marginal consecutive numbering of the individual items. Of course, it is possible that the selection and numbering of the short items was already in the source Ordin-Nashchokin obtained or might have been done by the translators in Moscow, excerpting material from a longer text he had sent. The manuscript of No. 42 is in the misdated collection of miscellaneous documents, drawn from RGADA, f. 141, 1652, No. 122, concerning which see also note 10 above.

FIG. 16.2. An elaborately illustrated Dutch broadside, celebrating the Anglo-Dutch peace settlement in 1654.

From the year 1654 there is only one dated item in V-K V, a translation (not entirely accurate) from a printed declaration of peace between the English and the Dutch.[13] The text is but a summary of the document, not the full 33 articles of the treaty itself.[14] The peaceful settlement of the Anglo-Dutch War was a significant event, widely reported in the contemporary media. The text of the declaration was printed on the verso page of *ODC* 1654/19 (published on 12 May), and the numerous Dutch separates included a broadside, illustrated with an elaborate engraving depicting the negotiators, Westminster, the Dutch Fleet, and mythological figures (FIG. 16.2).[15] The Hamburg *WZ* followed the negotiations and celebration of the peace in its three weekly editions. For example, the *ODiZ* 1654/17 reported from London on 17 April about the signing and subsequent celebration; *WDoZ* 1654/18 on its last page printed a news item from The Hague, 8 May, about the receipt of the news. The Hamburg newspaper's ongoing reportage included a note in *ODiZ* 1654/20 from The Hague, 16 May, indicating that there would be a country-wide celebration of thanks and announcement of the peace. The same report mentioned briefly the fact that a Russian envoy had

13. V-K V: 95–96, No. 24. For the identification of its source and a discussion of the translation, along with a facsimile of the original, see Maier 1997: 74–77.

14. For the full text in a contemporary, official English version, see *Articles of Peace, Union and Confederation, Concluded and Agreed between his Highness Oliver Lord Protector of the Common-wealth of England, Scotland & Ireland* [...] *And the Lords the States General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. In a Treaty at Westminster bearing date the fift of April Old Style, in the year* [...] *1654.* London: William du-Gard and Henry Hills, 1654 (British Library copy available through EEBO).

15. *Verkondinghe van de Vreede, Unie ende Confoederatie den 15. Aprilis deses loopende Jaers 1654* [...] Amsterdam: Francoys van Buesecom [Beusecom], 1654. For other versions and pamphlets describing celebrations of the peace see, e.g., Tiele, 1: 78–79.

been received by the Dutch government.[16] An update from The Hague, 22 May (*WDoZ* 1654/20), provided details of the celebrations: 'Next Wednesday, that is on the 17th of this month, the public announcement of the peace is to be held in all towns of the United Provinces; bonfires shall be kindled, and cannon shall be fired everywhere. On the 3rd of June, the general Thanksgiving shall be celebrated everywhere in the whole country.' The Saturday issue, *WZ App*. 1654/20 ,reported the erection of 'ein Arcus Triumphalis' on the Dam in Amsterdam, which would be the subject of at least one separate published in Leiden in Latin.[17]

Even though there is no direct evidence about when and how the Russians obtained the Dutch pamphlet, there is at least indirect information about the possibilities. The Dutch government informed many of the European states about the conclusion of the peace, in the case of the Russians, via their envoy then in the Netherlands (Aitzema 1657–1671, 8: 100). In fact two Russian missions were there at the time. One, headed by an undersecretary Gerasim Sergeev syn Golovnin, accompanied by an interpreter Nechai Driabin, had arrived in Amsterdam on 23 April, was received on the 29th by the States General, and departed on 21 June.[18] This mission, which had been to negotiate the purchase of armaments, was successful. However, the envoy arrived back in Moscow only on 29 December (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 184). Among the several missions sent from Moscow in late autumn 1653 to inform European governments about the decision to go to war with Poland was one to the Netherlands. A courier Matvei Ivanov syn Polivanov, accompanied by an interpreter named Verner, delivered in the Hague the tsar's letter that justified the war, with reference to the publication of insulting books by the Poles.[19] Polivanov had reached Amsterdam on 29 April and, having received the Dutch response on 20 June, sailed for Archangel, where he arrived on 20 August. So both of these missions were in the Netherlands to have witnessed the celebration of the treaty; one or both were told the news when received in the Hague and very likely would have been given the publication about the agreement. Since Polivanov arrived in Archangel on 20 August, he could have delivered to Moscow the Dutch pamphlet no later than mid- September.[20] However, given the imposition of quarantine on account

16. The newspaper report erroneously referred to the Russian emissary as a 'resident'. Since there are no details, it is uncertain to which of the Russian missions then in the Netherlands the news refers.

17. Tiele, 1: 79 (No. 4303).

18. Golovnin had previous experience on diplomatic missions: he had been sent with messages to Sweden in 1647, accompanied the embassy headed by Grigorii Pushkin to Sweden in 1649, and in 1651 again he took messages to Sweden (Demidova 2011: 138). Nechai Driabin was an interpreter for German at least as early as the mid-1630s; his resumé included service on missions to Holstein, Denmark, and Sweden (Beliakov 2017: 299).

19. On Polivanov's mission, see Bantysh-Kamenskii (1: 184), whose description (seeming to indicate the year as 1654) is somewhat confusing in its dating of Polivanov's dispatch from Moscow on 6 December. This clearly has to mean December 1653, as confirmed by the archival listings about the dispatch of the several missions with the tsar's letter in the Swedish Affairs files for that year. See the inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1653, fol. 110v, No. 6.

20. It is also possible, though less likely, that the Russians received the Dutch publication from an English envoy. The text of the translation published in V-K V is from a manuscript in the English

of the plague in 1654, which included specifically measures to isolate Archangel, there might have been a considerable delay before Polivanov's report reached the government.

16.4. What news was the tsar receiving while on campaign in 1654?

An archival file containing as yet unpublished documents that could fill out some of our knowledge of what foreign news the government was receiving in 1654 has been described in the inventory for RGADA, f. 229 (Ukrainian Chancery / *Malorossiiskii prikaz*).[21] The general heading for the file is 'Reports of *voevody*, news sheets and depositions about events in foreign countries, sent to the tsar while on campaign,' the dates of the texts encompassing May–August 1654.[22] The *dvortsovye razriady*, the daily record of the tsar's activities, provide details of his itineraries and often mention what communications he was receiving or the decisions he made. It is clear that he was keeping close track of both the intelligence regarding current military operations and more broadly news of international affairs, with much of the information coming directly to him, rather than via the chanceries in Moscow. In all likelihood, the compilation in f. 229 is one that had been kept in the files of the tsar's Privy Chancery and at least provides a snapshot (hardly a complete picture) of the kinds of information that drew the tsar's personal attention.[23]

Affairs files, catalogued by Bantysh-Kamenskii under 1654 and dated 15 April (see the inventory, RGADA, f. 35, *Opis'* 1, 1654, fol. 53, No. 1). However, as was common in his inventories, that is the date of the document in its title or header, in this case the N.S. date when the treaty was signed. Listed in the inventory immediately following the translation (and apparently originally copied into the same seventeenth-century scroll containing it) is a report about the mission to Moscow of William Prideaux, an envoy from Oliver Cromwell, where the documents cover the period from September 1654 through July 1655. So it is also possible that the English envoy brought the Dutch separate with him to Moscow in September. That the translation got filed under English Affairs does not preclude its having arrived via a different source, one of the Dutch merchants involved in the Muscovy trade.

21. We know of the contents only thanks to the descriptive and cryptic listing, compiled in Moscow in the dark early years of World War II by Ivan Filippovich Kolesnikov (*Malorossiiskii prikaz* 2012: 23–24). His listing supplements the inventory first compiled in the early nineteenth century. In the now published inventory, Kolesnikov's additions have been distinguished by shading in the tabulation. The file in question here is RGADA, f. 229, op. 1, 1654, No. 13. The descriptive captions quoted in our subsequent discussion are presumably Kolesnikov's summaries, not translations of any headers in the original documents.

22. On Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's activities during the campaign, see Kozliakov 2018: 132–212. For an illustrated history of the tsar's campaign to recapture Smolensk in 1654, see Babulin 2018; a compact summary is in Kurbatov 2019: 17–21. A valuable monographic treatment of the war, focusing on the events of 1654–1658 and the Russian administration in the territories it occupied, is Mal'tsev 1974 (some of his observations about diplomacy have been updated in Floria 2010).

23. We know that the tsar employed a secretary of the Privy Chancery, Tomilo Perfil'ev, as a courier during the siege of Smolensk in August (*DR* 3: 445). A possible 'continuation' of the file now preserved in f. 229, in the sense that it contains copies of documents from the tsar's personal chancery, is listed in the inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1654, fol. 176, No. 16: 'September 1654–April 1655. The dispatch of the sovereign's missives from the campaign at Smolensk to the boyars and commandants, and their reports with various news.' The dates encompass the period when the tsar had left Smolensk, spent some months in Viaz'ma on account of the plague and returned to Moscow. He departed for Lithuania on his next military campaign in mid-March 1655.

Communications during the time the tsar was on campaign were disrupted by a major outbreak of the plague in early summer, which forced the authorities to institute strict quarantine measures.[24] The tsar had set out for Viaz'ma on the campaign on 18 May (*DR* 3, 412). After the taking of Smolensk in late September, the tsar had planned to return to Moscow, but instead he stopped in Viaz'ma until the plague had subsided. He arrived back in Moscow in the second week of February 1655 (ibid.: 454, 456). One of the first decrees about quarantine halted normal travel between Moscow and Smolensk (*DAI* 3: 443). Government couriers were excepted, although some messages they carried might be 'disinfected' by having the originals first copied and then burned.[25] One of the decrees issued in Moscow to military commandants in Ukraine specified that reports which might normally have been sent to the capital were instead to be sent directly to the tsar (ibid.: 447). In Moscow, the offices occupied by the Ambassadorial Chancery were cordoned off (ibid.: 462). A report compiled in Moscow on 17 December contained detailed statistics on the survivors and deceased in the clerical and government institutions of the capital. In the Ambassadorial Chancery, the chief secretary Almaz Ivanov, three undersecretaries and 30 translators and interpreters survived, but some 30 other staff members had died (ibid.: 509). The death tolls in the households of the elite nobility were shockingly high. Merchant travel, including specifically that from Archangel – traditionally one source for the acquisition of foreign news – was suspended (ibid.: 467–468). It is therefore possible that the apparent paucity of *kuranty* in 1654 and 1655 was in part due to the plague.

A number of the files in the compilation now in RGADA, f. 229, contained news reports presumably of the same kind that we find in the *Vesti-Kuranty* texts, dealing with a wide range of topics, not necessarily all relating directly to the current war. There is a cryptic listing for 'Various news from England, France and Holland.'[26] The description of another file is 'News from European countries: from Cologne on the intention of the Roman emperor to launch a war with someone; from Holland on the dispatch of warships against Turkish pirates; from England on the cruel rule of Cromwell, etc.'[27] Here it is possible to surmise something more about the content and its importance on the basis of what we know was being reported at the time. The news regarding the dispatch of a Dutch fleet against Turkish pirates likely concerns the response to major episodes of piracy in the western Mediterranean. A report datelined Amsterdam 23 May (*WZ App*.

24. For a still useful summary account of the plague based on the original documents, see Vysotskii 1879; a convenient collection of many of the primary sources is in *DAI* 3: 442–521, No. 119. Vysotskii does not attempt to determine exactly when and where the plague first appeared. Possibly it came from the south either via the Volga or from the Crimea. There is some evidence it had arrived by late June. In July numerous documents were being issued about controlling its spread. There were renewed outbreaks of the plague (or at least some other infectious disease) which had a significant impact on the military campaigns in 1656 (see Lobin and Smirnov 2021: 35).

25. *AAE* 4: 112, No. 75; *AMG* 2: 382–384, Nos. 608, 609.

26. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 77–82.

27. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 151–155.

1654/ 20: [4]) included news about a pirate fleet of 30 ships which had captured several merchantmen and taken them off to Algiers. On 20 June, there was more news from Amsterdam about Turkish attacks on commercial shipping (*WDoZ* 1654/24: [4]). News from The Hague on 26 June (*WDoZ* 1654/25: [4]) told of the dispatch of Dutch warships to clear the Mediterranean of Turkish and other pirates. The description of the other news here is too vague to pinpoint exactly. However, the news concerning Cromwell undoubtedly reflects his assumption of authoritarian powers with the establishment of the Protectorate in December 1653.

Another of the news items, somewhat inaccurate, might at first blush seem to be of little interest: 'On the taking of the city of Kandahar from the Persians by the Indian emperor.'[28] In fact, the Mughals tried unsuccessfully to retake Kandahar (today, in Afghanistan) from the Safavids and gave up after a five-month siege in 1653. The city had been in Safavid hands since February 1649. News from South Asia most likely would have come via a Dutch source; given the distances and delay in transmission, an error in reporting would be understandable. This news would have been 'relevant' in Moscow: a number of the most prominent Muscovite merchants were involved in the Persian trade, and the tsar had a strong personal interest in it (for additional detail, see our Sec. 19.6.2). Eventually he assigned some oversight to his Privy Chancery (Gurliand 1902: 193–196). The immediate reason for attention to the news about Kandahar may have been the receipt of a report from the Astrakhan military governors, written apparently after the end of April. In it they cited information obtained from merchants and at least indirectly from Russian envoys to Persia, mentioning the Mughal siege of Kandahar and the fact that the Safavid shah had sent a report about the Mughals having given up the siege (*AI* 4: 205–207, No. 95). This news was apparently some months old by the time it reached Astrakhan; we do not know exactly when it would have arrived in Moscow and been forwarded to the tsar.

Three of the other files likewise can be related to the government's concern about foreign trade, especially that in luxury goods. There was a short item on the desire of Florence to establish relations with Moscow.[29] In 1652, the tsar had sent a mission abroad to obtain various luxury items for the court (some of them Italian). One member of the mission was the Englishman John Hebdon, who would soon become a trusted agent for such missions; documents pertaining to his activity were kept in the Privy Chancery. On this mission, Hebdon traveled to Riga, Lübeck, and Amsterdam; then, it seems, he went on to Venice (Gurliand 1903: 7–8). He is known to have been involved in the trade whereby caviar was being shipped from Archangel to Livorno in Italy. He returned to Moscow in 1654 (the exact date not indicated), which probably was the time that the tsar received a report about the desire of the Medicis in Florence to establish relations with

28. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 60–64, 67–68.
29. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fol. 33.

Moscow. Hebdon would subsequently assist in arranging transport in Archangel to take the embassy of Ivan Chemodanov to Italy in 1656.

In the 1650s, Archangel was still the only port under Russian control through which there could be trade with Western Europe, the shipping dominated by the Dutch. One of the files here is 'On the arrival in Archangel of Dutch ships with goods; inventory of the latter.'[30] It was standard practice for the Russian officials to inventory the goods brought by foreign ships in order to determine what customs duty to levy. Since there was no navigation during the winter, the first ships would normally arrive no earlier than late spring. While some of the foreign ships might arrive even later in the season, presumably the commercial fair scheduled for August was the occasion when the goods they brought would be traded – just in time for the ships to sail back before winter with what they had obtained in Russia. On adjoining folios with the inventory of goods was a document 'On the scheduling of the fair in Archangel for the second half of August (from Dormition Day).'[31] Dormition Day is 15 August.

The security of the trade to Archangel was an ongoing concern, heightened now with rumors about a possible attack connected with the war against Poland, as laid out in an item 'On the refusal of the people of Danzig of a loan to the Polish king and about Cromwell's intention of allegedly to go to Archangel on warships, disguised as commercial vessels, and to destroy the city.'[32] At the end of November 1654, King Jan Kazimierz dispatched Nicholas de Bye to England with the goal of trying to persuade Oliver Cromwell to invade Russia by sending a large fleet to Archangel (Fedoruk 2008–2009: 130). Cromwell rather rudely dismissed the Polish mission, but presumably news would have gotten out (perhaps deliberately disseminated by the Poles) about plans for an English attack. A Scottish mercenary in Russian service, George Keith (Iurii Kit), who had been commissioned to obtain intelligence while in Riga, reported from a conversation he had there in mid-November with none other than the Swedish governor Bengt Horn that the Swede, referring to the plan by Cromwell, had inquired about the defenses of Archangel (*AIuZR* 14: 650). The information may well have come from a Polish embassy to Sweden which was passing through Riga while Keith was there. Yet this news would have been received by the tsar many weeks after the period ostensibly covered by the documents in this file. In June Keith had arrived from Riga and joined the Russian army at Smolensk – specifically the lead division directly under the tsar's command (Babulin 2018: 43). Might it not be that the idea of an attack by Cromwell on Archangel was already at that time circulating amongst the Scottish mercenaries who had fled Britain and were being hired by various armies in Eastern Europe? A number of them were living with their families in Riga; on his arrival in June, Keith undoubtedly would have been deposed regarding any such news.

30. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 90–93, 99–105
31. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 94–98.
32. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 50–56, 69–71, 150.

News about the plans of Russia's enemies was full of rumor which might not always be accurate. Another such example which came to the tsar, involving the plans of the Poles, is the item entitled in the inventory: 'News about the intention of the Polish king in alliance with the Turks to attack Moscow and Khmelnytsky.'[33] A Polish embassy to Istanbul in April and May had reached an agreement that the Ottomans would support a Crimean-Polish offensive and defensive alliance, which then was signed in mid-July. In a somewhat vaguely worded letter on 8 July 1654, Bohdan Khmelnytsky wrote to the tsar about the intention of the Poles to wage war in alliance with the Turks and Tatars (*Arkhiv* 1914: 814–816). However, the Ottoman government had not committed itself to join with the Poles in attacking Moscow and the Zaporozhians, even though the possibility that such might occur has to have caused great concern in Moscow.

Another group of the documents in this file pointed in the opposite direction: 'On the embassy of the Crimean Aga Aivas with the proposal to conclude an alliance with the Cossacks against the Poles and concerning the restraint of the Don Cossacks from raiding the Crimean shores.'[34] The documents on the embassy of Aivas Beg to Moscow are dated 15 November 1653 – February 1655. He brought news that the Crimean khan was attacking the Poles and discussed the question of restraining the Don Cossacks from attacks that might provoke conflict between Moscow and the Ottoman Empire.[35]

Moreover, the file contained a rather large group of documents which might well have provided additional evidence about Ottoman intentions: 'Translations of sheets and letters of Greek clergy and depositions of merchants about affairs in the Near East.'[36] There was a substantial flow of letters sent to Moscow from Southeastern Europe and other areas of the Ottoman Empire.[37] Greek clerics and merchants frequently arrived in Muscovite territory. As has been well documented, such letters and the depositions of those who brought them included a great deal of information on events in the Ottoman capital and in Ukraine, through which the carriers of the missives traveled.[38] The letters and depositions in this file need to be examined in order to learn whether the collection of translations relates to the period of the tsar's campaign or the previous year or two.

33. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 75–77.

34. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 205–218.

35. See the inventory for RGADA, f. 123 (Crimean Affairs), *Opis'* 1, 1653, fol. 176, No. 19.

36. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 219–254.

37. There is, of course, a great deal of other information concerning the Ottomans which was being obtained during diplomatic exchanges, a subject that would require a separate study. One example of the kinds of official documents which the Russians could obtain is listed in the archival inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1651, fol. 168^{v}, No. 14: 'Translations of letters 1) to the hetman of the Zaporozhian army Bohdan Khmelnytsky from Vizier Mehmet Pasha and the vicegerents of the Silistria Siyaush Pasha and the Belgrade Suleyman Aga; also [2)] to the Russian envoy Boyar Il'ia Danilovich Miloslavskii from the translator of the Turkish sultan, Zulfu-Kar-Aga.' Correspondence between Khmelnytsky and the Turkish officials in 1654 has been published from the Moscow Polish affairs files in *Arkhiv* 1914: 798–806, No. CCXC. See also note 63 below.

38. For details and the publication of a selection of the documents, see Chentsova 2010: 71, 101–108, 170–171, 194–206, 216–224, 242–246. See also idem 2001, where the focus is an interesting set of Greek letters from Ukraine with information on an important stage in the Cossack rebellion.

FIG. 16.3. King Karl X Gustav (1622–1660). Engraving by Ludwig van Schuppen, after a depiction by Daniel Klöcker.

One possible explanation of the interest here is the fact that the Orthodox clerics had sent to Moscow in 1648 a famous icon of the Iverian Mother of God. When he set out on his campaign in 1654, the tsar took it along, and it is likely that a second copy of the icon also had been brought to Moscow in this period. Apart from that, the information, if current, was valuable for keeping track of Turkish and Tatar military activity and intentions.

Two of the files related to Russian foreign-policy concerns which may only indirectly have had a bearing on the war against the Commonwealth. Relations with Sweden certainly were important; the tsar's officials paid close attention to the question of the succession to the Swedish throne, as evidenced at the time of Queen Christina's coronation.[39] She abdicated in 1654, and on the following day, 7 June, King Karl X Gustav (FIG. 16.3) was crowned as her successor. So, while on campaign, the tsar received a report 'On the ascent to the throne of Swedish King Karl and on the surveying of the border zone with Sweden.'[40] Apart from the succession issue, ever since the end of the Time of Troubles and the settlement in the Truce of Stolbovo, the delimitation of borders between

39. The inventory for the Swedish Affairs files includes two, as yet unpublished documents relating to her coronation '20 October. Description of the coronation ceremony for Swedish Queen Christina'; '6 November. Translation of the Swedish Diet's decree following the coronation of Queen Christina related to several state institutions' (RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1650, fol. 106, Nos. 6, 7).

40. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 12, 19–20, 27–30, 39–42, 73–74, 87–89, 108–118, 121–122, 158–169. The folios pertaining to Sweden have been mixed up with folios containing many of the other news items. While the texts may all date from roughly the same period, in the absence of specific internal dates, establishing any kind of chronological sequence for them may be impossible. Queen Christina's embracing of Roman Catholicism and her peregrinations, which ultimately took her to Rome, were widely reported in Europe and of interest in Moscow (see Wåghäll Nivre 2008). Another of the unpublished archival documents attesting to this interest is listed in the inventories as: 'October 10. Translation of the missive of the Roman Pope Alexander VII to Swedish Queen Christina, praising her for adopting the Catholic faith and informing her about the sending to her a teacher, his secretary Lukash Golstin' (RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 113v, No. 10). Presumably the papal letter is that published as the preface to *Professio Fidei Das ist: Offentliche Bekandtnuß deß wahren/ und Catholischen Römischen/ allein seeligmachenden Glaubens. Der Durchleuchtigisten/ Großmächtigistin Königin Christinae Königin in Schweden/ [et]c.* Frankfurt am Main: Weiß, 1655 (VD17 12:633349D). There also is an Augsburg edition (VD17 14:081065Q). The immediate source used for the Moscow translation may have been either a pamphlet or a newspaper. While its relevance to the peace negotiations between the Commonwealth and Russia in 1656 is not self-evident, what appears to have been a copy of the pope's letter was among the documents and books which the Russian delegation took along to Vilna (see Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 179).

Muscovite territory and Swedish Livonia had continued to be negotiated between the two countries. When Karl X Gustav died in 1660, the Swedish agent Adolf Ebers brought the news to Moscow and very likely gave the Russians the published proceedings of the Swedish Riksdåg concerning administration during the minority of his successor, Karl XI.[41]

Although of no consequence for Russian relations with its western neighbors, since the late sixteenth century relations with the polities in the Caucasus had been important for the expanding Russian Orthodox empire. So the inclusion here of a file with documents relating to the arrival of Georgian royalty in Russia is no surprise: 'On the sending of missives of the Georgian Tsar Teimuraz and Tsaritsa Elena to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich with a declaration of submission and request about various emoluments.'[42] Teimuraz I had been deposed and turned to Moscow for support to regain his throne. In 1653, he sent his grandson to Moscow, where he remained until May 1660. The *dvortsovye razriady* record the reception of the Georgian royalty.[43] In November 1653 (no day given), a high-level delegation of Russians was dispatched to Nizhnii Novgorod to meet Tsaritsa Elena Levont'evna and her son Tsarevich Nikolai Davydovich. On 27 December, the Georgians made their ceremonial entrance into Moscow. On 1 and 6 January 1654, the tsar received the Georgian tsarevich. The Georgian tsaritsa was received by the women of the Russian court on 8 January. The Georgian tsarevich now came to be included in ceremonial meals with high-ranking Muscovite nobles presided over by the tsar, accompanied him on some of his religious pilgrimages, and also on the campaign that began in May. Among the missives listed here were letters in Greek, presumably ones the Georgians brought with them and would have presented to the tsar on their arrival. Greek commonly was the language used in Russian diplomacy with the Christians in the Caucasus.

The remaining files in this compendium all presumably had a direct bearing on the war. The file inventoried under the header 'On the making abroad of a hammer for the

41. See the inventory listings in RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 123, №. 5: '1 May – 25 July. Arrival in Moscow of the Swedish agent Adolf Ebers as an envoy with a missive communicating the death of Swedish King Karl X Gustav, and on the accession to the throne of his son Karl XI'; ibid., fol. 122v, No. 4: '1 March. Articles in Latin of the Swedish Diet which took place in Göteborg, from the state officials concerning the state administration in the period of the royal minority.' The proceedings of the Riksdåg probably were published in both Latin and Swedish editions, as seems to have been the case with a number of Swedish separates containing treaties or other important documents. We have not yet found a reference to a Latin edition in this case, but the Swedish edition is: *Sweriges Rijkes ständers Beslvvt, Som aff them enhälleligen giordes, på then allmenne Rijkzdagh, som höltz i Götheborg then 1. martij åhr 1660*. Göteborg: Amund Grefwe [1660]. The date in the inventory is that printed in the Swedish original, not the date when the publication was received. The Ambassadorial Chancery received at least one subsequent publication of the proceedings of the Swedish Riksdåg, as listed in the inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 123, №. 6: '3 November. The decisions of the Diet printed in Swedish at its conclusion.' Presumably this is a copy of *Sweriges Rijkes Ständers Besluth, Som aff them enhälleligen giordes, på then allmenne Rijkzdagh, som höltz i Stockholm den 3. novembris åhr 1660*. Stockholm: Henrich Keyser, [1660].

42. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 9–11, 35–36, 72, 131–144, 180–185.

43. *DR* 3: 381–382, 384–390, 393–395.

striking of coins' concerned measures to improve state finances.[44] In early June 1654, when he was already off on the campaign, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich issued a decree about a monetary reform, by which at least certain Russian coins now were to be made of copper (Mel'nikova 1989: 200). This reform required an upgrading of the facilities of the Moscow mint. One reason for undertaking the monetary reform was the need to produce money that could be used in the Cossack territories of Ukraine to replace the use of Polish coinage there (Spasskii 1962: 119–122). Russia had a chronic shortage of precious metals for the striking of coinage, which is one reason the prospecting for ore deposits came under the purview of the tsar's Privy Chancery. The experiment of producing copper coinage would prove to have been unwise, as it provoked a major uprising in 1662 by those who refused to accept the new coins.

Some of the documents contained material on important strategic and military successes in the war.[45] Among them was the surrender of Polotsk, about which there was a report 'On the intention of the people of Polotsk to become subjects of the Muscovite state in connection with the plundering in regions bordering with Lithuania.'[46] On 29 June, a message from Vasilii Petrovich Sheremetev, commanding another division of the Russian army, informed the tsar that the people of Polotsk had surrendered to the advancing Russian army (*DR* 3: 432). The tsar immediately forwarded this news to Moscow. On 7 September, the tsar issued to Polotsk a charter of privileges, specifying that it was a response to a petition from the residents to come under Muscovite protection at the time when they surrendered the city to Sheremetev (*AIuZR* 14: 295–298).

The primary target of the tsar's campaign in 1654 was Smolensk, which had been ceded to the Commonwealth by the Truce of Deulino at the end of the Time of Troubles and which the Russian army had failed to retake in the war of 1633–34. Enlisting the support of the Zaporozhians for the siege of the city was part of the strategy, reflected in another of the files: 'On the dispatch of a Zaporozhian force to Smolensk to assist the Muscovite army and on the salary payments to the Zaporozhians.'[47] The tsar left Viaz'ma for Smolensk on 10 June, at which time he sent a message to Khmelnytsky along with

44. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 1–7.

45. There also were some reports about events of lesser significance, which, nonetheless, seem to have been brought to the tsar's attention. Those files in RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13 contained: [A] (fols. 21–24) 'On the incursion of the Lithuanians into Opochetskii district.' The center of the area in question is about 120 km directly south of Pskov and close to the border of today's Latvia. [B] (fols.16–18, 25–26) 'On the refusal of townsmen of the Pskov Pechory Monastery to provide carts for the transport of arms sent from Riga to Novgorod.' The monastery was the Russian outpost closest to the border with Livonia on the major route that connected Riga with Pskov and Novgorod. Conscription of locals for transport of goods and messages was a common practice. So far we have not found a copy of the text described here. For an analogy of a government decree to a monastery that it provide transport for armaments purchased abroad to the tsar's army at the front, see *AI* 4: 252–243, No. 99, the order imposing the transport burden on the Tikhvin Monastery in the Novgorod Eparchy in June 1655. [C] (fols. 187–204) 'On the execution of the Viaz'ma resident Fedor Safonov for communicating military secrets to a Polish noble.'

46. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 29–30, 83–86.

47. RGADA, f. 221, op. 1, 1654, No. 13, fols. 275–302.

a monetary payment (*zhalovan'e*; *DR* 3: 428). Possibly this was in response to a Zaporozhian promise to send troops. A Cossack force was present in the siege of Smolensk, although the main activity of their contingents focused elsewhere. Cossack representatives were present at the tsar's camp outside of Smolensk starting at least in late July (ibid.: 437, 442). On 20 August, the tsar received a report about the success of a Zaporozhian force led by Ivan Zolotarenko, which had just taken Gomel. Another report from Zolotarenko arrived on the 29th (ibid.: 444–445). Smolensk surrendered to the Russian forces on 23 September 1654. The tsar quickly sent the news back to Moscow and to all his other key commanders in the field (ibid.: 449–450), after which he headed back to Viaz'ma on 5 October.

The evidence from this one compendium of documents illustrates a wide range of subjects concerning which the tsar could acquire news even when off on campaign and despite the interruptions in communication on account of the plague. His meticulous attention to the affairs of state extended to other topics too. For example, while still at Smolensk, Aleksei Mikhailovich was continuing to press the Moldavian ruler, Hospodar Gheorghe Stefan, to acknowledge Muscovite sovereignty.[48] However, Stefan chose instead to ally initially with the Poles. The Muscovite government was warned he could not be trusted, although he did eventually accept Russian suzerainty in 1656. The possibility of Ottoman Turkish involvement in the wars with Poland-Lithuania explains both the Moldavian initiative and the interest in news coming from Greek clerics and merchants.

16.5. Other evidence on the range of news acquired by the government in the 1650s

The foreign-relations files – which were not examined closely for the edition of V-K V – contain a great deal of other foreign news, some of it concealed under general rubrics of reports from border commandants or from diplomatic negotiations. There also are a few listings of pamphlets for which we can tentatively identify the actual imprints. While we must leave for other scholars the examination of the archival files, we can at least offer here some guidance regarding the kinds of material that can expand our corpus of *kuranty* or '*kuranty*-like' texts. This material derives in the first instance from examination of the digitized archival inventories (*opisi*), compiled by Bantysh-Kamenskii; so the descriptions, chronology, and the ordering of the files are his. The file designations may include in the headers a range of dates if they represent collections assembled over the course of several months or more, or they may have a single date, which in the case of an item such as a pamphlet may be one contained on its title page. It is important to remember, as we have emphasized before, that there can be some uncertainty about the identifications and the chronology, one reason being that back in the seventeenth century the chancery officials organized files according to their own perception of their

48. *RUD*: 480–488, 511–530. On the involvement of Moldavia and Wallachia in the international relations of this period, see also Semenova 2002.

content and relevance before pasting them into scrolls. Bantysh-Kamenskii's numbering of the archival units in many cases reflects his separation of them from scrolls which had contained other material as well.

One of the standard categories he used to inventory material was reports of military governors (*voevody*). These could include communications they had received from their counterparts as well as news reports. For example, under the year 1655, the first archival unit in the Swedish Affairs files contains: 'Jan.–Dec. Reports of *voevody* of Novgorod and other cities bordering with Sweden, and the dispatching to them of the sovereign's missives on various border matters.'[49] Concealed under this general rubric, as Elena Kobzareva discovered, are translations from Dutch newspapers with April news, which were received (in Moscow?) on 23 June, reporting the advance of the Swedish army on Marienburg in Prussia, the expectation of a Swedish attack on Danzig, and a rumor that the Swedes might even be planning to attack a Russian outpost on the Kola Peninsula. The same file contains from later in the summer a speculative report – based on a German letter from Riga – which questioned whether the Duke of Courland would support Sweden or Russia and which indicated that the Lithuanian forces under Prince Radziwiłł might surrender to the Swedes.[50] Those subjects were of considerable interest to the Muscovite policy makers at the time. None of this material made it into V-K V, although that volume does contain a translation of excerpts from Dutch newspapers, reporting late March through April news, which arrived in Moscow from Archangel on 28 June.[51] The April news, received more than two months after the reported events, may have prompted the sending of a Russian diplomatic mission to Danzig, but by the time it arrived, the Swedes had already taken the city. The report from Riga, on the other hand, seems to have been more current.

During the period between the end of hostilities in the Russo-Swedish War of 1656–1658 and the signing of the Peace of Kardis in 1661, there were extensive exchanges of between the commandants on both sides of the border with Livonia. The archival inventories regarding Swedish Affairs make it clear that news and intelligence was being exchanged, for example in the file titled: 'January–December. Reports of Novgorod, Pskov and other commandants of the towns on the border with Sweden [...] their correspondence with the Swedish border commandants. In addition, translations of news reports and depositions about foreign news.'[52] The portion of this file which has been published

49. Listed in the inventory, RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol.112, No. 1.

50. Kobzareva 1998: 53, 57, 69, 79; Floria 2010: 27–28. The given archival file also contains correspondence between Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin and the Swedish governor of Livonia Magnus De la Gardie. It is thus possible that the Dutch and German news reports were ones Ordin-Nashchokin had received from De la Gardie, who seems to have been eager to tell the Russians about Swedish military successes.

51. V-K V: 97–99, No. 25. The text has been preserved only in a nineteenth-century copy (a manuscript in the Zabelin collection of the State Historical Museum in Moscow). Given the very poor preservation of the main Dutch newspapers in this period, it has been impossible to determine the sources for the translation.

52. RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 122, No. 1.

indicates that it had been brought 'from above' (that is, the tsar's chambers), which may mean that the news had been sent directly to the tsar before being transferred to the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K VI/1: 82, No. 4.69). Analogous to the examples from the Swedish affairs files is one inventoried for documents pertaining to Polish affairs in 1659. The first archival unit contains 'Reports of Russian commandants from Smolensk, Vilna, Polotsk, Vitebsk and other places with the appended news (*vedomostei*) about Polish affairs. Also there, the dispatches of the sovereign's missives to them and their correspondence with Polish magnates.'[53]

The archival inventories list an impressive number of letters and official documents produced by other governments. Some of them presumably had been copied and disseminated, but others may never have been intended to be widely shared, especially with the government of a hostile power. How they were obtained by those who produced the copies is not always clear. In a few instances, as the archival inventories suggest, the Russians intercepted enemy communications or interrogated refugees and captives.[54] There are also many well documented cases of how copies of another government's official communications were shared during diplomatic negotiations in order to support or refute the arguments of one of the negotiating parties. Much of this material, not all of which has been published, relates to the complicated political struggles involving Russia, Sweden, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Cossacks, the Crimean Tatars, and the Transylvanian and Moldavian principalities.

The Swedish invasion of the Commonwealth in summer of 1655 dramatically changed the course of events. Swedish successes brought about the near destruction of the Polish-Lithuanian State (in Polish historiography known as 'The Deluge') and encouraged the Russians to begin serious negotiations with the Commonwealth for a truce in their own conflict. Fearing that a powerful Sweden would now occupy all the territories along the western border of Muscovy, the Russians reached at least a temporary settlement with the Commonwealth in negotiations at Vilna and declared war against Sweden. While Russian attention to Swedish affairs was hardly new, there now was an influx of documentation, including copies of many important official documents and in some cases unofficial publications. It is in this period that we begin to find significant evidence concerning the role of Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Naschokin in supplying the tsar with important foreign news.

53. RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1659, fol. 192, No. 1.

54. For example, in the inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1654, fols. 174, 175, Nos. 1, 2, 7: 'Depositions of refugees from Poland and Lithuania about events there'; 'Translations from royal manifestos and captured letters of Lithuanian Hetman Radziwiłł to the king of Poland and various Polish magnates and from them to him at the time of the war between the Russians and the Poles'; 'Translation from reports, captured from the Poles during the campaign of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich to Lithuania, indicating exactly how many commanders and officers were in the sovereign's army'; RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 177, No. 4: 'Intercepted Polish letters with translations from the time of the Russo-Polish war; among them letters of the king, of the hetmen, and of the traitor and former colonel Kostin Poklonskii.'

Typically at the onset of a war in Europe, the initiators of the conflict would issue justifications for their decision to invade another country. Official proclamations often would be printed and distributed to help recruit allies or try to persuade skeptical individuals at home about the rationale for a potentially costly war. Apart from whatever official missives may have been sent from Stockholm to Moscow, the Ambassadorial Chancery obtained a printed booklet that had been widely distributed, containing an unofficial argument justifying the Swedish invasion. Its content has been summarized in the archival inventory as: 'Copy of a printed letter of Kiriakos Trizimachos, addressed to his acquaintance Andreas Nikanoros, concerning the justified reasons why the Swedish king went to war against the Poles.'[55]

Hrushevsky (9, bk. 2, pt. 2: 160) has emphasized that 'Letters from the Swedish king to the Zaporozhian hetman and the acting hetman [Ivan Zolotarenko] figured considerably in the rift that opened between Muscovy and the Swedes in the spring of 1656.' Two of the Swedish king's letters sent in November 1655 and translated in Moscow suggest that Cossack troops had already been sent or at least promised.[56] A *kuranty* translation from Dutch newspapers read to the tsar and boyars at the end of 1655 included information that Khmelnytsky had gone over to the side of the Swedes and promised to keep the Tatars from raiding in Poland, where they might threaten the Swedish forces.[57]

The frequent exchanges between the Zaporozhians and Moscow provided a conduit for the Russians to obtain many such documents. For example, in 1657, when Khmelnytsky and his secretary and immediate successor Vykhovsky were continuing to pursue

55. RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 113^{v}, No. 12. There are many printed editions of this letter, accompanied by a response to it, in both Latin and German. Some include an explanatory text or a version of the Swedish king's declaration of war, for which the letter provided a justification. See, e.g., *Epistola Oder Send-Schreiben/ Deß Cyriaci Thrasymachi [...]. Ahn Andream Nicanorem: Auß dem Stetinischen Lateinischen Exemplar ins Teutsche übersetzet*. N.p., 1656 (VD 17 12:188871S; see also VD17 14:052387D, VD17 28:734071C, VD17 28:734067S, VD17 14:706471Y). The Russian translation of this booklet is probably the item listed among the books and papers taken to Vilna in 1656 by Nikita Odoevskii, for possible reference during his negotiations there for a truce with the Commonwealth and an alliance against the Swedes. See Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 175, 179. The booklet is listed twice as 'Perevod s nemetskoi pechatnoi tetrati, za chto uchinilas voina u sveiskogo korolia s polskim korolem 1655-go godu.'

56. See the inventory, RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 113^{v}, № 11: 'November 13 and 16. Translations of the missives of Swedish King Karl Gustav to the Ukrainian Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky with expression of his satisfaction regarding the favorable comments he sent, and to the colonel Zolotarenko, thanking him for sending 10,000 Cossacks to assist the king in Poland.' The second of these is apparently the letter dated 14 November published from the Ukrainian Affairs files in *AIuZR* 14: 894–896. Very likely copies of these letters were among the books and documents taken to Vilna in 1656 by Obolenskii. See Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 179: 'List sveiskogo Karl Gustava korolia, pisan k zaporozhskim kazakam, perezyvaia ikh k sebe, 164-go godu'; 'Perevod z gramoty sveiskogo korolia, kakovu pisal k Zolotarenku.'

57. Floria (2010: 64–65) cites this unpublished translation from the Polish Affairs files (RGADA, f. 79, op. 1, 1656, No. 1). Although we cannot be certain of the exact Dutch source, we note that *ODC* 1655/47 (published 23 November) contained reports from Poland, 28 October, and Stettin, 10 November, about Cossack proposals to send troops to support the Swedes. However, these news items do not mention any agreement specifically to block Tatar raids.

foreign-policy alignments independently of what Moscow expected from them, there was a flurry of diplomatic activity – Russian missions to the Zaporozhians and the Cossacks' missions to Moscow. During these negotiations, the Russian diplomats obtained many of the letters the Cossacks had been exchanging or intercepting, some provided by the Cossack leaders themselves, others presumably acquired surreptitiously. Among the correspondents were the Transylvanian Prince Rákóczi, the Moldavian Hospodar Gheorghe Stefan (communicating important news about impending Tatar attacks), Swedish King Karl X Gustav, the Polish Crown Hetman Stanisław Potocki, Habsburg Crown Prince Leopold, and the Crimean khan and his subordinates. As soon as copies of these documents came into the hands of the Ambassadorial Chancery, they were translated.[58] The Cossack leadership viewed such interactions as a means of securing support for Cossack autonomy or independence, even though from the standpoint of the Russian government the documents might suggest that the Zaporozhians were violating the understanding reached at Pereiaslav in 1654.

The archival files show that the Russian government was managing to track closely the Polish response to the Cossack rebellion. The files contain translations and copies of the Polish proclamation in response to the Pereiaslav agreement in 1654, appealing to the the Zaporozhians not to follow Khmelnytsky's lead in accepting Russian sovereignty.[59] Its survival threatened by the rebellion and war against both Russia and Sweden, the Polish government tried to drive a wedge between the Zaporozhians and Russia by sharing with the Russian peace delegation at Vilna intercepted Swedish documents. The Russian envoys received on 1 September 1656 two of King Karl X Gustav's letters to Khmelnytsky, one dated 22 February, the other 23 July.[60] Such documents were not always obtained quickly or in chronological order. On 24 March 1657, the Ambassadorial Chancery received a letter that Khmelnytsky had written to the Swedish king back in January 1656. Even though the letter was already a year old, the Russian commandant in Druia (today in northern Belarus, on the border with Latvia), Afanasii

58. See the texts published in *AIuZR* 7: 180–181 and vol. 11: 685–706, 723–742. For a discussion of the Zaporozhian policies, the Russian responses and the diplomatic exchanges, see Floria 2010: 229–232, 240–242, 252–261, 287–300.

59. The inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1654, fol. 174, No. 3, lists: 'February 28. Translation of the *universal* [proclamation] of Polish King Jan Kazimierz to the Zaporozhian Cossacks that they should not follow Hetman Khmelnytsky in becoming Russian subjects, and rather submit to the king's authority.' The inventory also lists (ibid.: fol. 175, No. 8): 'June 6. Manifesto signed by Polish King Jan Kazimierz to the [council of] elders and Zaporozhian Cossacks, denouncing them [for supporting] the traitorous action of Hetman Khmelnytsky [...] and advising them to reconsider and return as before to being subjects of him, the king, and of Poland.'

60. See *RUD*: 195 and the discussion by Floria 2010: 156–158, who states (p. 157) that the letters were handed over on 7 September. The archival inventory lists a file with the Latin originals of the letters and their translations (RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1656, fol. 181, No. 8): '22 February and 27 July. Copies and translations of two missives of Swedish King Karl Gustav to Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, to incline him to support his [the king's] side, and advising that he should not join up with the Poles in any way and that he [Khmelnytsky] can anticipate envoys from him [the king] with new assurances.' The translations have been published from this file in *Sbornik IuZR* 1911–1916, 1, Sec. 2: 29–34.

Ordin-Nashchokin, had found it useful to document the historical background to his report about how the hetman had sent a military detachment to support the forces of the Transylvanian Prince György II Rákóczi, which were attacking Poland.[61] The correspondence between King Karl X Gustav and Bohdan Khmelnytsky must have been of particular interest to the tsar, whose Privy Chancery contained a file described in the 1677 inventory as 'Excerpt from articles, in which the Swedish king called on Bohdan Khmelnytsky to become his subject' (*RIB* 21: 347).

Rákóczi's intervention in the war attracted the attention of the government in Moscow and was the subject of many reports in the Western press.[62] As Ordin-Nashchokin reported, in 1654 Rákóczi had written to Khmelnytsky and his secretary Vykhovsky that he would never be in conflict with them and requested that they send envoys to him.[63] The Transylvanian prince sent another envoy to the Cossacks in 1655, but when there was no news back about him, he wrote to Vykhovsky on 1 December, inquiring about the fate of that mission.[64] In February and March 1656, Khmelnytsky wrote to Rákóczi, affirming his intention to maintain with him good relations, raising the question of sending troops to assist him, and promising that he would be sending an embassy to Transylvania.[65] The two sides agreed on an offensive and defensive alliance in September 1656.[66] Having learned of what they believed was a commitment by Khmelnytsky to support Rákóczi's pretensions to the Polish throne (even though that was not specified in the treaty), in February 1657 the Russian government vigorously protested that the hetman had violated his agreement with Moscow to support the tsar's candidacy in Poland.[67]

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61. Cited in Floria (2010: 227) from the unpublished archival file RGADA, f. 96, 1657, No. 2: fols. 149–156.

62. For a detailed analysis of the Russian response to Rákóczi's intervention, see Floria 2010: 205–261 (Ch. 4). Hrushevsky (9, bk. 2, pt. 2: 216–244) provides considerable additional evidence regarding the Cossack negotiations with Rákóczi. On the Western reporting about Rákóczi, see Dillon 2014.

63. See the inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1654, fol. 174, No. 4.

64. See *AIuZR* 14: 885, which publishes the letter, translated from Latin and preserved in the Ukrainian Affairs files in Moscow, and a letter from the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet IV to Khmelnytsky. The file specifies that the letters had been brought to Moscow on 23 April 1656 by the Russian envoy to Khmelnytsky, Larion Lopukhin. As summarized by Hrushevsky (9, bk. 2, pt. 2: 127), the hetman 'showered them [the Russian envoys] with a heap of documents: three letters from the sultan [Mehmet IV], one from the khan [Mehmet Giray IV], one from John Casimir, another from Charles Gustavus, and two from his chancellor [Erik Oxenstierna], as well as letters from György Rákóczi II and Hospodar Gheorghe Ştefan.'

65. *RUD*: 344–345. On the Transylvanian-Zaporozhian negotiations in 1656, see Floria 2010: 164–166.

66. *RUD*: 349–350; for the contemporary Russian translation of the Latin text, see *AIuZR* 3: 546–547; for an English translation, Hrushevsky 9, bk. 2, pt. 2: 227. Apparently the authorities in Moscow received the text of the treaty only in mid-December from their *voevoda* in Kiev Andrei Buturlin, who had obtained it from a Cossack colonel. See Buturlin's report, *AIuZR* 3: 552; Hrushevsky, 9, bk. 2, pt. 2: 166. The Polish envoy Kazimierz Montrymowicz, who came to Moscow with a plea that the Russians help the Poles survive in the face of the invasion by the Swedes and the threat from the south, brought a copy of the agreement in May 1657 (Floria 2010: 241).

67. *RUD*: 348–350; Floria 2010: 211.

In pursuit of his aim to be elected Polish king, Rákóczi was also exploring other possible alliances against Poland. Seizing the opportunity presented by the Swedish invasion of the Commonwealth, he concluded an alliance with Sweden at Radnot on 6 December 1656, distributed a proclamation to the citizens of the Commonwealth, and sent an army in support of the assault on Kraków.[68] The Transylvanian intervention had a considerable impact on Muscovite foreign policy.[69] The Russians twice obtained copies of Rákóczi's proclamation, dated 31 December 1656. The Russian *voevoda* in Vilna, Mikhail Shakhovskoi, received a copy of it in Polish on 17 February 1657. He promptly had it translated and forwarded to Moscow.[70] On a mission to Lithuanian Hetman Wicenty Gosiewski, on 20 February, Artamon Matveev also obtained a copy which he forwarded in a report to Moscow.[71] The proclamation was widely published, with versions in German, Latin, and Dutch.[72] In a letter to Rákóczi in May 1657, the tsar called on the Transylvanian prince to give up his pretensions to the Polish throne and not to support the Swedes in the war against the Commonwealth (*RUD*: 357–358). The abrupt reversal of Rákóczi's fortunes meant that the letter was never delivered.

68. The Latin text of the treaty between Sweden and Transylvania, dated 6 December 1656, has been published by Szilagyi 1891: 190–196. It is not clear whether the Russian officials were able to obtain a copy of it, although the subsequent coordination between the Swedish and Transylvanian armies was sufficient evidence that there had been a formal agreement. *WDoZ* 1657/8 printed a report from Zamość dated 25 January about the beginning of the Transylvanian invasion, supported by the Cossacks. Rákóczi sent ahead to Lviv a herald with a proclamation that the inhabitants of the city need not worry since he was coming as a friend, whom they might accept as their king. The newspaper published an 'extra' to its *WZ App.* 1657/8: *Universal So Der Fürst in Siebenbürgen Herr Georgius Ragozzi an die Stände in Pohlen hin und wieder ergehen lassen. Nebenst 2. Extract-Schreiben auß Crakaw und Breßlau sub dato den 28. Januar. und 17. Februar. Anno 1657.* N.p., 1657 (VD17: 14:052432P). The extra printing also contains news items datelined Kraków 28 January and Breslau 17 February. *WDoZ*, 1657/9: [3-4] reported from Breslau, 17 February, about the Transylvanian's army having crossed the border on 26 January, with the plan that a Cossack force would join it on 14 February. The article went on to summarize the contents of Rákóczi's proclamation, emphasizing his arguments in support of his acceding to the Polish throne. It is difficult to know whether these somewhat cryptic summaries of the proclamation in the newspaper articles are referring exactly to the text of it which we have.

69. Floria 2010, Ch. 4; also Medvedeva 2002: 191–192.

70. *AMG* 2: 561, No. 949; for the translated text ibid.: 558, No. 944.

71. Floria 2010: 218, citing RGADA, f. 79, 1657, No. 2, esp. fols. 30–33.

72. Apart from the Hamburg 'extra' (VD17: 14:052432P), cited above in note 68, see other printings containing the proclamation, VD 14:002266M, 14:002256E, 15:741696B, 23:266285H (Dutch translation as well as a Latin version of the text). Unlike in the Hamburg printing, *Praeliminar Ursachen Warumb Der Durchläuchtigste Herr Her Georg Ragotzi Fürst in Siebenbürgen* [...] *Die Cron Pohlen mit Seiner Kriegesmacht überzogen Nebst dessen Universalia An alle und Jede Einwohner des Königreichs Polen*. N.p., 1657 (VD17 14:002256E) includes the date and 'signature line' at the end of the proclamation, and two different news items, one datelined Breslau, 11 February, the other from the Polish border, dated 18 February. The texts of those items (but for some minor editorial changes and the date on the Breslau report given as 17 February) are identical with two reports published in *WDoZ* 1657/9. Copies of the proclamation probably began circulating prior to the arrival of Rákóczi's army at the border. So we cannot be certain about the path and source by which the Russian *voevoda*'s contact in Vilna would have obtained what appears to have been a copy in Polish. It is likely that the original version of the proclamation circulated in Latin. For the Latin text, see also Szilágyi 1891: 129–130.

16.6. The Swedish invasion of the Commonwealth and the Kėdainiai accord

There is a considerable amount of archival documentation showing how the Russian government was obtaining news about the Swedish invasion of the Commonwealth in summer 1655. One of the first steps by the Swedish general Magnus De la Gardie, on 31 July, was to demand that the Lithuanians submit and become subjects of the Swedish king. Much to the consternation of the Kremlin, the magnates led by the Protestant Janusz Radziwiłł (1612–1655) agreed at Kėdainiai to submit to Sweden in return for guarantees for the security and autonomy of their duchy.[73] There were several stages in the negotiation, with certain Swedish proposals made on 31 July/10 August and a quite specific Lithuanian declaration in response on 7/17 August. After contentious negotiation over the next two months, the agreement, termed the Union of Kėdainiai, was finalized on 15 October. A public declaration of it was printed in 500 copies with text in Latin and German for distribution among the Lithuanian magnates, who signed the agreement on 10/20 October.[74] Celebrations of the agreement took place in Riga and throughout Livonia but not in Sweden (Kotljarchuk 2006: 132).

Since the 31 July/10 August proposals were printed and distributed in Swedish Livonia, very likely one of the imprints was the source for the Russian archival file of that date. Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin secured a Polish translation of the final agreement (dated 20 October), which he forwarded with other reports – among them, letters he had received – to the Ambassadorial Chancery.[75] As Ordin-Nashchokin noted in sending

73. For a discussion of the agreement, its background, and its consequences, see Frost 2003: 43–52, and Kotljarchuk 2006, Ch. 3. Kotljarchuk's English translations of the August declaration and October proclamation is in ibid.: 313–320. He emphasizes that the Lithuanian declaration of 17 August was not an agreed-on treaty, even less a 'capitulation' by the Lithuanians to Sweden, although some historians have treated it as such (ibid.: 111). It was, rather, an agreement about military collaboration. As he writes, De la Gardie, the Swedish commandant, "signed two documents, which were printed and distributed to Lubienecki and officers of the Livonian army before their march to Lithuania" and "revealed the secret preparations for the treaty between the GDL [Grand Duchy of Lithuania] and Sweden" (ibid.: 99; bibliographic citations from copies in RA (Sthlm) and his translation on pp. 101–104). Presumably one of these was the source for the document listed in the inventory of the Polish Affairs files (RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 178, No. 9): 'July 31. Translation from letters and articles of the Swedish general Magnus De la Gardie to Lithuanian magnates and people of all ranks, concerning their becoming subjects of the Swedish king.' The inventory listing in the Swedish Affairs files for translations of the preliminary and final versions of the agreement is RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 112^{v}, No. 5: 'July 31, August 2, October 20. Translations of the articles and treaties negotiated in Lithuania between the Swedish general Count De la Gardie and Benedict Skytte and the Lithuanian magnates concerning under what conditions the Principality of Lithuania would submit to Swedish rule.' It is not clear what the document dated 2 August might be. The Swedish archival copies of the Kėdainiai texts of 17 August and 20 October have been published in *RUD*: 64–70.

74. See Kotljarchuk 2006: 125–126 for a summary of the key provisions.

75. See the inventory listings: 'October 20. A copy and translation of the treaties concluded between the Swedes and Lithuanians concerning how the Lithuanians would become permanent subjects of the Swedish king, sent by Afanasii Nashchokin' (RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 178^{v}, No. 13); '27 Aug.–3 Nov. The arrival in Vilna of the Swedish officer Bartholomew Julich with letters of the Swedish general Count Magnus De la Gardie to *voevoda* Nashchokin, informing about the Swedish military conquest of Briatslow district with all of its towns. In the same file is the dispatch of *stol'nik*

the treaty, it contained a phrase that gave it a decidedly anti-Russian emphasis. It appears that Ordin-Naschokin's Polish contacts had provided him with a text that included a deliberate mistranslation by the Poles of the Latin original.[76] The distorting emphasis aside, in its basic outlines, the agreement was clear evidence about plans that were detrimental to Moscow's interests. In a church service in the Moscow Kremlin, the visiting Patriarch Macarius III of Antioch condemned Radziwiłł as a heretic (Kotljarchuk 2006: 132). According to Paul of Aleppo, the chronicler of the visit to Moscow by Patriarch Macarius, 'About this time news came to the emperor [tsar], and the report was by him made public, that the accursed Radzivil, who had made terms with Sweden, and taken up his residence in that country, had suddenly fallen a victim to the vengeance of the Almighty, and had broken his neck.'[77] If in fact the tsar had made the news public, this is an interesting and rare example of the dissemination of foreign news beyond the confines of government circles.

Even though the Kėdainiai agreement helped persuade Courland to accept Sweden's protection (despite Moscow's pressure), as Andrej Kotljarchuk has put it, "The KU [Union of Kėdainiai] had rapidly become useless to Sweden, since the Swedish army had controlled the north of the Duchy since August 1655. Swedish soldiers treated Lithuania as an invaded country. The Lithuanian nobility realized that they had been excluded from power [...] Thus, the KU lost its significance for both parties" (ibid.: 137). The Union's chief proponent amongst the Lithuanian magnates, Janusz Radziwiłł, died at the end of December, when already it was clear that conflicts among the Lithuanian magnates doomed any possibility that the Swedes could weld them into an effective tool against Poland. In the first months of 1656, some of the most important ones switched sides and supported the Poles. The long-term importance of the Union, in Kotljarchuk's view, was this (ibid.: 139):

> Thanks to the KU, Lithuania (unlike the Ukrainian Hetmanate) remained on the map of Europe until 1795 [the final partition of Lithuania-Poland]. Only the alliance with Sweden prevented incorporation of the GDL [Grand Duchy of Lithuania] into the Muscovite state. The KU made the future of Russian policy very complicated. The Muscovites had not expected the Swedes, who had once been their allies in a war against the Commonwealth, to turn into potential enemies. A Russian-Swedish conflict became inevitable .

Afanasii Nesterov to the general from the boyars at Vilna, and the *stateinyi spisok* about his sojourn in Vilna' (RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1655, fol. 113, No.8).

76. See Floria 2010: 45–46, citing Zaborovskii 1994: 127 n. 168. It was not until May 1657 that the Ambassadorial Chancery obtained a copy of the original Latin text.

77. The date of this information is uncertain, but it has been placed in the diary in the context of information for the first and second weeks of Lent in February 1656 (Paul of Aleppo 1829–1836, 2: 274). The 'celebration' of his death in Moscow in early February would have been soon after receipt of the news. Radziwiłł died during the battle for Tykocin (now in Białystok Country of northeastern Poland) on 31 December 1655. There seems to be no mention by Paul of Aleppo about Macarius' having preached a sermon denouncing Radziwiłł, although there are several passages in the diary containing imprecations about him.

Elena Kobzareva (1998: 54) emphasizes that, quite apart from the Kėdainiai agreement, the conflicting interests of Russia and Sweden with regard to control of northern Lithuania and the Baltic made a Russo-Swedish war inevitable. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that the makers of foreign policy in Moscow had any illusions about the stability of the alliance of convenience with the Swedes during the war against the Commonwealth. She emphasizes that even as early as 1654, Patriarch Nikon and Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin were advising the tsar to prioritize a campaign to seize territory all along the Western Dvina River to the Baltic and the important port of Riga (ibid.: 59–61). Whether Ordin-Nashchokin, who would continue to advocate Russian moves to contain Swedish ambitions in the Baltic, was already a confidant and influence on the tsar seems unlikely.[78] As Kobzareva's and Floria's detailed analysis of Russian foreign policy in this period shows, there were many, often conflicting sources of information which were being received by the tsar and his advisers.

The acquisition of news about Swedish affairs naturally continued to be a high priority in the months leading up to the Russian campaign against Riga. Selected examples illustrate some of the different channels by which news was being obtained. As in earlier years, correspondence of merchants, while unpredictable in frequency and substance, was one source, either willingly turned over or intercepted by the Russian authorities. Correspondence between Daniel Anastasius in Narva and the Swedish factor in Novgorod Adolf Ebers contained news about how Swedish subjects were fleeing to Russia and a vague report that the Swedish king had fought a battle with the Poles.[79] Around the same time, without any indication as to how it was obtained, there was news about Polish overtures to the Turks for aid in the war against Russia.[80] However, by late spring intercepted proclamations by Polish King Jan Kazimierz directed that local officials coordinate with the Russians to resist the Swedish armies.[81] The king's decrees expressed the hope that the war with Russia might end soon.

16.7. The negotiations in Vilna in 1656

After setting out again to lead the Russian military campaign in 1656, the tsar was receiving regular reports and sending back directives to both his commandants and diplo-

78. Floria 2010: 66–67. Kobzareva (2001) raises important questions about the degree to which at any moment particular individuals on the staff of the Ambassadorial Chancery in this period influenced the tsar's decisions about foreign policy. There is considerable evidence about the turnover in the staffing of key positions, although this did not necessarily mean that the absence of previous experience in diplomacy was an obstacle to effective service.

79. See the inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1656, fol. 114^{v}, No. 6, the file dated 13 March.

80. See the letter of the Polish Chancellor Stefan Korytinski to the Turkish *kaimakan* (deputy of the grand vizier) requesting that he persuade the sultan to send troops to assist Poland in its war against Russia (*Sbornik IuZR* 1911–1916, 1, sec. 2: 35–37). Even though there was no such plan by the Russians, the letter stressed that the Muscovites were intending to attack Turkish territory.

81. The proclamations, one to the officials in the Bratslav district (dated 18 May) and the other to the city of Bychawa (dated 3 June), have been published from copies in the Polish Affairs files in Moscow (*Sbornik IuZR* 1911–1916, 1, sec. 2: 51–54).

mats. There is extensive published documentation from the mission headed by the boyar Nikita Ivanovich Odoevskii, who was sent to negotiate a peace with the Commonwealth at Vilna.[82] The evidence offers a vivid example of how even the best-informed government in frequent communication with its envoys might fail to achieve its foreign policy, goals due to unexpected developments on the battlefield and in the diplomatic alignments of the contending powers. In summarizing how the tsar and his advisers badly miscalculated by going to war against Sweden before they had reached a settlement with the Commonwealth, Aleksei Lobin and Nikolai Smirnov (2021: 19) suggest, wrongly, that the Russian government had misread the international situation because it was 'inexperienced in the diplomatic game.' The evidence we have reviewed in earlier chapters suggests that this was hardly the case. Mistaken foreign policy decisions even today are not for want of good information or naiveté. Certainly this is true in the events which unfolded during the Odoevskii mission.

The decision to go to war against Sweden even before the end of the conflict against the Commonwealth was based on logical assumptions, but ones which only subsequent developments proved to have been wrong.[83] The Russian government made two important assumptions: that the Swedish ability to defend and control the northern parts of Lithuania and Livonia was limited, and that the Commonwealth government was desperate enough to agree readily to even the most uncompromising Russian demands. Swedish weakness offered an opportunity for Russia to make successful territorial gains and head off the likelihood that Sweden could draw the Cossacks away from their commitment to Moscow. After their initial rapid advance into northwestern Lithuania, the Swedes were

82. For the primary source documentation see: *RUD*: 137–227, which includes extensive quotations from Odoevskii's end-of-mission report (*stateinyi spisok*), a range of important documents, including exchanges with the tsar and a section of the *stateinyi spisok* submitted by Afanasii Ivanovich Nesterov with details of his conversations with King Jan Kazimierz; *Sbornik Mukhaova* 1866: 483–542, the Russian translation of the diary by Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski, the referendary of Lithuania who was a member of the Commonwealth delegation. Unfortunately, the editors of the selections in *RUD* deliberately excluded major sections of what they themselves recognized as an important 'supplement' to the other material, the so-called 'Vestovoi spisok' (news listing), containing information the Odoevskii mission was receiving about political and military events which it quickly forwarded to the tsar (ibid.: 138). For the diary written by Frano Gundulić, a Dubrovnik noble who was a member of the Austrian delegation mediating at the negotiations, see Pentkovich 1869. We thank Oleg Vladimirovich Rusakovskii for a reference to this interesting source, which also covers the prior negotiations of the Austrian mission in Moscow. Rusakovskii has prepared an edition and translation of the diary, written by one of the translators for the Russian mission in Vilna, Christoph (Vasilii) Bousch. The forthcoming edition of his Russian translation may not include his edited text of the German original (in NIOR BAN, Collection of Foreign Manuscripts, F.15, 'Tagebuch des Krieges des Zaren Alexei Michailowitz mit Polen, 1654–1664'), which we cite from the text Rusakovskii generously sent us. Floria (2004; 2010, Ch.2) provides a detailed summary and analysis of the Odoevskii negotiations, contextualized with reference to other Russian diplomatic initiatives. Frost (2003, Ch. 4) is valuable for its discussion of the Polish context for the negotiations and their aftermath. See also the *kandidat* dissertation by Dmitrii Igorevich Ivanov (2000), which is devoted specifically to the Vilnius negotiations. His conclusion provides a good, compact summary.

83. For a summary judgment on how the Russian assumptions proved to be wrong, see Floria 2010: 139–142.

now faced with a serious rebellion in the province of Samogitia (Zhemaitiia). There was an expectation that Brandenburg-Prussia would ally with other anti-Swedish forces, the Danes and Dutch would prevent Swedish naval domination in the Baltic, and the Austrian Habsburgs were committed to sending troops to help the Poles. In fact, the Habsburg envoy in Moscow had deliberately misled the Russians: the only commitment made by Vienna was to offer its services as a mediator in the conflict and, as became apparent at Vilna, not a neutral one. Rather than fight the Swedes, Brandenburg was about to ally with them, albeit reluctantly and not for long. When the Swedes managed to negotiate a peace with the Dutch, who had sent a fleet to Danzig, Denmark also decided not to send warships to interrupt Swedish communications in the Baltic. Despite the dramatic successes of the Swedes in overrunning much much of the Commonwealth and forcing the king temporarily to take refuge by fleeing abroad, the military balance began to shift. Whereas the Russian government had expected that disaffected Lithuanian magnates would side with Russia, many of them decided that support for the Poles made more sense. The Swedes then focused greater efforts in the north and managed to prevent the Russians from taking Riga. The negotiations at Vilna became a stand-off, where neither side would concede to the other's extreme demands.

The selection of Odoevskii to head the mission underscores the importance attached to its success, given the fact he had a good deal of relevant experience in previous diplomacy and in service on the eastern and southern frontiers (Likhach 1905). He had participated in the marriage negotiations with Danish Prince Waldemar and had played a key role in undermining the efforts by a Polish embassy in Moscow to drive a wedge between the Russian government and Khmelnytsky's Cossacks. Odoevskii was a participant in the tsar's campaigns starting in 1654 and thus would have been well informed of the latest news about the progress of the war. One of Odoevskii's sons – Fedor Nikitich, at a young age already a boyar and the vicegerent (*namestnik*) in Pskov – was a member of the mission. In poor health, he died before the negotiations actually began. The other principal of the delegation, Prince Ivan Ivanovich Lobanov-Rostovskii, had led a mission to Persia three years earlier and later in the war held important commands in Lithuania and Ukraine. The two secretaries (*d'iaki*) were both experienced functionaries: Gerasim Semenov syn Dokhtorov and Efim Radionov syn Iur'ev. Both subsequently were involved in negotiations with both the Swedes and the Commonwealth.[84] Even though he seems not to have been of sufficient rank to be mentioned in the formal report at the conclusion of the negotiations, the young and capable Ivan Zheliabuzhskii was also on its staff, presumably because he had been an escort for the Habsburg mission to Moscow that had negotiated the arrangement for the imperial mediation at Vilna (see Sec. 17.3 below).

Two translators were assigned to the mission. Christoph (Vasilii) Bousch, a Courlander who had been in Russian service for little over a year, was a native speaker of German

84. For their careers, see Demidova 2011: 174–175, 642–643; Bez'ev 2015: 137–139.

and could handle Polish and Latin.[85] Grigorii Kolchitskii was a specialist for Polish, Latin and 'Belorussian'.[86] The records of the negotiations mention Bousch several times, since his German and, apparently, his Latin were important for the interactions with the Habsburg mediators. There was one occasion when the Russian mission handed the Poles a set of its proposals in Polish, ostensibly in order to ensure there was no misunderstanding about the contents.[87] Documents which the Commonwealth delegation gave the Russians in Polish were translated by the Russian staff. In anticipation of possible challenges with translation, the mission took along a tri-lingual dictionary for Latin, German and Polish (which had been published in 1642).[88] We can but speculate on the degree to which negotiations were conducted in Russian or Polish, though it seems certain that outside of the formal meeting, the two sides were comfortable in informal conversations where they found a common language. In their discussions with the Habsburg mediators, the Poles used Latin, perhaps in the expectation that the Russians would not be able to follow a Latin conversation, but in one instance, the Russians were addressed by the mediators in 'Slavonic' (*Sbornik Mukhanova* 1866: 515).

Of particular interest here is the fact that in preparation for the Odoevskii mission the officials of the Ambassadorial Chancery had undertaken serious research in the Polish Affairs files. The mission took along to Vilna a substantial number of documents and books which were deemed relevant to the topics laid out in the instructions drawn up for the negotiators.[89] The discussion above has already noted a number of specific examples of documents acquired in the months prior to the embassy, which were included in its 'reference library'.

The Russian mission received two sets of instructions, much of the first and 'public' ones focusing largely on the Russian grievances that had led to the outbreak of the

85. The most extensive treatment of his career is in Oleg Rusakovskii's introduction to his forthcoming edition of Bousch's diary. See also Beliakov et al.: 71–72. Bousch had translated during the Habsburg imperial mission to Moscow led by Allegretto Allegretti in late 1655 and the first months of 1656, which reached the agreement whereby Allegretti would mediate the talks at Vilna. In his diary covering the Austrian mission, Gundulić refers, apparently, to Bousch (not by name), suggesting that he did not yet know 'our language' well enough to translate into Slavic during an audience with the tsar at Polotsk ('perevodchik, kakoi-to novokreshchenyi Kurliandets, byl nebolshoi znatok nashego iazka' – Pentkovich 1869: 160).

86. For his career, see Beliakov et al.: 125–126. Kolchitskii and his brother Stepan were from Kiev. Stepan had taught Grigorii Polish. When Stepan died of the plague in 1654, Grigorii was hired in his place as a translator.

87. *Sbornik Mukhanova* 1866: 509.

88. Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 174: 'Kniga trekh iazykov, latynskaia, nemetskaia i polskaia leta 1642 godu diktsyonar.' This most likely is the dictionary purchased in Poland in 1653 during the embassy headed by Prince Repnin-Obolenskii, described in his report as 'Diktsionar ili leksikon gdanskii, kotoroi na tri chasti rozdelen; pervyi pochinaettsa ot nemetskogo iazyka, vtoryi ot latynskogo, tretii ot pol'skogo. A iazykov est' v nem shest'' (Belokurov 1898: 34). The book is presumably Petrus Dasypodius, *Dasypodius Catholicus, Hoc est, Dictionarium Latino-Germanico Polonicum, Germanico-Latinum, Et Polono-Latino-Germanicum* [...] Danzig: Hünefeldius, 1642 (listed in VD 17 14:698788L).

89. See the analysis and publication of the original list in Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989.

war, but the second, secret, set dealing with the more immediate and concrete issues, relating to the Russian successes in the war, territorial claims, and possible discussion of the tsar's candidacy for the Polish throne. The opening Russian statements in the negotiations reiterated the litany about how the Commonwealth was at fault for the hostilities, since it had refused to honor agreements made during earlier negotiations and had continued to insult the tsar's honor. In the event the Russian envoys needed to cite chapter and verse to prove all this, they could refer to copies of earlier negotiations and agreements, going back even to the beginning of the sixteenth century. According to Christoph Bousch's diary, on 18 August many books and documents ("viel Brieffe und gedrukte Bücher") were handed over by each side to document the allegations about who bore the responsibility for starting the war.[90] There is no explicit identification of which books were being adduced as evidence, although the list of what had been supplied to the Odoevskii mission suggests possibilities. Of particular relevance would have been the documents from the period starting with the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617, among them ones on the negotiations that had led to the peace agreement at Polianovka, which ended the Smolensk War in 1634. The material brought back from Poland by Grigorii Kunakov and the compendia of offending passages both from those books and from exchanges with border commanders were included, along with documentation from the Russian embassies of the early 1650s, which had demanded Polish apologies and destruction of the offending publications.[91]

It was important at the outset to establish thereby the Russian justification for the war. The issues regarding titulature involved more than just the defense of the tsar's honor. Titular claims to the Lithuanian and Belorussian lands were very important, especially now that the successful Russian military campaigns had gained control over much of that territory. As the negotiations proceeded, the Russians made it clear that they would not abandon these conquests of what historically had been theirs before the Time of Troubles. Emboldened by some very recent successes against the Swedes and their allies, the Poles likewise refused to abandon their titular claims. The Russian side then complicated the negotiations by bringing to the forefront the issue of the possible candidacy of the tsar for the Polish throne, given the fact that King Jan Kazimierz had no heir and was thought to be in bad health. Were the tsar or his son to be elected King

90. The passage here is cited from Oleg Rusakovskii's edited text of Bousch's German diary.

91. For details, see Sec. 15.7 above. The list of the books sent along with the Odoevskii mission includes specifically Piasiecki's Latin chronicle and the three books on Władysław IV by Gorczyn, Wassenberg and Twardowski. Another of the publications obtained by Kunakov is listed as 'A Translation from a Polish printed booklet (*tetradi*), which the secretary Grigorii Kunakov brought from Lithuania in the year [7]157 [1649].' Excerpts from one or another of the panegyrics to Władysław are listed along with a copy of the oath taken by Jan Kazimierz ('Vypiska iz polskoi pechatnoi tetrati, v kotoroi napechatano o zhitii i o schast'e polskogo Vladislava korolia s pokhvalami. Tut zhe prisiaga korolevskaia Iana Kazimera korolia'). Copies of the letters exchanged between the tsar and the king during Kunakov's mission in 1649 are listed along with copies of the evidence which had been compiled to illustrate how the Polish officials had failed to write out correctly the tsar's titles. See Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 174– 178,

of Poland, there was uncertainty as to what exactly the ruler's titular claims would be, and whether the previous constitutional arrangements of the Polish-Lithuanian state would be observed. Divisions amongst the Lithuanian magnates (some inclined toward Moscow, others toward Warsaw), the question regarding guarantees of Cossack rights, and the status of the Uniate church all further complicated the matter. Eventually, in order simply to sign a truce and coordinate military efforts against the Swedes, both sides agreed that the territorial and succession issues would have to await further high-level negotiations between the two governments.

Apart from documenting the blame for the Russo-Polish war with reference to the previous history of Russo-Polish relations, the Odoevskii mission had an interest in citing evidence about Swedish perfidy. One item in the mission's 'reference library' very likely was the translation of the published booklet, in which Kiriakos Trazimachos justified the Swedish declaration of war against the Commonwealth (see note 55). Since that was arguably rhetorical propaganda, of likely greater substance was to be able to cite documents relating to the Kėdainiai Union between the Swedes and the disaffected Lithuanians led by Janusz Radziwiłł. As shown above in Sec. 16.6, the Russian government had learned about that agreement some months previously. A somewhat vaguely worded item listed amongst the documents taken to Vilna by Odoevskii would seem to refer to the treaty.[92] In the negotiating session of 28 August, emphasizing the perfidy of the Swedes, the Russians mentioned that the Polish envoy who had been in Moscow, Piotr Galiński, had referred to the Kėdainiai agreement and indicated that copies of it (and presumably related Swedish communications), which had been obtained by the Commonwealth military commanders, would be made available to the negotiators when they met in Vilna. The Polish negotiators agreed that, on successful conclusion of the Vilna negotiations, they would hand over copies of Swedish letters demonstrating Sweden's intent to attack Muscovy.[93] Informed of this promise, the tsar instructed Odoevskii in a letter dated 18 September to be sure to obtain the promised documents and any others which demonstrated how the Swedes were suborning the loyalty of Polish and Lithuanian magnates. As the tsar explained, such documents were important to prove Swedish perfidy and if possible should be obtained with the original seals of authenticity (*RUD*: 204).

92. Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 177: 'Articles of prince Radziwiłł [agreed on] with the Swedish king, in the name of the entire Lithuanian Principality, and concerning which his grace, the king [of Poland] and the Polish Commonwealth did not know, in 1655.' It is not clear whether the Radziwiłł referred to here is Janusz or his cousin Bogusław, both of whom were involved in the Kėdainiai negotiations. The same section of the list of the documents taken by the embassy includes as well two items written by one 'Adam Voliaks' (one of the Swedish officers) that are connected with De la Gardie on the one hand and Bogusław Radziwiłł on the other (ibid.: 166–167, 177).

93. *RUD*: 165. As noted above (n. 60), anxious to prove to the Russians that Khmelnytsky's Cossacks could not be trusted, on 1 September, the Poles provided copies of two letters in Latin, which Karl X Gustav had written to the hetman on 22 February and 23 July 1656.

The Commonwealth negotiators finally did give the Russians on 24 October three documents (*RUD*: 191–192). One was Karl X Gustav's letter to Bohdan Khmelnytsky, informing him of the Swedish treaty with Brandenburg and the Swedish military successes at Warsaw and asking the hetman to maintain peaceful relations with the Tatars and his other neighbors until a Swedish-Cossack treaty would be concluded.[94] The second document was a copy of the Kėdainiai agreement between Magnus De la Gardie and Benedikt Skytte on the one hand and the Lithuanian magnates on the other, promising that Lithuanian territories would be returned to the magnates. The third was a letter from Janusz Radziwiłł to his cousin Bogusław, stating that he was on peaceful terms with the Russians, but that the Swedes were preparing to attack Muscovy. The Polish negotiators presumably hoped that the prospect of receiving these letters might encourage the Russians to sign off on the truce agreement quickly. However, as it turned out, nothing in these documents would have been news for the tsar's government. Perhaps recognizing this, the Polish negotiators also promised another collection of letters written by the Swedish king and De la Gardie, which the Poles had sent to Vienna to document Swedish perfidy. Copies of those letters were to arrive (in Vilna) soon and would be handed over to the Russians immediately.

Whether or not the promises regarding these letters were merely a diplomatic ploy on the part of the Poles, there is ample evidence about exchanges of other news during the negotiations. Not all of it was accurate, perhaps not because it was deliberately skewed by those who had provided it. Naturally both the Russians and the Poles were anxious to impress upon their counterparts news of military successes against the Swedes, the point being to reinforce the wisdom of concluding an alliance directed against King Karl X Gustav and his allies. The Austrian mediators were also an important source of news, although not, it seems the most trustworthy one.

On 30 July, the day the Russians arrived in Vilna, they received from the Habsburg ambassador in Warsaw a copy of the Treaty of Marienburg, 25 June 1656, which committed Brandenburg-Prussia to support the Swedish campaign in the Commonwealth. The Russians immediately forwarded the text to the tsar along with the cover letter, translated from German by Christoph Bousch. Presumably the Russians had been given a manuscript copy of the treaty. News about the negotiations at Marienburg had been reported in the Hamburg *WZ* some weeks earlier.[95] Also, there were various pamphlets, containing the elector's declaration and his letter to the Dutch government about the

94. This letter probably is a copy of the one dated 27 July which had already been given to the Russians on 1 September, although in it the Swedish king refers as well to his letters of apparently the same content, written on 30 June and 15 July. The Russian translation of the 27 July letter is in *Sbornik IuZR* 1911–1916, 1, sec. 2: 32–34. On the identification of all three of the letters given to the Russian negotiators on 24 October, see *RUD* 2007: 228 n. 21. A copy of Janusz Radziwiłł's letter had been given by the Polish envoy Peter Galiński to the officials in Moscow back in April.

95. See especially *WDoZ* 1656/26, two articles from Marienburg dated 15/25 and 16 June, published on 6 July.

agreement.[96] Immediately after its reports concerning the agreement, the Hamburg newspaper published news about the joint military operations of Sweden and Brandenburg in Poland. The coverage by *WZ* of the war in Poland is impressive for its regularity and detail, with frequent reports coming from correspondents in Marienburg and Toruń, and occasional articles from Riga with details of Russian troop movements.

On 30 August, acting on information provided by one of the Polish negotiators, the Russians sent Christoph Bousch to the Austrian mediators, who let him copy a newsletter they had just received from their resident in Warsaw (*RUD*: 194). The Swedes had just been forced to retreat from Kraków. A Dutch fleet (in alliance with Denmark against the Swedes) had just arrived at Danzig. Faced with a deteriorating military situation, the Swedish king now was making overtures to Poland to end the fighting, but King Jan Kazimierz refused to negotiate, even though the senators were pressing him to end the war. In fact the king was now approaching the Habsburgs to obtain armaments to continue the war. Many of the magnates who had sided with the Swedes were now withdrawing their support and backing the Commonwealth. With the turn-around in Polish fortunes, Khmelnytsky was promising to support the Poles against their enemies. His repeated switching of alliances was a consequence, allegedly, of his having acquired Jesuit ways as a young man!

On 16 September, Bousch again visited the mediators, who were unhappy that it was taking so long to get the tsar's response to the latest proposals, which they had sent for his review. After all, they indicated, Riga (where the tsar was camped; see FIG. 16.4) was not all that far away, and they – the Austrians – were well informed about the events there and in Moscow, where, it was true, the plague was still raging. And, they said, 'They had news that the hetman of the Zaporozhian Host Bohdan Khmel-

FIG. 16.4. The Russian siege of Riga in 1656. Engraving by Adam Pérelle.

96. See Knuttel, 2, pt. 1, Nos. 7756, 7757, 7759.

nytsky had died and that in his place as hetman had been elected his secretary (*pisar'*), who favored the Roman faith, and that Zaporozhian messengers had been sent to the tsar and the Polish king […]' (ibid.: 166). In fact, even though he may have been in poor health, Khmelnytsky lived on for nearly another year, until 27 July/6 August 1657. On another occasion, September 22, a noble named Aleksandr Voina reported third- or fourth-hand news – supposedly confirmed by merchant correspondence which he saw in Kėdainiai – that King Jan Kazimierz had died (ibid.: 195–196). He would die at age 63 on 16 December 1672.

Later, on 8 October, the Poles reported to the Russians news received from Brest about a successful attack in 'Prussia' led by Crown Hetman Wicenty Gosiewski and supported by a contingent of Crimean Tatars.[97] They had defeated a force of Prussians [i.e., Brandenburg troops], Swedes and Lithuanians. Among those captured were Bohusław Radziwiłł, a Swedish general, and a number of other officers, who were taken to Kraków. 'And other Polish cities, though not all of them, were liberated from the Swedes and Prussians, and the Swedish king, reportedly, went by sea in ships to relieve Riga.'[98] This report accurately described the Battle at Prostki (then East Prussia, today Poland) on 28 September/8 October 1656, in which Radziwiłł was captured and the commander of the Brandenburg force, Prince Georg Friedrich of Waldeck, barely escaped.[99] The report about the Swedish king's sailing to Riga may have been inaccurate rumor, but the Polish negotiators were happy enough to repeat it to their Russian counterparts on 13 October, presumably in order to pressure the Russians to hurry up and sign a peace agreement with the Commonwealth (*Sbornik Mukhanova* 1866: 533). In fact, by the end of September, the tsar had already decided to give up the siege and had begun to withdraw his troops (Kurbatov 2018: 17–18). On 30 September, presumably not yet having heard the news about Protski, the tsar had written to Odoevskii to inform him that the elector of Brandenburg had agreed to sign a non-aggression treaty with Russia (*RUD*: 206–207). However, withdrawal of Prussian support for the Swedish campaign in the east must not have provided any optimism about possible success at Riga. On receipt of the tsar's letter on 8 October, according to the Polish diary of Brzostowski, Odoevskii openly wept, perhaps, as Boris Floria speculates, because the courier from Riga had brought other news about the failure of the siege there and the planned withdrawal.[100] The tsar had

97. Gosiewski, like some of the other Lithuanian magnates, played both sides in the complicated politics of the period. At one time a strong supporter of King Jan Kazimierz, the Lithuanian hetman signed on to the Kėdainiai Union, only then to abandon it and lead armies against the Swedes. While fighting on the Polish side, he was taken captive by the Russian forces and held by them for several years. He was actively involved in diplomacy with Brandenburg-Prussia, perhaps responsible for the withdrawal of Prussian support for Sweden, and in negotiations with Moscow he supported the idea of the tsar's candidacy for the Polish throne and Russian incorporation of Lithuania. See Przyboś 1959–1960. The Habsburg ambassador in Moscow in 1661, Augustin von Mayerberg, raised the issue of Gosiewski's release from his Russian captivity (see below, pp. 588–590).

98. *RUD*: 173; *Sbornik Mukhanova* 1866: 530.

99. On the battle of Prostki see Augusiewicz 2001.

100. *Sbornik Mukhanova* 1866: 530; Floria 2010: 147.

just learned by some secret means that the Polish king and senators had agreed to have the Diet vote on the tsar's candidacy for the Polish succession. Aleksei Mikhailovich included this news in a separate letter to Odoevskii, also dated 30 September. Maybe Odoevskii wept with joy at that news.

On the same day the Polish negotiators reported the news about the Battle of Prostki, they informed the Russians about the agreement to consider the tsar's candidacy. However, there was a condition attached: that there be no concession of the territories occupied by Russia since the delineation in the Peace of Polianovka and that the Russians abandon their protectorate over the Zaporozhians. In other words, the concession that they would consider the succession issue was probably meaningless, attached as it was to demands which the Russian side had categorically rejected and which the tsar's most recent instructions to Odoevskii had declared were unacceptable. As discussion of this proposal unfolded, the Polish side added a further complication to which the Russians immediately objected: the tsar's son, not the tsar himself would be considered.

In situations such as this, where parties to a conflict naturally stake out 'non-negotiable' demands and then spend much of the time stubbornly defending them, it can be difficult to know how well informed the respective sides really are about each other. How well did King Jan Kazimierz and his magnates understand what was a non-negotiable priority for the Russians? How realistic was it, after several such attempts in the past, for the Russians to expect that a Russian ever would be elected king in the Commonwealth? Did the Russians really understand the constitutional structure of the Commonwealth, where there always was a delicate balance within it of regional and confessional interests? Diets convened on a regular basis debated policy but did not always reach an agreement. What the Diets concluded would always be recorded in the official published constitutions – books which, as we have documented earlier, were being acquired in Moscow. Apart from the formal written records, the Russian government had many other sources (not necessarily unbiased) for achieving an understanding of Polish-Lithuanian politics. Before Fedor Nikitich (Filaret) Romanov returned to become head of the Russian church and de facto decision maker under his son, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, he spent several years as a captive in Poland. There were frequent exchanges across the border with Lithuanian magnates. Border commandants communicated, and embassies were exchanged. Contacts intensified as a consequence of the Cossack revolt in 1648. Members of the Commonwealth negotiating team in Vilna and some of the Lithuanian magnates there were informing the Muscovite negotiators about the factionalism that might throw into question the possible succession by the tsar and favor a different candidate (*RUD*: 195).

At the same time the Odoevskii mission was dispatched, the tsar sent a letter to the Lithuanian magnates who controlled each of the administrative regions of the Grand Principality of Lithuania. Recognizing that their regional Diets were empowered to elect officials, he instructed them to select representatives who would come to Vilna to be

present during the negotiations. There is little evidence those representatives in practice had any role in the proceedings. The point seems to have been to reassure the magnates that their traditional rights would not be negotiated away by the tsar, who now claimed to be their legitimate sovereign. The tsar's letter emphasized that he expected the king and the Polish senators would recognize this sovereign claim, and, should they balk at so doing, it would be confirmed by the national Diet and become legally binding through publication of the Diet's proceedings in the constitution (ibid.: 150).

In mid-September, having been sent to the Polish court to update the king regarding the Russian campaign at Riga, the Russian courier Afanasii Nesterov had conversations with several of the key Lithuanian magnates, who assured him of their wish for the successful conclusion of the Vilna negotiations. They voiced support for the tsar's candidacy in the Polish succession, but emphasized that it still would be necessary for a Diet to reaffirm that commitment. In the conversations, Nesterov said that he knew the decision of the Diet would have to be published as a 'constitution' for such a commitment to be legally binding (ibid.: 219). Such evidence thus demonstrates that the tsar's government had a clear understanding of the political system in the Commonwealth and the significance of the regularly published constitutions. At the same time, Moscow expected that the Diet should confirm commitments that were in fact *unlikely* to be accepted, in particular with regard to matters of faith. The tsar was not going to accept a demand that the king be a Roman Catholic, and he was going to insist that the Uniate church, which recognized the authority of the pope, be abolished.

The Ambassadorial Chancery had been acquiring copies of the various Polish constitutions and would continue to do so as the century proceeded. The Odoevskii mission provides evidence that the books must have been read and were deemed to be of practical value in diplomatic negotiations with the Commonwealth. Among the books in the 'reference library' taken to Vilna by Odoevskii were two copies of the Polish constitutions.[101] They might have been of some value in supporting the Russian argument that war against the Commonwealth had been justified by the alleged failure of the king to

101.The list of the documents and books supplied to the embassy includes: 'Konstitutsyia polskaia, pochavshi ot korolia Zhigimonta Avgusta leta 1550-go do Iana Kazimira korolia leta 1649 godu'; 'Spisok s polskoi pechatnoi konstytutsyi o prisiage Iana Kazimera korolia latynskogo iazyku 1649-go godu' (Zaborovskii and Zakhar'ina 1989: 174, 179). We have not located any evidence about the existence of a comprehensive collection of the constitutions in a single volume covering from 1550 to 1649. There is such a collection with an earlier terminal date published in: *Konstytucye Statuta y Przywileie na walnych Seymach Koronnych od roku pánskiego1550 áż do roku 1637 uchwalone*. Kraków: Piotrkowczyk, 1637 (see Estreicher 20: 48–52). Possibly the compilers of the Russian description erroneously thought it extended up to the beginning of the reign of Jan Kazimierz, although it may also be that the text which the embassy had was a manuscript compilation, based on more than one published Polish constitution. If the Moscow chancery had a copy of the 1637 edition, it would have been a very valuable reference work. The printed constitution which is indicated as having been copied to take to Vilna could be *Denuntiatio Regis coronati Joannis Casimiri* [...] *d. 1 mensis Februarii 1649* (listed in Estreicher 18: 425), or, more likely, excerpts taken from the complete constitution, *Przywileie y Constitucie Seymowe za Panowania J. K. Mci Jana Kazimierza, R. P. 1649*, published in Warsaw by Elert and in Kraków by the heirs of Piotrkowczyk in 1649 (see Estreicher 20: 54).

keep the promises he had made under oath at the time of his election, among them support for equal confessional rights of all the state's Christian denominations.

Very likely, being able to refer to the constitutions was even more important for what they contained regarding the procedures for electing a new king and the obligations which were imposed on him. Odoevskii's *stateinyi spisok* contains a few pages which the editors have described as excerpts from Polish constitutions on several subjects: the obligations of Polish kings to strive for the return of any lands which had been lost; the right of the nobles to elect a king; the obligation to give no positions to foreigners or hire foreign troops; the nobles' right to oppose any actions by the king which violated the conditions of his election; and the text of the oath taken by the king at his coronation (*RUD*: 161). The editors chose not to include this text in the publication of other parts of the end-of-mission report, and there is no indication why it was copied in the particular section of the report about the negotiations preceding the discussion of the session which took place on 25 August. In his diary, Bousch provides a likely explanation for the copying of the text. Later in the negotiations, the Polish delegation had written off to King Jan Kazimierz to determine whether he would support the Russian proposal that the tsar be considered as a candidate to succeed to the Polish throne. The king's response, read at the negotiating session of 9 October, was that such a preliminary agreement was possible, any final decision resting with the Diet, providing that the Russian negotiators would submit a formal commitment that the tsar would observe all the legal norms, privileges and freedoms guaranteed in the Polish republic. As Bousch suggests, the Russian delegation hadn't really thought about that matter (could that really have been so?), but on reviewing what a Polish king swore an oath to defend, they were happy enough to produce the requested affirmation of the tsar's commitment. It may well be that the excerpts from the Constitutions summarized what the Russian determined were the essential points.

This review of the documentation about Odoevskii's negotiations at Vilna, while by no means complete, reveals a great deal about how well the Russian government and its diplomats were informed and about the ways in which they used the information they had. Records of earlier embassies, news of important events that were now 'history', books and publications (or their translations) all might provide supporting evidence for a new diplomatic initiative and were not simply gathering dust in the archive. Whether the knowledge of such material and news which was currently being obtained about recent events was sufficient to develop a successful foreign policy is another matter. Mistakes might be made on account of a rigid commitment to deeply engrained beliefs and the inability to anticipate political or military developments. The record of the Odoevskii mission suggests that when confronted with unexpected difficulties, the makers of Russian foreign policy were flexible enough to make the best of a bad situation.

CHAPTER 17

The Tsar's Informants: Important Suppliers of Foreign News

As the evidence in the previous chapter suggests, in most respects the channels for obtaining foreign news in the 1650s were little different from the picture for earlier decades. While coming up with meaningful statistics is impossible, we can reasonably posit that during a period of active diplomacy, diplomatic channels were more important than in a period where there were few embassies or negotiations. Depending on where a particular threat to Muscovite territories might be emerging, the reports of certain *voevody* might be much more important than those from another theater of activity. There appears as yet to have been little sense of the necessity of establishing a regular mechanism for obtaining foreign news. It was done on an *ad hoc* basis, though that of itself does not necessarily mean the results obtained were poor. The fact that there were long-term negotiations in border areas, where the negotiators were expected to report regularly and could do so without undue delay, might have developed an awareness of the value of having regular news not only regarding matters closer to home but also those in more distant parts of Europe. If there was movement toward the idea of regularizing the flow of news, Aleksei Mikhailovich's increasingly active involvement in direct management of government affairs and the establishment of his Privy Chancery were certainly contributing factors. And the identity of the men known to have provided news also may help to explain the decision to create the international post in the 1660s.

17.1. News via Dutch contacts

Some of the documents in dossier No. 13 in RGADA, f. 229 (discussed in Sec. 16.4) connect with the Archangel trade, and in particular with the Dutch merchants, who were important sources of foreign news in previous years. That such news might still arrive from Archangel was possible even during the period when the transport of goods was halted by quarantines during the plague in 1654. Among those with Dutch connections were members of the Muscovite elite, who were in the inner circle of those around the tsar and increasingly seem to have been involved in news transmission. One of them was the boyar Il'ia Danilovich Miloslavskii, who headed a number of the important government

offices in the middle of the seventeenth century. One of his daughters had married Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, and another of his daughters the influential court official Boris Ivanovich Morozov. Morozov had been the tsar's tutor, exercised great power in the administration, and despite temporary exile on account of the salt riots in 1648, he had been brought back by the tsar and remained close to him. Miloslavskii and Morozov were the first deputy commanders below the tsar in the lead division of the Smolensk campaign in 1654, although these appointments seem to have been honorary, and there is little evidence they played an important role in any of the military actions.[1] Both had diplomatic experience and contacts in the foreign community in Moscow. Morozov had participated in negotiations with the Persians and Swedes in 1628 and 1631, was involved in trade with the English and Dutch, and had a significant library that contained foreign books, many related to his position as head of the Apothecary Chancery.[2] While so far we have no direct evidence Morozov obtained foreign newspapers, we know that part of Aleksei Mikhailovich's education involved exposure to what were called *friazhskie listy*, among them undoubtedly broadsides with engravings.

Miloslavskii had headed a Russian embassy to the Ottoman Empire in 1643, and another one to the Netherlands in 1646–47 – the goal of the latter was recruitment of foreign specialists for Russian service. Thus he was involved with some of the Dutch who resided in Russia, a fact which probably explains how he obtained the Dutch newspapers that he handed in to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 10 February 1651 (V-K V: 22, 149). Whether he would have been able to read them cannot be determined. As a member of the tsar's inner council (*blizhniaia duma*), he was privy to the debates over the course of Russian foreign policy in the late 1650s and early 1660s. He was allegedly one of the 'enemies' of Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin.[3]

In The Hague, Miloslavskii had met Thomas Kellermann, sent there as a courier by the tsar. Thomas was the son of an important merchant resident in Moscow, Heinrich Kellermann, who clearly was keeping track of foreign news.[4] On more than one occasion Heinrich gave the Ambassadorial Chancery newspapers and newsletters, among them

1. Babulin 2018: 41; *DR* 3: 414.

2. On Morozov's books, about which we have only fragmentary knowledge, see Luppov 1970: 111–112; Belobrova 1993b: 362–363; *Istoricheskii ocherk* 1956: 428–431; Lifshits 2018.

3. Ikonnikov 1883: 289. It is difficult to know whether Miloslavskii had any significant influence on the making of foreign policy. There is an anecdote, based on the disparaging account of Muscovy written by the Habsburg envoy Augustin von Mayerberg, suggesting that Miloslavskii was a self-promoting incompetent and that the tsar recognized him as such. After a disastrous defeat of the Russian army in 1661, Miloslavskii proposed that he might do better and could even capture the king of Poland. The tsar dismissed the suggestion with a vulgarity and threw his father-in-law out of the conference room. See Longworth's (1984: 146–147) retelling of the incident, quoting Mayerberg, with the conclusion that the tsar "had come to despise Il'ia's character and his capabilities."

4. Thomas Kellermann is listed in the Amburger-database under No. 26321. The family were apparently Livonian Germans, involved primarily in the Dutch trade. His father Heinrich is known in the Russian sources as Andrei Kelderman. The Russian government more than once employed the Kellermanns on diplomatic missions.

likely a copy of *TVQ*, and a pamphlet containing the speech of the English ambassadors to the States General in 1651.[5] In addition, the translators obtained copies from some of his correspondence, including letters he had received from Stockholm in 1649 and another sent by Karp Demoulin from Haarlem in early 1651.[6] At least the letter from Haarlem may well have been voluntarily handed over to the Russians by Kellermann, since it contained information Demoulin had asked him to pass on to the Ambassadorial Chancery (about the sending of a Dutch agent via Riga and Pskov). It seems likely that the printed news Kellermann handed in on 2 June would also have come via the Baltic, although the outbreak of war between the Netherlands and England in 1652 created uncertainties about the reliability of the normal channels for obtaining news at that time.[7]

Packets of news continued to be obtained in Archangel during the short summer navigation season. The *voevoda* on the Northern Dvina at Archangel in 1651–1656 was Boris Ivanovich Pushkin, who had headed the embassy to Sweden in 1649 and thus would have been well aware of the value of foreign newspapers (see Ch. 13). A packet of news he sent arrived in Moscow on 11 July 1652; it seems likely that another set of newspapers which arrived on 31 August also came from him.[8] The normal practice was for the Russian officials at the port to interrogate arriving merchants about news and – as we know from examples in earlier years – sometimes specifically ask them to hand over the newspapers they carried.[9] While we have no proof yet of his involvement with the documents from Archangel now in f. 229, No. 13, it would have been in Pushkin's responsibility to produce them and send them on to Moscow or directly to the tsar, who was off on the military campaign against the Commonwealth.

5. V-K IV: 205–208, No. 54; V-K V: 30–34, Nos. 6–7.

6. For 1649, see V-K IV: 162–163, No. 41; for 1651, V-K V: 27–28, No 4.

7. A letter containing news from the foreign commercial agent in Pskov, Jan van Staden, written on 22 January 1651 and sent to the translator Ivan Adamov (Johannes Böcker von Delden), obviously would have been based on information Van Staden had received via the Baltic (V-K V: 26, No. 3). The news packet delivered on 2 June (ibid.: 30–32, No. 6) probably could not have arrived via the Archangel route so early in the navigation season.

8. V-K V: 41, No. 10; 53–57, No. 13.

9. V-K IV: 209–210, No. 56; 212, No. 58. Another example of the transmission of news by Dutch merchants who had arrived in Archangel was in late summer 1657: the *voevoda* Petr Semenovich Prozorovskii sent on to Moscow 'six printed German [Dutch?] letters concerning all kinds of foreign news,' which had arrived on a ship connected with the Dutch merchant Georg Klenck; they were translated on 17 October 1657 (the manuscript is in RGADA, f. 155, op. 2, 1657, No. 5, fols. 91–96; we owe this reference to Stepan Shamin). These translations were not published in V-K V. Prozorovskii had a distinguished career, with appointments as *voevoda* in several locations and responsibilities at court in the reception of visiting dignitaries (Korsakova 1910b). In 1662 he headed the Russian embassy to England, seconded by I. A. Zheliabuzhskii. There is a well-known portrait of the members of this mission now in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (see FIG. 17.4 below). In 1665, he was appointed to a commission negotiating with a Dutch ambassador about trade, along with two of the most experienced Muscovite foreign-affairs experts, A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin and I. A. Pronchishchev, both of whom also had been involved in the earlier negotiations with Sweden. This evidence suggests that Prozorovskii would frequently have had opportunities to hear or read foreign news reports.

17.2. John Hebdon as an agent for obtaining foreign news

One of the important purveyors of news for the tsar was the Englishman John Hebdon.[10] He had first worked in Russia as an English commercial agent and translator in the 1640s. On 20 April 1650, still identified as an English interpreter, he was deposed in the Ambassadorial Chancery, reporting news about the political situation in England (V-K IV: 180, No. 49). The inventory of the Privy Chancery archive records that the tsar received from him on 25 May 1651 from Riga a report 'on Polish news' (*RIB* 21: 871–872). The Ambassadorial Chancery translated on 3 June 1651 printed news he had sent from Riga (in the same packet as his report to the tsar?); among the sources were two German and one Dutch newspaper (V-K V: 19–22, No. 1). In the following year he was already undertaking commissions from the tsar regarding the sale of Russian products, the acquisition of weaponry, the hiring of specialists, and the purchase of luxury items. With the establishment of the Privy Chancery, his instructions were channeled through it, which meant that he was acting on orders directly from the monarch. Since he returned from an extended foreign mission for the tsar in 1654, we can reasonably suppose that he might have provided some of the news in f. 229, op. 1, No. 13, although it is impossible to know whether via Archangel or the shorter Baltic route. In particular, he could have reported the interest in Florence about establishing relations with Moscow. In the summer of 1656, before setting out for Venice, he was in Archangel, from which he sent newspapers to Moscow, ones which must have arrived at the port probably on Dutch ships.[11]

Having returned from Italy, in 1658 Hebdon was sent on another commission for the tsar, this time to the Netherlands. He spent more than a year there, returning in December 1659.[12] While the main purpose of the trip seems to have been to negotiate arms purchases, deal with other economic matters, and hire specialists, he also was to acquire books on artillery. Three of the numbered points in Hebdon's instruction con-

10. For his biography and career in Muscovite service, see Gurliand 1903, who mined an extensive file of documents pertaining to Hebdon (preserved in the Privy Chancery archive: RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 118). Gurliand was interested mainly in Hebdon's various commissions from the tsar relating to economic matters. This file *may* contain as yet unpublished material of interest for the role of Hebdon in providing foreign news, a subject that was not the focus of Gurliand's study.

11. V-K V: 110–114, No. 29; 153–157, App. No. 2 (a draft copy), specifies that the newssheets (*vestovye listy*) were sent from Archangel by Hebdon and received in Moscow on 15 August 1656. One item in the packet is a translation from the German pamphlet that contained the letter of the Swedish king to the city of Danzig. The manuscript of the translation is in RGADA, f. 155, 1656, No. 1, which contains this sequence of news packets as published in V-K V, Nos. 27, 29 (and App. 2), 29a, 28, 31 and 30. Nos. 30 (which specifies its sources are German newssheets), 31, and 29a are clearly connected, the originals for the first two translations specified as having arrived in Moscow on 29 August. It is a reasonable hypothesis that all the items in this sequence could have been sent by Hebdon in at least two mailings, spaced about two weeks apart. The archival scroll may once have been part of the files collected in the Privy Chancery that dealt specifically with Hebdon's various commissions and his reports.

12. A possible indication that the tsar was satisfied by the result of this mission is the fact that Hebdon, his two sons John and Richard, and his son-in-law (*ziat'*) Thomas were all received by the tsar on 23 February 1660 (Belokurov 1908: 58).

cerned the acquisition of news: a printed newssheet about the recent Russian campaign, news about the other Russian campaigns, and more generally news from all states which he should communicate every month (Gurliand 1903: 11). It is significant that there appears to have been particular interest in knowing how Russian affairs were being reported and not simply learning the foreign news. This is one of the earliest indications that the tsar wanted to obtain news from the West on a regular basis, but there is no explicit evidence here that Hebdon was to try to set up an arrangement for it to be sent once his mission ended.

Another archival scroll (f. 155, op. 1, 1658, No. 1) contains several packets of news, whose internal dates range from June through August 1658.[13] The header to one of them specifies it is translations made from printed *kuranty,* sent from overseas by Hebdon and received in Moscow on 2 October (V-K V: 128). The header of another, with an obvious lacuna for the name of the city from which the printed newspapers were sent, dates the receipt – or translation – just a few days earlier (on 30 September; ibid.: 121). Another of the items specifies it is based on Dutch printed and handwritten news which was brought to the Ambassadorial Chancery from the tsar's chambers on 30 October (ibid.: 125). One of the reports is a translation from 'another Dutch sheet', the subject being a description of the coronation of the Habsburg emperor on 1 August (ibid.: 127). So the files here might all tentatively be traced to Hebdon's activity, where he was sending his reports directly to the tsar, perhaps fulfilling his instructions that he do so on a monthly basis.[14] There are other examples attesting to the fact that at least some of the news from abroad was being sent directly to the tsar through his Privy Chancery.[15]

As Gurliand (1903: 14–15) suggests, at very least here in the case of Hebdon we can sense a growing recognition on the part of the government concerning the desirability of having a regular commercial agent for Muscovy abroad. Hebdon's next commission kept him in Western Europe for more than three years, based mainly in the Netherlands and England; his appointment was essentially that of a roving agent, rather than a resident of one city. He did, however, contract in various locations for merchants to represent Russian interests, even if not vested with a formal appointment as resident (ibid.: 33).

13. Published in V-K V: 121–130, Nos. 33–38.

14. The scroll in question contains the items published in V-K V as Nos. 33, 38, 36, 37, 34 and 35. While proof may be impossible, conceivably other scrolls in the Privy Chancery archive inventoried after the tsar's death contained news which Hebdon sent later in his mission to the Netherlands. The inventory of 1683 lists, inter alia, a scroll with *kuranty* of the years [7]167 [1658/59] and [7]168 [1659/60]; see V-K VI/1: 16. These listings could encompass the packets now published in V-K V as Nos. 39, 40, and 41 – they too might be associated with Hebdon. However, there is no specific evidence for such a supposition, and it seems a bit more likely that Nos. 39–41 are based on sources obtained by A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin.

15. In 1658, the chief secretary of the Privy Chancery, Dementii Bashmakov – who was apparently embedded with the Russian army in its campaign against Poland – sent German newspapers to Moscow (V-K V: 118–120, No. 32). In 1660, there is another example of foreign – in this case Dutch – newssheets, which were brought from the tsar's chambers (*s verkhu*) to be translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K VI/1: 82–87, No. 4).

He reported, with some enthusiasm on account of his royalist sympathies, about the restoration of the Stuart Dynasty in England at the accession of King Charles II. Hebdon recited a list of the embassies being sent to the king to emphasize how important it would be for Moscow to do the same (ibid.: 23–24, 26). When the Russian embassy headed by Prozorovskii and Zheliabuzhskii arrived in London in November 1662, Hebdon was instructed to assist it, but there is reason to believe his loyalties now lay with the English, not with Russia. On his return to Moscow in 1664, he was already acting on behalf of the English government.[16]

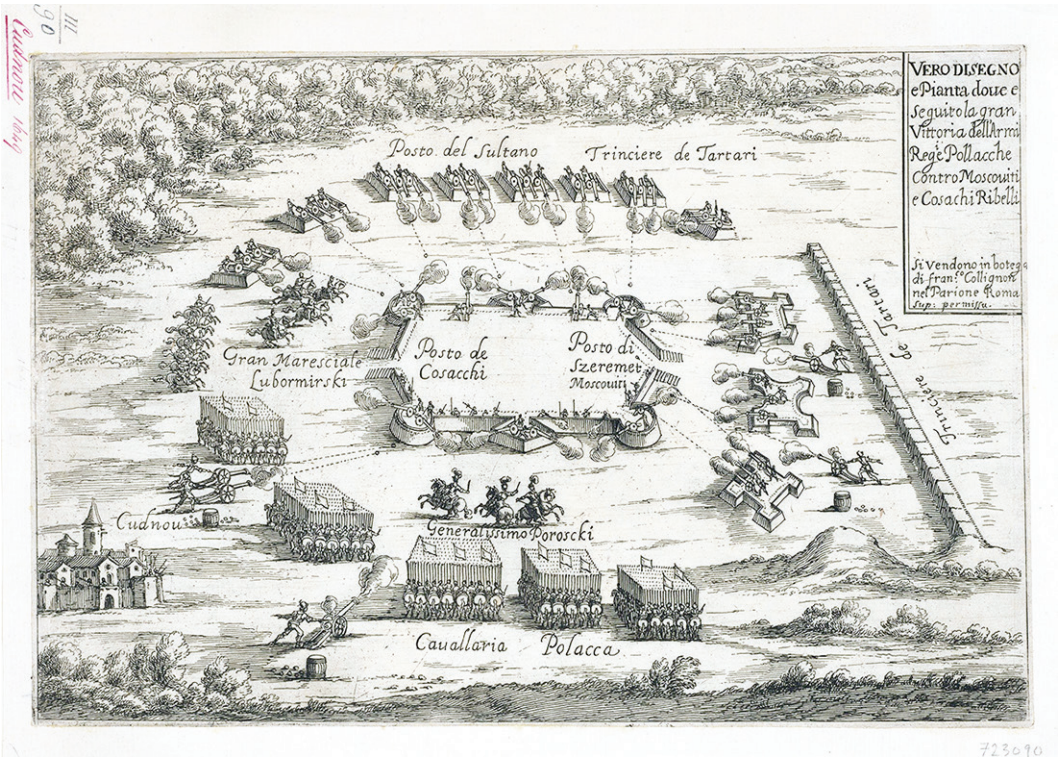

FIG. 17.1. The Battle of Chudnov (1660), engraving by François Collignon.

17.3. The response to Western reports on the battle of Chudnov

In the Netherlands in 1661, Hebdon acquired printed news about the disastrous battle of Chudnov, in which the Muscovite army led by Vasilii Borisovich Sheremetev was defeated and Sheremetev taken captive (FIG. 17.1).[17] Hebdon stated that he could not vouch for the accuracy of the reports, but he prompted the tsar to send an official Russian version of the event, which could then be placed in Western newspapers (Gurliand 1903: 21–23). This episode concerning the reportage about Chudnov merits some additional comment

16. Hebdon died in England between 1665 and 1667. The John Hebdon who subsequently figures in Anglo-Russian relations was his son.

17. On the campaign and the battle, see Kurbatov 2019: 163–168. For a valuable eyewitness account, see Gordon 2009–2016, 2: 68–100. Gordon at the time was a mercenary in the Commonwealth forces; his long and honorable Russian service began the following year.

to supplement the discussion of it by Stepan Shamin (2011a: 151–154). In our Sec. 15.7, we discussed the acquisition of Polish publications by Russian envoys in the early 1650s and the way in which the Muscovite government used them in lodging a formal diplomatic complaint with the government of the Commonwealth. There is clear evidence that the confrontation with Poland-Lithuania over these matters occupied a significant place in Muscovite relations with its neighbor. Diplomatic missions seeking to line up possible support for the war against the Poles cited the insulting behavior of the latter as one of the main reasons for the outbreak of hostilities.[18] Citation of the insults also was an important part of the government's 'public' campaign within the country to justify the war to Muscovites and stir up enthusiasm for it. The Russian negotiating mission in Vilna in 1656 reiterated the complaints about insults to the tsar (see pp. 561–563).

As we have seen from the example of the Hamburg *WZ*, the foreign newspaper reportage on the events in Eastern Europe was substantial. Equally impressive is the evidence about the scope of coverage in contemporary pamphlets.[19] Even if much of this escaped their gaze, the tsar and his key officials certainly were well aware of the attention devoted to the war and to other events involving Muscovy. News reports covered both military successes against the Poles and their allies and the Commonwealth's successes on the battlefield. The reccent Polish successes help explain why the war dragged on for so many years following the near total collapse in the mid-1650s. The battle at Chudnov was not the only such military victory against Muscovite forces. It was one of the more significant ones, all the more embarrassing for the fact that the Russian commander, Vasilii Borisovich Sheremetev, was taken off to the Crimea as a captive.

It remains to be seen whether the publications Hebdon purchased and sent back to Moscow can still be found in the archive. A separate listed in the inventory of the Swedish Affairs files may have been acquired by some other means. For example, it might easily have been obtained via contacts in Riga.[20] A file preserved in the Privy Chancery archive contains a translation from a Polish printed book that apparently included not

18. See the listings in the archival inventory, RGADA, f. 96 (Swedish Affairs), *Opis'* 1, 1653, fol. 110v, Nos. 5, 6. Russian missions sent to Sweden, France, Denmark and Holland all seem to have been tasked with explaining the hostilities with Poland 'with the complaint against the Polish king and his subjects in their printing in books and in letters of evil disgraceful and slanderous statements about the Russian rulers and the whole tsardom.'

19. E.g., Estreicher 14: 392–394; 16: 135–137; 26: 213–220. See also Zawadzki 2002: 180–221, for a review of the many pamphlets about the Commonwealth's campaigns between 1655 and 1663, among them the publications about Chudnov.

20. The inventory listing is RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 123^{v}, No. 8: '20 November. Printed description of the battle between the Polish-Swedish army and the Russians in the Ukraine commanded by General Sheremetev.' The battle took place on 25 October. There are various publications relating to the battle; one of the most likely sources for the item listed in the inventory is: *Glaubwürdige Relation, Von der Herrlichen Victoria, Welche* [...] *Ihr. Königliche Maytt. zu Pohlen und Schweden etc. Durch Ergebung Deß Moßkowitischen grossen Krieges-Heer/ Unterm Commando des Moßkowit. General Szeremet, In der Ukraina erhalten* [...] N.p., 1660 (VD 17 23:316023D; see also VD17 23:316020F). It is unlikely any Swedish forces were involved – the apparent suggestion here probably derives from the fact of the Polish king's continued claim to the Swedish throne, as indicated in the titulature printed on the title page.

only a report on the battle but other news from the war.[21] Presumably the source for the translation was not the same as the one in the Swedish Affairs files. The inventory for the Privy Chancery archive in fact is quite specific that the printed book had been obtained from Poland via Kiev. What Hebdon sent may very well be in other files from the Privy Chancery, which have served as the main source for information about his activity. At very least, we can be sure the foreign reports about Chudnov had been brought to the tsar's personal attention. Even prior to Hebdon's suggestion that a Russian version of the events be distributed for publication, to counter the 'lies' alleged to be in the Polish reports, such a text had been composed and was ready to send him.[22] The Polish Affairs files contain what may be a copy of this text, dated 10 January: 'A true declaration of all the actions between the Russian and Polish armies in 1660, sent to Lübeck for printing in foreign newspapers.'[23] Since Hebdon had first reported to the tsar about the Polish news in a letter from Amsterdam dated 26 December, the Russian 'true declaration' must have been written prior to the receipt of his information in Moscow.

Shamin (2011a, Ch. 3) devotes a substantial chapter of his book to the foreign news about Moscow and in particular the instances such as that involving Hebdon where the Russian government protested the foreign reports and undertook to counter them by having Russian agents distribute the government's own versions of events. Given the chronological focus of his book, Shamin's evidence concentrates on the last half of the seventeenth century. This evidence is striking testimony to the level of awareness among the Muscovite authorities concerning the importance and impact of the foreign press. The conscious attempts to influence its content in a sense were no innovation, since, well before the middle of the seventeenth century, the government and the Orthodox Church had absorbed the importance of publicizing events within the country and had the mechanisms in place to do so. We shall return to this question in our conclusion, when looking at the degree to which the news in the *kuranty* spread beyond the circles of the Moscow elite.

21. 'Translation, in quires, from a Polish printed book, which was brought to Kiev from Poland by the Kievan colonel Vasilii Dvoretskoi, and from Kiev that book was brought to Moscow by the *stolniki* and *voevody* Prince Iurii Boriatinskoi and Ivan Chaadaev in the year 7169 [1660/61]; concerning various news of happenings in Poland and in the German lands, and on the capture of the boyar Vasilii Borisovich Sheremetev' (*RIB* 21: 350–351). The following publication (in German, not Polish) is an analogous source: *Glaubwürdige Relation, Von der herrlichen Victoria so Ihr May. Armeen in der Ukraine und Littauen wieder die Moßcowitter erhalten. Gedruckt im Jahr 1661* (copy online through Google Books). It opens with a description of the battle – a condensation of the text published in the 1660 pamphlet cited in the previous note – but then contains several datelined entries with news from 'Lithuanian Jürgenburg', Hamburg, Meissen, and Vienna. We have not found a pamphlet in Polish that deals with the battle and suppose that the archival listing might have indicated the place of the publication, not the language.

22. It is quoted in Gurliand 1903: 22–23 n. 1.

23. See the inventory, RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1661, fol. 197, No. 7.

17.4. Ivan Zheliabuzhskii: a diplomat involved in the exchange of foreign news

While Hebdon was acting primarily as a personal agent for the tsar, there were other individuals actively engaged in diplomacy who had meaningful interaction with foreign envoys and were also frequently sent on foreign missions by the Ambassadorial Chancery. Among them, of particular interest is Ivan Afanas'evich Zheliabuzhskii (b. 1638), whose career spanned the second half of the seventeenth century.[24] It seems likely that he would have learned Polish while young, growing up in a service noble family that had emigrated to Moscow and whose members were often involved in dealings with the Commonwealth. His service records imply he might have acquired other foreign languages (German and Latin would have been very important), but there is no direct evidence to support such a hypothesis. In his mission to Ukraine in 1657 (see below), he was accompanied by an interpreter, Dmitrii Ostaf'ev, whose linguistic competence supposedly included Greek, Romanian, Turkish and Persian (Beliakov 2017: 321). However, it appears that for the most part Zheliabuzhskii did not need his assistance, and in fact before the end of the mission sent him back to Moscow as a courier. On his mission to Brandenburg-Prussia and Courland in 1661, Zheliabuzhskii was accompanied by Lazar' Zimmermann, presumably for translation from German. Zimmermann had earlier been assigned to the embassy to Venice headed by Chemodanov, in 1656, and toward the end of his career served as a translator in Novgorod (Beliakov et al.: 214–215). Zheliabuzhskii certainly would have had opportunities to acquire other languages later in his career.

Still in his teens in 1655, he was appointed as one of the escorts who interfaced with the Habsburg envoys, when they were in Moscow between autumn of that year and spring of 1656.[25] He probably had but a minor role in the event (the other escorts are the ones mentioned by name in the official documents), but it is reasonable to suppose that he would have had some conversations with Allegretto Allegretti, the lead envoy. Allegretti was an experienced diplomat, originally from Ragusa, who knew Latin, Italian, Spanish, German, 'Slavonic', and probably Polish and French.[26] The documentation about the embassy suggests that he was able to speak (in some kind of Slavic) with Muscovite officials without the aid of a translator. When his escort – not named – told him

24. Basic biographical information is in Ussas 1916; Bogdanov and Kagan 1992 provide important supplements, with a focus on Zheliabuzhskii's *Zapiski* – diary notes covering the period from 1682–1709.

25. The documents about that embassy and its negotiations in Moscow are in *PDS* 3: 255–522, and *RUD*: 234-–243, 248–252, 255–263. On the selection of escorts and the roles they played, see Domrachev 2023. His focus is on later in the century and the escorts assigned to Polish diplomats arriving in Russia. The assignment of a translator, Semen Lavretskii, is unusual, leaving open for further study the question of the language abilities of those selected to accompany a foreign mission.

26. For his biography, see Conde-Pazos 2021. On his knowledge and use of 'Slavonic' as documented from the embassy to Moscow in 1655, see *RUD*: 231, 250–251, 258–259. The second in command of the mission, Johann Theodor von Lorbach, did not get along with Allegretti and complained about the latter's having conversations with the Russians (presumably in Slavic) which he, Lorbach, could not understand.

the tsar would be happy to have the envoy address him in Slavic, Allegretti complied.[27] Zheliabuzhskii subsequently was on the staff of the Russian negotiating team at Vilna in 1656, where at one point he met with Allegretti and reported on his conversation with him.[28] The best guess is they conversed in Slavic (Russian or possibly Polish). So this is no indication that Zheliabuzhskii (at least yet) would have known Latin or German.

In 1657, the young Ivan Afanas'evich received a more important assignment: to deliver to the Transylvanian Prince György II Rákóczi and a Cossack force led by Onton Zhdanov the tsar's directive that the Transylvanian abandon any pretensions he had to the Polish throne and cease his military action in support the efforts by Sweden to occupy most of Poland. However, by the time of Zheliabuzhskii's mission – as he learned in Ukraine during the summer – the tide had turned, Rákóczi's forces had been defeated by the Poles and Tatars.[29] Not only was it difficult to locate the Transylvanian prince, but in any event, as the Zaporozhians insisted, it was impossible to travel safely to find him. So Zheliabuzhskii had to confine himself to gathering intelligence and interrogating the Cossack commander, Onton Zhdanov. Zheliabuzhskii's two interim reports (one sent after 10 July and received in Moscow on 3 August; the other sent after 24 July and received on 7 August) and his *stateinyi spisok*, submitted presumably around the beginning of September, are a remarkable testimony to the young Ivan Afans'evich's perspicacity in attempting to ferret out news from a wide range of informants, and his ability as an interrogator in the way he pressed Zhdanov to provide an honest account of his involvement with Rákóczi. The interim reports were read immediately to the tsar, who then sent new instructions to Zheliabuzhskii; we can assume the tsar would have at least heard an oral summary of what was in the final mission report. Zheliabuzhskii's reports are a vivid example of the challenges of acquiring information in the chaotic situation in Ukraine and yet how much the most capable of the tsar's officials could learn. The intelligence gave the lie to some of the assertions of loyalty to Moscow that Khmelnytsky had been making (Floria 2010: 261).

Zheliabuzhskii's employment by the Ambassadorial Chancery continued. The Russian diplomatic mission at Vilna in June 1658 sent him as a courier to the important Lithuanian magnate Hetman Wincenty Gosiewski, who had been delegated by the Polish king to oversee negotiations with the Russians (and separately with the Swedes) about possi-

27. *RUD*: 258, Allegretti's report on the mission: "Come finirono queste dimande, io dissi a Sua Alteza in mia lingua Slava persuaso dalli pristavi quali anticipatamente m'havevano insinuato, ch'egli desiderava sentirmi parlare in idoma tanto conforme al suo." See also the diary written by a member of the mission, the Dalmatian Frano Gundulić, who comments on the same incident and at a ceremonial dinner was able to converse directly with the tsar without a translator (Pentkovich 1869: 149–150, 155–156).

28. See *RUD*: 169; *PDS* 3: 525–526.

29. The documents on Zheliabuzhskii's mission, including his *stateinyi spisok*, have been published in *RIB* 8: 1235–1292. For a cogent discussion of Rákóczi's actions in this period, see Shusharin 1998: 226–230. For a discussion of Zheliabuzskii's mission in the larger context of Russian foreign policy in the period, see Floria 2010: 240, 259–261.

ble long-term peace settlements (Floria 2010: 373–374, 380). The Russian envoys were waiting at Vilna for the arrival of their counterparts but had no information as to when to expect them. On 2 July, Zheliabuzhskii brought back the response that Gosiewski would soon provide information on the Commonwealth's delegation. The negotiations eventually would break down for a variety of complicated reasons. Of some interest is the fact that deliberately misleading 'news' was being circulated, and even when the Russian side had accurate information, the Kremlin chose to ignore it in favor of preconceived notions (for the whole story, see ibid., Ch. 7).

When the Russian government attempted to initiate a new round of peace negotiations with the Commonwealth, Zhelabuzhskii was assigned in July 1659 to head a mission to Warsaw. In addition to making the arrangements about launching the negotiations, he was to propose a truce in the fighting (ibid.: 485, 500–502). If the Poles had been inclined to consider the proposal, while Zheliabuzhskii was in Warsaw the situation changed dramatically, thanks to their having received news about the defeat of the Russian army at Konotop on 24 June 1659. Although a Cossack and Tatar army had inflicted heavy losses on a Russian force, this was not the total destruction of the main Russian army, as some exaggerated reports received in Warsaw suggested. Nonetheless, the news encouraged the Poles to reject the Russian proposals of a truce.[30] Through no fault of his own, Zheliabuzhskii came away from the Polish capital empty-handed. However, assiduous in his intelligence-gathering, despite an effort by his hosts to keep him isolated while there, he was able to report back to Moscow about unrest in the Commonwealth and stresses between the Poles on the one hand and the Cossacks and Lithuanians on the other. Moreover, he reported Lithuanian attacks on the Swedes, important news which influenced the Russian government to pause negotiations for a permanent peace with Sweden (ibid.: 512–514, 522). Here we have a good example of how news could have an impact on foreign-policy decisions.

Presumably because his mission to Poland had given him some 'expertise' on the fraught situation in Ukraine, at the end of January 1660 Zheliabuzhskii was dispatched on mission to the Cossack Hetman Iurii Khmelnytsky, who had been elected to replace the pro-Polish Ivan Vykhovsky.[31] This was an important assignment at a time when Zaporozhian loyalty to Moscow was in question. Zheliabuzhskii's next significant diplomatic assignment was a mission to Brandenburg-Prussia and Courland in 1661, at a time when events on the ground were going badly for Russian forces.[32] The Russian response

30. The battle certainly was a significant Russian defeat at the hands of the rebel Cossack Hetman Vykhovsky and his Crimean allies, but by later in the year the Russian army began to reestablish control over Ukraine and solidify its position with the installation of permanent garrisons. On the battle and the campaign of the summer, see Kurbatov 2019: 122–134; for an assessment suggesting that the battle was of greater consequence, see Frost 2014: 184. Floria (2010: 501) cites the exaggerated news suggesting that Russian losses were several orders of magnitude higher than in fact they had been.

31. At the time of his departure on 29 January and again at his return on 20 May, Zheliabuzhskii was received by the tsar. See Belokurov 1908: 54, 87.

32. Floria 2010.: 605, 630–631; *Rossiia i Prussiia*: 217, 513–514. The decision to send Zheliabuzhskii

to proposals of mediation in peace negotiations with either Sweden or the Commonwealth varied and was very much dependent on how well the wars were going.[33] Even though possible mediation by Brandenburg-Prussia had earlier been considered, now it was important to encourage the involvement of the Great Elector. Caught between the greater powers, Courland's position was a delicate one. Concerned not to antagonize Poland, the duke of Courland blocked Zheliabuzhskii from proceeding to Berlin (the ostensible reason being that there was no safe route to travel). Informed that a diplomatic mission from the Habsburg emperor was on its way to Moscow, the tsar then instructed Zheliabuzhskii to wait at the border for its arrival and to escort it to Moscow (FIG. 17.2).[34] The route through Russian-held Livonia involved stopping briefly for a banquet hosted by the Russian governor, Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin.

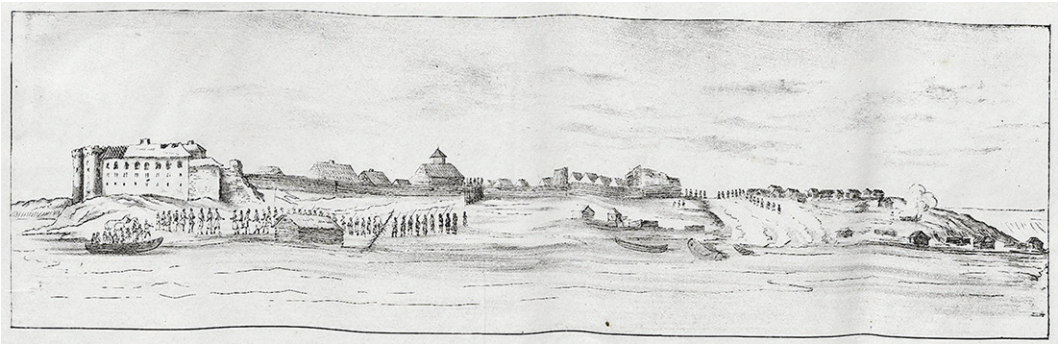

FIG. 17.2. Ivan Zheliabuzhskii meets the Habsburg embassy at Kokenhusen. Drawing by Rudolph Storno, the artist accompanying the embassy to Moscow in 1661.

The Habsburg ambassador Augustin von Mayerberg's descriptive book in Latin about Muscovy includes substantial information on his travel, reception and negotiations (Mayerberg n.d.; Russ. tr., 1874). Since much of the Russian documentation about the

to Brandenburg had been made back in October, but he did not leave Moscow until the start of the new year. The importance attached to the mission in part is underscored by the assignment to it of one of the longest serving departmental undersecretaries, Elisei Grigor'ev (for his service record, see Demidova 2010: 147). The mission also included the experienced Lazar' Zimmermann, listed as a translator for German, who had in 1656 gone on the Russian mission to Italy. On one occasion, he provided the chancery printed newspapers, which were translated for the *kuranty* on 29 August 1664 (V-K VI/1: 105–106, No. 13). When Zheliabuzhskii was reassigned to accompany the Habsburg embassy to Moscow, Zimmermann stayed with him. However, there is no direct evidence he was involved in the discussions Zheliabuzhskii had with the ambassadors. Even before they reached Moscow, Zimmermann was sent ahead as a courier with messages to the Ambassadorial Chancery. This leaves open the question of whether Zheliabuzhskii had the language skills (Latin or German) to deal with the Habsburg envoys.

33. Another element in the complexity of the diplomatic decision making at the time was the fact that Ordin-Nashchokin had his own ideas about foreign policy, which did not always agree with those being formulated by the tsar and his advisors in the Ambassadorial Chancery in Moscow. See the discussion below in Sec. 17.5.

34. The Russian archival documents pertaining to the Habsburg embassy are in *PDS*, 4: 1–224. At the time the embassy took place, the chief envoy is referred to in the sources as Augustin von Mayern, but we use here the subsequent name, Von Mayerberg, since that is the one most commonly encountered in studies of the period.

reception of the embassy also has been published, it is possible to track closely Zheliabuzhskii's professional activity, to see how a foreign observer judged his ability, and to learn some interesting details about how foreign news was being obtained and used. As was typical for such assignments given Muscovite officials, one of Zheliabuzhskii's obligations was to elicit from the visitors as much news and intelligence as he could.[35] His report written on 14 April (received and read to the tsar on 23 April; *PDS*, 4: 29–32) contains the record of his conversation with the ambassadors, in which they made it clear that their proposal of mediation in the Russo-Polish conflict was an alternative to a French proposal to mediate. According to the envoys, Russia needed to be concerned about French support for Sweden and a possible threat of French military involvement. There were already some thousand Frenchmen in Danzig when the Austrian delegation passed through. Mayerberg further expressed surprise that the Russians had conclud-

35. For an analogous example, brought to our attention by Stepan Shamin, see the very careful diary of Andreas Rhode, the secretary of the Danish envoy Hans Oldeland on their mission in Moscow from late March to early June in 1659. Rhode records how they were asked, on 24 March, very specific questions – to which the Danes were happy to reply – about the recent peace signed between Denmark and Sweden (Treaty of Roskilde, 8 March 1658 [NS]) but then the sudden Swedish attack and (unsuccessful) siege of Copenhagen, 11 February 1659. Clearly the Russian escort assigned to the Danes had been briefed on the latest news. The Russian then delivered to the Danes a packet of mail that had just arrived, informing them that its not having been opened was a sign of the tsar's favor toward them. However, he asked to know what news was contained in the mail. In one of the subsequent negotiating sessions, the Danes gave the Russian translator selections from the news which they had received in the mail. The Danes provided the Russians with a copy of a pamphlet describing the Swedes' 'perfidious' actions since having signed the peace treaty in the previous year. Rhode describes its contents as a 'printed booklet with a reliable account about the events which occurred following the peace treaty concluded by us with Sweden.' Kordt (1916: 374–375 n. 1), who edited and translated Rhode's account, identifies the publication as *Kaart oc sandfærdig Beretning anlangende huis som siden Freden, der imellem hans Kongl. Maytt. aff Danmarck oc Norge &c. oc Kongen aff Sverrig &c den 26. Februarii Anno 1658 i Roeskild er bleff sluttet.* [...] Copenhagen: Morsing, 1658, though it seems likely that what the Russians would have been given was the German translation: *Kurtzer/ Aus den Actis und Protocollis gezogener/ Warhafftiger Bericht. Was nach dem/ am 26. Februarii Anno 1658. zu Roschildt/ zwischen dero zu Dännemarck/ Norwegen/ Königl. Majest. [et]c. und dem Könige in Schweden/ getroffenen Friede* [...] *Aus dem Dänischen ins Teutsche übersetzet*. Copenhagen: Morsing, 1658 (VD17 14:080763H). Latin, French, and in the next year, English and Dutch versions are also known. The envoys were happy to provide the Russians with engraved portraits of their king and queen. When meeting with some of the resident foreigners in Moscow (including merchants with Danish commercial connections), the envoys told them about the wonderful victory over the Swedes at Copenhagen and in the Sound. The visitors seem to have been able to learn news the Russians were currently obtaining. The envoys asked the Russians' translator, Johann Böcker von Delden, to find out what progress had been made in the ongoing Russian negotiations to convert the truce with Sweden into a permanent peace. He reported that matters were still pending, waiting for a Russian envoy to return from Sweden with an agreement about where the commission would meet to settle questions about borders. On 4 May, Rhode reported that the tsar had received bad news about a major military defeat of the Russian forces led by Prince Trubetskoi near Putivl. This seems to have been erroneous information, as Trubetskoi's own long report on his campaign, if anything, paints a positive picture of a series of successful, if relatively small battles (see *AIuZR*, 4, esp. 231–234). As the Danes were preparing to return home, they queried von Delden as to the safest route, since the mission had received no really recent news about what was happening in other countries that might prevent safe travel. For all this, see the Russian translation of the yet unpublished German original kept in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, Rhode 1916: 361, 366, 367, 371, 374, 386, 387, 390.

ed a peace with Sweden (The Peace of Kardis) without any mediation, since mediation would have ensured a more favorable agreement. The report ended with brief notes on the Ottoman invasion of Transylvania and the expectation of a major war between the Habsburgs and the Turks. A Brandenburg-Polish conflict was in the offing. In a subsequent conversation with the envoys – the report of which was received in Moscow on 3 May and sent to the tsar, who was out of town – Zheliabuzhskii questioned whether the Poles would prefer the Habsburg to the French mediation. In response, he was told there were concerns in the Diet about too much French influence. Another Habsburg

FIG. 17.3. Two scenes from the album of drawings by Rudolph Storno, the artist assigned to the Mayerberg embassy in 1661. At bottom, a detail of the formal entry into Moscow, the Russian escort (no. 8, presumably Ivan Zheliabuzhskii) seated in the center of the ambassadors' carriage. Above is the right half of the depiction of the formal reception by the tsar, to whose right (no. 3) is the boyar Il'ia Danilovich Miloslavskii. The two ambassadors, Calvucci and Mayerberg (no. 8), face the throne, with the Russian interpreter (no. 9). On the right (no. 5) is the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery Almaz Ivanov, accompanied by two of the departmental secretaries (no. 7).

mission was in Poland presenting the case for Habsburg mediation, but there was some urgency in the Mayerberg mission to get the Russians to agree to it and head off the French. The subject of a possible Habsburg-Muscovite alliance against the Turks came up in this meeting as well. As in the case of his interrogation of Onton Zhdanov in Kiev in 1657, Zheliabuzhskii comes across here as being very well prepared to ask the right questions, though whether the responses really told the Kremlin anything it did not already know from other sources is doubtful.

At least initially after Mayerberg's arrival in Moscow, Zheliabuzhskii was replaced by another escort (*pristav*). However, under what seems to have been simply a pretext (a claim that the new one had taken ill), he resumed his position as the chief escort for the Mayerberg embassy (FIG. 17.3).[36] Shortly after he had taken up the duties, on 27 May, 'German newspapers [*kuranty*]' he had acquired were translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K VI/1: 94–98, No. 9). The news in that packet covered a wide range of dates from 19 January to 22 March (hence the most recent item was already some two months old). It would not have been news in Moscow to read a report from Danzig dated 18 March about the Austrian embassy being on its way to Moscow to negotiate a possible alliance against the Turks. Likewise, the same item's report about a Turkish mission to persuade the Poles not to join in a war against the Ottoman Empire probably was not news by the time it was translated. The various reports in this packet about Ottoman military preparations and the likelihood of war between the empire and the Turks certainly would have reinforced what the Habsburg negotiators in Moscow were telling the Russians. One of the four Danzig reports, dated 15 March, concerns the reception of Muscovite and Cossack envoys in Częstochowa (see the discussion below). It seems likely that several sources were drawn on for this translation, the largest number of datelined reports coming from the Baltic region.[37] The form of some entries suggests they are but short summaries from a handwritten newsletter. Interestingly, the final several items (starting on a new sheet) include a number of reports about prophetic or mirac-

36. The envoys were informed of the change on 21/31 May (Mayerberg n.d.: 40; 1874: 75).

37. So far it has been impossible to identify direct sources for the news. However, we note that *WZ App*. 1661/13: [3], in an article from Danzig 19 March, reported the departure of the Mayerberg embassy from the city on its way to Courland and correctly suggested that its purpose was to propose Habsburg mediation in the Russo-Polish war. *ODiZ* 1661/14: [4] included a Danzig report dated two days earlier, in which the arrival of Mayerberg in the city on his way to Courland and Moscow was mentioned. *WDoZ* 1661/11: [3]–[4] contains a report from Danzig 22 February with much the same news as in the entry of the *kuranty* from Danzig 15 March (V-K VI/1: 94–95). The long item from Venice dated 21 February (ibid.: 95) has some connection with documents dated a month earlier. The news summarizes a letter ostensibly from Sultan Ibrahim to the Habsburg commander Christoff Rihlman and Rihlman's report sent to the government of Venice on 20 January, both published in *WZ App*. 1661/10: [1]–[2]. The published version of the sultan's letter may well be fictive; there are differences from what is in the translation, suggesting that the latter's original must be another version of the letters or a text in which some material from them has been combined with another source.

ulous events.[38] We shall discuss these later in the context of other reporting concerning natural and unnatural 'wonders' (see Sec. 20.3.1).

Shamin (2020a: 100) has already noted that undoubtedly Zheliabuzhskii obtained this news packet from a member of the Austrian mission. Indeed, the envoys would have been happy to give the Russians reports that by and large confirmed what they were telling the Muscovite officials: that is, concerning threats to Muscovy from the West (hence the desirability of mediation to settle the war with Poland) and underscoring the Ottoman threat, which needed to be countered by a coordinated Christian response. In his book, commenting specifically about Zheliabuzhskii's appointment as their escort, Mayerberg (n.d.: 40; 1874: 75–76) noted that the Russian was certainly not dumb and in fact seems to have been perceived by his superiors as having the clever ability to elicit even confidential information in his conversations with the mission's staff. Mayerberg suggested that Zheliabuzhskii owed his position to patronage by the 'Chancellor' (Almaz Ivanov) and could be expected to report to him any secret information. This was a potential threat to the Austrians' achieving any success in the negotiations. At the same time, it offered the opportunity to ensure that the Russians would receive news that supported the Austrians' negotiating points.

The exchange of news moved in both directions, as the accounts of the actual negotiations in Moscow between the imperial envoys and the Russians make clear. In the long session on 24 May, the envoys provided details about the French machinations which included having a French candidate as the successor on the Polish throne and military collaboration with Sweden directed against Moscow. The king and queen were secretly plotting with the French. The immediate Russian response was simply to ask whether the emperor had plans to advance the candidacy of one of Rákóczi's family or a Habsburg prince for the Polish throne. The envoys stated that the Habsburg heir was out of the question, since he would succeed the emperor, but that a Transylvanian candidate would be deemed acceptable. The boyars then reminded the envoys that there had been an earlier agreement by the Polish king to support the succession by a Muscovite candidate (Truce of Vilna, 24 October 1656). The discussion came back to the matter of mediation, the envoys asking whether the Russians were considering a different offer. In response, the boyar negotiators informed the envoys that the French ambassador had approached Ordin-Nashchokin about this, the tsar's response being that the French should send a formal mission. However, so far nothing had happened. So Moscow was open to Habsburg mediation but insisted that a courier be sent right away to Poland to learn whether the Poles were amenable to it.

38. Shamin's examination of the manuscript containing the Zheliabuzhskii news packet indicates there are three different scribal hands with breaks at fols. 48/49 and 52/53, the manuscript containing one of the problematic collections of miscellaneous news now in RGADA, f. 141, No. 122 (V-K VI/1: 22). So there is uncertainty about the completeness and the order of the items, some of which are on separate folios. Possibly not all of what has been preserved can be connected with Zheliabuzhskii, even though Shamin considers the manuscript to represent a distinct packet.

In the subsequent session, where discussion continued on possible arrangements for a peace conference, the Russians reported that the Poles had detained their envoy, Larion Ivanov, who had been sent to discuss at least a truce in anticipation of further negotiations.[39] If the Habsburg envoys in Moscow were to send a courier to their colleagues in Warsaw, perhaps they could learn why this breach of diplomacy had occurred. The envoys claimed to have no information about the detention of Ivanov, which in fact had occurred and even was reported in the newspapers. However, the Austrians then cited information they had received on 30 March from their colleague in Poland on 13 March. He had reported that the king had rejected the Muscovite proposal of a truce, and the Muscovite envoy had been ordered to go to Kraków and then on to Warsaw.[40] The king and queen were clearly determined to continue the war, though no explanation was given. The envoys in Moscow insisted the reason was the plotting with the French. So here was some accurate information – when pressed further, the envoys seem honestly to have responded they had no additional details about the Russian envoy – but also undocumented speculation that surely exaggerated the idea of a French threat to Moscow, even if the pro-French policies of the royal couple are documented fact.

Zheliabuzhskii's instructions as escort included making sure no unauthorized person could meet with the visitors or give them letters. However, he was delegated to deliver to them mail packets that had been forwarded from Courland.[41] The packets arrived and were delivered sealed, but Zheliabuzhskii was instructed to ask, when handing them over, who had sent the letters and what news they contained. The second of these packets, he was told, contained only personal letters from family members and no news, but the first, which he delivered on 10 June, in fact had a lot of news, which the envoys were

39. At the beginning of December 1660, Larion Ivanov, still early in a noteworthy career, was dispatched to Poland to learn whether the king would agree to a truce. He was then detained and was still there when a higher-level mission headed by Zamiatnia Leontiev and Luk'ian Golosov arrived in Warsaw on 25 April. The new Russian mission, originally dispatched to Polotsk in anticipation of negotiating there, but sent on to Warsaw, was also held in effect under house arrest, pending the decision of the Diet in May. The Russians were finally sent home on 15 July, after the Poles refused to agree to a truce (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 3: 135; Floria 2010: 602–603).

40. A report datelined Częstochowa 8 February in *WZ App*. 1661/9: [2]–[3] mentioned the arrival of a Muscovite 'Goniec' (courier) there at the time when a Cossack envoy was also being received. Both of them handed over written proposals. The Russian was instructed to proceed to Kraków, where he was likely to have to remain for quite some time. Reports in two subsequent numbers of the Hamburg paper (*WDoZ* 1661/10: [4] and *WZ App*. 1661/12: [2]–[3]– items from Danzig 28 February and Kraków 2 March) mention, with somewhat different detail, the reception of the Muscovite envoy ('Internuncius Leno Chuanowitz' = Larion Ivanov[ich]) by the king at Częstochowa, the decision that any discussion of a truce had to wait for the Diet, and the directive that Russian go to Kraków and then to Warsaw to await its start (scheduled for 2 May). A report from Warsaw 5 March (*ODiZ* 1661/15: [2]) specified "Der Moßkowitische Gesandte welcher Brieffe vom GroßFürsten an den Chmielnitzcky gebracht vor dessen aber dem Feld Herr zugeschickt worden ist allhier unter der Wache in Arrest." So the explanation for the detention of Ivanov undoubtedly was justifiable Polish suspicion about Muscovite communication with the Cossacks, who were also negotiating with the king. The reference here is to Iurii Khmelnytsky, the son of Bohdan who had accepted Polish suzerainty and whom the Poles were hoping to install as the Cossack leader in Left-Bank Ukraine.

41. *PDS* 4: 196–199, 203–204.

happy to summarize for him. As the envoys explained to Zheliabuzhskii, the letters had been sent from Vienna by acquaintances (*priiateli*) via Mayerberg's brother in Danzig, who then had forwarded the mail to Courland. 'And newspapers (*kuranty vestovye*) were sent to them as well, and those newspapers had been printed in Danzig in April.'[42] They contained news about the reception of the Muscovite envoy in Warsaw: he was to stay on through the meeting of the Diet, whose conclusion was to be delayed on account of an outbreak of the plague in Warsaw and its surrounding region.[43] The mention of the plague was the one item that immediately caught the attention of the tsar when Zheliabuzhskii's report was read to him and the boyars. He ordered that the news be sent to Smolensk and Polotsk, and that, if the Russian envoys Leont'ev and Ivanov would be released and return to Smolensk or Polotsk, they be interrogated about whether the Polish king had been in the affected areas and whether they had traveled in them (*PDS* 4: 198–199). A significant portion of the news dealt with events in Transylvania, where the Turks were demanding the submission of Rákóczi's successor, János Kemény, who had proclaimed Transylvanian independence and appealed to the emperor for help.[44] The emperor was sending troops but perhaps only to strengthen border defenses. To meet the Turkish threat, it was essential, following the Muscovite settlement of its war with

42. *PDS* 4: 196–197. The date indicated for the printing of this news and the dates of the reports in the earlier packet obtained by Zheliabuzhskii would seem to suggest that the latter drew on newspapers which may have appeared in late March or early April. Possibly they too included ones printed in Danzig, which seems to have been an important node for the imperial communication network in the Baltic. In other words, the Austrians may have had sequentially printed numbers, the earlier ones received perhaps soon after they had arrived in Moscow (about which we have no concrete information) and the later ones in the letter packet Zheliabuzhskii delivered. Zheliabuzhskii delivered the packet of private letters on 9 July. In his published narrative about the embassy, Mayerberg (n.d.: 95; 1874: 183–185) complained bitterly about the Russians' blocking the ambassadors from sending or receiving mail, despite the efforts by the Duke of Courland to find ways to have it safely delivered. Suspicious that the mail contained secret information, Almaz Ivanov ordered that it be opened, and the envoys were told the letters had never arrived. To illustrate his point, Mayerberg provided an example of this obfuscation in connection with a negotiating session in March 1662. It is entirely possible that the attitude of the Russian authorities about delivering the embassy's letters still sealed had shifted over the course of the year since the mission had first arrived. Mayerberg explained the Russian action in part as a response to the fact the envoys had insistently pressed the issue of being allowed to have reliable communications.

43. While not necessarily identical with the reports published in Hamburg (see above, n. 40), presumably the reports in the newspapers from the two cities had a common source and obviously were in agreement. It is not clear whether Zheliabuzhskii's report is based on his actually seeing the Danzig newspapers that had arrived in the mail or, more likely, is from a summary which the Austrians told him.

44. News of the events in Hungary frequently filled the pages of the Hamburg *WZ*, though it is difficult to extrapolate from its reporting exactly what might also have appeared in the Danzig newspapers. One exception is in Zheliabuzhskii's report: 'And the Turk wrote to him [Kemény] that he should be faithful hereafter and that he should provide [as tribute] every year from the Hungarian land five hundred thousand gold coins.' *ODiZ* 1661/14: [1]–[2] published excerpts from a letter sent by the Ottoman commander (*vezir*) of Ofen (Buda) with demands that included the payment of that sum of tribute. The summary in Zheliabuzhskii's report could well derive ultimately from such a publication of that letter.

Sweden (which was imminent), to end the war with Poland in order to prevent Polish collaboration with the Tatars in a way that might threaten the Habsburgs.

Here we have evidence of transmission via several different channels of the news about the Russian envoy, Larion Ivanov, in Poland. A report about his reception at Częstochowa and the decision that any truce would have to await the meeting of the Diet had arrived in Danzig by 8 February and was printed in Hamburg presumably around the end of that month or in early March. More recent reports (from Danzig 28 February and Kraków 2 March), concerning his going to Kraków and anticipating his further travel to Warsaw for the Diet, appeared in *WZ* in the subsequent two weeks. On 13 March, the Habsburg envoy in Warsaw wrote a letter to Mayerberg with this news; Mayerberg received it on 30 March, presumably when he was in Courland. On 3 June, the Russian negotiators in Moscow told Mayerberg about the detention of their envoy, news that they might have received even some weeks earlier from the mission headed by Leont'ev and Golosov which had been sent first to Vilna and had arrived in Warsaw on 25 April. However, the negotiators meeting with Mayerberg professed not to have had any explanation regarding Ivanov's detention. On 4 June, the Habsburg envoys told the Russians about the letter they had received back on 30 March. On 6 June (27 May O.S.), the newspaper obtained by Zheliabuzhskii was translated in Moscow (V-K VI/1, No. 9). In it was a report datelined Danzig 15 March about the envoy's reception and the decision he was to go on to Kraków. On 20 June, Zheliabuzhskii learned about the news reported in Danzig newspapers printed in April, copies of which the envoys had just received in the mail via Courland. So the news about the Muscovite envoy was public knowledge, reported in both Hamburg and – with some delay – in Danzig newspapers and also in a letter written by the Habsburg envoy in Warsaw. Assuming the reception in Częstochowa took place toward the end of January, nearly four months elapsed for the news (from any of these sources) to reach the officials in Moscow. The Russian officials obviously had received the information earlier; nothing in the newspaper reports seems to have contained details they would not have already known.

On 27 August, the envoys asked Zheliabuzhskii whether there was any news from Poland, whether the Tatars had sent an army in support of the Polish commander Czerniecki, and whether there was to be an exchange of prisoners with Moscow (*PDS* 4: 206–207). Zheliabuzhskii replied there was no fresh news about the military events, and that instead of a prisoner exchange, the Russian captives were wanting simply to pay ransom to be released, since they were suffering and starving in captivity. The envoys then indicated that when they had been in Courland, they heard that the Poles were wanting to exchange prisoners on a one-for-one basis, but for the return of the captured Lithuanian Hetman Gosiewski, two commanders (*voevody*), etc.[45] The envoys had written to the

45. While Gosiewski earlier had been a key informant for the Russians and supporter of their campaigns, he changed sides, as had many of the magnates, . See Przyboś 1959–1960. For the context in which Gosiewski and the other Lithuanian magnates who had been inclined to accept Russian suzerainty but began to turn against Moscow in 1657, see Floria 2010: 250–252.

Poles to facilitate such an exchange if the Russians would agree to it; the Poles were unwilling to consider a ransom agreement. Clearly the issue of the return of Gosiewski was an important one. In this exchange, the envoys mentioned that the Russians had shown them newspapers, which contained reports that the Habsburg envoy in Warsaw had been denied access to the Polish court but with no explanation given.[46] Mayerberg asked that if the Russians had any reliable news (*podlinnoi vesti*) from Poland about this, they share it. If there were no such news, would the tsar allow them to write to the duke of Courland, since he had provided them with accurate news he obtained from his envoys attending the Diet. Zheliabuzhskii's report on this exchange was read to the tsar. The suggestion here seems to be that the Habsburg envoys did not believe the report which the Russians had showed them.

On 11 September, the Russians arranged for the Habsburg envoys to meet with Zamiatnia Leont'ev and Ivan Mikhailov, who had returned from Poland and were to inform the Austrians about their mission (ibid.: 207–218). The head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Almaz Ivanov was present and explained to the imperial representatives that the Russian envoys had been sent with specific instructions to explore a possible truce with the Poles. So the Russian envoys had news about the Diet in Warsaw, which could answer the questions the Habsburg ambassadors had posed. They related how in Warsaw the imperial envoy Isola asked to meet with them, but the Poles would not permit this. In fact a guard had been placed at Isola's residence to prevent him from leaving, and his staff had been separated from him and lodged in other houses. A lengthy discussion ensued about the possible reasons for this: the Russians heard rumors that the Poles had demanded the return of their royal crown, which they alleged the Habsburg forces involved in the taking of Kraków had seized (a rumor which Mayerberg denied was true). Then there was an issue of the Austrian mission in Moscow sending a courier to Vienna through Poland, in the company of a herald and a Russian clerk, only to have the courier arrested and his letters seized. The Austrians insisted the real issue was the effort by the king and queen to name the French prince of Condé the successor, which meant that it was pointless for them even to talk with Isola.

Given this situation then, the discussion turned to the question of what the safest way would be for a message to be sent to the emperor indicating the tsar's openness to imperial mediation. The Austrian reply is of some interest: send the message via the *starosta* of Zelborsk (Selburg; today, Sēlpils, Latvia), who would forward it to the duke of Courland, and he in turn would send it to Danzig where there were many imperial subjects who could forward it to Vienna. This way the Poles could never learn of the initiative. Sending a courier directly would be a mistake, as he would meet the same fate as the earlier one. The Russians suggested as an alternative having foreign merchants convey the message to Riga, from which it could be taken by sea to Lübeck.

46. So far there is no evidence about what sources might have contained this news. Our survey of the complete run of *WZ* for this period has turned up no such reports, even though it contains frequent and often detailed news from Warsaw and the Polish court.

The meeting continued with the imperial envoys being shown (or told) news from printed 'kuranty' about the Habsburg war against the Turks in Transylvania.[47] Given the fact that such news was common, for instance, in the Hamburg *WZ*, it is impossible to know exactly which newspapers were involved. Finally, since the issue of an exchange of prisoners had arisen in the earlier discussions, the Russians laid out in detail the maltreatment the Russian prisoners of the Poles were receiving, in contrast to the very kind treatment of Hetman Gosiewski and his fellow captives by the Russians. The Austrians agreed with this condemnation of the Polish actions and promised to write to the emperor. They admitted that while in Courland, the duke had asked them to intercede to get Gosiewski released, but now, having heard the Russian side of the captive situation, they could not support that request.

In the follow-up to this meeting on the same day, the Austrians confronted Zheliabuzhskii (*PDS* 4: 218–221), protesting that they could not understand how it was possible that the Russian envoys who had been in Warsaw for such an extended period had not been able to learn more about why the imperial envoy and the courier had been held in confinement. Zheliabuzhskii insisted the Russians too had been under house arrest and thus were unable to contact anyone to find out. The ambassadors, when asked by him to give their explanation, reiterated their idea that the pro-French queen was to blame. What, then, asked Zheliabuzhskii, would the emperor's response to this insult be? The envoys responded that the emperor could cut off communications between Poland and other countries, and 'the Polish state would decay.' Zheliabuzhskii's somewhat contentious exchange with the envoys continued with questions about communicating the tsar's intentions to accept Habsburg mediation.

The published Russian record of the negotiations ends months prior to when the envoys eventually left Moscow. So there are scant details about possible further exchanges of information between the two sides (given the way Mayerberg's book generalized about the formal proceedings), even if already by September the main business of the embassy had been concluded. In any event, Zheliabuzhskii may have ceased to be involved. In June 1662, he left Moscow for England in the embassy headed by Prince Petr Semenovich Prozorovskii, which included one of the secretaries from the Privy Chancery, Iurii Ivanovich Nikiforov and the translator Andrei Foret (FIG. 17.4; Bantysh-Kamenskii 1: 117). Zheliabuzhskii had been given an important secret assignment, to try to obtain a subsidy for Muscovy from the English government. Although unsuccessful in that – King Charles II was having enough difficulties in prying funds out of Parliament – the still young Russian diplomat then was sent on to Florence and Venice.

47. The wording here is 'Poslom ob"iavlivany pechatnye vestovye kuranty […]' ('Printed news *kuranty* were shown the ambassadors'), but then the indication is the ambassadors, 'vyslushav vestei' ('having listened to the news'), expressed their appreciation.

FIG. 17.4. A contemporary portrait of the Russian mission to England in 1662. The ambassador Petr Prozorovskii is seated; Ivan Zheliabuzhskii stands in the center behind the chair.

What we have from the materials about the Mayerberg negotiations is enough to shed some light on his oft quoted statement about why it was so difficult to negotiate with the Russians. He opens with a diatribe about how the Russians from infancy 'offer sacrifices to Mercury' (here, presumably, understood in his role as the god of thievery and trickery), apparently with some success. For the Russians are shameless liars, who can never be trusted to negotiate honestly. They play fast and loose in negotiations, especially for the following reason (Mayerberg n.d.: 38–39; 1874: 73):

> ...[T]heir principal method of argument relies only on news printed by the Prussians or Dutch in weekly *Mercuries*, which are being delivered to Moscow from time to time by foreign merchants. They listen to them as though they are the pronouncements of the three-legged Oracle of Delphi. Or they try to extort [news] from butlers, stable boys, and ordinary

> foot soldiers who have been taken as prisoners of war. When these poor individuals are taken to interrogation, even if they do not have the slightest knowledge of any secrets regarding their king or military leaders, to redeem themselves from torture they invent them [the secrets]. All this makes the fulfillment of the obligations undertaken by foreign envoys so tedious and their success so dubious that they frequently repent of having accepted their assignment.

On the face of it, we might suspect that Mayerberg is finding excuses for the fact that his mission was largely unsuccessful. The acidity of his remarks is an accurate indication about his supercilious attitude concerning Muscovites and their ways, a kind of condescension regarding the 'semi-barbarous' Russians that often is to be found in foreign accounts.

However, there is more here which may be explained by the exchanges he had with Zheliabuzhskii and the higher-level Russian negotiators. Clearly Mayerberg did not trust the Russian escort or his superiors. But what diplomat of any talent would accept on face value what he was told by a counterpart in negotiations? We have seen plenty of evidence that the Russians were always wanting to confirm the authenticity of news they received. Mayerberg surely was right to assume Zheliabuzhskii's assignment was to pry out secrets and report them to his superiors. The Russians obviously were interested in foreign news, some of it indeed obtained from German and Dutch newspapers. At a moment when such printed news contained no little reporting on prophecies and the paranormal, a rational, educated Austrian might have found reason to sneer at the Russian interest. There would have been good reason to suspect that the interview with the Russian envoys just returned from Warsaw was merely diplomatic theater, in which the Russians had no intention of revealing what the envoys might in fact have learned there. Perhaps the expression of a Russian willingness to accept imperial mediation was just playing along with no serious intent of ever accepting it. After all, had they not already negotiated a peace with the Swedes without any mediators? And they were actively exploring possibilities of direct negotiations with the Poles. There was reason for suspicion, even if an objective assessment of the evidence might suggest the Russians were being quite honest in this instance.

It is not clear whether anything in the *kuranty* exchanged, summarized or waved in front of the envoys (with the possible exception of the paranormal and prophetic reports) would have been a cause for a blanket condemnation of the published newspapers as untrustworthy 'Mercuries'. In fact, there is no evidence that the envoys disputed accounts about the events in Transylvania, and both sides in the negotiations seem to have accepted the news about how the Poles had postponed any decision about a truce until the meeting of the Diet. While in Moscow, the Habsburg mission clearly was starved for current news it could trust, as its queries during the negotiations suggest. However, if the newspapers were primarily 'Prussian and Dutch', that meant they were Protestant in their political slant and almost by definition could not be expected in Catholic Vienna to provide an accurate view of events. The envoys' trustworthy correspondents enclosed

for their information newspapers published in Danzig, which printed, as near as we can tell, reports similar to ones published in Hamburg. But possible bias aside, by the time the mail reached Moscow, the news was dated.

Mayerberg's comment shows that he acquired information concerning how the Russian government obtained foreign news not just from newspapers but from other sources as well. However, nothing in the record of the negotiations seems to suggest directly the Russians were citing information they had received from military captives, even though we know that was a source of intelligence for them, as it would have been for any armies and governments of the day. We might recall that, like Mayerberg, the nineteenth-century historian Ogloblin did not rank news obtained from such interrogations to be very reliable. Some of what the Russian envoys who had been in Warsaw reported was explicitly labeled by them as rumor and in fact was confirmed by the Austrian envoys to have been false. But that of itself is insufficient to prove that the Russians simply were obfuscating at every turn. At very least, Mayerberg's accusations about the Russian reliance on questionable sources of news needs to be taken *cum grano salis*. It is important that he saw evidence how in 1661 the Russians were acquiring foreign news, even if he exaggerated the degree to which they simply believed everything they obtained. That the *kuranty* were cited and even the foreign newspapers from which Russian translations were being made were pulled out to be shown during negotiations is striking evidence about the degree to which there was such material in hand and it was being consulted. Both Mayerberg and his negotiating counterparts clearly seemed to prefer obtaining information via reliable contacts (e.g., the duke of Courland) or through the efforts of their own emissaries. In other words, networks of personal contacts were still deemed to be the most trustworthy sources of news.

17.5. Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin: the best informed of Muscovite officials in the 1650s and 1660s?

As we have emphasized, the professionalism and expertise of those most directly involved in Muscovite diplomacy had substantially increased by the middle of the seventeenth century. This can be seen in the staffing of key diplomatic missions, where those heading them often were individuals with previous experience of dealing with foreigners, and where the supporting staff tended to be drawn from the ranks of the professionals of the Ambassadorial Chancery. Moreover, as the examples cited above demonstrate, often the same experienced foreign-affairs experts worked together in foreign assignments or in negotiations closer to home. While we cannot necessarily document what this meant in terms of exchanging information about foreign affairs, it is reasonable to posit that there was such sharing and a growing awareness of the foreign news. Documenting the degree to which an interest in foreign news spread amongst the Muscovite elite beyond those tasked with diplomacy can be more difficult. However, as much of the older scholarship about Muscovy in the seventeenth century has argued, there was an increasing acculturation of the elite to Western ways. Certainly border commandants (who were

FIG. 17.5. Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin. Contemporary portrait by an unknown artist.

frequently rotated) were among those who in their duties often had exchanges with their foreign counterparts and were continually being made aware of foreign news, either simply because someone showed up to enter Muscovite territory and thus was interrogated on the spot or because, acting on instructions from Moscow, the commandants sent out intelligence missions. Of course, much of what the border commandants might learn tended to be fairly narrow in its geographic focus, but there is certainly evidence that foreign newsletters and newsprints were being obtained (e.g., in Archangel, Novgorod, or Pskov) and sent on to Moscow. In some cases, that foreign news was translated locally.

Arguably the Muscovite official of mid-century who was best informed about foreign affairs and best positioned to use that knowledge to influence policy decisions was Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin (FIG. 17.5).[48] Foreign diplomats who met with him and whose impressions inevitably are quoted, acknowledged, if begrudgingly, his acquaintance with foreign customs and current affairs. In some cases his foreign counterparts in negotiations slandered him to try to have him fired, probably because they recognized he was such a formidable and well informed adversary. Russian historians have made much of him as a forward-looking predecessor of the reforming Tsar Peter the Great, their accounts often hagiographic in tone. Given the abundant evidence about his important activity and closeness to the tsar, as Boris Floria has suggested, there has been a tendency even by some of the best historians to attribute to Ordin-Nashchokin an influence on policy that he may not

48. Most of the details of his biography and his service were established by Sergei M. Solov'ev (1960–1966) in his massive, archivally based treatment of Russian history (esp. the original vols. 11–13; vols. 6–7 in the 1960s edition), and then pulled together and supplemented by Ikonnikov 1883. Kliuchevskii 1957–1959, 3: 334–351, Lecture LVII provides an eloquent summary of Ordin-Nashchokin's career, interpreting him as an important transitional figure in Russia's march to modernity. Galaktionov and Chistiakova 1961 are useful for some details of his early career, based on Galaktionov's research. Chistiakova and Galaktionov 1989 focus mainly on the period starting in the 1650s. Rogozhin 2002: 156–170 is little more than a paraphrase of Chistiakova and Galaktionov. The current essential, detailed treatments of Ordin-Nashchokin's role in the formation of Russian foreign policy are in Floria (2010, 2013), where he reassesses the analysis by the earlier scholars and cites much additional archival documentation. See also the assessment of Ordin-Nashchokin by Bushkovitch 2001: 51–55. A full scholarly biography of Ordin-Nashchokin is still needed, as is publication of his voluminous correspondence and reports.

always deserve (Floria 2010: 66–67). It is also clear from Floria's work that not all of Ordin-Naschokin's foreign-policy initiatives should necessarily be regarded as successes in the long term for Muscovite interests. Moreover, while the Russian statesman undoubtedly played a role in improving the flow of foreign news into Moscow, as we shall show, the exact nature of his contribution may be difficult to establish.

His career, long known in its main outlines, explains how he developed his expertise. The son of a minor provincial service noble in the Pskov region, he seems to have acquired a good working knowledge of Latin and Polish at an early age and at some point added German. Living near Muscovy's western borders and on one of the main roads to Moscow presumably brought him into frequent contact with foreigners. His linguistic ability may have been the key to his early assignments in government service. When the government felt it was important to obtain first-hand information about Ottoman intentions and their relations with the ruler of Moldavia, Ordin-Nashchokin was dispatched to the Moldavian capital, Iaşi, in October 1642 and over a period of several months there acquired a great deal of useful intelligence. His next assignments took him back to the Western borders at a time when there were rumors of a possible attack by the Poles. In the early 1650s, he was put in charge of the Russian commission to adjudicate disputes about the borders between Muscovite territory and Swedish Livonia, work which required regular interaction with his counterparts on the Swedish side. When the war against Poland began, he took up military duties as a *voevoda*, was involved in negotiations for the surrender of Commonwealth cities, and then was appointed the commandant in Druia (Belorussia) in occupied territory not far from Polotsk. In that assignment, on the eve of the outbreak of war against Sweden, he interacted with both the duke of Courland and Magnus De la Gardie, the Swedish governor in Riga. For Ordin-Nashchokin the Russian priority should be to pushing into Livonia in order to gain a permanent Russian foothold on the Baltic littoral. Among the towns the Russians seized in Livonia (today, Latvia) was Kokenhusen (renamed Tsarevichev Dmitriev; now Koknese), where Ordin-Nashchokin served as *voevoda* from 1656 to 1661, a position that meant he was in effect the Russian administrator for all of the conquered Livonian territories (FIG. 17.6).

Apart from his administrative and military duties, he played a key role in negotiations with both Sweden and the Commonwealth. He was promoted to the rank of council secretary (*dumnyi d'iak*) in anticipation of the truce negotiations with the Swedes in 1658, during which, technically the junior Muscovite representative, he was de facto the head of the mission. The resulting truce signed with Sweden at Valiesar (Vallisaare, near Narva) on 20 December 1658 was a remarkable achievement and surprisingly favorable, confirming Russian possession of much of the occupied territory.[49] However, by the time of the negotiations for a permanent peace signed at Kardis (Kärde in today's Estonia)

49. The text of the treaty is in *PSZ*, vol. 1: 468–478, No. 240. For details about the complex international context and the negotiations, see Floria 2010, Ch. 7; Kobzareva 1998: 204–231.

FIG. 17.6. Map of Livonia and Courland.

on 21 June 1661, the military and political situation had reversed in Sweden's favor.[50] The Russians had to abandon their gains in Livonia, and the borders reverted to those established by the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617. In exchange, however, Moscow obtained a Swedish promise not to assist the Commonwealth in its continuing war with the Russians. While Ordin-Nashchokin had originally been involved in the negotiations that led to the Kardis treaty, given his outspoken advice that the projected settlement was undesirable, the tsar removed him from the negotiating commission. Ordin-Naschokin subsequently was very critical of the outcome and of those who had been responsible for the agreement. As the war with Poland drew to a conclusion, Ordin-Nashchokin played the lead role in negotiating the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667. His reward was to be named the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery and be recognized by the tsar as the de facto chancellor of the Muscovite state. This long series of important negotiations required that Ordin-Nashchokin be in regular contact with his Swedish, Polish or Lithuanian counterparts over extended periods. At the same time, he also interacted with representatives of other states that had an interest in the outcome of the East European wars. In other words, he had almost continuous access directly or indirectly to foreign news and, importantly, served as a filter for a lot of it before it reached Moscow.

50. For the text of the treaty, see *PSZ*, vol. 1: 532–548, No. 301. On the negotiations, see Floria 2010: Ch. 10; Kobzareva 1998: 255–286.

The still fragmentary publication of Ordin-Nashchokin's papers makes it impossible yet to provide a full picture of his role in obtaining and managing the flow of foreign news. However, selected examples from the published record provide an idea of the range of his contacts and sources and how he used his command of the news in pursuing his foreign policy goals.

Who were his contacts? With the outbreak of the Swedish-Polish war in the summer of 1655, while stationed at Rēzekne (Rositten, Rezhitsa; today, eastern Latvia), he received letters from a correspondent in Riga, Albrecht Bülow, and messages from the Swedish governor Bengt Horn and the chief military commander Magnus De la Gardie regarding Swedish troop movements.[51] When the Swedish ambassador heading for Moscow, Gustav Johan Rosenlind, passed through, he provided Ordin-Nashchokin with additional information on Swedish plans. It is not clear whether 'German sheets' (*nemetskie listy*), received from Riga in Moscow, with news of the surrender of Polish forces, were provided by Ordin-Nashchokin, who was then immediately ordered to march to Minsk (Floria 2010: 22, 27–28). Apart from his Swedish informants, he had contacts in Poland, some of whom seem to have been trying deliberately to mislead the Russians. As mentioned earlier, he was apparently responsible for sending to Moscow in mid-December 1655 a Polish version of the Kėdainiai treaty by which the Lithuanians submitted to the Swedes. At the end of 1655, Ordin-Nashchokin reported on the unsuccessful attempt by De la Gardie to persuade the Elector of Brandenburg to submit to the Swedes, which then would lead to an outbreak of hostilities between the two countries (ibid.: 58).

As Floria emphasizes (ibid.: 66–67), in this period Ordin-Nashchokin was simply fulfilling the duties of a military commander responsible for the acquisition of intelligence. He had not yet risen to a position where he might give the tsar advice on the conduct of foreign policy. Back in Druia, the seat of his command, Ordin-Nashchokin continued normal activities for a border official, one important assignment in early 1656 being to make the travel arrangements for the Russian courier Grigorii Karpov syn Bogdanov, who had been dispatched to Vienna with the interpreter Timofei Angler and in the company of a Habsburg courier returning from a mission to Moscow. In the first instance, this involved interactions with Courland, through which the route west lay. Ordin-Nashchokin received a letter in Polish from a Courland official, Heinrich von Dertninen, additional news from Druia merchants returning from the Courland capital, Mittau, and a letter in German from the duke himself about the reception of the envoys and their dispatch.[52] Druia townsmen (*meshchane*) who had been in Mittau

51. Bülow, termed an 'assessor' seems to have been a messenger used by the Swedes in communicating with Ordin-Nashchokin. He came to Druia again in December 1656, with an important message from De la Gardie proposing a temporary armistice. See Floria 2010: 213.

52. As was typical for the newspaper reports of the time which tracked the movement of diplomats, the Hamburg *WDoZ* 1657/9: [4], in a report datelined Danzig, 20 February/1 March, mentioned that the Muscovite envoy, accompanied by the imperial envoy who had been in Moscow, had arrived in Königsberg en route to Vienna. The Elector of Brandenburg was providing them accommodations ("haben ihm durch dero Land aller Orthen freye *Station* geben lassen").

had heard that the Swedes and Brandenburg had signed a peace treaty, news which Ordin-Nashchokin reported to Moscow and which Bogdanov confirmed in a report he managed to send on 1 February, just before leaving Courland.[53] Regular exchanges between the duke and Ordin-Nashchokin would continue to be an important source of news for the Russian *voevoda* over the next two years, in part because of the duke's interest in signing a treaty with Russia, whereby Courland would receive guarantees of its territorial integrity under Russian protection.[54]

Bogdanov, who had a long career that included many foreign assignments, was able to send back to Moscow some interim reports, which Ordin-Nashchokin forwarded. In those and in his end-of-mission report, submitted in late spring, he provided a substantial amount of important intelligence about possible weaknesses of the Swedes.[55] This contributed to the Russian decision to go to war against Sweden. Bogdanov's report included information from knowledgeable Habsburg court officials. Intelligence Ordin-Nashchokin was gathering, much second- and third-hand from oral reports, also described how the Swedes were encountering serious resistance. However, his informants misleadingly reported a supposed agreement between the Poles and the Habsburg emperor regarding a possible Austrian succession to the Polish throne, in return for which military assistance would be provided to the Poles against the Swedes.[56] It is not clear whether such oral depositions were being carefully recorded in writing (the

53. Floria 2010: 69 n. 262; *PDS* 3: 576. Floria seems to be mistaken in writing that Ordin-Nashchokin's report was received in Moscow on 8 February, that apparently the date on or after which the *voevoda* wrote it. Possibly both Ordin-Nashchokin's report and that from Bogdanov were carried by the same courier. In any event, the news of the Sweden-Brandenburg treaty, apparently agreed to reluctantly by the elector, seems to have arrived in Moscow before the Russian government sent a diplomatic mission to Courland, Brandenburg and Denmark on 13 March (Floria 2010: 69). Ordin-Nashchokin's reports from Druia could take as long as two and a half weeks to reach Moscow. The treaty in question here was preliminary to a final agreement, signed only on 25 June (see below).

54. Eventually Duke Jakob sent Ordin-Nashchokin a draft of the treaty which was translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery on 30 January 1658 and, apparently, accepted by the Russian government. See the publication of at least a summary of the terms by Bantysh-Kamenskii, 3: 6–7. The text with the notation that it had been sent to Ordin-Nashchokin in Druia is listed in Bantysh-Kamenskii's inventory for RGADA, f. 141, *Opis'* 3, fols. 172^{v}–173. The entry has been crossed out in pencil; so it is not clear whether that is still the archival location. For the history of the negotiations leading up to the treaty and its aftermath, see Rukhmanova 1975. The treaty never achieved the desired goal of maintaining Courland's neutrality and in fact was one reason why the Swedes invaded the duchy in late September 1658 and imprisoned the duke. The Russians arranged a prisoner exchange for his release in 1660. On the relations between Duke Jakob and Russia, see Jakovļeva 2007.

55. The documents on Bogdanov's mission have been published in *PDS* 3: 529–672, his intelligence report on 650–672. See also Floria 2010: 69–70, 82–84. For Bogdanov's career, see Demidova 2011: 74; Bez'ev 2015: 139–141.

56. In particular, see Ordin-Nashchokin's report sent on 12 February 1656 and received in Moscow on 29 February, published in *AMG* 2: 485–488, No. 801, and the discussion in Floria 2010: 73–74. Polish disinformation efforts did not end there. In August, King Jan Kazimierz's envoy tried to persuade the Russians that the Brandenburg treaty with Sweden included a provision for military cooperation not only to conquer Lithuanian territory but also to lay waste to Muscovite possessions (Floria 2010: 199).

normal practice) or whether Ordin-Nashchokin simply was summarizing them in a way that we think from later evidence he would do when receiving multiple reports.

His connections with Courland deepened in June 1656, when the Russian army was besieging Riga. He was sent to Mittau to prod the duke into supporting the Russian war effort (Floria 2010: 104–119). His selection for this mission probably is evidence that he had risen in importance among the tsar's foreign-policy advisers. While in Mittau, he acquired recent news about the situation in Riga and about the arrival of a Dutch fleet to help Danzig, besieged by the Swedes. Refugees from Riga were optimistic that their city soon would fall to the Russians. He met with the Courland chancellor and with the Brandenburg mission that was in Mittau, tasked with trying to negotiate a treaty with Moscow to protect Brandenburg interests in East Prussia. The elector was proposing to mediate between the Russians and Swedes. The duke of Courland expressed to Ordin-Nashchokin the hope that in the negotiations with the Russians (the tsar was currently in his military camp near Riga), Brandenburg could be persuaded to break its alliance with Sweden. Ordin-Nashchokin's information about the imminent fall of Riga may have encouraged the Russian government to reject any proposal of mediation and alliance. The Brandenburg mission failed. Although the elector's envoys told the Russians that there was no formal written agreement with the Swedes, as noted above, in fact there was one, a copy of which the Russian mission at Vilna had obtained at the end of July (*RUD*: 148). That there was such a treaty was no secret – its negotiation at Marienburg had been reported in the contemporary newspapers. The agreement laid the basis for active military collaboration in the campaigns in Poland but also specified that Brandenburg would not support the Swedes in their war against Moscow. So there was no need for the Russians to be concerned that Brandenburg would help the Swedes to defend Riga.

The idea that Riga should be brought under Russian control was already becoming something of an *idée fixe* for Ordin-Nashchokin. At times this would put him at odds with the tsar's other military commanders, the Moscow foreign-affairs experts, and the tsar himself. Ordin-Nashchokin had a strategic vision that Moscow should control the Western Dvina River all the way to the Baltic, where Riga would provide a permanent maritime outlet to the West. However, he also was pragmatic, ready to consider opportunistic alternatives that might eventually give Moscow its outlet to the sea. The tsar and his advisers were willing to settle for less in the northwest, if to focus there would undercut securing the southern borders and maintaining control over a major part of Ukraine. So, when De la Gardie sent a proposal to Ordin-Nashchokin at the end of December 1656 for a temporary armistice, the tsar empowered his *voevoda* to negotiate a six-week pause in the fighting and issued further instructions about what towns were to be off limits for Russian advances subsequently (presumably in the hope that a real peace could then more readily be negotiated). As the focus of Muscovite policy now increasingly was on Ukraine, anticipating a renewal of hostilities with Poland, Ordin-Nashchokin was left

largely just to hold the line in Livonia. Despite the renewal of hostilities with the Swedes after the temporary truce, he had no choice but to continue negotiating with De la Gardie about arrangements for a peace congress.[57] However, the Russian *voevoda* seems to have done everything possible to drag out the exchanges and kept pressing Moscow for more support in order to take Riga.[58]

His ability to acquire foreign news with, apparently, some regularity was important for making his case. He continued the expected practice of sending on to Moscow the full texts of incoming letters or the originals of foreign newspapers. Unlike many of the newspapers and pamphlets, handwritten newsletters often contained but cryptic summaries. One such report which he forwarded was a 'news digest' (*vestovaia rospis'*) containing *vesti skoryia* ('rapid news') he had received from the duke of Courland on 10 February 1657.[59] It contained nine short, numbered items, to which on the following day had been added a longer one with details of Lithuanian troop detachments. Most of the short entries dealt with movements of some of the major military forces under prominent generals. In his cover letter, Ordin-Nashchokin added information obtained orally from the Courland court official Friedrich Budberg, who had brought the duke's letter. As often was the case in the news of the day, the movements and plans of monarchs

57. Ordin-Nashchokin's assignment and the initial exchanges about where the negotiations might take place (complicated by the wishes of the duke of Courland to have them in his capital) were reported in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1657/7: [2] in an article datelined Marienburg 17 January/6 February, citing a letter from Riga sent on 13 January. The Swedish Affairs documents contain a file for 1657 described in the inventories as 'Jan.-Sept. Correspondence of *voevoda* Afanasii Nashchokin with the Swedish general De la Gardie concerning the truce needed by Russia and Sweden; also there, the dispatches of the sovereign's letters to him and his responses to them with appendices' (RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1657, fol. 116, No. 2, consisting of 289 sheets).

58. Floria 2010: 213–217, 368–373.

59. *AMG* 2: 563–564, No. 955. It is possible that the numbering of short news items in this fashion is something that the copyists or translators in Moscow added in order to clarify the presentation of the information. The manuscript containing Ordin-Nashchokin's report with the attached newsletter from the Duke of Courland is in the files of the Military Appointments Chancery. The relevant inventory (printed and available on the archive website, but apparently not yet published), RGADA, f. 210, Dokumenty Razriadnago prikaza, [op.] 9. Stolbtsy razriadnykh stolov. A) Stolbtsy Moskovskago stola. F. 210, op. 9, describes dossiers Nos. 272 and 279, which contain many documents from this period published in *AMG* 2. As a *voevoda*, Ordin-Nashchokin was expected to send his reports to the *Razriadnyi prikaz*, even if in some cases he asked that copies be forwarded to the Privy Chancery, and he also began to write directly to the tsar via the Privy Chancery. According to the inventory (pp. 128–132, 140–141), included in files Nos. 272 and 279 are many of Ordin-Nashchokin's reports. No. 279 contains 'correspondence of the Privy Chancery with *voevody* regarding the military actions against the Swedes and Poles and the outbreak of plague in Livonia.' While there is no direct evidence Ordin-Nashchokin was involved in its transmission, there was another news report received in Moscow on 2 March 1657 which had been sent from Courland. This 'packet' contained letters in Dutch, reporting on the arrival of foreign envoys in Courland who would be involved in the negotiation of a peace between Sweden and Poland; also there were 'translations from *kuranty* and *vesti*,' most of this news reported from cities in the Baltic region which were frequent sources for news printed in, e.g., the Hamburg *WZ* (Elbing, Danzig, Stettin, Marienburg, Bütow…). This unpublished material is listed in the archival inventory, RGADA, f. 141, *Opis'* 3, 1657, fol. 147, No. 31. It is possible that the source was letters of Dutch merchants which had been opened.

received some attention in the duke's letter: the location of the King of Sweden in Marburg, but with no news of what he was doing; more significantly, Danish preparations to go to war against the Swedes, and the intention of the king of Poland to go to Lviv to continue the negotiations (which had begun at Vilna). Ordin-Nashchokin devoted much of his cover letter to news about military preparations in the immediate areas under his command, painting what might have been interpreted as a rather bleak picture of how ill-equipped the local forces were. Even if he was accurately reporting the news, it served his purpose of trying to elicit more Russian military support. Subsequently in February, the receipt of additional news about the desperate situation of the defenders of Riga, which might force them to capitulate to the Russians, reinforced his views that it made sense to launch a final assault of the city (Floria 2010: 268–269).

Among Ordin-Nashchokin's dispatches, received in Moscow on 24 March, were translations or at least summaries from 'German printed booklets' containing news of Polish affairs in the first weeks of 1657.[60] There was a letter in Polish (then translated in Moscow), written by an official working for Bogusław Radziwiłł, one of the leading Lithuanian magnates fighting the Poles. The letter related the taking of Kraków by György II Rákóczi's forces and expressed the Lithuanians' intention to accept Muscovite suzerainty. Lithuanian Hetman Wicenty Gosiewski corresponded with Ordin-Nashchokin, met with him, and supplied news about the movement of De la Gardie's Swedish forces. A translation made in Moscow on March 25 from a printed newspaper included a report from Königsberg dated 8 February, concerning a military offensive by Gosiewski toward Riga, where, according to secret information he had obtained, it was expected that the Rigans might welcome his forces.[61]

Ordin-Nashchokin also was reporting news about the Zaporozhians, some of which suggested they could not be considered trustworthy allies. While it is not clear how he would have obtained them (most probably via his contacts in Courland), on 24 March 1657, the Ambassadorial Chancery received from him copies of a letter Bohdan Khmelnytsky had written to the former Crown Chancellor of Poland Hieronim Radziejowski, and letters that both the Cossack hetman and his secretary Vykhovsky had written to King Karl Gustav back in January of the previous year, suggesting that they negotiate an alliance against the Poles.[62] As Floria notes (2010: 227), this was already ancient history. More important was the recent news both from Ordin-Nashchokin and confirmed in other sources, about the Zaporozhian support for Rákóczi's invasion of Poland and the

60. Floria 2010: 232. For some of the German pamphlets of this period, including ones on the invasion by Rákóczi, see Zawadzki 2002: 196–202.

61. Floria 2010: 266–269. The file is listed in the archival inventory, RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1657, fol. 174, No. 2.

62. Radziejowski had conspired with the enemies of the Polish king and as a result been banished in 1652. He then encouraged the Swedes to attack the Commonwealth and in 1655 accompanied the Swedish forces during their invasion of Poland. However, in 1656 the Swedes arrested him; at the beginning of 1657, they prosecuted him for betraying Swedish interests and imprisoned him in the castle of Örebro. See Wasilewski 1987.

fall of Kraków to their forces.[63] Moscow's immediate response was to send Khmelnytsky a command that he observe the Pereiaslav agreement (which had left Cossack foreign affairs in Russian hands).

It seems clear that both Khmelnytsky and Polish officials were deliberately trying to influence Muscovite policy by manipulating information and sowing suspicion between the Cossacks and Russians, although with limited success (ibid.: 230). Establishing the truth of intelligence being received in Moscow is often quite difficult. Undoubtedly what really counted in decision making was what was believed at a particular moment and whether at that moment there would have been alternative information that had to be weighed. An interesting example is a letter Ordin-Nashchokin had received from the duke of Courland and forwarded to Moscow, where it was translated on 14 April.[64] The letter, written on 15 February by a Polish noble, who had been with King Jan Kazimierz in Danzig, told how back in September 1655, the king had proposed a Habsburg succession to the Polish throne, an overture welcomed by the emperor, who suggested his younger son Joseph. However, the emperor allegedly encouraged the Poles to offer the succession to the tsar in the hope this would provoke a long-term Russian war with Sweden. If this were true, then what the Polish commissioners negotiating for a possible peace with the Russians at Vilna in 1657 were proposing – namely that the tsar be offered the succession – probably was simply a misleading ploy in what was a fruitless exercise to reach a peace agreement. This information added to Russian concerns about possible Habsburg intervention in support of the Poles, which might involve as well Lithuanian and Tatar forces, all of which then could attack the Cossacks.

That the Lithuanian magnates in fact were not in favor of such a scheme became apparent only with some delay. Muscovite envoys reported on their meetings with the Lithuanian leaders, and Ordin-Nashchokin supplied news (received in Moscow on 29 April 1657), obtained from the duke of Courland about the hard-line Lithuanian position being adopted in negotiations with the Poles (ibid.: 235). Threatened by the combined military forces of Rákóczi and the Swedes, the Lithuanians were demanding Polish support; without it, they would throw their lot in with Muscovy. In this situation, the 'defection' of the Zaporozhians by joining a coalition against the Poles was a serious matter, which might force the Lithuanians to submit to the victorious Swedes.[65] However, the military

63. For Ordin-Nashchokin's news, as discussed above, see Floria 2010: 232. While there is as yet insufficient documentation to identify the German newspaper sources, the Hamburg *WDoZ* 1657/9: [3-4], reported in articles datelined Breslau 17 February and the Polish borders 18 February that Rákóczi's army had entered Poland on 26 January NS and was being joined by a sizeable Cossack force. Kraków had not yet fallen but clearly was threatened.

64. See Floria 2010: 272–274. The report about the receipt of the letter and its translation are in RGADA, f. 63, op. 1, 1657, No. 1, fols. 14, 28–36.

65. A Polish mission to Moscow headed by Kazimierz Montrymowicz in the second half of May was happy to emphasize Zaporozhian duplicity. In support of exaggerated news reports about the success of the campaign against the Commonwealth, he gave the Russians a copy of Khmelnytsky's agreement with Rákóczi (Floria 2010: 236–237, 241). Montrymowicz is an interesting choice made by the Poles for this mission, since he had been the key official interacting several years earlier with

balance was already beginning to shift against the Swedes. This in turn caused the Lithuanian magnates to retreat from the idea of submitting to Moscow. As Zheliabuzhskii reported from his mission discussed above, at least some of the Zaporozhians also now reconsidered their strategy, realizing that to fight a strengthened Polish army would require close cooperation with Moscow (ibid.: 247–261).

Ordin-Nashchokin continued to send regular reports from Kokenhusen (Tsarevichev Dmitriev) and then Vilna during the second half of 1657 about events in the Baltic region and the Commonwealth, although their delivery may well have been slowed due to the outbreak of plague.[66] His informants included Rigans who had fled the city on account of the plague, the chancellor of the duke of Courland, and Lithuanians who had fled Swedish service. Of particular importance were his communications with the Lithuanian Hetman Gosiewski, with whom Ordin-Nashchokin met in mid-October, not far from Kokenhusen.[67] Gosiewski was trying to persuade the Russians to join the now significant coalition of forces supporting the Commonwealth, which was winning the war against Sweden. This happened exactly at the moment when the Kremlin was exploring the possibility of signing a peace with the Swedes (the Livonian campaign having stalled) in order to focus on the war against Poland-Lithuania. Gosiewski's optimistic news aligned with Ordin-Naschokin's own views which were now at odds with those of his superiors. In sending the information to Moscow, the Russian commandant also harshly criticized his peers, who had failed to send promised support to take Riga. An envoy sent by Gosiewski to Moscow in early 1658 reiterated the arguments in favor of continuing to fight the Swedes. However, this mission was unable to dissuade the Russian government from its efforts to end the conflict with Sweden in order to focus on the war against the Commonwealth (Floria 2010: 308–309). In a letter King Karl X Gustav had sent to the tsar, which was translated in mid-February, the king pressed for conclusion of a peace and bitterly attacked Ordin-Nashchokin for failing to reach an agreement with De la Gardie.

Despite its interest in reaching a peaceful settlement with Sweden, the Russian government was in no hurry to do so, so long as there still seemed to be some hope for obtaining its strategic aims in negotiations with the Commonwealth. With that goal in mind, Ordin-Nashchokin was authorized to continue negotiating with Gosiewski, who

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a Russian embassy to Poland and seems to have been able to talk directly with the Russians without an interpreter. Kliment Ievlev, returning in early June from a diplomatic mission to Poland, brought copies of captured Swedish documents with plans for a formal alliance with the Cossack leader. Ievlev had received the documents (written in German and Latin) from Alexander Vulf, the *starosta* of Filin, who had been assigned to him while in Poland (see *Sbornik IuZR* 1911–1916, 1, sec. 2: 100, 107–116). Apparently the documents were translated into Russian only in late June.

66. A number of the documents have been published in *AMG* from RGADA, f. 210, op. 9, Nos. 272 and 279 (see *AMG* 2: 585–587, 589–596, Nos. 988, 990–992, 999, 1002, 1003, 1005, 1006). These reports come only from the files of the *Razriadnyi prikaz* and need to be substantially supplemented by materials in the foreign affairs files.

67. See *AMG* 2: 594–595, No. 1005, and for a discussion of Ordin-Nashchokin's unsuccessful efforts to change the decisions made in Moscow, Floria 2010: 280–286.

encouraged the expectation that the upcoming meeting of the Diet would support the agreement negotiated at Vilna about the tsar's possible succession to the Polish throne.[68] At the same time, Ordin-Nashchokin reported news from his Swedish contacts in Riga that a peace between Poland and Sweden was in the offing, information which then presumably would strengthen the case for focusing the Russian military effort on defeating Sweden.[69] Ordin-Nashchokin sent his son Voin to Warsaw to report about the decision by the Diet, only to learn from him the disturbing news that the Poles were refusing to consider a peace with Russia and in fact were planning to ally with the Cossacks and Tatars to attack Moscow.[70]

On or soon after 30 April, Ordin-Nashchokin sent a detailed report to Moscow, where it was received on 11 May.[71] He summarized information he had received from the Lithuanian Hetman Gosiewski, whose report was confirmed by Ordin-Nashchokin's son, Voin. On 28 April, Ordin-Nashchokin had received letters from Magnus De la Gardie, the Riga governor (Bengt Horn?), and the English envoy from Hamburg. All of these letters were sent on to Moscow with the instruction that they be delivered to the Privy Chancery. This latest news confirmed that there was a pause in the Swedish war with Denmark; King Karl Gustav was now heading east to Lübeck and on into East Prussia. On 30 April, Ordin-Nashchokin met a Rigan, Hans Glins, who told him in some detail about the imperial electoral convocation and the French threat of war, should Archduke Leopold be elected. There was other important political news about Swedish actions. Glins apparently had been sent to the Russian *voevoda* on an official mission from the governor in Riga; so this information was based in part on official communications, which had arrived in the governor's office. Clearly the governor was wanting to learn about Russian intentions, given recent reports he had received about an impending Russian move to attack Narva (Rugodiv). The Swedish official indicated that he hoped a peaceful settlement could be reached, involving as well Brandenburg, but for this to happen depended in part on whether the Lithuanian armies were collaborating with the Russians. We get the impression that the Swedish information network functioned very efficiently, with official correspondence probably communicating news faster than anything that would appear in even the best regional newspapers. The Russians presumably would have been aware that the Swedish officials might have been providing information deliberately skewed to influence Russian policy. However, even before receiving the disturbing news from Warsaw, the tsar had decided to accept a formal Swedish proposal to begin serious peace negotiations, prior to separate negotiations for a peace with the Commonwealth (Floria 2010: 344).

As Boris Floria has established (2010, Ch. 7), with abundant supporting detail which need not be repeated here, Russian expectations for the negotiations failed to antic-

68. *AMG* 2: 597–598, 600–601, Nos. 1009, 1015.
69. Ibid.: 601–602, 604-605, Nos. 1016, 1021.
70. Ibid.: 605–606, No. 1022; for a discussion, see Floria 2010: 339–341.
71. *AMG* 2: 606–607, No. 1023.

ipate the obstacles to any quick settlement. If there was some hope that success with the Swedes would put pressure on the Commonwealth to accede to Russian demands, that in fact did not happen in time to avert a renewal of the war with the Poles and their allies. The Lithuanians approached the Russian government with a proposal for a treaty, whereby Moscow would become the guarantor of their rights. Having learned of this proposal and endorsed it with some enthusiasm before it was discussed in Moscow, Ordin-Nashchokin laid out for the tsar his ideas of how to obtain the maximum concessions from the Swedes. However, Ordin-Nashchokin's recommendations were at odds with the views of the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Almaz Ivanov, about the best location for the talks with the Swedes (the choice of location possibly having some influence on the outcome Moscow wanted). Ultimately Ordin-Nashchokin lost the argument, but it delayed the opening of the talks. Although the tsar appointed as the formal head of the Russian delegation to negotiate with the Swedes Prince Ivan Prozorovskii, Ordin-Nashchokin nonetheless was promoted to the rank of Council Secretary and entrusted with secret instructions that make it clear he was to play the key role in trying to obtain the maximum demands for the Russian side (ibid.: 348–373). He was authorized to make some territorial concessions if the Swedes would open harbor facilities on the Baltic to Russian merchants. There is some evidence that the tsar was personally involved in drawing up these instructions.

Ironically, going into the negotiations, the Swedes accused Ordin-Nashchokin of being too pro-Lithuanian, whereas the Lithuanians now began to criticize him for not strongly enough supporting their cause. In fact, the tsar and his advisers had rejected the Lithuanian proposals, anticipating that they would be superfluous if the Diet were to agree to terms of a Russian-Commmonwealth treaty and confirm the succession of the tsar to the Polish throne when it became vacant. As it turned out, those expectations were dashed in part due to unexpected developments in Ukraine. Until mid-summer, the Ambassadorial Chancery had been unaware of the secret diplomacy between Cossack leader Vykhovsky and both the Swedes and the Poles. He was looking to abandon fealty to Moscow, a development that the Russians refused to believe could happen. At one point in negotiations with a Russian delegation, in order to demonstrate continuing Cossack loyalty in supplying useful intelligence, Vykhovsky had read to them a spurious letter, allegedly from King Karl X Gustav. Even after they had obtained a copy of a genuine letter, in which Vykhovsky laid out for the Lithuanian Hetman Pawel Sapieha the terms for a possible Cossack-Polish agreement, the Russians persisted in their belief in Cossack loyalty and dismissed that letter as a Polish fabrication, intended to sow discord between Moscow and the Zaporozhians.[72]

72. Floria 2010: 374–380, 397–398. Further analysis of the as yet unpublished archival files may make it possible to see more clearly how and when Russian officials managed to establish what had been mistaken or misleading 'news'. For example, weeks after having received the report about Vykhovsky's letter to Sapieha, as we learn from the archival inventories under the date 7 September 1658, the Ambassadorial Chancery had translations of the Polish king's proclamation regarding a mo-

The challenges for the peace negotiations which were now being undertaken separately with the Swedes and the representatives of the Commonwealth were substantial. Even though the Russian government was receiving a great deal of foreign news (thanks in part to Ordin-Nashchokin), not all of it was accurate or timely, and some important developments were not reported. Furthermore, as Elena Kobzareva (1998: 211–212) has argued, rivalries amongst the Russian officials meant that the negotiating teams, military commanders, and makers of foreign policy in Moscow (the tsar and the Ambassadorial Chancery) often were not sharing information with each other.[73]

Had Ordin-Nashchokin known in March 1658 about the serious plans by King Karl X Gustav to send a major Swedish force into Livonia, the Russian *voevoda* might have moved more quickly to begin serious negotiations for at least a truce (ibid. 1998: 198). As it was, Ordin-Nashchokin remained convinced of the weakness of the Swedish position in the east and thus was in no hurry to conclude a treaty, when the Russian forces might still be successful in gaining control of more territory. His delaying tactics meant that the effort to reach a settlement with the Commonwealth had already failed by the time serious negotiations with the Swedes began. Yet Ordin-Nashchokin learned about the breakdown of the negotiations in Vilna with the Poles too late to realize that his idea of continuing a war against Sweden was no longer viable (ibid.: 208–209, 211). Among the important developments which were not anticipated, was the decision by the elector of Brandenburg-Prussia to withdraw his support from Sweden and instead to support the Commonwealth (ibid.: 214–215). As already noted, the information about the defection of the Cossacks to the Polish side likewise was not anticipated, and initially was not believed. The communication about the key events in the Commonwealth and the failure of the negotiations in Vilna meant that news first went to Moscow and only with delay became known to Ordin-Nashchokin, who was negotiating off to the west in Belorussia, influenced by the at times misleading information he was receiving from his Lithuanian contacts and his own preconceived ideas about what would constitute a favorable outcome for Russia. As it would turn out, his perception about Swedish weakness in the end proved to be accurate, thanks to the miscalculation by King Karl X Gustav that he could easily defeat Denmark and then be able to resume his military successes in the east. Ordin-Nashchokin thus managed to negotiate on 20 December 1658 at Valiesar (Vallisaare) a surprisingly favorable truce that left most of the territories conquered by the Russians under their control, pending an eventual peace settlement.

bilization of the armed forces to fight the Russians and circular letters sent by the Lithuanian Hetman Pawel Sapieha and the Zaporozhian Colonel Ivan Nechai (see the inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1658, fol. 191^{v}, No. 15).

73. Our focus here is on the relationship between news acquisition and diplomacy. Also of importance for Ordin-Nashchokin was his relationship with other Russian commandants in coordinating military actions and ensuring the safety of the negotiators. As Kobzareva writes (1998: 209–211), the antagonism between him and the *voevoda* based in Pskov, Ivan Andreevich Khovanskii, meant that Khovanskii's troops were not available when Ordin-Nashchokin needed them. Khovanskii was for a quick settlement with the Swedes, rather than holding out for an extension of the conflict, but it was not just a matter of policy differences.

17.6. The *kuranty* on the eve of the establishment of the foreign post

The evidence about Ordin-Nashchokin's role in diplomacy and the acquisition of news to the end of 1658 should be sufficient to illustrate how he became one of the tsar's most important 'news agents', during a period when there still was no regular and reliable mechanism for obtaining foreign news. Additional information about his activity in that period and then over the next few years are in the detailed studies by Boris Floria (2010, 2013). There is no need here to review further the material in those studies, which reinforce what we have learned. Well-connected and well-informed as Ordin-Nashchokin was, there were limits to what he knew even regarding Russia's immediate neighbors. Even the best informed of the tsar's officials – and, of course, the tsar himself, who was actively involved in the making of policy – might err. We might argue that the creation of the Privy Chancery was a mixed blessing for coordination of policy, since this meant that important information sent directly to the tsar might not be shared with others who had a need to know in order to carry out their assignments. In sending his news reports and frank advice to the tsar on policy (even occasionally phrased with a lack of tact), Ordin-Nashchokin had taken full advantage of the arrangement. One of the undersecretaries of the chancery, Iurii Nikiforov, frequently delivered to him the tsar's orders and conveyed the responses directly to the monarch. At times this involved secret instructions, which were not shared with the Ambassadorial Chancery.[74] However, once he became in effect the tsar's prime minister with his promotion to head the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1667, Ordin-Nashchokin tried to ensure that in his new position he would receive the foreign news first, rather than wait for it to be sent from the tsar's office to be translated. By controlling directly the flow and dissemination of news he might better be able to control decision making. Whether Ordin-Nashchokin was the instigator of the establishment of the foreign post is another matter (to be considered in our next chapter), but he was quick to take its administration away from the Privy Chancery and initiated the expansion of the postal service.

Before turning to the early history of the Muscovite international post, which transformed the acquisition of foreign news publications, we shall review briefly the evidence in the published *Vesti-Kuranty* from the immediately preceding years. This will shed some additional light on the role of the Privy Chancery in the acquisition of news and, in that connection, on Ordin-Nashchokin's activity as the tsar's 'news agent'. There are several 'packets' of news covering late April through mid-May, and then June through August 1658, which have been published in V-K V. In addition, there is one issue of the Amsterdam newspaper *OMC* (1658/31, published on 6 August), with an annotation that it had been translated in Moscow, even if we now seem at best to have but a very short translated text that may have derived from it.[75] The earliest of the translated packets

74. See Kobzareva 1998: 242–243, 269.

75. Photographs of this copy are appended to V-K V in the plates following p. 160. According to a note in the edition (p. 5), this had been considered as the source for the translation published as No. 34, the first entry on fol. 22. However, only part of that entry corresponds to the Dutch report, so that

(V-K V: 118–120, No. 32) was made on June 1 from German newspapers (*kuranty*), sent to the Ambassadorial Chancery by the important Privy Chancery secretary Dementii Bashmakov while he was out of town.[76] Conceivably this was one of the reports from Ordin-Nashchokin, where Bashmakov was acting as the direct conduit between the *voevoda* and the tsar. The news covered the last days of the Protectorate in England and disorders in France. But the main interest for the Russians presumably would have been the reports of the Swedish preparations for war against Denmark and the substantial detail relating other Swedish military activities further east. The convocation of the imperial Diet to determine the succession to the recently deceased emperor also received considerable space. This subject undoubtedly was of interest for the Russians given the question of whether a Habsburg prince might be named as a successor to the Polish throne instead of the tsar. It is difficult to determine whether any of this news would have been of real value to the tsar, since the reports may in fact have been dated compared to ones the Russians had already received.[77]

The next six news packets in V-K V (Nos. 33–38) are from a single archival file.[78] As the compiler himself recognized, there are gaps and probably some confusion of folios that, we assume, might hinder any effort to be sure of the chronology and provenance of the news.[79] Three of the packets include in their headers the dates indicating when they were received or translated: September 30 (No. 33), October 2 (No. 38) and October 30 (No. 36). It seems likely No. 37 also was translated on October 30. While there is no receipt date noted on No. 34, if in fact it draws on the lone copy of the Amsterdam paper preserved in the archive, the translation cannot have been made any earlier than the second half of September. In two cases (Nos. 36 and 38) we can assume the original news

it seems more likely a different source had been used.

76. The manuscript of this news packet is in the 'catch-all' collection of RGADA, f. 141, 1658, No. 68, where it was inventoried as a separate file. There are not enough extant German newspapers from this period to determine a possible source, although two of the articles overlap in content and wording with ones found in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1658/18 and 19. Bashmakov may have been traveling in connection with the arrangements for the new peace conference in Vilna. Ordin-Nashchokin was supposed to be going to Vilna but was still in Kokenhusen (Floria 2010: 371). The tsar was in Moscow, preparing for a formal reception for the visiting ruler of Georgia (*DR* 3: 493).

77. The dates of this news fall in a compact period between 20 April (reports from Paris and London) and early May (reports from Hamburg, Stettin and Elbing). Presumably the most recent of the German sources, if published, could not have appeared before mid-May, but that then means they came into the Russians' hands very rapidly.

78. V-K V: 121–130, based on the archival unit RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1658, No. 1 (fols. 1–26).

79. See V-K V: 4. While the compiler, V. G. Dem'ianov, noted possible continuations of texts from one packet in the texts to another, for some odd reason he made no effort to reconstruct the original sequences. It seems likely that the text in No. 34 on fol. 23 is the logical continuation that follows fol. 2 in No. 33 (about the controversies at the imperial election convocation in Frankfurt). However, other than that, textual evidence alone makes it difficult to suggest further rearrangement. Our suggestions here about the chronology may, of course, be wrong, if folios with news of a particular date have been misfiled and were not in the 'packet' for which we have a date of receipt in its header. Also, we have not attempted to adjust for calendar differences. The Russian dates of receipt would be O.S., but news items may be N.S.

sources first came to the Privy Chancery, No. 38 having been sent from overseas by the tsar's personal agent, John Hebdon. Hebdon's news seems to have arrived with the least delay in transit. Its reports, specified as coming from printed newspapers, date between 7 and 23 August (the last an item from Hamburg), which means that the most recent of the papers he sent likely was published no earlier than the beginning of September. In other words, that news arrived in about a month. Nos. 33, 36, its probable continuation in 37, and 38 all drew on printed sources. Dutch sources are specified for Nos. 36 and 37, which, significantly, are the packets with the latest receipt date.[80] Their most recent news is dated 1 August; it took two months en route.

In the absence of original sources for comparison, we can but speculate on the degree of selectivity exercised by the translators. The great majority of the articles in these packets concerned the Baltic region and in particular Swedish activities. It is likely, of course, that such news was deliberately selected from a broader range of possibilities. The one extant Amsterdam paper we know was received and marked as 'translated' in fact has practically no such news; it may well be the annotation should not be taken to mean even a large portion of the news (for example, two long articles from France) had been of enough interest to translate. On the other hand, we know some Dutch papers of the period might have substantial sections devoted to news of the Baltic region. German newspapers might devote entire issues to Baltic and other East European news.

The few news compendia dating from 1659 which have been published in V-K V and V-K VI/1 merit some comment because of what they suggest about the sources and the procedures by which news was being processed. One is excerpts translated from a letter written in English in London by a certain Iurii (George) Karg.[81] Karg presents his news in diary form, with three dated entries, for 15 April, 6 May and 13 May, but there is no indication when the letter was received in Moscow and translated, or to whom it had been written.[82] The excerpts focus on what was really significant news: the decision by Parliament to end the Protectorate, the still unresolved military events, and uncertainties about the political future. The end of the English civil war was of substantial interest in

80. So far, with the exception of the one Dutch newspaper still in the Moscow archive, none of the possible printed sources can be found. In No. 34, there is a line that may translate a colophon or more likely be the dateline at the bottom of a decree or letter such as those often published in one of the contemporary newspapers: 'Given in the city of Frankfurt am Main August 4, 1658.' It has been impossible to locate a source for the text connected with this, the description of events at the imperial electoral convocation. Naturally that event was the subject of many published news reports at the time; there also were elaborate sets of engravings, depicting the arrival of the various delegations in Frankfurt.

81. V-K V: 130–131, No. 39. In the translators' header, this is termed 'perechen' iz gramotki', a standard formula found in other examples where letters were excerpted but not translated in full. This term could be derived from the frequent headers in Western newspaper articles, 'Extract Schreibens', for excerpted newsletter reports.

82. One possibility, although it cannot be proven, is that the letter is one which John Hebdon obtained when he was on a mission for the tsar in the Netherlands during the years 1658–1659. He was involved there in negotiations with an English General Erhard, possibly a supporter of the Stuart restoration. Hebdon returned to Russia late in the year. See Gurliand 1903: 10–14.

Moscow and would be the subject of translated news publications in the following year (see below). Karg's reference to the parliamentary 'letter' is presumably to the published decree of 23 January, which proclaimed the establishment of a Commonwealth ruled by Parliament but not the restoration of the monarchy.[83]

The context for understanding the significance of three other files which have been published in V-K V as Nos. 41, 42 and 43 involves the Russian policy debates during 1659 about negotiations for possible peace treaties with Sweden or the Commonwealth. At the start of the year, the Russian government was exploring the possibilities of negotiating a peace with Sweden, albeit uncertain about the military capabilities the Swedes (at war with Denmark) in the east. On 6 February, Ordin-Nashchokin was named to head a mission to negotiate a treaty with Sweden (Floria 2010: 470–472). Exactly what such an agreement might be was left vague in his instructions, pending the acquisition of additional information regarding Sweden's current international position and military strength. Ordin-Nashchokin was already firmly convinced that military cooperation with the Swedes was desirable. Expecting that an agreement would be reached quickly, he even went so far, on his own initiative, to alert Danzig that a combined Swedish and Russian force soon would come to assist the city against the 'common enemy', i.e., the Commonwealth. There was every expectation that the Swedes would soon resume their campaigns in Poland. By summer, however, there were reports that the Swedish campaign in Denmark was going badly (ibid.: 480).

At the same time, the Russian government's optimism faded about its ability to bring to heel the Cossacks led by Vykhovsky, who had aligned with Poland. To revive negotiations with the Commonwealth for a peace settlement now became a pressing priority for Moscow, precisely at the time when, as Russian envoys discovered, the Poles were unwilling to negotiate. Of particular interest here was the mission of Ivan Zheliabuzhskii, who attempted unsuccessfully to get the Poles to accept a truce.[84]

The headers for two *kuranty* packets from 1659 specify that they had been excerpted (*vypisano*), in one case from 'various genuine news' (*iz roznykh podlinnykh vedomov*) and in the other 'from a quire (*tetrati*) which the Council secretary Afonasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin sent.'[85] In the first of these, the short news items are merely listed in paragraphs for which consecutive numbering has been added in the margins; in the second, there are 23 paragraphs, numbered in the text. Internal evidence in the texts suggest the sources and the processing of the information are connected, even if there may be some doubt regarding exactly what was Ordin-Nashchokin's role.[86] That is, do

83. For the decree, see *A Declaration of the Parliament assembled at Westminster. January 23. 1659* [...] London: Streater and Macock, 1660 (available in EEBO; Thomason / E.1013[24]; Wing (2nd ed., 1994) / E1491). We have not located an edition printed in 1659.

84. Floria 2010: 485–486, 488, 492, 500–502.

85. The texts have been published respectively as V-K V: 133–134, No. 41, and 134–137, No. 42.

86. The header referring to Ordin-Nashchokin is on a separate, short folio; the main text with the numbered items begins on a new folio with the header 'News from overseas and from various places of the current year [7]168 through the 21st of October.'

we have here compendia of news which he himself – or his translators in Dorpat, where he was posted – put together, or might these instead be compilations assembled in Moscow for the ongoing policy discussions between the tsar and his close advisers? In any event, these are clearly not just translations of foreign news sources but rather excerpts from such information (likely acquired in various ways, not just from printed newspapers), along with the incorporation of material from Russian documents such as reports from military commandants and diplomats. The texts give the distinct impression that they have been compiled in order to support a specific policy argument. One of the common features in the texts is the use of the term 'Velikaia Rossiia' ('Great Russia'), which in Russian government circles at the time embodied the concept of the state's territories other than those of Ukraine ('Malaia Rossiia'; see Solov'ev 1947: 38). The texts here make that distinction clear. Ordin-Nashchokin used the term more than once in an extended and sharp critique of his current instructions which he wrote to the tsar (Floria 2010: 489–491)

In his analysis of V-K V, No. 42, Boris Floria (ibid.: 513–514) treats it as a compilation which Ordin-Nashchokin produced in response to his having been ordered to avoid firm commitments to any kind of military alliance with Sweden and, it seems, to delay as long as possible the conclusion of a treaty.[87] Ordin-Nashchokin argued, on the contrary, that it was imperative as quickly as possible to conclude a treaty with Sweden that would include military collaboration, since this would head off a possible Swedish collaboration with France. If Floria is correct, what we have here (and in No. 41) are thus rare examples of how a Muscovite official's reading of the international news was being used in an argument about the direction of state policy. However, as Floria (ibid.: 514) notes, one of the main arguments – regarding French support for Sweden – was based on rumors that never were confirmed. The text refers also to the recent Russian diplomatic mission by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii in the Commonwealth, although it is not clear whether Ordin-Nashchokin had yet learned about his report regarding the Polish refusal to negotiate. The *voevoda* emphasized the expectation that the Swedes would be ready to sign a peace with Moscow but not with Warsaw. Moreover, they were about to resume operations in Poland, which might make it more likely that the Commonwealth would have to seek peace with Moscow.[88] Ordin-Nashchokin devoted a certain amount of space to the military situation in Vilna, where the garrison led by Daniil Myshetskii needed reinforcement. Such implied criticism of the failures of the Russian commanders to send troops where most needed had been a common feature of Ordin-Nashchokin's regular reports. As news subsequently reached Moscow that the situation in Ukraine

87. Gerasimova 2015: 161 likewise attributes the compilation of No. 42 to Ordin-Nashchokin, focusing in particular on the report that the Vilna burghers were inclined not to resist if the Commonwealth forces attacked the city. When the attack occurred, some of them actually tried to aid the enemy, but the Russian garrison drove off the attackers. News of this was sent to Moscow by the commander of a Russian detachment in the area and also was reported in Dutch newspapers translated in Moscow in July 1660 (for the latter, see V-K VI/1: 82, No. 4.69).

88. V-K V: 136, No. 42.33, numbered 14, among the points in the communication.

had improved, the tsar and his advisers chose to ignore Ordin-Nashchokin's recommendations. A Swedish alliance seemed unnecessary, and the priority was to secure Russian goals first by settling with the Commonwealth, after which a settlement could be reached with Sweden (Floria 2010: 513).

In support of its decision to avoid a military alliance with Sweden, in late 1659, the government was receiving news about Swedish military setbacks and Polish-Lithuanian advances. As the Swedes increasingly were being pushed back toward the end of the year, the Russians translated two German 'printed booklets' (*pechatnykh tetradei*), one with news about Polish military successes in East Prussia and a report about about how the defenders of Danzig had retaken from the Swedes the fortresses guarding the harbor and thus opened the sea route, connecting Poland to the West. A second pamphlet reported the defeat of the Swedish army in Denmark at Nyborg on 24 November 1659. The originals were delivered from the Privy Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation on 22 December 1659.[89]

The *kuranty* translations (*s nemettskikh kurantov*) published in V-K V, No. 43 were based on originals received from Vilna on 19 February.[90] The news coverage is quite detailed, focusing, as one might expect, on the subjects of most immediate concern to the Russian government (and, presumably, the publishers of the original sources). The first section (fols. 1–7) of the news packet contains what may well be a complete translation from a single German newspaper, opening with a report from Danzig. Only after several items on Baltic, Swedish, and Polish affairs are there reports from England about the latest developments in the moves to end the Protectorate, from Vienna about the Turks having defeated Prince György II Rákóczi, and a short item from Naples about a major

89. See Floria 2010: 517. The translations are contained in a large dossier with reports of Novgorod and other commandants along borders with Swedish-held territories (RGADA, f. 96, op. 1, 1659, No. 1). Floria also mentions news (*vesti*, on fol. 405) received via Novgorod on 12 December concerning selection of representatives to the Swedish Diet who were pressing the king to conclude a permanent peace with the Danes, Dutch, Poles and the Habsburg emperor. So far it has been impossible to locate a news publication that would seem to correspond to the first of the two printed German pamphlets (it could well be an issue of a German newspaper or one of the news 'extras' focusing on Baltic events which were being published at the time). There are, however, pamphlets about the battle at Nyborg, among them: *Volnkommene Beschreibung Der Auff Fühnen geführten Bataillie, Und An Dänischer Seiten glücklich erhaltenen Victorie* [...] *Wie solches Ihr Excell. der Herr Feld-Marschalck Eberstein/ Den 16. Und ein ander Königl. Dänischer Minister Den 18. dieses auß Nyburg schrifftlich Communiciret hat*. N.p., 1659 (VD17 23:317340Q); *Fernere Continuation, Der/ aus Fühnen/ anhero nacher Kopenhagen/ durch* [...] *geschriebene Brieffe/ confirmirten Victorieusen Progressen/* [...] *Wegen der Am 14./24. Novembris* [...] *Feldt-Schlacht bey Nieburg/ und darauff erfolgter Eroberung derselben Stadt/* [...] *totaliter ruiniret worden*. Kopenhagen: Morsing, 1659 (VD17 14:080649L).

90. V-K V: 137–146. The archival dossier (RGADA, f, 141, op. 1, 1660, No. 12) today is not located where it would have originally been filed and apparently is not connected with any adjacent files. As is the case with other files in f. 141, the manuscripts probably were originally in the files of the Ambassadorial or the Privy Chanceries. It is possible, of course, that this is not a single news 'packet' but rather one that has been assembled from separate translations. The Russian *voevoda* in Vilna, Mikhail Semenovich Shakhovskoi, very likely was supplier of the originals; over his several years since the Russians took the city, he had been diligent in sending news reports to Moscow (Gerasimova 2015: 194–195).

earthquake in Calabria. The translation then contains a transitional sentence for the text which occupies the next several pages (fols. 7–13), a draft of the Swedish proposals for a treaty to end the war with Denmark and the commentary on the draft by the mediators. The text is known from a Berlin newspaper that occasionally was being received in Russia, though small variants suggest the direct source must have been either another newspaper or one of the pamphlets which published the draft.[91] The inclusion of this translation, when negotiations would not yet reach a conclusion for many months, suggests how important the information was for the decision makers in the Kremlin. At the end of this text, starting on fol. 14 is a translation, probably from a different newspaper, with a long report on the Danish victory over the Swedes at Nyborg and a shorter one about the Dutch celebrations on receiving that news. As noted above, that news had been received back in December via Novgorod. The remaining items are a long report from Venice about the naval war against the Turks in the Aegean and a report from Cologne regarding French affairs and the serious illness of the Archduke of Savoy.

The Polish and Swedish affairs files can be expected to yield a lot of additional foreign news, some of which explicitly is in dossiers that contain Ordin-Nashchokin's reports and letters from 1659 and 1660.[92] The selection of some of this material, from the Swedish Affairs files (now published in V-K VI/1) provides at least a glimpse of his activity in

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91. In Maier 2006a: 459, the Berlin newspaper *BE* 1659/51 was listed as a possible source for the Russian translation. It has all the main text but there are two telling differences. No other articles from that issue of the paper have been translated here. Of the separates with the text, the one which corresponds most closely to the translation is *Erklärung Von Der drey Stände/ Als Friedens-Mediatoren Hohen Bedienten/ An stat einer Antwort/ Auff die Von Ihr. Majest: in Schwed: Zu den Friedens Tractaten Verordneten Commissarien Ihnen eingehändigte Schrifft außgefertiget/ im Jahr 1659*. N.p.: 1660 (VD17 14:082387P). If we trust the precision of the header in the translation file, specifying that the sources were *kuranty* (generally referring to published newspapers), not *tetradi*, then a translation from the separate is less likely than from another newspaper. However, we note that sometimes the headers will refer to the German newspapers as *tetradi* (reflecting their small quarto format). There is no separate listing in the Swedish or Danish Affairs files to suggest that the Russians ever received a copy of the final Swedish-Danish peace, signed on 6 June 1660.

92. See, for example, in the Polish Affairs files: RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1659, fol. 192, No. 1 'Reports of Russian commandants from Smolensk, Vilna, Polotsk, Vitebsk and other places with appended news (*vedomostei*) about Polish affairs. Here too [are] the dispatches of the Sovereign's missives to them and their correspondence with Polish magnates'; No. 2. 'Correspondence of Polish magnates with the Koknese *voevoda* Afanasii Nashchokin concerning what has occurred in Poland'; 1660, fol. 195, No. 1 'Reports of Russian commandants from Smolensk, Vilna, Polotsk, Vitebsk, Kukonos [Kokenhusen], and other places with appended news of Polish affairs. Here too are the dispatches of the Sovereign's missives to them and their correspondence with Polish magnates.' The file 1660, No. 10 (described on inventory fol. 196), contains a printed Latin text of the Oliwa treaty that ended the Swedish-Polish conflict on April 23/May 3, and file No. 16 (fol. 196v) is another copy of the agreement (its translation?). In the Swedish Affairs files, the inventory listings are: 'Reports of commandants of Novgorod, Pskov and other cities bordering with Sweden […] Here too are translations from news (*vedomostei*) and depositions concerning foreign news'; 'Third meeting […] of Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin […] with the Swedish envoys […] on the border between Iur'ev Livonskii and Kolyvan […] for peace negotiations […] Here too the recall of the aforementioned Nashchokin to Moscow for condolences concerning the flight of his son Voin to Danzig' (RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fol. 122, Nos. 1 and 2).

keeping the tsar informed and can be supplemented with the citations by Floria (2013), which we will not attempt to summarize here.

The death of Swedish King Karl X Gustav on 13 February 1660 occurred at a critical moment in the ongoing wars and the peace negotiations which were already underway. With the leading proponent of Swedish aggression gone, the armies bogged down and the country exhausted, there was now an incentive for Sweden to agree to terms with both the Commonwealth and with Russia. The king's death naturally was widely reported in the newspapers and separates, especially since his successor Karl XI was still a minor. The Russian interest in the Swedish succession is evidenced in two different translations of the same foreign news reports, and a number of archival files which we have not examined.[93] The header for news packet No. 2 says merely that it is a 'Translation from a German printed booklet (*tetrati*),' the copy placed in the archival dossier later than is the translation in packet No. 3 (for which there is more precise information about how it was obtained).[94] The header for packet No. 3 reads: 'Translation from printed newssheets which Bogusław Radziwiłł sent to Council Noble Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin. Translated at the ambassadorial congress (*posol'skii s"ezd*) in the present year [7]168 on March 28.' Radziwiłł was one of the prominent Lithuanian magnates who had first supported the Union of Kėidainai and then, in 1657, fled to Prussia, where he had been given an administrative post. This news text was one of several that the Russian negotiators (*velikie posly*) acquired, which they were forwarding to Moscow from Dorpat (see below).

93. V-K VI/1: 77–82, Nos. 2–3. The inventory RGADA, f. 96, *Opis'* 1, 1660, fols. 122^{v}–123 lists the following: No. 4. March 1. 'Articles in Latin of the Swedish Diet which took place in Göteborg of the state officials concerning the future state administration during the minority of the king'; No. 5. May 1–July 25. 'Arrival in Moscow of the Swedish commissioner Adolph Ebers as ambassador with the missive informing of the death of Swedish King Karl Gustav and the accession of his son Karl XI [...]'; No. 6. November 3. 'Resolution of the Diet printed in Swedish at the conclusion of that Diet.' It is possible that Ebers brought the articles in Latin (the date of the file is presumably the date when they were issued). A contemporary Swedish publication of the March 1 Göteborg Diet's resolution is: *Sweriges Rijkes ständers Besluth, Som aff them enhälleligen giordes, på then allmenne Rijkzdagh, som höltz i Götheborg then 1. martij åhr 1660*. Stockholm: Keyser [1660]. The resolutions of the November 3 Diet were also published by Keyser: *Sweriges Rijkes Ständers Besluth, Som aff them enhälleligen giordes, på then allmenne Rijkzdagh, som höltz i Stockholm den 3. novembris åhr 1660*. Stockholm: Keyser [1660]. Without examining the Keyser publication of the March 1 resolution, we cannot determine whether it includes a text in Latin. Obviously the version the Russians obtained could come from a different source.

94. Copied as the last item in No. 2 in sequence without a folio break is what most likely derives from a different source, a condensed translation of the letter written by the French Ambassador to the Dutch Republic, Jacob August de Thou, on 23 February, when he was trying to mediate in the negotiations to end the Swedish-Danish war, in which the Dutch had been supporting the Danes. On this translation and a Dutch text which presumably is similar to the one the translators used, see V-K VI/2: 449–450. The De Thou letter is not included in packet No. 3. The sequencing of the various news reports as currently preserved in the archival files RGADA, f. 96, 1660, Nos. 1 and 2, may not be meaningful as an indication of the order in which material was obtained, unless a connection can be established with any adjacent documents that could have accompanied them. Our discussion here is treating the files in chronological order of what their headers or contents say.

The headers suggest there were possibly two separate printed sources containing the identical text, in the first case likely a single issue of a German newspaper or a news separate with datelined entries of the same type as those printed in regular newspapers. Even though the file associated with Ordin-Nashchokin describes the source differently, it is not inconceivable that he sent the printed source he had received to Moscow, where it then was translated a second time. Much of the news related to the king's death and the ongoing war with Denmark, starting with a report from Danzig dated 19 March, indicating that on his deathbed Karl X Gustav had issued an order freeing the duke of Courland from Swedish captivity and in his will laid out the terms of the succession, the points then briefly listed. Only the final item, from London 2 March, was on a completely separate subject, the insistence of General Monck that the newly convened parliament – by this is meant the so-called 'Rump' parliament, convened in the previous year, ostensibly as the revival of the one which had existed between 1649 and 1653 – be replaced by the restoration of the parliament that had been disbanded in 1648 by Fairfax and Cromwell. Given Monck's position and the fact he had no intention of trying to assume the throne himself, the expectation was that Charles II would be restored.

On 16 May the Ambassadorial Chancery translated some Dutch newspapers, which Ordin-Nashchokin (and his fellow negotiators) had received with letters from Dutch merchants and forwarded to the tsar. The translations were made a month and a half after the most recent date of the publications, well-known Amsterdam and Haarlem newspapers from which the translators selected many articles (14 out of some four dozen) but for the most part summarized or excerpted material.[95] By a curious coincidence, the first article, a report from Königsberg, mentions Ordin-Nashchokin in his capacity as commandant of Kokenhusen. However, the translator apparently deliberately glossed over a reference later in the article to a defeat suffered by Russian forces, suggesting instead that only a Lithuanian contingent was involved. The only interest for the translators in a report from Genoa about various Italian news was the small section on the arrival of a Russian embassy in Livorno and its reception with honor by the Medici duke in Florence (this was the mission headed by Vasilii Bogdanovich Likhachev). The only part of a news article from Rome which was translated concerned the sighting of what may have been a comet, which all the 'astrological philosphers' (*filosofy astrologicheskie*) prophesied was a sign of impending misfortune.

The selections from the Dutch papers are of interest for what they reveal about how essential it was to follow the news regularly. A reader familiar with the report from London, translated in V-K VI/1 (Nos. 2–3), about the new and old parliaments, might well have found confusing in the translations from the Dutch papers another London report referring to a new and old parliament but needing clarification as to which then was

95. V-K VI/1: 71–77, No. 1. See the original sources and Ingrid Maier's commentaries on the translations (V-K VI/2: 450–459). The newspapers included the *ODC* 1660/12 and *OMC* 1660/13 (both, Amsterdam) and *HSC* 1660/13, whose respective publication dates were 23 March, 30 March, and 27 March.

really the 'new' one. Presumably Londoners and many of the Dutch readers who would have been following the events in England closely would have been aware that General Monck's insistence that the 'Rump' parliament disband and a new one be elected had created quite a stir. An article from Hamburg dated 19 March opened with reports of important deaths: the Holy Roman emperor, Swedish General Karl Gustav Wrangel (granted, with the qualification that reliable information was lacking), and the Swedish king. In fact Emperor Leopold I, elected in 1658, would continue to rule until 1705, and as a report from Hamburg a few days later emphasized, 'From Pomerania is the news that General Wrangel, God granted, is alive and well.' Regarding the Swedish succession though, there was new information in the 19 March Hamburg article and in a report from Wismar dated 17 March. Before he died, Karl X Gustav had named specifically the ten leading counsellors of state who were to maintain peace. The Russian translator included the complete list but, as was common, garbled a few of the names that were unfamiliar. There also was news (erroneous) that the dead king was to be laid to rest in Uppsala, whereas in fact the burial would take place in Stockholm. And there was news about the expected conclusion of the Diet in Göteborg (it did actually conclude on 5 March). Other reports included the expectation of a rapid conclusion of peace between Sweden and Denmark – the treaty would be signed on 6 June. More than one article suggested that the negotiations at Oliwa (Oliva) would soon reach a successful conclusion and, in fact, the treaty was signed on 3 May. A report from Danzig dated 13 March contained news from Livonia of a Polish advance into Lithuania, the conclusion of a cease-fire with Russia until mid-June at the same time that Russian forces were besieging Brest and Grodno, and an agreement between Russia and the emperor that the Russians would not attack the Habsburg force in Poland, with the understanding though that Kraków and Warsaw were to be left to the Russians. Whatever Russian optimism might influenced such news, it proved to be misplaced as the Russian military campaigns of the summer were a disaster (see Frost 2014: 186–187).

17.6.1. Reports on the restoration of King Charles II

The German newsletter which Ordin-Nashchokin sent from Dorpat and which was translated in Moscow on 7 July (V-K VI/1: 87–89, No. 5) opened with an article from Danzig dated 5 June, thanking the Lord for the conclusion of the 'long desired peace' between the Swedes, Danes and Dutch which had just been signed, with additional information on the expectations concerning peace in the Commonwealth and the hopes of the Cossacks in that regard. There was news regarding the Turkish wars, reported from Venice and Vienna. A major portion of this packet, reported from Hamburg, the Hague, and London, concerned the celebrations for the return of King Charles II.

The subject obviously must have been of particular interest in Moscow, as we learn from another news packet translated in July (no day indicated) from 'Dutch news sheets which were brought from Above by the Council Secretary Larion Lopukhin' (V-K VI/1: 82–87, No. 4). That is, they must have come to the tsar directly (as, incidentally, ap-

pears to have been the case with most of Ordin-Nashchokin's reports and news) and were being brought to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation.[96] The entries on the first two folios are very short: two concern the news of the Swedish-Danish peace, one concerns the war against the Turks in Hungary, and the rest have news about the war against the Commonwealth. The selection seems to have been made specifically for sentences mentioning Muscovite forces: an attack against them in Vilna; the Polish seizure of Windau, where they massacred the women and elderly the Russians could not take with them into the safety of the castle; the urgent call for a meeting of the Diet to deal with the Muscovite situation…. These reports concerned events that very likely were well known in Moscow from reports of military commanders during what was proving for the Russians to be a disastrous summer campaign season. The resurgent Commonwealth armies took back much of the territory it had lost in Lithuania but for a few isolated Russian garrisons in cities such as Vilna (Kurbatov 2019: 160–162). All this news, but for the Vienna report, came from Baltic locations, including three items from Danzig and two from Königsberg. The final item, from Hamburg, conveyed what obviously was an inaccurate rumor – that the young king of Sweden, Karl XI, had died of smallpox, a fact which the Swedes allegedly were trying to keep secret. Unlike in the case of the files discussed earlier, which may have been assembled and edited by Ordin-Nashchokin in support of his proposals, these short entries read like normal translators' summaries under datelines. This was already a time with a surfeit of news and short deadlines, the Ambassadorial Chancery staff was beginning to be very selective in its treatment of the incoming reports.[97]

Quite in contrast are the news items which follow after those first two folios: a long set of texts relating to the Stuart restoration. It includes a report about the preparations of Charles II to leave the Netherlands and return to London, the king's declaration to the 'estates' of the city of London, and Parliament's official proclamation of Charles as king. Each of these items begins on a new folio, as do the next two items, one about the Dutch Estates General sending an embassy to Charles while he was still in Breda and the second a report on General George Monck's arrival and reception in London. Monck was the commandant in Scotland who became the key supporter of the restoration. The sources for all of this news could well have been Dutch newspapers, even if the header

96. Stepan Shamin notes that the materials in the Swedish Affairs file No. 1 for 1660 seem to be a collection of various scrolls of both the Privy Chancery and the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K VI/1: 23). In particular, he suggests that the packet published in V-K VI/1 as No. 4 (from fols. 69–83) is among papers which were in the Ambassadorial Chancery, and he thus hypothesizes that the material had originally been housed there. However, this supposition speaks only for the copy of the translation and not for the path by which the originals arrived in Moscow. He notes that the watermark on all the sheets is a foolscap, but of itself that says nothing about whether the current folios represent a single unit in its original, undisturbed form.

97. The summary nature of these several entries focusing mainly on the ongoing war in the Commonwealth may make it impossible to determine their sources. Ingrid Maier suggested tentatively (V-K VI/2: 459–460) that two of the articles may have been drawn from *ODC* 1660/22, but the correlations are too vague to constitute convincing proof.

does not specify that the 'news sheets' were printed. Some of the texts are also known in separate brochures.

The proclamation adopted by both houses of Parliament (on fols. 76–78) is a close translation of a text that first was published on a single sheet in London (with printing variants and another edition in Edinburgh).[98] The one curious 'mistake' in the Russian translation is the rendering of the date as March 8, 1660. The printed date reads 'Die Martis, May 8, 1660', where Die Martis is Tuesday, mistakenly understood by the translator (or his direct source) as the month. The translation does not include the colophon with the name of the city and the publisher. A Dutch translation is known, but so far only from the historical compendium by Lieuwe van Aitzema published several years later, and derived, apparently, from a different printing of the original document.[99]

So far, it has been impossible to locate the source for the text on fols. 72–74, a long description of the king's procession on 24 May to the city of Breda, accompanied by his brother James, Duke of York (in the Russian text: *Erk*), and the Earl of Ormond (James Butler). They first went to The Hague, where they were greeted with great ceremony by the Dutch officials; they left The Hague on 2 June.[100] A short text follows on fol. 75 under a new heading: 'The declaration of the king on [!] the States-council of the city of London.'[101] Presumably this is but a summary of a longer decree, concerning the intention to protect trade and punish piracy. From his temporary residence at Breda, before setting sail for England, Charles issued a number of proclamations promising protection of religious freedom, security, etc. One of his letters from Breda, dated 4/14 April, is addressed 'to the Lord Major, Aldermen, and Common-Councel of the City of London,' the group identified in the the somewhat opaque Russian translation – of a decree which we have not located – as the 'States-council of the city of London.'[102]

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98. *A proclamation, of both houses of Parliament, for proclaiming of His Majesty King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.* London: Macock and Tyton, 1660 (Wing [2nd ed.1994]/ E2196; available in EEBO).

99. Aitzema, 9: 830–831. At the end of the text, instead of the 'signature' of the Secretary of Parliament John Brown, the text has the invocation 'God save the King' (Godt bevvare den Coninck), which is found in the Edinburgh imprint of the original decree. Aitzema goes on at great length with a description of negotiations and ceremonies, involving King Charles before he left for England.

100. There are several paintings by contemporary Dutch artists, showing Charles II's ceremonial progress and then departure from Holland on June 2. For the latter, see Hendrick de Meijer's canvas (Rijksmuseum Inv. No. SK-A-252), at https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-252.

101. The header 'Ob"iavlenie korolia o dume Statov goroda Lundena' presumably contains a mistake, *o dume* instead of *k dume*, since the decree was addressed *to* the city magistrates. The translator's choice of the word *Staty* (pl.; the Genitive is Statov) is one indication of a likely Dutch original, as the Dutch government, States-General (Staten-Generaal), is referred to by that term elsewhere in the translation.

102. There is a collection of Charles' early proclamations, including those issued from Breda: *A collection of His Majesties gracious letters, speeches, messages, and declarations since April 4/14 1660*. London: Bill, 1660 (Wing / C2937, available in EEBO). His letter to the city magistrates is on pp. 26–31. However it is not the document concerning trade and piracy which we have in the Russian translation.

The remainder of the text (fols. 79–83), following the Parliamentary declaration, is undoubtedly based on a Dutch separate (or a copy made from it), beginning with an account of how the Dutch government sent an envoy to Charles at Breda on 16 May and issued various decrees about providing support for the king and his entourage during their residence in the Netherlands.[103] If we have correctly identified the source, that part of the original text is considerably condensed. On a new folio is a description of what General Monck was doing, how he appeared before Parliament, and in a public ceremony on 17 May read out a list of the nine points negotiated between the king and the estates regarding his prerogatives. The ceremony concluded with great fanfare, the confirmation of payment to the troops and a subsidy for the king, and the assertion that a ship would be sent to the Netherlands for him on 20 May.

Three additional translated news packets drawn from the Swedish Affairs files have been published in V-K VI/1, all of them sent from Dorpat by Ordin-Nashchokin and received in Moscow during a week and a half in October 1660.[104] Until a closer examination of all the news files in the archive can be made, we can only speculate whether the receipt of several packets in such rapid succession is evidence that there already was beginning to be really regular delivery of the news. The news selection in these translations is largely what we would expect: several items on the events in northern Europe as the Swedish wars were coming to an end, and some rather substantial items regarding the wars against the Ottomans over Crete and in Hungary (in particular, the siege of Vardin/Grosswardein).[105] The peregrinations of Queen Christina of Sweden after her abdication had long been a staple of news reports and were of sufficient interest in the aftermath of the death of King Karl X Gustav to attract attention in Moscow. She was on her way to Stockholm, presumably to attend the king's funeral, and along the way was entertaining dignitaries and consulting with Swedish officials.

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103. The separate is *Verhael Hoe dat den Generael Monck binnen Londen Op den 17. Mey 1660. over de 40000. man inde wapenen heeft doen komen, en wat conditien hy deselfde heeft voorgelesen tot herstellinge van den Koninck Carolus Stuart* [...] N.p., 1660 (Knuttel 1/2: No. 8205, copy available in Google books).

104. V-K VI/1: 90–93, Nos. 6, 7, 8. The headers read respectively: 'Translation of newspapers (*s kurantov*) which the grand envoys Council Noble Afanasii Lavrent'evich Nashchokin and his colleagues sent to the Great Sovereign Tsar and Grand Prince Aleksei Mikhailovich, autocrat of all Great and Little and White Russia from Iur'ev Livonskii in the present year [7]169, October 5'; 'Translation of newspapers sent from Iur'ev-Livonskii October 16'; 'Translation of German newspapers which the grand envoys Council Noble Afanasii Lavrent'evich Nashchokin and colleagues sent from Iur'ev-Livonskii in the present year [7]169, October 12'. The second of these (No. 7) is an incomplete copy, as it ends (fol. 479) with a header 'from Vienna on the 18th day,' but with the expected text of a new article missing.

105. While we have not identified with any certainty sources used by the translators, certain of the translated reports correspond at least in part to articles published in Hamburg. Compare, for example, the report from Venice dated 6 August (V-K VI/1: 91, fol. 470) with *WDoZ* 1660/33: [1], and Venice, 3 September (V-K VI/1: 93, fol. 475) with *WDoZ* 1660/37: [1].

17.6.2. The burning of John Milton's books

News about the restoration of the English monarchy also continued to attract attention, with a report from London on 27 August (fols. 477–479) that contains a number of interesting details. Part of the report corresponds closely to a news item published in Hamburg (*WDiZ* 1660/36: [3]), with an account about visits by various ambassadors to the king and a quite detailed description of two portraits which had been put on display in the Bourse in London, one of Charles I and the other of his son, Charles II. The Russian translator must have found this information in a different German newspaper, where the reporter or editor had interpolated between the two sections of the London report a short, but intriguing sentence: 'The book of John Milton, which was written against the dignity of the king, is to be publicly burned by the hangman, since the one who wrote the book has gone off.' This may well be the earliest Russian mention of Milton and one of his books, although it is possible his name was known in the Ambassadorial Chancery from the time when he was secretary to Oliver Cromwell. The book burning did not actually occur until 27 August. However, the information in the newspaper the Russians were translating most likely derived from knowledge of the widely distributed royal proclamation, dated 13 August, which authorized that the books be confiscated and burned and that Milton (and the other offending author mentioned, John Goodwin) be tracked down, arrested and punished.[106] The Hamburg *WZ* had mentioned the decree about Milton's books in articles published in two separate issues (one dated 20 August, the other 27 August).[107] So the news obviously was making the rounds in the European press. As the decree specified, the books by Milton deemed offensive and dangerous under the new regime were his anti-monarchical tract published soon after the execution of King Charles I: *Eikonoklastēs* (his rebuttal of the famous royalist tract *Eikōn basilikē*) and *Pro populo Anglicano defensio*.

We can at least hypothesize what the interest in Moscow could have been regarding the burning of Milton's books. The execution of a fellow monarch, King Charles I, had so offended the tsar that it led to a rupture of relations with England and the cancellation of English merchants' privileges. One of the famous published tracts about his fate had been translated in Moscow (Maier and Mikhaylov 2009). The restoration government of Charles II issued sweeping pardons, but specifically excluded those most directly in-

106. There are various editions of the proclamation, available online in EEBO. See, for example: By the King. A Proclamation, For calling in, and suppressing of two Books written by *John Milton*; the one Intituled, Johannis Miltoni Angli pro Populo Anglicano Defensio, contra Claudii Anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, Defensionem Regiam; and the other in answer to a Book Intituled *The Pourtraicture of His Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings*. And also a third Book Intituled, *The Obstructors of Justice*, written by *John Goodwin*. London: Bill, 1660 (Wing [CD-ROM, 1996] / C3323). The king issued the proclamation following an instruction from the House of Commons on 16 June, as recorded in *The Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 8, 1660–1667* (accessed at: https://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol8/pp65-66).

107. *WDiZ* 1660/35: [3]; *WDiZ* 1660/37: [2]–[3]. The more recent of these issues contains the older (20 August) article, in which both Milton and Goodwin are mentioned.

volved in the execution of his father. It is hard to know whether there was a serious intent to send Milton to the Tower, but he certainly must have run some risk by publishing yet another political pamphlet in early 1660, arguing against the restoration of the monarchy. Perhaps what was significant here for the Russian government too was simply the example of how other governments dealt with those who questioned royal prerogatives and offended monarchical dignity. By the standards of what the Russians demanded of other governments (that they execute such offenders), Milton got off lightly. And Russian complaints about allegedly offensive publications never resulted in anything more serious than confiscation of copies of imprints and ceremonial burning of them.

But we should not infer that his political tracts were known in Russia, and the report certainly is no indication of any interest in his stature as a great writer, which had yet to be established. As part of his pamphleteering in the early 1650s, Milton had also composed a short book about Muscovy, but it was published only some three decades later and could not have been known in Moscow in 1660. Certainly there is no reason to think the Milton affair loomed very large in the worldview of the makers of Russian policy at the time, where news coverage so concentrated on the military maneuvers and diplomacy of those who could affect the outcome of the wars for dominance in northeastern Europe. Queen Christina's travels and entertainments, from which something might have been inferred about Swedish politics during the minority of the new king, arguably were deemed of greater immediate import. The Russian take on the Milton affair (which we can only hypothesize) does seem analogous to what we have seen about the way that several Polish publications, including both literary popularizations and a book by Samuel Twardowski, one of the great Polish baroque poets, were mined not because of any evident interest in them as literature, but simply to be used as fodder for diplomatic protest.[108] It would be another several decades before educated Russians were ready to appreciate the literary contributions of such eminent writers.

***

The few *kuranty* translations which have been made available for 1660 but hint at the volume and range of foreign news which the Russian government was acquiring and the role of Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin in providing it. In his detailed chapter devoted to 'The Difficult Year 1660', Boris Floria (2010, Ch. 9) demonstrates the important role which foreign news and military intelligence played in the Russian decision to sign a disadvantageous peace with Sweden at Kardis. The news Floria cites is primarily from the as yet unpublished reports of commandants and diplomats. It was indeed a 'difficult year' on account of miscalculations by the tsar and his advisers: their inflated opinion about the capacity of the Russian military forces, their expectations of loyalty from their erstwhile allies, the Lithuanian magnates and the Zaporozhian Cossacks, their failure to appreciate the strength of the revived Commonwealth forces and anticipate that the King of Poland would sign so soon a peace with Sweden (at Oliwa) and

108. See Sec. 15.5 above; Jansson and Waugh 2023.

ally with the Crimean Tatars. The failures on the battlefield against the Commonwealth and its allies culminated in the destruction of the main Russian army and the capture of its commander, Vasilii Borisovich Sheremetev, at Chudnov in October. It was not as though the Moscow government had insufficient foreign news or lacked the means to obtain military intelligence. As much as anything, the faulty decisions were a result of interpreting the news and the strategic situation with an optimism that would have been belied by a more objective assessment of the available information. Ordin-Nashchokin played a role in the failures but by no means the critical one. Even an official as well informed and experienced as he would not always reach the right conclusions, as his ever more significant impact in the making of Russian policy in the 1660s (documented in Floria 2013) would reiterate.

The evidence of the 1650s and early 1660s about the active involvement of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in decision making (even if the results were not always positive) is impressive. Through his Privy Chancery, he was able to acquire directly reports of all kinds, including foreign news, and he must have developed an appreciation for the importance of being informed as quickly and accurately as possible about events near and far. It thus comes as no surprise that the Privy Chancery and presumably the tsar himself would play a key role in the establishment of the first Russian international post, with the specific goal of improving the acquisition of international news. The history of that event and its aftermath will be the subject of our next two chapters.

V. THE ERA OF THE FOREIGN POST

> [The foreigners] have hacked out an opening from our state to all their lands in order to observe clearly all our state and economic affairs. The opening is this: they created the post, for what benefit to the Great Sovereign only God knows, and it is impossible to calculate how much ruin that post has brought to the whole tsardom.
>
> -- Ivan Pososhkov (1701)
> (*Sochineniia*, p. 273)

In his still unsurpassed history of the early Russian posts published more than a century ago, Ivan Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 166) found himself agreeing with the Petrine-era curmudgeon Pososhkov, who was wishing for a return to the inward-looking era of some earlier century. At least at the start, as far as economic matters were concerned, the first Russian international post, managed as a commercial business by foreign entrepreneurs, seems to have benefitted mainly the foreign traders and, too expensive, was little used by Russian merchants. Unlike Pososhkov, Kozlovskii was looking ahead, emphasizing the cultural value for Russian society of joining the international postal network. As the rest of his magisterial study would demonstrate, by the end of the seventeenth century, the advantages of postal communication for the Russian government were quite clear, even if the benefit for society still was far from realized.

To a degree these negative judgments obscure an important point, which is the emphasis of Chapters 18 and 19 in our study. The stated purpose of the establishment of the first post in 1665 was to supply the Russian government with regular foreign news, the expectation being that such news would thus be obtained with little delay. Despite the thoroughness of Kozlovskii's study, there is more to be said about how successfully that goal was accomplished, and an argument can be made that 1665 was a pivotal year for the improvement of the Russian government's communication with the outside world. In this section of our study, Ch. 18 explores in some detail the decision to inaugurate the foreign post, its challenges and development under the first postmasters. We extend the analysis through to the end of the century, in order to show how the postal history was not just a matter of importing a foreign institution, but adapting established institutions to achieve the goal of rapid communications. One benefit was to transform Russian diplomatic communication with its ambassadors abroad.

In Ch. 19 we analyze the impact of the post in the first years of its existence on the flow of foreign news. There is substantial evidence that newspapers were arriving regularly on something like a subscription basis. In fact, now so much news was being received in this fashion that the *kuranty* translations rarely would do more than excerpt but a small fraction of the information. This pattern seems to have persisted in the remaining decades of the century. To illustrate these points, we focus in particular on news about Dutch affairs, whose contextual analysis suggests ways to broaden our understanding of the decisions about what was important to translate. The news may have reinforced decisions regarding Russian foreign policy, even if in some instances it seems that the reports were ignored or not clearly understood.

CHAPTER 18

The Creation and Functioning of the Russian International Post[1]

Ivan Pavlovich Kozlovskii's history (1913) of the first Russian posts has never been superseded, its second volume publishing many of the relevant archival documents. He introduced his detailed analysis with a brief review of postal history outside of Russia. However, as our Ch. 3 has already shown, there is more to be learned about how postal networks in early modern Europe developed, especially in northeastern Europe, in order that we be able to make meaningful comparisons with the development of the post in Russia and determine whether that development may have been successful, if measured by a European standard. Kozlovskii's work was pioneering in his discussion of the first Russian postmasters and what they accomplished. Yet even he left unanswered some questions about how well the new post functioned. Here we bring to bear new evidence in this regard, especially from correspondence and the *kuranty*. This chapter looks closely at the origins and first years of the new foreign post, selectively reviews evidence about its functioning later in the seventeenth century, and concludes with an examination of evidence regarding how for rapid internal communication of important information, existing institutional arrangements could be employed to achieve results that were as impressive as any which have been documented for the postal networks elsewhere in Europe.

Who deserves the credit for the creation of the Muscovite foreign post in the mid-1660s and how successful was it? Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin has commonly been regarded as the first Russian official to appreciate the need to regularize the state's communications with other European countries and support the creation of the institutions which would make that possible.[2] However, substantial as were his contri-

1. This chapter is a revised version of the article first published in Russian (Waugh 2016b: 407–442), which also covered material on the European postal networks discussed above in our Ch. 3.

2. Having engaged in constant correspondence with various European courts and with the tsar, 'he was the first among us to sense the inadequacies in rapid and regular relations' (Tereshchenko 1837, 1: 48). In the words of a popular survey, 'Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin is properly considered to have been the real organizer of the Russian post' (Vitashevskaia 1962: 47). Vigelev (1990: 102) specifically credits Ordin-Nashchokin with the decision to hire Van Sweeden and emphasizes how the

butions to the improvement of the postal service, there is little evidence to credit him with its inauguration and initial operation. As we shall summarize below, there is much documentation about the growing awareness of the government regarding effective communications and in particular the interest of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in being kept informed personally about all kinds of news. The first postal contract makes clear that the primary reason to establish the institution was the acquisition of foreign news. Diplomatic correspondence was secondary. To emphasize Ordin-Nashchokin and his protégés diminishes the accomplishment of the first postmaster Jan van Sweeden, whom the tsar hired to establish the line connecting Moscow with Riga.

To a degree, this distortion of the early history of the Russian foreign post is a result of the failure by historians to appreciate the institutional rivalry between the tsar's Privy Chancery and the Ambassadorial Chancery, which assumed oversight of the post three years after its creation. Patronage networks and personal rivalries were involved, and the contending parties accused each other of mismanagement. To believe the Marselises – a family of foreign merchants with roots in the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark who enjoyed the support of Ordin-Nashchokin – the first attempt at creating a postal network by the Dutch entrepreneur Jan van Sweeden (Ivan fan Svedin) never really got off the ground. Similarly, Andrei Vinius, scion of a family of Dutch industrialists, who replaced the Marselises as postmaster, would have little good to say about both Van Sweeden and Leonhard (Leontii) Marselis. The Marselises receive the credit for establishing the first functional postal network, despite the fact that in his meticulous study Kozlovskii had correctly credited Van Sweeden.[3] At the same time, he was unable to find much evidence about how well Van Sweeden's post operated. A number of sources, some previously untapped, tell us a great deal about its functioning, even if the history of the decisions behind its creation remains somewhat opaque.

18.1. The growing awareness of the need for regular and rapid communication of foreign news

The connection between regular postal communication and the acquisition of foreign news was recognized everywhere in Europe. All the important instances in which there would seem to have been some recognition of the value of Muscovy's having a foreign

latter's replacement by Marselis as postmaster led to significant improvements in a poorly functioning system. There is abundant evidence throughout Boris Floria's study of Ordin-Nashchokin's foreign policy in the 1660s to document his constant attention to foreign news (Floria 2013; see also our discussion in Sec. 17.5). However, he does not take up the issue of the creation of the post.

3. Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 58–60; cf. Küng 2009: 62–63. E. I. Kobzareva (1988: 61–62), in her rather hasty examination of the beginnings of the posts, indicates in somewhat confusing fashion from the later claims that M. [*sic*] Marselis had as early as 1665 been concluding agreements with the Vilna postmaster that he supply German and Dutch newspapers and more widely was trying to create an information network in other cities. That he had laid the groundwork in Vilna so early seems unlikely, since more than half a year elapsed after he took over the postmastership in 1668 before the new Vilna route was up and running. Even if we believe these claims, they fall short of demonstrating the establishment of a foreign post by the Marselises as early as 1665.

post prior to 1665 are related to the concern for speedy and regular delivery of news. The best documented example concerns the correspondence in 1643 and 1644 between the Swedish secretary in Riga, Laurentius Grelle (writing under the pseudonym Justus Filimonatus), a Russian translator in Pskov, and an imposter posing as a dispossessed Bohemian noble, who persuaded the tsar of his bona fides and converted to Orthodoxy as Prince Lev Aleksandrovich Shliakhovskii.[4] Grelle hoped in vain to become a regular news agent for the Russian government and wrote on more than one occasion about the difficulty in ensuring regular and secure communication of his letters between Riga (later from Danzig) and Moscow unless some kind of regular courier service could be established. Nothing ever came of his suggestion. Another episode which should have reinforced for the Russian authorities the value of having regular postal communications was the experience of the Russian embassy in Stockholm between June and October 1649.[5] While there, the Russian mission translated on a regular basis West-European news reports, most importantly from a leading Hamburg newspaper (*WZ*). However, it seems that this news arrived in Moscow only when brought back by the envoys at the end of their mission. For an embassy to be able to send regular reports with a courier required adequate staffing (and permission from the host government), neither of which seem to have been the case for the Stockholm mission.

The experience of the Swedish residents in Moscow was different. Even though there could be interruptions in regular communication, they were generally able to report with some regularity to their government and also frequently provided foreign news to the Russian government. The Swedish commercial representative in Moscow between 1650 and 1655, Johan de Rodes, was in regular contact with the Swedish agent in Novgorod and reported back to Stockholm as often as twice a month.[6] His letters might be carried by Swedish government couriers returning from Moscow, by foreign merchants, or by couriers whom he hired. With one exception, in the few cases where De Rodes mentions when he received a message from Stockholm, the elapsed time of travel seems to have been a month and a half or longer.

In 1653, citing the slow speed and lack of regularity of the informal communications network, De Rodes recommended that a regular postal service be established, whereby letters from the Swedish Baltic territories would be sent to Narva, from there to the Swedish yard in Novgorod, and then to the Swedish residency in Moscow (Küng 2009: 62). This service also would carry the post out of Russia. Of course the emphasis here was serving the needs of Swedish merchants and supplying the Swedish government with regular news out of Moscow. The possibilities of opening a regular international

4. See our Ch. 11; in Russian, Waugh 2021b, 2022b.

5. See Maier 2002 and our Ch. 13.

6. Kurts 1914, passim. In what appear to be unbroken sequences of De Rodes' reports, the dispatch dates in 1651–1652 from Moscow included: 10, 22 Aug.; 24 Sept.; 6, 20 Oct.; 8 Nov.; 11, 24 Dec.; 14 Jan.; 23 Mar.; 28 Apr.; 31 May; [30 June]; 6, 18 July; and then, after a gap in the record: 20 Oct.; 16, 25 Nov.; 20 Dec.; in 1653, 20 Jan.; 13 Feb.; 10, 28 Mar.

post that could serve as well Russian interests had to wait for the end of the war with Sweden of the late 1650s, where the Truce of Valiesar in 1658 and subsequently the Treaty of Kardis in 1661 stipulated that there be unimpeded communication between Russian and Swedish officials across the border, and that only authorized individuals would be allowed to read any of the correspondence. The foreign news supplied directly to the tsar by his increasingly influential foreign-policy adviser, Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin, undoubtedly reinforced Aleksei Mikhailovich's awareness of the value of receiving regular news reports from Europe.

There is additional evidence to suggest the Kremlin by the late 1650s must have appreciated the value of having regular communications and reports from permanent residents stationed in other countries. Reports such as that submitted by Ivan Chemodanov on his return from Italy (see Sec. 4.8) would have underscored the significance of being able to obtain news rapidly via the existing postal networks. However, only halting steps seem to have been undertaken to bring communications up to what we might term the 'European standard'. While he clearly was interested in keeping well informed of foreign affairs, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich tended to lean heavily on sending special agents on temporary missions abroad, where one of their tasks might involve obtaining news on something like a regular basis. As we have detailed in Sec. 17.2, one such agent was the Englishman John Hebdon, who carried out several such missions, one – lasting for most of 1659 – centered on The Netherlands. When Hebdon was commissioned to go abroad again in 1660, his titles included that of 'resident', although clearly he was being directed not to reside in one place but rather be a roving agent. Among his priorities on these missions was to acquire certain kinds of news, of particular interest being printed reports about the tsar's military campaigns. In 1659, this was not to be just a one-off acquisition of what foreigners were saying about Muscovy, for he was to obtain 'news (*vesti*) from all states on a monthly basis.'[7] Thus, Hebdon would always write in his various reports a certain amount of political news. Soon afterwards, a Russian embassy to England and Italy was tasked with exploring the possibilities of engaging regular correspondents to send news to Moscow. However, it reported that finding an agent who could obtain regular news from England, Florence and Venice was impossible, at the same time that the chancellor in the Duchy of Courland expressed a willingness to send news on a regular basis.[8] Apparently nothing ever came of this initiative.

7. Gurliand (1902: 108–109) notes that on 22 February 1659 at the end of the document was a directive for it to be sent (from the Privy Chancery) to the tsar's trusted foreign-policy adviser, Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin. Presumably the latter was to send it on to Hebdon, who was already abroad. In his monograph on Hebdon, Gurliand (1903: 10–11) specifies that it was in fact an instruction for Hebdon.

8. See the report by Petr Prozorovskii and Ivan Zheliabuzhskii, quoted by Kobzareva 1988: 61.

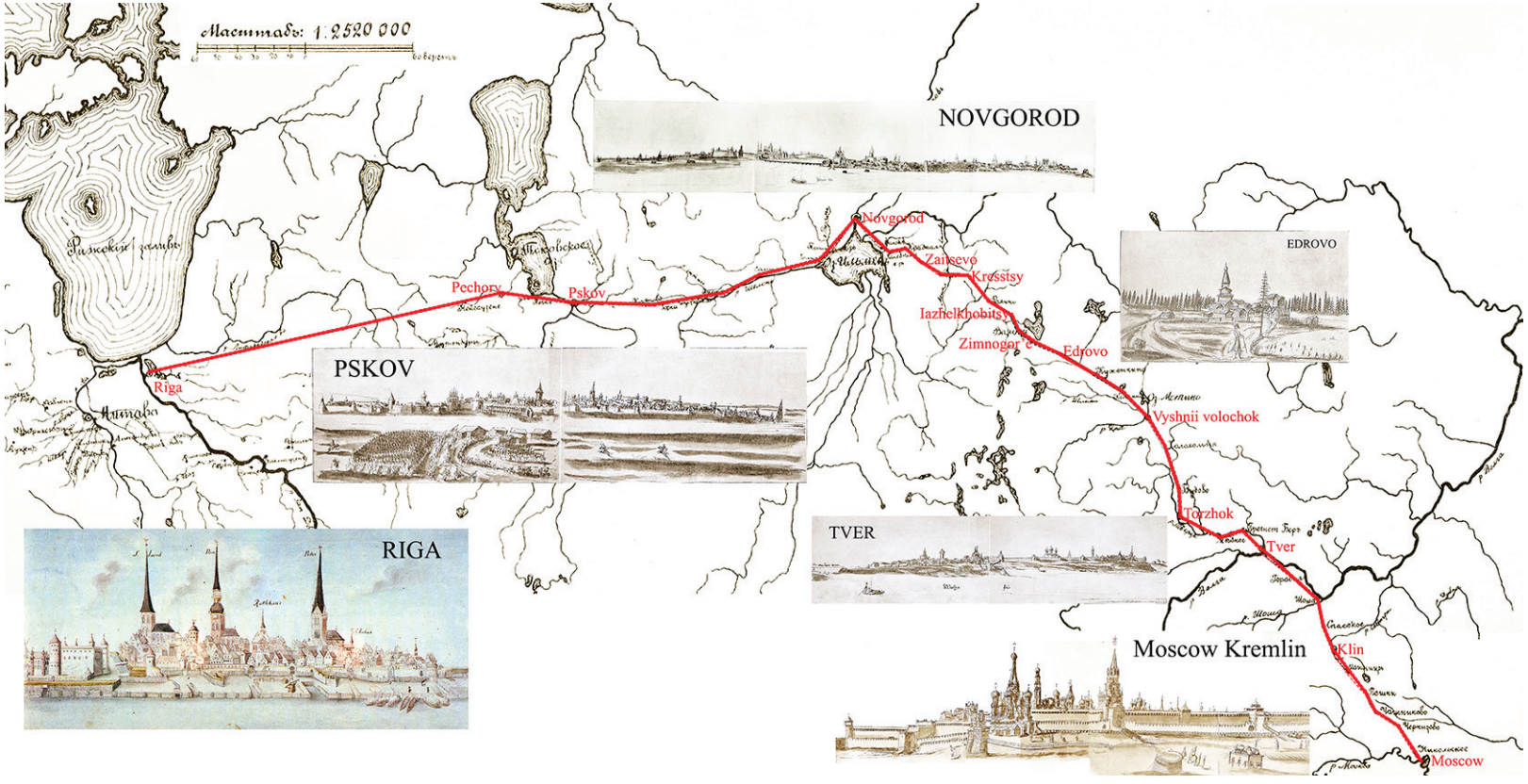

FIG. 18.1. The Moscow to Riga postal route (the segment from Riga to the Russian border at Pechory simplified).

18.2. Jan van Sweeden and the establishment of the Riga postal route

On 18 May 1665 (O.S.), in the presence of officials from Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery (*Prikaz tainykh del*), Jan van Sweeden signed a contract to establish the first Muscovite foreign post.[9] He agreed to bring from Riga on a biweekly basis:

> all kinds of printed and handwritten news sheets and letters from various states: from the Empire, Spain, France, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, England, Italy, Holland and the Netherlands, from all capitals every two weeks, and from the Turkish Empire, from Persia [Kyzylbash] and from India, and also from many other lands, all kinds of news from time to time, concerning military, trade, and all other affairs occurring in the above-mentioned states and cities.

Not only was the post to supply news on a regular basis, but it was to be available for correspondence between the Russian government and its ambassadors when they were on missions abroad. Further, while Van Sweeden's post could carry letters to or from other foreigners in Moscow, it was forbidden that the post be used for transporting any commercial goods. In return for the rather princely annual compensation of 500 rubles cash and 500 rubles worth of sables, the postmaster was to maintain the whole system, including post horses, riders, and – although not explicitly stated – payments to foreign postmasters for acquiring the news.[10] Although the contract left Van Sweeden to fill in the details, the route was to follow the normal road from Riga to the border of Muscovy at Pechory, near Pskov, and then to Novgorod, where it joined the main road, connecting that city to Moscow. It appears that Van Sweeden's operation was small, since the contract specified the issuing of passports for only four couriers who would carry the mail and subcontract along the route to obtain transportation.

A number of points about the contract merit our attention:

- The main purpose of the post was to serve government interests, first and foremost in the obtaining of regular news and information from abroad.
- The administration of the system was under the Privy Chancery, not the Ambassadorial Chancery.
- There was no connection between this new post and the long-established Muscovite system of horse relays (*iamskaia gon'ba*).
- The management of the system was in the hands of a foreign entrepreneur who was not part of Muscovite administration.
- Financing was provided by the government (a rather lavish sum for the time, it seems).

9. A transcription of the contract, signed by Van Sweeden himself (based on the original in the Privy Chancery files, now at RGADA, f. 155, 1665–1666, No. 11, fols. 18–19^{v}), is in Waugh 1972: 510–513, App. IIc. The version published by Pokrovskii (1906: 20–21) has a number of significant mistakes. Possibly the archival document is not the original 'contract', but rather a copy certified by Van Sweeden, at the time he was contesting the later decision to award the postmastership to the Marselises.

10. Other documents show that the tsar's government also sent separate payments to the foreign postmasters, though not on a regular basis (Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 69).

Clearly for Aleksei Mikhailovich and his foreign-affairs specialists, the time had come to do something about establishing a regular mechanism for the acquisition of foreign news. In turning to a foreigner, Van Sweeden, the Russians were following what was a normal practice elsewhere in Europe in situations where a new postal route was to be created. The first Swedish postmaster in Hamburg was a Dutchman, and subsequently Germans in Swedish employ were given the responsibility for expanding the system both in Sweden and its overseas possessions across the Baltic (see our Ch. 3). As in the Russian case, but unlike elsewhere in Europe, where private commercial interests often were the key catalyst for creating and managing a regular post, the Swedish initiative in the first instance was a response to government needs for regular information and communication with its officials.[11]

The positioning of the foreign post in the Privy Chancery is the best indication of whose priority and initiative lay behind the decision to hire Van Sweeden. Aleksei Mikhailovich had established the Privy Chancery on the eve of his departure to lead the Russian army in the campaign against Poland in 1654.[12] The institution was intended to provide the tsar with a personal instrument of management and control. Although some historians have thought the Privy Chancery was intended in the first instance as a kind of 'secret police' or Star Chamber, this seems not to have been the case, but the tsar did use it to collect all kinds of information that he deemed of personal interest, and through it he undertook initiatives he did not to trust to be delegated to other offices (for example, prospecting for precious metals, or writing official history). The tsar personally drew up instructions sent out through his Privy Chancery about what to obtain from abroad; so it was quite normal for the instructions to Hebdon to have been issued in that fashion. Ordin-Nashchokin often would send his reports on foreign negotiations and news to the Privy Chancery. In situations where negotiations were particularly sensitive and, it seems, the tsar did not trust his other officials, he specifically ordered Ordin-Nashchokin to communicate directly in this fashion.[13] Long runs of the foreign news reports (*kuranty*) were kept in its archive alongside copies of ambassadorial reports (*stateinye spiski*) and much else. Since the first Muscovite foreign post was organized under the aegis of the Privy Chancery, it is reasonable to suggest the initiative was the tsar's, whatever may have been the advice he received from his confidants, among them Ordin-Nashchokin.

At the time the contract with Van Sweeden was signed, Ordin-Nashchokin had apparently already taken up his position as the newly-appointed governor in Pskov. Grant-

11. Linnarsson 2011: 46. In his comparisons, Linnarsson apparently was unaware of the Russian case.

12. The most thorough treatment of its history is still Gurliand 1902, which can be supplemented for the role of the institution in managing the royal estates by Zaozerskii 1937 and, for the undertaking to write official history, by Belokurov 1905. On the documentary collection of its archive, see Waugh 1986. See also our Sec. 16.2.

13. See our Sec. 17.5. In secret instructions regarding the upcoming negotiations with the Swedes in 1658, the tsar specified that Ordin-Nashchokin was to report to him directly through the Privy Chancery (Solov'ev, bk. 6 [vol. 11]: 63).

ed, while there, he was authorized to carry out diplomatic negotiations, and he would have had an interest in improving communications along the well-traveled road which connected Pskov with Moscow on one end and with Riga on the other. The Swedish authorities rightly, it seems, suspected him of having secret contacts in Livonia (Küng 2009: 63 n. 29). Sometime in the second half of June 1665, Ordin-Nashchokin forwarded to Moscow a news packet, which was handed over to the Ambassadorial Chancery by the Privy Chancery on 27 June for translation. The packet included several German newspapers published in Königsberg and a letter (in Polish) to Ordin-Nashchokin from Willem Becker (Bekker) in Riga, dated 15 June.[14] The elapsed travel time for this letter to reach Moscow was just under two weeks. Becker's letter suggests that he must have been a regular informant for Ordin-Nashchokin and took advantage of the arrival of messengers from him to send reports back to Pskov. Very likely this arrangement is what has been interpreted as the establishment of some kind of regular international post by Ordin-Nashchokin, though it seems in fact to have been a personal arrangement he made, not any kind of official government initiative. From the standpoint of Becker, the relationship would seem to be analogous to what Droste (2021) has documented for other suppliers of news who cultivated close personal and often clandestine relations with highly-placed clients in return for some expected benefit.[15] As had been the case we examined earlier with Laurentius Grelle, the obstacle to being able to supply news on a regular schedule was the uncertainty and potential cost of engaging couriers. Becker alludes to the planned establishment of a regular postal connection, which would carry letters from Riga to Moscow in 14 days. However, it is unclear whether this means he had already learned about the tsar's contract with Van Sweeden. In any event, there seems to be no suggestion here of a connection between the Van Sweeden post and Ordin-Nashchokin, whose direct oversight of the system began only some years later, when he became head of the Ambassadorial Chancery.[16]

Whether Van Sweeden had the right credentials to set up and run a postal network might be questioned. He seems to have had no previous experience in doing so. How-

14. V-K VI/1: 115–119, No. 22. For Ingrid Maier's identification of the newspapers and comparison of their texts with the translations, see V-K VI/2: 256–268. Willem Becker was a wealthy German merchant in Riga who was actively involved in trade with Amsterdam. His son, Herman Becker, prospered in the family business and was an art dealer, whose personal collection included paintings by a number of his famous contemporaries, among them Rembrandt (Postma 1988).

15. Becker also corresponded with Peter Marselis (Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 63–64).

16. As Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 65) puts it, to credit Ordin-Nashchokin as the founder of the Russian international post is problematic: 'His relationship to postal affairs prior to 1667 is difficult to establish.' The date 1667 here refers to the fact that the Truce of Andrusovo which Ordin-Nashchokin negotiated in that year included a measure to establish a postal connection through Vilna with the Commonwealth, what became the second Russian international postal route. In 1691, at the request of the tsars (Peter and Ivan), the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery produced a review of the history and financing of the Russian foreign post. The document describes precisely Van Sweeden's contract with the Privy Chancery covering from 1665 to 1668 and the fact that on 1 June 1668 the administration of the post was turned over to Leonhard Marselis under the aegis of the Ambassadorial Chancery (*SGGiD* 4: 629).

ever, he was an entrepreneur of wide ambitions, involved in establishing various kinds of manufactures in Russia (glass and paper among them), and like members of other foreign entrepreneurial families there, he was sent abroad on various commissions for the tsar.[17] It is no accident that all of the first Muscovite postmasters were from foreign families with significant long-term activity in Russia and with experience abroad as agents or diplomats. Van Sweeden certainly would have been acquainted with the already well-developed postal networks in the West and could be presumed to have the personal connections which would enable him to link the Russian post with those networks. Of course, at the particular moment in 1665, he may simply have been the one on the spot to take advantage of contacts with the Privy Chancery and to seize what may have seemed like a good business opportunity.

At the point in May 1668, when the management of the post was being taken away from Van Sweeden and handed instead to the Marselis family, Van Sweeden vigorously, if unsuccessfully, defended himself, asserting that for three years he had fulfilled the terms of his contract. Earlier scholarship in fact failed to adduce proof that Van Sweeden's post actually functioned. However, by looking closely at the files of the *kuranty* and other archival material containing correspondence in and out of Moscow, despite some gaps due to faulty preservation, we can be confident that Van Sweeden's assertions were accurate.

For several months after the signing of the contract, there is little specific evidence in the extant sources to document regular postal deliveries through Van Sweeden's system. One possible source which might fill this gap in our knowledge is the correspondence between the newly arrived Swedish resident in Moscow, Johan von Lilienthal, and his government.[18] Already on his way to Moscow, Von Lilienthal wrote home from Novgorod on 23 May 1665. The next letter of his which has been preserved was written in Moscow on 14 June, less than a month after Van Sweeden had signed his postal contract. On 30 June (fol. 11) and again on 4 July (fols. 12^{r,v}), Von Lilienthal wrote about Van Sweeden's having contracted to set up a regular post to Riga. Von Lilienthal thought this was an excellent idea in principle, given the importance of a regular post for commercial relations. As Enn Küng (2009: 65) summarizes, Von Lilienthal had

> discussed the matter with Van Sweeden. He started by investigating the security of postal traffic, fearing that the Russian side was confiscating as well as opening letters. Naturally, the newly appointed Russian postmaster denied any possibility of such a thing. Lilienthal felt that a contract would help to prevent misunderstandings. He also stated that he would

17. For his biography, see Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 60–62, with some supplementary material in Amburger 1957: 155. See also Gurliand 1903: 14. It is of some interest that among Van Sweeden's foreign contacts was Nicolaas Witsen. Already a prominent Dutch burgher, Witsen accompanied the Dutch embassy to Russia in 1664–1665, during which, collecting material later to be used in his pioneering study of Siberia, he obtained information from Van Sweeden about those regions still little known in the West (Witsen 1966–1967: 373–388).

18. The correspondence is in RA (Sthlm), Muscovitica, Vol. 82: Residenten Johan von Lilienthals brev till Kungl. Maj:t. 1665–1667.

continue to use merchants or couriers for the dispatch of his most important letters to Sweden, in spite of the agreement.

While the matter needs closer examination, one might wonder to what degree Von Lilienthal in fact avoided using Van Sweeden's post. Is it possible that the alternatives were frequent enough to ensure regular delivery of his reports? And what were the routes which they travelled? Following his report dated 4 July, he began to send many of his messages in cipher, a practice followed over the years by the Swedish agents in Moscow at least for the parts of their messages which dealt with potentially sensitive political matters.[19] Of itself, the use of cipher may not necessarily reflect the fact the letters were being consigned to the regular post.[20]

During this same period, the second half of 1665, on at least two occasions, 16 July and 12 August, packets of news received in the Privy Chancery were delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation (from whom is not specified).[21] In addition, on 29 July and 25 October (dates which correlate closely with Von Lilienthal's posts), the Ambassadorial Chancery translated foreign news reports which we might hypothesize arrived in the post (V-K VI/1, Nos. 26, 30). It is hard to know whether we should read any regularity from these dates or the dates of Von Lilienthal's letters – letters could be written a few days before actually being sent off. However, we might at least posit mail arrivals, with departures perhaps a day or two later, on or soon after the 12th of each month and soon after the 25th, which would be at the two-week intervals specified in Van Sweeden's contract. While we have only a few examples of notations about receipt dates in Stockholm, it seems that the transit times for Von Lilienthal's reports were slow: 44, 54, 48, 77, and 48 days. Since Swedish mail from Livonia might be routed circuitously around the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland, and even far to the north around the Gulf of Bothnia (rather than via the Åland Islands), such lengthy transit should not surprise us.[22] Even if Van Sweeden's post was used for part of the trip, rather than being sent all the way to Riga, the letters probably would have been transferred in Novgorod, whence

19. The dates of those reports from July to the end of the year are: 23, 24 July; 1, 5, 12, 24 August; 2, 10, 18 Sept.; 3, 11, 25 Oct.; 8, 21 Nov.; 6 Dec.

20. After all, at various times Russian diplomats and officials used cipher for sensitive communications with the tsar. According to Ikonnikov (1883: 37), Ordin-Nashchokin used cipher when reporting directly to the tsar through the Privy Chancery. The inventory of the documents in the Privy Chancery archive compiled in 1676 mentions specifically a scroll with his reports written 'in the new cipher, in the year [7]169,' that is, apparently when he was involved in the negotiations with the Swedes in 1660/61 (*RIB* 21: 19).

21. V-K VI/1: 120–127, 131–134, Nos. 23, 25. In his introduction to V-K VI/1: 53–59, Stepan Shamin has conveniently tabulated all the headings for the *kuranty* in that volume; the list contains data about the receipt or translation date of the news, as well as the names of the person or institution from which it had come into the hands of the translators. There may well have been more news packets delivered to the Privy Chancery during 1665 which have not been preserved.

22. On the Swedish postal routes and speed of transmission, see Simonson 2011. By 1688, a post from Stockholm to Riga might take as little as 21 days and in the reverse direction a month (ibid.: 75). From Narva to Stockholm should have been faster, if following the same routing around the Gulf of Finland. However, it is not clear whether these figures are exceptional.

they could have been taken by courier to Narva before going on to Stockholm. This routing would have followed that already considered (and presumably used) more than a decade earlier by De Rodes.

If the evidence for the second half of 1665 is equivocal (keeping in mind it might have taken Van Sweeden some time to set up his post and get it functioning), by the end of winter 1666 there seems little doubt he was fulfilling his contract. Between 9 March and 24 August 1666, we have an almost unbroken run of news compilations, most of them with annotations indicating that they were either acquired from Van Sweeden or handed over to the Ambassadorial Chancery from the Privy Chancery at intervals of roughly every two weeks.[23] The dates are not entirely regular, but what we seem to have here is one postal delivery toward the end of the second week of each month, and one delivery two weeks after that. The manuscripts containing the headings were generated in the Ambassadorial Chancery at the time the translations were made, where the clerks were following a convention, specifying who or what institution had submitted the news. Most of the dates tell us when the translations were made, presumably as soon as the originals arrived in the Ambassadorial Chancery, on the same day or the day after when they had been delivered in the post.[24] The annotations do not mention specifically the Riga post, but that should not surprise us given the absence of an alternative postal route. Once the post had come under the administration of the Ambassadorial Chancery and a second route added to Vilna, the headings normally would specify the route by which the mail had arrived.

23. See the following news compilations published in V-K VI/1, Nos. **36** (received 9 March 1666), **40** (26 March), **38** (8 April), 42 and App.3 (23 April), **47** (10 May), 45 (23 May), **52** (15 June), 53 (28 June), **54** and 56 (12 July), **58** (27 July), **59** and App. 5, **6** (9 August), 62 (24 August). The numbers in bold face are the files with the annotation, indicating they had been provided by Van Sweeden. The other numbers are for files transferred from the Privy Chancery and translated but without that annotation. One peculiarity of the headings is that most of the references to van Sweeden as the source seem to have been added by a different hand sometime after the extant copies of the translations were made. Possibly this was done at the time when Van Sweeden was trying to prove he had fulfilled his contract for delivering the mail, in the course of which dispute an effort might have been undertaken to identify exactly which of the news reports had come from him (that is, via his post). In some cases, the notation that a file had been transferred and when it was received or translated also was added to the header by a different hand from that of the text copy. As we have noted in various places earlier, in instances where it is not specified who provided the news originals and when, it may be possible to hypothesize who was responsible, depending on the proximity of the files in the manuscripts. Thus, for example, in RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11, on fols. 15–51, there is a sequence starting with Van Sweeden's contract and including five news packets (three from German sources, two from Dutch), only three of which have the explicit notation he had provided the originals. Very likely the remaining two also are translations made from originals he had supplied. He was bringing in the mail both Dutch and German newspapers. This same kind of analysis could be applied for other news packets copied later in that same archival file.

24. There are two instances, Nos. 53 and 56, where the header says the file had been transferred from the Privy Chancery on one day (the presumed day when the originals had been received) but the translation had been made on the following day. Where only a single date is given, it presumably is the day the originals were received by the Ambassadorial Chancery and the translation was made.

Starting in July of 1666 and running through into the next year, there is evidence in the correspondence and diary of the famous Scottish mercenary, Patrick Gordon, that seems to relate to the functioning of the posts via Riga.[25] Gordon had been sent to England on official government business, but without funding or staffing so that he would have been able to correspond by using couriers. One of his reports was translated in Moscow on 15 November 1666, a date that would be consistent with mid-monthly arrival of the post. While travelling, Gordon received letters dated in Moscow as follows: 20, 24 July; 24, 26 Aug.; 25, 26, 27 Sept.; 7 Nov.; 4, 14, 17 Dec.; 2, 4, 17 Mar. 1667. Although there are some possible inconsistencies, for the most part this pattern would fit a reality whereby the Riga post was departing in the middle and toward the end of each month.

After August 1666, the *kuranty* files have gaps or are silent about Van Sweeden's involvement in the acquisition of news reports until the spring of 1668. It is possible that his absence from Moscow – when he was abroad – is one explanation, although we rather assume that he did not need to be present in person for his postal network to continue functioning. Van Sweeden was in Lübeck when Gordon passed through on his way back to Moscow. They traveled together to Riga, where they were hosted by Herman Becker, the son of the merchant Willem Becker, one of Ordin-Nashchokin's correspondents.

Beginning prior to Gordon's return to Moscow in the spring, starting in March 1667, we again have a long series of letters from the Swedish resident in Moscow, now Adolph Eberschildt/Ebersköld.[26] As with Von Lilienthal, we cannot be certain what network Eberschildt was using to send his reports, though clearly he was sensitive to the possibility that his mail might be intercepted, as he frequently wrote key parts of letters in cipher.

For much of this same period we also have foreign correspondence of Gordon. Once back in Moscow, Gordon took up his commitment to provide Joseph Williamson, the secretary to the English Secretary of State, with regular news reports.[27] In the first of these, dated 9 July 1667, Gordon notes receiving Williamson's letter of 24 May six days earlier (thus presumably on 3 July), but Gordon had no opportunity to respond before the 9th. He also specified that the post via Riga "goeth every Fortnight once," and his correspondent there was an English merchant, Benjamin Ayloff, "by whose conveyance

25. On Gordon's correspondence, see Waugh 2014, 2015a. The data on his correspondence in the 1660s come from Gordon 2009–2016, 2. For the Russian translation of the diary by Dmitrii Fedosov, who also edited the English original, see Gordon 2000–2018. Fedosov appends in this edition translations of Gordon's correspondence – which had previously been published in several articles – and analytical essays and notes. Our citations to the diary are to the English edition.

26. Before he was ennobled (in 1666), his family name was Ebers. The letters are kept at RA (Sthlm), Muscovitica, Vol. 83, Envoyen Adolf Eberschildts brev till Kongl. May:t, 1667–1684. The dates of the letters are: 8, 13 March; 2, 24 April (but with a P.S. dated 5 May); 12, 22, 28 May; 3, 19 June; 6, 17 July; 16 August; 3, 12 Sep.; 14, 23, 29, Oct.; 12 Nov.; 8, 21 Dec.; 15 Jan. 1668.

27. The letters have been published (from TNA, SP 91/3) by Konovalov 1964. The dates Gordon wrote the letters (with the arrival dates in London, where specified, in parentheses) are: 9 July 1667 (22 Aug.); 20 Aug. (13 Oct.); 3 Sept.; 1, 15 and 29 Oct.; and 9 Dec. (28 Jan. 1668).

my letters are sent directly for England." The implication here certainly is that Gordon entrusted his letters to the regular Riga post. Letters from Williamson via Danzig could be sent to Ayloff for forwarding to Moscow. In his letter of 20 August, Gordon apologizes for missing the two previous posts (presumably one in late July and another perhaps toward the middle of August). It is not clear whether Gordon's dispatch of 3 September did not in fact get posted closer to the middle of the month, in which case it could have been the 'last' letter he refers to in his report of 1 October; in the latter, he acknowledges receipt of Williamson's letter of 23 August. His dispatch of 9 December mentions that the most recent post left a day earlier than scheduled, and he thus missed it. He now had Williamson's letter of 4 October (received in the 'former' post) and the more recent one of 11 October. The 9 December letter contained news dating from 12 November through 8 December. In the conclusion to this letter Gordon warns Williamson that he soon will be ordered out of Moscow with his regiment and thus probably would not be able to receive mail from London, but no matter whether it would be sent via Danzig, Riga or Archangel, it would be held for him.

Gordon's mail to London took 47, 55, and 51 days; one of Williamson's to Moscow 41 and another no more than 39 days. We do need to keep in mind that letters might be dated some days in advance of when they actually went off in the mail, though Gordon gives the impression he was trying to time his close to the day the post rider left. We know from later evidence that anything under 40 days for a letter to travel between Moscow and London was probably pretty good time. Around 50 days was slow, although newspaper reports from London and printed in Holland that were arriving in Moscow in the mid-1660s tended to take that long or longer (Waugh and Maier 2009: 29). When calculating transit times based on the printing dates of the newspapers (not the dates of the events they reported), presumably it is necessary to add as a minimum some days for the time that elapsed between an event and when its report might reach Moscow.

The indications that the Privy Chancery continued to be the source for the news the Ambassadorial Chancery was translating continue in the first half of 1668 on roughly a semi-monthly schedule: 11, 24 January; 8, 21 February; 9, 23 March; 7 April, 4 May; 1, 15 June.[28] Those of 7 April and 4 May are the last to mention Van Sweeden as the source, the second somewhat less than a month before the meeting on June 1, at which he had to accept the decision that had been made to take the foreign post out of his hands and give it to the Marselis family. That decision notwithstanding, Van Sweeden's contract was renewed in 1668. He died sometime in the later part of the year, and his widow and nephew for a time continued to run a postal service to Riga, even if it was now not the one serving official government purposes. With only one exception, after June of 1668, the news files cease to mention the Privy Chancery as the institution which had received them before they were turned over to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation.

28. These dates have been taken from the headings in V-K VI/1, Nos. 129, 74–78, 81–86, 89, 90. Two of the dates (No. 74 [24 Jan.] and No. 82 [23 Mar.]) are for files where there is no mention of the Privy Chancery in the header.

18.3. The change in the postal administration starting in 1668

If Van Sweeden's post in fact had been a success, what explains his loss of the postal contract? The tsar may well have played a key role in the decision. According to Gurliand (1902: 299–300), for whatever reason Aleksei Mikhailovich had become unhappy with Van Sweeden's post. The tsar sent one of his secretaries from the Privy Chancery to Ordin-Nashchokin, instructing the latter to implement a proposal by Marselis to create a 'real' (*v sobstvennom smysle*) postal system. Ordin-Nashchokin responded to this with a proposal (not implemented) to add as well a postal route to Archangel which, he argued, would pay for itself due to the use of the route by the foreign merchants. This evidence leaves unclear whose initiative really was involved: was it the Marselises' idea to get the potentially profitable postal contract away from Van Sweeden? Had they made such a proposal directly to the tsar or rather had they used their close relationship with Ordin-Nashchokin to have the latter obtain from the tsar the directive about changing the postal administration?

The explanation may lie in the personal patronage networks and rivalries at the Russian court. This is the period when the ambitious Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin was trying to impose his will on foreign-policy making. His strong personal opinions about the best strategies led him to chart at times a course which did not align with the views of his colleagues. So long as he enjoyed the support of the tsar, he could get away with a lot, even when ignoring reliable news reports might lead him to miscalculate. While the problems left unresolved by the signing of the Truce of Andrusovo with Poland in 1667 would not immediately become apparent, Ordin-Nashchokin was well rewarded for his key role in the negotiations; soon afterwards, he was appointed head of the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1667.

More than a century ago, Il'ia Gurliand (1902: 329–333), who wrote the still authoritative study of the Privy Chancery, suggested that toward the end of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign he was using it as a means to circumvent and therefore curb the increasingly independent actions of the complex Russian bureaucracy. With his death, the rationale for the existence of this personal organ of royal power ceased, and the files were inventoried to be returned to the departments, under whose jurisdiction they really belonged. This picture of the institutional challenges to the effective management of state affairs helps us to understand what Ordin-Nashchokin was doing when he transferred the management of the international post from the Privy Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery. Surely his personal ambition was a factor. Long having enjoyed the opportunities to use a direct channel of communication to the tsar via the Privy Chancery, now that he was appointed to head the Ambassadorial Chancery, Afanasii Lavrent'evich understandably would have wished to bring all the threads of foreign-policy making under his control. Among other things, that meant having direct and immediate access to foreign news. From the standpoint of rationalizing the bureaucracy, it made no sense to route the flow of news first to the tsar, who in any event had to forward the incoming

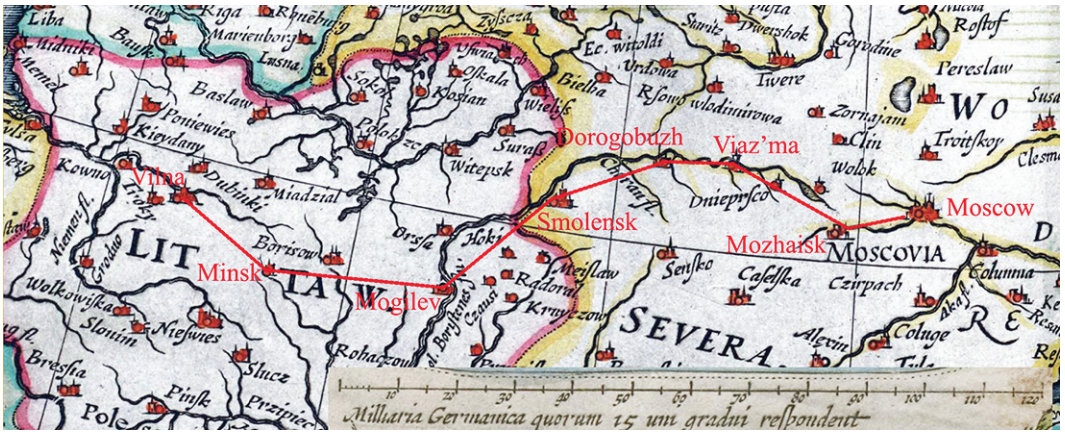

FIG. 18.2. The Moscow to Vilna postal route.

newspapers to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation, before the substance of the news could be known and acted upon.

Moreover, the postal system could be upgraded. More regular deliveries of the news, on a weekly rather than just biweekly basis, certainly would be desirable. Perhaps most importantly, the Truce of Andrusovo with Poland (1667) now required that a new, more direct postal route be established to Vilna, so that coordination between the two governments would be improved and – once the residents of the two states took up their posts – they could communicate rapidly with their home offices. Whether Van Sweeden could have handled these improvements and extended his system to include a second route is something we can never know. He was not given the chance; instead, Ordin-Nashchokin turned the post over to Leonhard Marselis who, by all accounts, was his protégé.[29] Beginning on 12 September 1668, the annotations on several of the news reports indicate their source was the new postmaster, Leonhard Marselis, or his father Peter, who delivered them directly to the Ambassadorial Chancery.[30]

That there was a close relationship and trust between Ordin-Nashchokin and the Marselises is apparent from their roles in clandestine attempts the former was making to establish direct relations with Hetman Lubomirski, whose rebellion against the gov-

29. For the post under the Marselises, see Amburger 1957: 154–160; Kozlovskii 1913, 1, Chs. 2–3; Küng 2009: 63–66.

30. On the basis of the dates of the news translations for September 1668 through May 1669 – evidence which, of course, may be incomplete and may not all relate to the movement of the Marselis-run post – it is difficult to determine how well it met its goals. There were five translations spread out over roughly one-week intervals in October, three in November, only two in December, one in January, one in April and six in May (basically four intervals, as two sets are only a day or two apart). See V-K VI/1, Nos. 107, 109, 105, 111, 113, 110, 117, 121, 119, 125, 131, 133, 137, 143, 142, 141, 153, 139, 145. The first (and few) news packets specified as having been submitted to the Ambassadorial Chancery by Leonhard Marselis are No. 93 (12 Sept. 1668), 96 (31 Oct.), 99, 110 (6 Nov.), and 125 (17 Dec.). On one occasion in this period (No. 107 [1 Oct.]), his father Peter turned in the news to be translated. However, he may well have acquired it through some channel other than the regular post. It seems likely that under the new administration of the post, the practice of mentioning the postmaster as the source for the acquisition of the news soon ceased in favor of mentioning which postal route had been responsible for supplying the sources.

ernment had occupied many of the news reports out of Poland. Ordin-Nashchokin was hoping thereby to put pressure on the Polish king to conclude a peace treaty. Only in his early 20s, Leonhard Marselis was entrusted with a mission to Breslau in 1666, from which he reported back to Moscow via Daniel Brandes in Danzig and Willem Becker in Riga, apparently using from there Van Sweeden's post.[31] On 12 August 1666, Peter Marselis delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery for translation German newssheets which his son Leonhard had sent from Breslau on 11 and 21 July. The latter's cover letter mentioned a previous one he had sent on 23 June. At the same time, Marselis père delivered a letter Daniel Brandes had sent to him on 27 July from Danzig, in which Brandes related Leonhard's adventures while in Breslau, including a narrow escape from capture by Lubomirski's forces, and his intent soon to leave Lübeck on his way to Riga. Leonhard had expressed concern to Brandes about not having had any responses from Moscow to his reports. Brandes also thanked Peter Marselis for having sent him some sables (a normal form of payment for services).[32]

The transfer of the post to Marselis was made official on 25 May 1668.[33] As early as 12 June, Eberschildt mentioned in a dispatch the new postal arrangements; he provided further detail late in the summer.[34] Marselis moved rapidly to sign new contracts with the connecting foreign postmasters. He made a quick trip to Riga to negotiate there with the postmaster; he returned in August.[35] Even though Marselis had first demanded he be given the same government 'salary' which Van Sweeden had received (in addition to being able to use the government horse relays [*iamskaia gon'ba*] and not have to hire his own riders), he had to settle for financing the post out of his own pocket. As a concession, Ordin-Nashchokin provided that the new Marselis post was to have an absolute monopoly in carrying all the mail by foreigners in Muscovy, which would guarantee a source of revenue. Eberschildt reported that in fact any letters found to be sent outside the system were being intercepted and removed. After a quick series of instructions to the Muscovite officials along the route regarding the arrangements for using the *iamskaia gon'ba*, the first mails along the now weekly Riga route departed on 17 September 1668, but it took until March 1669 before Marselis could travel to Vilna and confirm the arrangements for that route. Its first departure was on 11 March. Over the months, beginning in October 1668, it seems that Eberschildt was trying to send a weekly letter from

31. Floria 2013: 107–108, 130–132; Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 85–87.

32. These letters submitted by Marselis (RGADA, f. 155, 1666 g., No. 11, fols. 284–291) were not included in V-K VI/1. See Stepan Shamin's tabulation of the entire contents of that archival file (V-K VI/1: 37). On Brandes as a news agent, see below, Sec. 19.2, pp. 672–673.

33. The most detailed account of the transfer of the post and the terms of Marselis' contract is in Kozlovskii 1913, 1, Ch. 3, with the relevant documents in his vol. 2.

34. RA (Sthlm), Muscovitica, vol. 83, Eberschildt to King Karl XI, 12 June 1668 (fol. 65[r]); 1 Sept. (75–76); 8 Oct. (76b); 10 Oct. (77–78); cf. Küng 2009: 65, where apparently he has mistakenly given 8 August instead of 8 October for the date of one of Eberschildt's letters.

35. The terms of the agreement, primarily specifying the tariffs for the mailing of letters, have been published in *SGGiD* 4: 223–224.

Moscow, presumably timed for the departure of the mail.[36] However, it is clear from the documents published and analyzed by Kozlovskii that Marselis' post along both routes encountered problems in the beginning, which meant that it could not always meet the contracted schedules.

For communication with their government, the Swedes in Moscow obviously would have been using the Riga route, although it is likely that already at Novgorod their letters were being diverted to Narva (a provision in Marselis' contract specified that there be a Narva mailbag). The Narva route clearly was the preferred one for the news coming out of Moscow in the early 1670s; the elapsed time for news from Moscow to reach Narva generally was either 18 or 25 days (depending, apparently, on whether the connecting transport in Novgorod had just been missed by the post incoming from Moscow).[37] Weekly reports seem to have been the norm.

Further evidence on the functioning of Marselis' Riga post in its first year of operation can be found in the correspondence of the English embassy, headed by Sir Peter Wyche in 1669. The letters sent to London were written both by Wyche and by his secretary, Robert Yard, who seems to have been responsible for sending the Moscow news reports to Joseph Williamson. Yard was already writing from Moscow on 13 June (his letter received by Williamson in London on 11 July), noting in it that he had received Williamson's letter sent on 2 April. He warned Williamson that "wee have here some apprehention that our letters are taken up" (fol. 163^{v}), i.e., presumably opened. As in the case of the Swedish resident's correspondence, the English embassy planned on writing every week.[38]

The sequence of the English letters indeed suggests that, despite other evidence about delays and malfeasance on the part of the postillions, Marselis eventually made good on his promise to establish the Riga post on a weekly basis – a two-week gap between 14 and 28 July is probably due to the letters not having been preserved, not the absence of a post. We assume here that the embassy indeed was using the regular post, not special

36. The letters have the following dates: 10, 20, 27 Oct.; 3, 10, 24 Nov.; 1, 8, 15, 29 Dec.; [one letter lacking exact date], 19, 26 Jan. 1669; 2, 10, 13, 19, 23 Feb.; 9, 16, 23 March; 13, 20 April; 4, 11, 25 May, etc. There are some gaps. Perhaps Eberschildt missed some weeks, there may have been no post, or the letters may not have been preserved.

37. These observations are based on a survey of the letters sent by the Swedish commercial agent in Moscow, Christoff Koch, to the Swedish governor in Narva, Simon Grundel-Helmfeldt, and copied or excerpted by the latter, who forwarded them to Bengt Horn, the Swedish governor for Estonia. (The letters are kept in RA [Sthlm], E4304, Bengt Horns Samling.) On Koch's activity as a Swedish agent, see Droste and Maier 2018.

38. The letters are in TNA, SP 91/3. Following its initial report, the dates of the embassy's correspondence from Moscow are: 23 June (received in London 30 July); no date, probably 30 June (rec. 2 Aug.); 30 June (rec. 2 Aug.), referring to receipt of two letters dated 13 April and 18 May both on the previous day; 7 July (rec. 7 Aug.), referring to a 3 June letter from London "just received under Mr. Sanderson," an English correspondent in the Baltic region; 7 July (rec. 7 Aug.), indicating to Williamson he can expect a letter every week; 14 July (rec. 14 Aug.); 28 July (rec. 28 Aug.); 9 Aug. (? rec. 10 Sept. [date unclear]); 17 Aug. (rec. 15 Sept.); 19 Aug.; 15 Sept. (? rec. 17 Oct. [date unclear]). Once back in Riga, the embassy sent letters on 20 Sept. (rec. 19 Oct.), 29 Sept., and 30 Sept. (rec. 26 Oct.).

couriers. Over a period of about two months, mail from Moscow seems to have been arriving in London at what was probably optimal speed, on the average just a little over 32 days (the fastest time was 29 days, the slowest 38). These data are not entirely compatible with the Riga to London transit times, which seem to have averaged around 29 days – there is no way mail from Moscow could have arrived in Riga in three to four days. At very least, we might conclude that mail sent via Marselis' post to London would reach its destination a week or so faster than did Gordon's mail via Van Sweeden's post. However, we cannot know whether the efficiencies (or delays) are to be connected with the Moscow-Riga leg on the route or some other part of it further west. The Anglo-Dutch war at the time of Gordon's correspondence probably forced some of the mail to go via a circuitous route, even though Gordon reported that mail deliveries across the Channel were not being affected.

The *kuranty* files from 1671 offer additional evidence about the regularity of the posts, since the translators of the foreign news in Moscow often indicated in the headings of the translations the date of receipt or translation, via which post the originals came, the language of the original news sources, and whether they were printed or handwritten. In some instances, a particular individual is named as having provided the news, but generally such indications also specify the postal delivery (Riga or Vilna).[39] Statistics derived from this evidence need some interpretation. Apart from possible gaps in preservation, the copies of the translations group the texts separately by language of the originals, German or Dutch. In some instances there will be a run of material from one, but not the other of the languages. The explanation may be loss of the texts, the fact that there was nothing of interest to translate in some of the incoming newspapers, or that no newspapers in one of the languages was in the most recent post. It is possible that translations were made not on the arrival of each mail but at the point when the mails from both routes had arrived in a given week, which would explain why some of the dates in the example cited above are less than a week apart. In any event, the *kuranty* files for this period and for a few years later in the 1670s offer statistics, allowing us to judge whether the posts ran *more or less* on time.

In his detailed description of the Russian trade, compiled in 1674, the Swedish agent Johan Kilburger provided what is often quoted as the best summary of the status of the Russian foreign post just prior to its management being transferred from the Marselises to Andrei Vinius (Kurts 1915: 160–161). Kilburger specified that the Moscow-Riga mail took 9–11 days, and 23 days for the entire route from Moscow to Hamburg via Riga. The mail sent through Vilna and Königsberg would take three weeks to reach Hamburg,

39. See Stepan Shamin's tabulation of the headers in V-K VII: 23–26 and his summary tabulation (for the period March – June 1671), illustrating that with both postal routes running, foreign news was arriving in Moscow between four and nine times a month (Shamin 2011a: 88). The dates are: 10 Mar. 1671 (Riga post); 16 Mar. (Vilna post); 17 Mar. (Riga); 23, 30 Mar. (Vilna); 8 Apr. (Riga); 10, 19 April (Vilna); 23 April (Riga); 1, 8, 13 May (Vilna); 19, 24 May (Vilna and Riga); 2, 9, 19, 23 June (Vilna and Riga); 29 June (Vilna); 6 July (Vilna). There is a gap in the files, with the series then resuming: 7, 15, 21, 28 Sept. (Vilna); 6, 13, 29 Oct. (Vilna), 7, 27, 29 Nov. (Vilna).

thus two days faster than the mail via Riga. While there was no regularly scheduled connection from Novgorod to Narva, generally it was possible to expect a weekly delivery 'by ordinary post'. Kilburger's data correspond rather well with our information from other sources, although his nine-day minimum for the Riga route appears a bit optimistic. Data from a couple of decades later suggest 11–12 days was the norm, and that in a period when the mail to Riga apparently was functioning with great regularity (Waugh 2014: 96). By his account, the deliveries and departures were regular, the Riga mail leaving Moscow on Tuesday evening and arriving in Moscow on Thursdays; the Vilna post arriving Wednesday morning and departing that same day in the evening.[40] He goes on to describe how the mailbags would be taken unopened to the Ambassadorial Chancery to ensure that the government would learn the news before any private individuals, but more importantly so that anyone using the mails not come under suspicion of activities harmful to the state. All the correspondence thus came into the hands of the 'chancellor', the implication here being that all letters were opened and read. In concluding this description, Kilburger stated that each week the mails brought to Moscow the same Dutch, Hamburg and Königsberg printed newspapers and newsletters as were being received in Sweden. They were all to be translated into Russian and read to the tsar.

Apart from the increased frequency of the posts and the addition of the second route, the new postal arrangements involved a very significant change in that the system was now integrated with the older horse relay network (*iamskaia gon'ba*).[41] At each *iam* station, three riders (*iamshchiki*) were to be designated as postillions. They were required to wear uniforms with postal insignia and be prepared at any time of day or night to carry the post to the next station without delay.[42] While in theory Marselis was supposed to defray their costs, there is no evidence that he ever did, and the payment for what was surely an extra burden on the riders was the government's responsibility by default.[43] That payments were inadequate, delayed or often never made emerged as one of the chronic problems hindering the efficient operation of the system.

It is possible that the new arrangement, taking advantage of the horse relay stations and personnel that were already in place (whether or not they were adequate to the

40. In 1672, a government decree that its officials use only the new post for their communications with Moscow specified different departure days (to Riga on Tuesdays, to Vilna on Thursdays), but of course the arrangement could have changed by the time Kilburger wrote (Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 158). If the data recorded about the arrival of foreign news translated for the *kuranty* are an accurate indication, in 1674 the Vilna route in fact may have been functioning but irregularly (Shamin 2011a: 89).

41. Among the older studies of the horse relay system, note Alef 1967 and the still valuable monograph by Gurliand 1900. On the system's relationship to the post, but primarily for the beginning of the eighteenth century, see Randolph 2017.

42. Uniforms and insignia for post riders were everywhere deemed to be of importance, in the first instance for identifying their immunity from interference and delay (Larsson 2011). For Russia, see also a document from the time of Andrei Vinius' tenure as postmaster, apropos supplying the cloth and uniforms (Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 52–54, No. 39).

43. Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 158) is unequivocal about the fact that the Marselises never paid the post carriers.

task), was the only way the government could hope to expand the system. Indeed, the Moscow-Novgorod-Pskov route and the Moscow-Smolensk route (leading on to Vilna) had long been provided with the means for frequent, if not necessarily rapid, transportation for official business. Under the new foreign postal arrangement, the transport costs de facto ceased to be responsibility of the postmaster. Also payments to foreign postmasters, who maintained the system up to the Russian borders, now ended up coming out of government funds. The postmasters made their income by charging tariffs for private mail. The transition to the Marselis post was a contentious one, in part because Van Sweeden's rates had been much lower, and in fact many of the foreigners in Moscow expressed a preference to continue sending the mail through him. Ultimately, it seems, the Marselises discredited themselves and undermined their service by excessive greed and rates that were so high as to encourage evasion of the postal monopoly.

Leonhard Marselis not only managed to displease his private clientele but also rather quickly must have shaken the confidence of his supporters in the Russian administration.[44] In 1669, the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery lodged a formal complaint that he had been opening the mail sacks and removing private letter packets prior to delivering the sacks to the Kremlin. Worse, in some cases he turned in not the original letters but copies; moreover, he was reading the foreign news reports and even had the temerity to mark passages which he thought should be translated for the *kuranty*. Determining what was 'relevant' news was the purview only of the officials in the chancery. The matter was referred to Ordin-Nashchokin, who was away from Moscow in the middle of negotiations about border issues. He responded by reaffirming his confidence in Marselis' pledge to carry out his duties faithfully. Despite this support and his father's testimony that it was perfectly normal in Europe for the postmaster to open the sacks on receipt (not to be able to do so would mean a lack of trust in his probity), Marselis was forced to comply with the demand the mail be delivered unopened, with the understanding that the packets of private letters would be handed back to him. Leonhard Marselis died in 1670, his position in running the post then devolving on his father and later younger brother Peter (jr.).

Ordin-Nashchokin's removal as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery and replacement in February 1671 by Artamon Matveev had no immediate consequences for the Marselises' position. However, sometime before April 1672, with no explanation, the postmastership was handed over to another Muscovite official of foreign extraction, the translator Andrei Vinius.[45] Then, just as quickly, when Vinius was sent abroad on an important diplomatic mission, the position reverted to the Marselises, now Leonhard's brother Peter. As Vinius would later enumerate, the younger Marselis apparently was incapable of running the system properly, the Vilna post having fallen into disuse (at

44. For details, see ibid.: 133–141, the discussion of the dispute with the chancery officials beginning on p. 138.

45. On the end of the Marselis tenure and beginning of that by Vinius, see ibid.: 158–164.

least until the appointment of Vasilii Tiapkin to be resident in Poland in 1673). On his return in 1675, Vinius resumed the postmastership. His official appointment justified the change by indicating the Marselises had failed to maintain the contracted schedules – the mails were delayed by several days on both routes. Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 164) suggests that after 1672, when they first had been removed from the postmastership, the Marselises simply lost interest in fixing what was wrong with the system. (For Vinius' long tenure as postmaster, see below, Sec. 18.5.)

18.4. The challenges of maintaining a regular postal schedule

Despite the evidence adduced above regarding the frequency of deliveries, it would be a mistake to assume that everything ran smoothly once the postal networks were in place. The accusations against the Marselises in 1675 had some basis in fact, even if all the problems were not ones they readily could have solved. In May of 1669, Leonhard Marselis complained that while the plan was for the Riga post to take seven days each way to the border from Moscow, in fact it was taking ten or eleven days; similarly, the route from Moscow to the border with Poland, which should have involved four or at most five days' travel, was taking anywhere from seven to nine.[46] Marselis' projection for the Vilna schedule was based on a detailed plan of operation, negotiated with the postmaster there, Reinhold Bissing.[47] Bissing expected that it would take four days from Vilna to the border and another four days from there to Moscow. Even though Bissing was protesting delays, Marselis apparently felt this schedule was more or less realistic. To implement it, he advised, it was necessary to add a relay station at Velikoe, between Mozhaisk and Viaz'ma, to break up otherwise overly long stretches of road where the riders could expect no relief. However, it seems that this request was not granted.[48] In May 1669, Bissing complained directly to Ordin-Nashchokin that one recent mail from Moscow had taken three weeks to arrive, instead of the projected eight days.[49] The fault, he claimed, was on the Russian side, where the mail was taking sixteen days to reach the border, although on the Polish side the four-day schedule for delivery to Vilna was being kept.

Apparently there was some improvement over the subsequent months, as two documents from August attest (apparently in the same year, 1669). They provide precise details of the travel schedule along the two postal routes: when a rider left point A and arrived at point B, and what the inspection there revealed about the condition of the mail bags.[50] These documents apparently were written specifically as part of a process, where the authorities were attempting to ensure that the mail bags be properly handled and there be no delays, and thus were carefully monitoring every step of the way during

46. Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 27–28, No. 19.
47. Ibid., 1: 117–118.
48. Ibid., 2: No. 19.
49. Ibid,1: 144; 2: 37–38, No. 28.
50. Ibid., 2: 14–17, No. 11.

one particular postal run. At several locations along the Riga route, inspection revealed the mail bags were wet, the seals or the cover sheets wet and tattered. The mail between Moscow and Riga took ten days to reach the border; the return trip took only seven days. On the Vilna route, the mail took six days between Moscow and the border and five or six days on the return trip. The Vilna route was the shorter one, but in percentage terms (calculated against the promised schedules), on both routes the delays were significant.

In the government's efforts to get the relay riders to travel faster, a persistent theme was that schedules had to be altered in April, the month of the thaw, when road travel became more difficult.[51] Understandably, the delays then must have been worse (compared with those documented for the relatively favorable month of August). The mandated speed for the post was later set at seven *versty* an hour in winter and summer, five in autumn and early spring during the mud season.[52] Even though we might imagine that the severe winter cold in Russia was an obstacle to travel, in fact winter travel might be the fastest of all, when it was possible to use sleds on a relatively smooth surface. In other seasons, the weather slowed travel, combined with poor road maintenance, with countless bridges and wood-paved sections traversing the swampy ground. Russia's 'roadlessness', especially in autumn and spring, was notorious, despite constant pressures on the population to maintain the roads.[53]

The state of the roads and bad weather were not just a problem in Muscovy. Even some of the long-established routes in Western Europe were not immune to bridges being washed out, rivers or bays being impassible because of unstable ice, or major blizzards. It might not surprise us that in northern Sweden, conditions sound little different from what we are told was typical in Russia (Simonson 2011: 80):

> At the beginning of the seventeenth century, some Swedish roads were little more than bridleways, and utterly unsuitable for coaches. They did not have ditches for drainage, nor were they metalled, and so they could easily turn into mud when it rained. During the seventeenth century, roads did improve somewhat, however, and are said to have reached an acceptable standard by the end of the century. Road maintenance depended on the resources available in the local peasant communities, since it was they who were responsible.

The situation elsewhere in northern Europe was not necessarily better. A key area between Hamburg and Bremen was full of natural obstacles to any direct travel by road – swamps, major rivers to cross, etc. (Fick 1966). The most direct postal route between Memel and Königsberg followed a narrow sand spit which did not have a firm surface and was horribly exposed in bad weather (Koch 1961: 13). According to Wolfgang Behringer (2003: 537 and passim), the roads in the Habsburg Empire were deemed particularly bad in the sixteenth century, but despite improvements, even by the eighteenth century, roads in many parts of Germany were not up to the standard of other parts of Europe.

51. Ibid., 1: 125–126.

52. Ibid., 2: 47, No. 34. A *versta* (sg.) was slightly more than one km.

53. Gurliand 1900: 257–259; Goehrke 2008.

The development of the post in some cases stimulated improvement in the roads, but in others, where the matter was left to state initiative, road improvement lagged (perhaps surprisingly, Prussia was a case in point).

Just as in Russia, the first hard freeze of winter might be expected to speed travel.[54] In his reports to Sir Lionell Jenkins, the Secretary of State in London, the English resident in Hamburg, Sir Peter Wyche, noted on 30 November/10 December 1680 that winter had set in, "that our River is allready unnavigable and impassable and those who are but to goe to the other side must stay sometime till the rigidnesse of the weather makes it a beaten Road for all Persons and Carriages." Yet unusually severe weather could interrupt service, as Wyche soon reported on 10/20 December: "The very hard weather wee have here doth so disorder our posts from all parts that at present there is little to bee advised. Not one of five (by all which I expected letters) is come this day." And a few days later, on 14/24 December, he writes again: "The great snow wee have in these parts (which noe man living remembers in such abundance) soe hinders all Posts, that wee are without any fresh information. The Antwerpe Ordinary of Fryday last is not yet arrived and those of yesterday and this morning are expected with as much uncertainty as impatience."[55]

Our appreciation of the challenges facing the Muscovite system is enhanced if we consider the realities of the distances involved. The relay stations on the Riga route were the following, their distances apart given here in *versty* and km according to the seventeenth-century *Poverstnaia kniga* (Petrov 1950: 144–146): Moscow – Klin 85 v/91 km; Klin – Tver 90/96, Tver – Torzhok 60/64, Torzhok – Vyshnii Volochok 70/75, Vyshnii Volochok – Khotelovo 35/37, Khotelovo/Erlovo [=Edrovo?] 35/37, Erlovo – Zimnogor'e 17/18, Zimnogor'e – Iazhelkhobitsy 23/24.5, Iazhelkhobitsy – Kresstsy 30/32, Kresstsy – Zaitsevo 35/37, Zaitsevo – Bronnitsy 30/32, Bronnitsy – Novgorod 20/21 (alternatively, 35/37; = summer route?), Novgorod – Pskov 145/154.7. Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 388) divides the distance between Novgorod and Pskov into three legs: Novgorod – Mshaga 50/53.3, Mshaga – Zagor'e 75/80, Zagor'e – Pskov 30/32. His figures somewhat diverge from those in the *Poverstnaia kniga*, and he notes that the various postal documents from the late seventeenth century often disagree on the exact distances. From Pskov to Pechory, which is a few kilometers from the border, is approximately another 50 km. The *Poverstnaia kniga* gives the Moscow to Pskov total as 685 v/731 km; thus the total distance from Moscow to the border would have been about 790 km. With the exception of a slight detour to Torzhok and another at Bronnitsy, the seventeenth-century route from Moscow to Novgorod is very close to that of the modern highway, and the distances between towns as plotted on a modern map correlates closely with that derived from the seventeenth-century sources. For the Vilna route, the stations were: Moscow – Mozhaisk 90/96, Mozhaisk – Viaz'ma 70/74.7, Viaz'ma – Dorogobuzh 50/53.3,

54. However, see the reservations about this expressed by Simonson (2011: 81).

55. TNA, SP 82/16, fols. 215^{v}, 220, 221.

Dorogobuzh – Smolensk 50/53.3. From Smolensk to the Lithuanian border at the River Poliana is approximately 15/16. The total distance from Moscow to Smolensk is given as 260/277, but one copy of the *Poverstnaia kniga* also gives a total of the distance from Moscow to the border as 320 *versty* (Petrov 1950: 142–144).

Hence, on the Riga route, the average distance between stations was nearly 50 km, the shortest distance being somewhat under 20 km. On the Vilna route, there were only four legs between Moscow and Smolensk, the average distance between them being some 70 km. In contrast, by the end of the sixteenth century, 20 km between post stations was the norm for the Habsburg imperial post; during the seventeenth century on some European routes, the norm for a 'post' was only 15 km.[56] The norm then would have been 7.5 km/hour, a speed roughly twice what the Swedish posts seem to have been able to achieve (3.5–4 km/hour; Simonson 2011: 93–94). Perhaps the speed of the Muscovite post, at least during times when it may have achieved the mandated seven *versty* per hour in winter and summer and five in autumn and spring, does not compare unfavorably, given the road conditions and the other problems it faced. Of course, we still cannot be certain how often in the normal order of things the post actually achieved the mandated speed. When fast communications really were deemed important and unlimited state resources were thrown at the system – the example being when Peter the Great visited the White Sea in the 1690s – even within Russia impressive speeds could be achieved. Over several weeks, the posts covering the 1280 km route between Archangel and Moscow averaged about 7.5 days in transit, a speed comparable to the best times achieved in Brandenburg-Prussia for the posts between Königsberg and Berlin (see our Sec. 18.6.1).

Apart from the challenges presented by distances, poor roads and adverse weather, another problem not just endemic to the Russian post, though perhaps more frequent there than in the West, was the reliability of the postal carriers. Outside of Muscovy (Sweden is a good comparative example), the expectations of reliable delivery were high, with specific penalties imposed for lateness or other malfeasance. Yet there still might be delays for a variety of reasons – in the Swedish case, for instance, the low priority the post may have had for the farmers obligated to carry it; thus, they might designate their weakest horses for the mail, keeping the best for work on the farm (Simonson 2011: 79–80). The Swedish case also may be special in that the postal functionaries were easily swayed by powerful elites to delay the mails if letters were not ready to be sent off (ibid.: 60–63). A government inspection of the posts in Sweden's overseas territories (on the south shore of the Baltic) revealed that deliveries might take two to three times as long as the regulations specified they should (Küng 2011: 117). While we have not seen many specific examples, surely delays in the posts in Sweden and elsewhere outside Russia might in part be explained by accident or incompetence on the part of the post carriers. Simonson mentions an example where "a postrider was on his way through the forest

56. That is, two German miles; two hours' travel time (Behringer 2003: 92, 125).

of Kolmården at dark of night, and his horse stumbled between two logs of a bridge and broke its leg."[57] And he goes on to suggest that keeping the postal schedule might be impeded by "the imagined dangers of ghosts, the Devil, and all the other horrors that populated the world at night."

The Russian records are full of examples of relay riders who lost or damaged the mail bags, generally because they were drunk, fell asleep along the way or fell off their horses. Firm instructions about keeping to schedules apparently had little effect, and the only response for malfeasance was to inflict corporal punishment on the wayward. It is hard to know how to read some of this evidence, since written records were generated only when there were problems with delivery, whereas there was no reason to document when things were running smoothly. Although apparently at each post station a record of arrival and departure times was supposed to be kept, little such material survives, and then only in instances of investigations that were trying to determine the cause for delays in delivery.[58]

At very least here we might speculate that in Muscovy, unlike in the West, concepts of time, speed and regularity were still poorly developed, at least among those like the relay riders who were now obliged to carry the post.[59] Although Sweden by the time of Peter I would have become for him a model of the 'Well-Ordered Police State', which he assiduously studied in undertaking administrative reforms, the 'ordering' of Swedish administration and society came slowly. The government had to work through a long period during which vested interests hindered the organization of an efficient post. It took time and resources not only to reshape the thinking of those responsible for the post, but also to provide them with the technical means to ensure the regularity of its arrivals and departures (Simonson 2011: 63–70). For this to happen also required that postal regulations be enforced in the interest of ensuring that the service would function as an impersonal institution of state service and not merely as a kind of arbitrary personal fief. Ultimately, the service would have to be staffed by dedicated, salaried officials, not by conscripted peasants or those who looked on it merely as a means of private profit. Proof of Behringer's interesting assertion that the emergence of regular posts resulted in at least their users beginning to measure time by the postal schedules may be found in the Swedish case only late in the seventeenth century, and surely only much later in Russia. True, the letter writers knew the schedules and tried to observe them, but for

57. Simonson (2011: 64), citing Holm 1906–1929, 1: 343.

58. This is true also of the Swedish records. For example, Linnarsson (2011: 30–31) suggests that the postmasters, acting in a private capacity, would not have felt compelled to preserve their personal records. One of the few places where quite a bit of the documentation about actual arrival and departure times of the mails has been preserved is England, although much of the mandated precise record keeping has been lost (Brayshay et al. 1998; Brayshay 2016).

59. That said, an obsession with speed was not alien to the Russian officials, as is evident from the insistence that punishments be carried out with little delay once a verdict had been reached (Kollmann 2015: 296–297. Note in our next section the tsar's impatience with what he perceived as the undue delays by Vinius, when the latter was sent abroad as an envoy.

most of Russian society the post was irrelevant, and there could have been no concept of postal time.

18.5. The foreign post under Andrei Vinius

When Ivan Pososhkov condemned the post as the creation of foreigners in 1701, surely he had Vinius in mind, since the latter had by then been the postmaster for the better part of a quarter century. For an outline of Vinius' family history and career as a translator, see Sec. 7.1.3. During his employment from an early age in the Ambassadorial Chancery, Vinius had opportunities to establish good relations with visiting envoys, and he moved easily amongst the upper echelons of the Russian elite and the members of Moscow's resident foreign community. There is every reason to think that Vinius was one of the most broadly educated and best informed of Muscovite officials regarding the West; his professional responsibilities ensured that he would be one of the first to know the latest news.[60] Judging from the evidence scattered throughout the multi-volume diary kept by Patrick Gordon, apart from whatever Vinius' official position allowed, he may well have acted as a news agent for many of the Moscow elite in the same way that news agents in the West cultivated relationships with influential statesmen.

Vinius' abilities and knowledge of the West were sufficiently appreciated in 1672 so that he was sent abroad that year as the head of one of three major diplomatic missions, intended to forge alliances to wage war against the Ottoman Empire.[61] In the normal order of things, a translator would not have been chosen to head an important embassy. All these missions failed in their goal, since the priorities of the other powers lay elsewhere. However, undoubtedly for Vinius his visits to England, France and Spain served the important function of providing him with first-hand knowledge of those countries.[62]

60. Igor' Iurkin (2007: 204) states: 'One can confidently assert that there was no one better informed in Russia in the last quarter of the [17th] century regarding the state of European politics.'

61. The three embassies were dispatched from Moscow in mid-October. Emel'ian Ukraintsev, who later would become head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, led the mission to Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Paul Menzies, a Scottish mercenary in Russian service, was sent to several of the German states, Rome, and Venice. The instructions to the envoys, some of their reports back to Moscow sent while en route (enclosing foreign news summaries and documents), and Menzies' end-of-mission report are published in *PDS* 4: 753–1078.

62. This end-of-mission report (RGADA, f. 35, op. 1, No. 16) has not yet been published. We are grateful to Andrei Gus'kov for providing us with a copy of the manuscript. In analyzing the report, Kazakova (1985) offers a somewhat exaggerated sense of Vinius' perceptiveness and the richness of his descriptions. In fact he says relatively little about some of what one must assume were his most interesting cultural experiences during the mission. Western newspapers contained reports about the Russian envoys which, as was common practice, attracted attention in Moscow and were translated in the *kuranty*. A German newspaper, received via the Riga post on 9 July 1673, reported from Paris on 11 June how 'Moscow's extraordinary envoy, who had recently arrived, every day takes in pretty buildings and their grounds, where various entertainments occur' (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, No. 9, fol. 49). The copyist added a marginal gloss for 'envoy' (*poslannik*), specifying that the reference was to 'the translator Andrei Vinius'. We have not yet located the source for this (presumably a newspaper for which there are no extant copies). Other German newspapers reported Vinius' reception by King Louis XIV at his field camp near Kortrijk (Courtrai) in what is now western Belgium, after which the Russian envoy was received by the Dauphin at St. Germain outside Paris. The Hamburg *WDoZ* (1673/24: [3]),

Since he used the international post for communicating with Moscow, he gained personal experience of dealing with the various agents who supplied news and would receive reports or letters and forward them through the post from the cities en route.[63] Vinius experienced first-hand the exigencies of transportation during the difficult seasons of the year. There had been various delays in his travel to Riga, where he arrived on 24 November. He had been instructed to request from the local Swedish authorities that they arrange for him to sail from Riga to London. However, they refused (they had no obligation to provide that assistance). Having been provided with funds to hire passage, Vinius consulted with local merchants, only to learn that there would be no ships for the next several months – winter had arrived, and there was ice in the Baltic. He then took it upon himself to write to the duke of Courland about arranging overland transport west. Awaiting a reply, he reported about the delay on 28 November (his message received in Moscow on 12 December).[64] Four days after he had received Vinius' report, the tsar wrote a blistering response, calling his envoy an idiot for his failure to follow orders to travel fast and delaying further by having had the temerity to write a letter to Courland, even

in an article datelined Paris 9 June, even mentions his name: "Herr Vinojus extraordinarie Envoye von Mußkovien."

63. He spent time consulting with Riga merchants (not specified by name) and enclosed a report from London in a cover addressed to Philip Verporten (Van der Poorten) in Hamburg, who was to post it. In spring and summer of 1665, Verporten had been in Moscow, where on several occasions he brought Dutch newspapers to the Ambassadorial Chancery (V-K VI/1, Nos. 16, 19, 26, 27, App. 1 and 2). There is an unpublished fragment in the *kuranty* files containing a translation of a Dutch letter given by Verporten to Andrei Vinius, who turned it over to the Chancery on 24 April 1666 (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11, fol. 94). The translation contained an excerpt from a letter sent from Danzig, where the translator specifies that the date of 26 March on the letter is N.S. A report from Warsaw about the opening of the Diet follows. When Vinius arrived in Calais on his way to Paris, he sent a report via Hamburg, addressed to Peter Marselis (presumably Peter jr., the head of the Moscow post at the time). We might speculate that, given the Riga connection, Vinius could have obtained some of the Dutch drawings, preserved now in his scrapbook, from Herman Becker, among whose clients were important Dutch artists.

64. On 28 November, both Vinius and Menzies wrote back to Moscow, each of them reporting news – their letters were sent to Artamon Matveev, the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery. Apparently they sent their reports with one of the musketeers from Pskov who had accompanied them across the border to Riga; presumably the reports were then forwarded from Pskov in the post to Moscow. Menzies enclosed a Latin version of the peace treaty which Polish King Michał Wiśniowiecki had signed with the Turks at Buczacz on 18 October (*PDS* 4: 887; a Russian translation of the treaty is listed in the inventory RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, 1672, fol. 232, No. 15). Vinius summarized news sent to him from Danzig by Daniel Brandes, one of the regular news agents on the Russian payroll at the time, and enclosed several newsletters (*vestovye listy*) which a Rigan had provided. Apart from the fact that Vinius' report was communicated to the tsar, it also was summarized in the Ambassadorial Chancery and at least excerpts from those newsletters appended to it were translated for the *kuranty*. Compare the texts: *PDS* 4: 880–884; V-K VII: 336–338, App. 13. At the end of a set of translations in the *kuranty* made from Brandes' letters dated 26 May 1673, the Danzig correspondent wrote: 'No letters from Andrei Vinius have come here, which greatly surprises me, in that he wanted at every opportunity to send his letters to me' (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1673, No. 9, fol. 33^{v}). Whether this meant simply that Vinius would send reports in envelopes addressed to Brandes in order that they be forwarded by him to Moscow is not clear.

though to do so was not mandated in the instructions drawn up in Moscow.[65] Traveling in the company with Menzies, Vinius next reported through the post from Königsberg on 20 December and from Danzig on 3 January, the day after he had arrived there. Perhaps stung by the reprimand he had received about the delays in what the tsar deemed was an urgent mission, he explained how bad weather had slowed travel, making the roads impassable.[66]

Although appointed as the postmaster just prior to his departure, Vinius had to wait until his return in December 1675 to take up his duties, with the expectation that he would do something to rectify the situation whereby the posts had too often run behind schedule (under the Marselis regime). Vinius would hold the position until 1695, when at least for the official record the administration was turned over to his son, Matvei, who two years previously had been given the direction of the newly established postal route to Archangel. However, it is generally assumed that Andrei Vinius continued to involve himself in postal affairs. Vinius père had for some time been far too busy with an accumulation of other responsibilities, including management of the Apothecary Chancery and then head of the Siberian Chancery. Matvei Vinius' term as postmaster ended when he was sent to Berlin to study and the post reverted to his father. Soon afterwards, in 1701, the elder Vinius was replaced, and thus his long involvement with the Russian foreign post ended.

Vinius' assignment to establish efficiency in the posts was not an easy task. The documents from his tenure as postmaster (which understandably highlight mainly the problems and do not tell us about when the post ran normally) paint a picture of ongoing financial concerns about the cost of the service, the regularity of payments to the foreign postmasters and relay riders, the delays due to the deplorable state of the roads, and so on. A flurry of communication in May 1684 followed a report by Vinius that the mail on the Riga route was taking as much as nine days to reach Moscow from Pskov, which meant that overall on the route deliveries were falling behind anywhere from three to five days.[67] The blame for this was laid on the mail carriers, with the usual response then being to flog them into doing their jobs properly. An incident that prompted an extensive investigation and a mass of paperwork in December 1686 and January 1687 involved a *iamshchik*, Pronka Kuzmich, who arrived in Moscow without the mailbags, claiming that his horse had bolted outside of Tver, thrown him out of the sleigh, and run back

65. For the tsar's response, sent through the post, see *PDS* 4: 885: 'And you, what, wrote to the Courland prince concerning your pass, which you had no business doing without the instruction of the Great Sovereign, and thereby have acted stupidly, and through that stupidity of yours have delayed the affairs of the Great Sovereign.'

66. *PDS* 4: 888: 'And, Sovereign, I experienced delay en route, impassable roads (*bezputitsy*) from 20 December to the present date, Sovereign: As we travelled through the Prussian land, there was much rain, the snow melted, there was substantial flooding, and it was impossible to travel through many areas and cross rivers.'

67. The document is published in Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 91, No. 60.

home, leaving him to follow on foot.[68] When the wayward horse and sleigh were found, the mailbags had vanished. The investigation determined that in all probability Pronka had fallen out of the sleigh when drunk. A search along the road turned up only a few loose letters and a couple of German newspapers; the rest of the mail was never found. That such incidents were not exceptional is evident from the story of *iamshchik* Timofei Elizarev syn, who set out from Moscow on the Mozhaisk road in June 1691 but stopped to take a nap, letting his horse graze, still saddled and with the mail bags.[69] When Timoshka awoke, saddle and bags, containing letters from the imperial ambassador and the Polish resident then in Moscow, were gone. The investigation established that Timoshka had been drunk; rather than being flogged with the knout, he was subjected to the more serious punishment of beating with the rod ('unmercifully'). The chronic problems of delayed deliveries causing missed connections continued through the 1690s.[70]

Apart from these day-to-day challenges of running the system, there was a more basic question of whether two postal routes to the West were sustainable, since with the termination of the permanent diplomatic representation of the Poles in Moscow and the Russian resident in Poland in 1677, the primary purpose of the Vilna route no longer existed. In Vinius' telling, problems with the Vilna postmasters exacerbated the route's decline already by 1675–1676 (perhaps he exaggerated some; see below statistics for part of 1676). The frequency of communication diminished, first to once or twice a month, then ceasing altogether in the period between 1681 and 1683.[71] Contributing to this situation were temporary closings of the border due to outbreaks of the plague in the West. As much as anything, the main concern on the Russian end as to whether the Vilna route should be maintained was the fiscal burden of supporting it. With the service less reliable, merchants who might have used it were sending their mail via the Riga route, which still ran on a weekly basis (even if not always according to schedule). To what degree the complaints about the costs reflect the fact that Vinius personally was suffering financially is not entirely clear: as had the Marselises, he was allowed to collect the fees from the private individuals who used the post, but presumably received no revenue for sending official mail.

Vinius justified his argument that the Vilna route should be closed as early as June 1681 (Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 57–58):

> And the imperial and Dutch newspapers, which formerly were sent through the Vilna post, are now sent as well from Königsberg through Riga, and in addition, according to my agreement with the printer of the Riga newspapers, a third set of newspapers – the Riga ones – are now being sent, which never were received previously. And in these newspapers there is always more Polish and Swedish news than in the Königsberg or Dutch ones.

68. Ibid.: 123–133, No. 71.
69. Ibid.: 147–149, No. 80.
70. Ibid., 1: 314.
71. See Vinius' summary of the history, ibid., 2: 77–78, No. 53; for a discussion, 1: 329–344.

He added in the summer of 1683 (ibid., 2: 69):

> And since 1681 only the Riga post has been running, and they have undertaken to send through the Riga post every week without interruption all the news of what is happening in Europe and in some parts of Asia.

However, given the importance of relations with Poland, the government was reluctant to terminate the Vilna post entirely. In 1684, even before the Vilna service had been fully restored, Vinius also had to report problems on the Riga route. The Riga postmistress Margarita Gize (who had succeeded her late husband Jacob Becker in the position) allegedly was failing to fulfil the terms of the postal contract and had increased the fees charged for the service.[72] Among the complaints Vinius raised was a failure to deliver certain of the newspapers for which he had paid and, as he alleged, the opening of the mails illegally by the Riga post office. So Vinius negotiated a new contract with Andreas Max, the postmaster in Dorpat, to reroute the mails and circumvent Riga. While the new routing apparently did go into effect for a time, the Swedish authorities were unwilling to accept it and launched a high-level investigation, which ultimately led to the cancellation of the contract with Max and the drawing up of a new contract with the Riga postmaster, one that remained in force to the outbreak of the Northern War in 1700.

The negotiations between Russia and Poland – which ultimately would result in the signing of the peace treaty in 1686 – necessitated a revival of the Vilna post, beginning in 1685. In that year Vinius signed a new agreement with the postmaster Reinhold Bissing, in which the latter agreed to send two *avisy* (newsletters) in each mail. The treaty the next year specified the service was to be used not only for official diplomatic correspondence but also for 'all necessary state newsletters and newspapers'.[73] However, Bissing's death in 1686, his eventual replacement by Johann Schröter, and the latter's doubling of the rates charged for the mail to Moscow led Vinius to question the viability of the service.[74]

Problems with the foreign postmasters raising the rates to what Vinius considered to be unreasonable levels persisted into the 1690s.[75] During Tsar Peter's 'Great Embassy' abroad in 1697–1698, which substantially increased the amount of official correspondence to Moscow, the costs of the foreign postal service became especially acute and were compounded by what from the Russian viewpoint were other abuses of the postal contract by the Riga postmaster, Gerdt Grön.[76] Vinius submitted a blistering account of Grön's misdeeds, in which he demanded substantial financial compensation and the

72. For details about this dispute, see Küng (2009: 67–73), who brings to bear material from RA (Sthlm) that Kozlovskii had not used. Those archival materials include a number of documents submitted and signed by Vinius as well as attestations on his behalf by important members of the foreign community in Moscow.

73. Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 336.

74. Ibid., 2: 81–87, No. 56.

75. Ibid., 1: 308–312.

76. Ibid.: 316–322; Küng 2009: 73–81.

removal of the Riga postmaster. Tsar Peter himself reinforced this demand with his own letter to the Swedish king. The Swedish government launched a detailed investigation; the situation with the posts was included in negotiations when a Swedish diplomatic mission came to Moscow. However, the matter never reached a final resolution, as the outbreak of the Northern War in 1700 led to the suspension of the Riga route and necessitated that the Muscovite foreign post use only the Vilna route.

Given the history of so many problems with the administration of the posts, we might well wonder whether they ever kept to schedule and did the job for which they were intended. As Kozlovskii points out, at least in the early years of his postal administration, Vinius was able to maintain the largely well functioning connection through Riga, which is why he suggested that the increasingly problematic Vilna route could be closed down.[77] For certain periods, we have some hard data on the regularity of the mails, but of course there are large gaps in the records, some of which may eventually be filled from the files of the yet unpublished *kuranty*, the evidence of foreign diplomats who were in Moscow, and from the long runs of Muscovite diplomatic documents. In the latter half of 1676, we can document from the notations on the *kuranty* a regular sequence of postal deliveries.[78] We should not assume that gaps in what otherwise is a weekly schedule in fact represent missing deliveries – they may simply be gaps in the preservation of the *kuranty*. For the first half of 1676, we have additional evidence on the frequency of the mails as well as a good idea of the elapsed time they took to get from Moscow to the Netherlands in the reports sent from Moscow by the Dutch ambassador Koenraad van Klenck.[79] Although his embassy arrived via Archangel, once in Moscow it was using the Baltic post for its communications. Van Klenck sent three or even four messages each month to his government between January and June, in other words, almost with every post. The dates of his letters suggest he prepared them for a regular weekly departure. While in winter several took more than 50 days to arrive, by May there was consistent delivery in only 35 days.

Table 18.1 provides a set of statistics – compiled in 1696 during a dispute with the postal riders over payment – which document the number of trips in one direction on the Vilna route between Moscow and the Polish border for the decade 1685/6–1696 (Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 198–199):

77. Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 328–331.

78. RGADA, f. 155, 1676, No. 8. Newspapers had arrived via Riga on 30 Aug.; 7, 15, 21 Sept.; 13, 20, 27 Oct.; 3, 9, 16, 30 Nov.; 6, 28 Dec.; via Vilna on 2, 16, 23, 29 Sept.; 8, 15 Oct.; 1, 5, 14, 20, 26 Nov.; 4, 17, 24, 29 Dec.

79. Coyett 1900: xxxvi–xl. A message Van Klenck sent right after he had arrived in Archangel, presumably carried by the same ship returning home to Amsterdam, took 49 days. In the great majority of cases, the destination of his messages is specified as The Hague.

TABLE 18.1. Trips on the Vilna route between Moscow and the Polish border, 1685/6–1696

Dates	Total number of trips	From Moscow to border	From border to Moscow
1685–1686/87	124		
1686/87–1687/88	125	63	62
1/IX/1688–1/III/1690	147	72	75
1/III/1690–1/IX/1691	143	73	70
1691/92	92	45	47
1692/93	86	42	44
1693/94	57	20	37
1694/95	41	12	29
1695/96	50	15	35

If we assume that the first four periods comprise a year and a half, when regular weekly service in both directions would mean a total of 156 trips, then the route operated at something close to the full schedule only for the time range between September 1688 and September 1691. A document from the Polish side in summer of 1686, when there was a dispute over fees, indicates that between May and the beginning of August, the mails from the Polish side never missed a week, even though it seems that mail coming from Moscow was less regular (ibid.: 82–83). After 1691, the Vilna service went downhill rapidly, at the same time that the Riga route apparently continued to function according to schedule. The outbreak of the Northern War against Sweden would lead to the closure of the Riga route in favor of reviving that through Vilna.

18.6. Other postal routes in Muscovy

The success of the foreign post made it an example that could be emulated at the times when the Kremlin considered improving postal communications along important domestic routes. We need to deal only selectively with those initiatives here since with one important exception, that of Ukraine, they probably had little to do with the acquisition of foreign news.

18.6.1. The Archangel post

Even though there was a perceived need for regular post to Archangel, especially to serve the interests of foreign trade, the Marselises had been unable to persuade the government to support establishment of such a system. Only in the 1690s, in the first instance in connection with Tsar Peter's trips to the White Sea, was the route developed, the assignment for managing it falling to Matvei Vinius.[80] By that time the Archangel route had long ago ceased to be of significance for supplying foreign news, which could be acquired more rapidly via the Baltic and Poland. However, with the outbreak of the Northern War, maintaining the Archangel route became a priority. The history of the weekly Archangel post is of some interest for what it reveals about the possible speed of travel

80. Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 419–503; Vigelev 1990: 147–162.

in the Russian North. It appears that the experience of organizing the other postal routes was drawn on to good effect, since the improvement of roads was a high priority here, anticipating the opening of the post and not left to be dealt with piecemeal later. The projected travel time for the route, covering a distance of over 1200 *versty* (1280 km), was about 7.5 days. From Archangel to Vologda, a distance of about 800 v (854 km), was supposed to take only five days and four hours in winter and summer and 7.5 days in fall and spring. The remaining 420 v to Moscow was to be covered in only two days, at an impressive speed of 8.5 v (9 km) an hour. When Peter went to Archangel for a third time in 1701, even that speed of communications did not satisfy him, and he set up a courier service on the route that was to travel 15 v an hour in the winter and summer and 10 v an hour in the mud seasons. For the 'normal' Archangel post, the reality seems to have been that the whole trip would take nine to ten days minimum (that is, between 128 and 142 km/day). As Vigelev (1990: 158) points out, such speeds certainly compare favorably with the speed on the Brandenburg postal route from Berlin to Königsberg, where the mail was scheduled to take four days to travel 640 km, the average being 160 km/day.

Too often studies of the speed of postal communications rely on the mandated schedules, without having concrete evidence to demonstrate how they functioned in actual practice. For the Archangel route, however, there is substantial evidence in the diary of Patrick Gordon.[81] During Tsar Peter's visit to Archangel in August and September 1693, Gordon was in regular correspondence with his daughter Mary and son-in-law Karl Snivins, who had been posted there just prior to Peter's trip north, as well as with some other Russian officials and one of his merchant contacts. On 9 August, Gordon received a letter that took nine days en route; the next one took seven days, then eight, then five in a row took only seven. In one of his replies sent back to Archangel in this period, Gordon specifies it went simply 'by post'; in another case he notes his reply just missed the return courier. Starting on 9 August and going through to just before Peter returned on 1 October, Gordon received letters from Archangel on 19, 23 August, 1, 6, 10, 12, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 26 September. The flurry of almost daily communication in September was probably in anticipation of Peter's return. Gordon would normally write a response immediately, or at latest on the following day, which seems to have been when a courier headed back to Archangel. Once Peter was back, the elapsed transit times began to increase.

When Peter again prepared to go to Archangel, in 1694, Gordon was ordered to go there too. His diary records carefully his exchanges of correspondence all along the route, which ran via Vologda, Tot'ma, Ustiug and Kholmogory.[82] Gordon arrived in Archangel in mid-May. One of the first packets of mail he received there had been sent from Moscow ten days earlier. From late May through into August, the posts from Moscow arrived weekly, with transit times of eight or nine days, whereas letters brought by

81. Gordon 2009–2016, 5: 242–249; see also Waugh 2014: 99–101.

82. Gordon 2009–2016, 5: 283–321 covers the period of his Archangel assignment in 1694.

private individuals generally were more than two weeks en route. Gordon received no fewer than 22 letters in a single post that arrived 9 July, only seven days in transit. The return posts seem to have been scheduled to leave early morning a day or two after the arriving post, although – as Gordon notes – those departures did not always go on time.

The records of the Archangel post, which are well preserved for 1698–1700, are also of interest in that they document the active use of that post by both foreign and Russian merchants.[83] The latters' business was intimately connected with that of the foreign merchants there and thus required regular communication with the northern port. This Russian use of the post contrasts to the situation already noted regarding the routes to the Baltic, where the private clients were primarily the foreigners.

18.6.2. Communication with Ukraine

From the standpoint of the government's demand for foreign news, routes to Ukraine were potentially of great significance, since relations with the Turks and Tatars on the one hand and the Poles on the other were so central to Russian foreign policy. Even without a regularly established postal system, information obtained by border commanders and other officials there was arguably much more important than any which might come so indirectly via German and Dutch newspapers sent through the Baltic. The Ukrainian affairs files contain abundant evidence of frequent communication of news to Moscow. Among the writers were Muscovite officials (sending intelligence gathered by their spies), clergymen or merchants, former captives of the Turks and Tatars, and envoys, among them ones sent by Cossack leaders (see our Secs. 14.4–14.6).

Given the importance of all this, the evidence regarding efforts to establish a regular postal system between Moscow and Ukraine is curiously opaque.[84] As early as 1667, the line of communications with Putivl (the key military and administrative center on the way to Kiev and other points) was termed a 'post'. However, the term may of itself not indicate any kind of new organization of communications. In March 1668, the tsar instructed his commander in Kiev that he should write more frequently about Ukrainian affairs (*AIuZR* 7: 50–51, No. 21). Presumably sometime soon thereafter, measures were taken to establish a postal service connecting Kiev with Putivl; starting in 1669, in two of the central chanceries, there are records which attest to the regularity of deliveries (Vigelev 1990: 122). An instruction to the military governor in Kiev (1674) cited a document from four years earlier, requiring that he use the post to send regular news to Moscow.[85]

83. Kozlovskii (1913, 1, Ch. 12) lists Russian officers, foreign merchants, and Russian merchants who used the Archangel post in 1698–1700.

84. This is one case where Vigilev (1990) does a better job than Kozlovskii in summarizing the evidence, in part because he consulted different archival files. However, much as he is interested in demonstrating the regularity of the post, he has to admit the evidence is at best shaky. Kozlovskii is not convinced that the efforts to establish a regular post between Kiev and Putivl in the late 1660s met with any success. Compare Vigilev 1990: 119–130 with Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 142–144, 508–513. The various volumes of *AIuZR*, the documents in which come largely from the *Malorossiiskie dela* (the Ukrainian Affairs files), demonstrate the frequency and speed of the communication of news from Ukraine.

85. Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 41–42, No. 32.

Whereas previously much of the reporting of news from Ukraine seems to have come directly to the tsar via his Privy Chancery, now the reports were to go to the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery (*Malorossiiskii prikaz*). Certainly the years 1668–1674 were ones in which news from Ukraine was of particular interest, given the political unrest there and the Turkish war that broke out in the early 1670s. Yet it is not certain that even in that period the Kievan post ran on a regular basis. In ideal conditions, a message might cover the 600 *versty* between Moscow and Putivl in a blazing 72 hours,[86] and all the way to Kiev (a total of 900 *versty*) in 114 hours, a speed of about 8 v/hr – that is, faster than the travel on the routes from Moscow to the West. There is ample evidence about a continual shortage of the horses necessary to ensure there would be fresh mounts; the same delivery that set record times to Putivl might then take a day or two longer than scheduled for the remaining distance to Kiev (Vigelev 1990: 122–123). Even if, for a time, there was some regularity in communications with Kiev, by the 1680s it might take two to three weeks for ordinary correspondence to travel between there and Moscow. Despite all efforts to get Cossack leaders to limit the use of special couriers in communicating with Moscow, since this placed too heavy a burden on the available supply of horses en route, the Cossacks were not persuaded of the reliability of the Russian posts.

Patrick Gordon is a valuable source of information about how messages normally might travel along the route connecting Kiev and Moscow. In the 1670s, he had been posted to the South, where he played an important role in what ultimately proved to be the unsuccessful defense of the Cossack capital at Chyhyryn against the Turks and Tatars. Gordon was again sent to Ukraine in the 1680s, assigned to Kiev. His diary for the period between his arrival in early April and September records his sending of both official and private messages, some only as far as Baturin and Sevsk, but many as well to Moscow.[87] While occasionally the diary specifies letters went 'by post', that does not necessarily mean there was any kind of regular postal schedule; in fact most seem to have been entrusted to couriers whose travel was 'on demand'. About the shortest time it would take for a message to reach Moscow from Kiev was 10–11 days, but sometimes they took a month or more to arrive. Gordon used every opportunity to send his private correspondence, some of which was addressed to relatives and other contacts abroad; at least part of his communication was funneled through Andrei Vinius in Moscow, so that he could put it in the foreign post from there.

86. By way of contrast, fragmentary data from 1648–1649 suggest that the normal travel time from Putivl to Moscow was more than two weeks, although a particularly fast delivery might arrive in eleven days. See the documents in *AIuZR*, 7, Appendix, where in some instances it is possible to calculate the elapsed time from when the news of an event was first learned in Ukraine (and its presumed dispatch to Moscow) and the receipt of the report in Moscow.

87. Since the volume or volumes of Gordon's diary that would have covered most of the 1670s have not been preserved (the exception being one volume focusing on the Chyhyryn campaign), we have little evidence regarding the details of his correspondence in that decade. We do have the diary for 1684–1689 (Gordon 2009–2016, 4); its data, summarized here, are analyzed in greater detail in Waugh 2014: 80–87.

18.6.3. Communication with Moscow during Peter the Great's Azov campaigns

Depending on the location of Muscovite operations in the South, other 'postal' routes were established in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, one connecting the important administrative center of Belgorod with Moscow. As a new study of the war against the Ottomans and their Tatar allies emphasizes, in preparation for the Crimean campaigns led by V. V Golitsyn in the 1680s, there were in fact substantial improvements in postal communications to the South.[88] During the second of those campaigns, in 1689, Golitsyn was able to receive from the Ambassadorial Chancery on a regular basis foreign news (including copies of the *kuranty*). At the time of Peter's Azov campaigns in 1695–1696, it was essential to ensure rapid communications with Moscow. What is not clear is whether the infrastructure put in place for communication during military campaigns continued to operate, once the war had ended, as a kind of real postal system (such as the Riga or Vilna posts). Turning again to Patrick Gordon, we can see that what was involved undoubtedly was similar to the arrangements on the Archangel route, ensuring the most rapid communications for the tsar when he was away from Moscow, but most likely as an ad hoc arrangement that would lapse once he was back.[89]

In March of 1695, Gordon headed off from Moscow to Tambov (some 480 km away), which was to be the staging center for the Azov campaign. The first time he received mail while there, it had taken 16 days en route from Moscow. Up to the point when the tsar arrived at the front on the Don, at the beginning of July, Gordon seems to have relied on couriers for his mail, with messages from Moscow taking a month or more to reach him. With the tsar present, communications with Moscow improved considerably. Between 2 August and 1 October, when the decision was made to break camp and abandon the siege, at least nine posts arrived from Moscow, at intervals ranging from six to ten days with a median time in transit of thirteen days. On modern roads, the distance between Moscow and Azov is about 1120 km; using that as an approximation, the couriers between the two at the time of the siege would have averaged a fast 89 km/day.

18.7. Conclusion

For a Muscovite of traditionalist views such as Ivan Pososhkov, it seemed obvious that the introduction of the international post was a foreign innovation that had nothing to do with native institutions and was merely a device aimed to facilitate the economic exploitation of Russians by foreign entrepreneurs. Pososhkov's criticism would suggest that he at least recognized the post was a success, and not merely an example of what historians have suggested was typical of so many of the Petrine reforms – the imposition of a foreign borrowing for which Russian society and institutions were unprepared, thus condemning it to failure. Indeed, it might be reasonable to suggest, as historians of the Russian posts have done, that the experience of introducing rapid postal communica-

88. Gus'kov et al. 2022: 434–436. See also the older monograph by Vigelev 1990: 183–198.

89. Gordon 2009–2016, 5: 358–451 contains the entries about his correspondence during the campaign: when he wrote, and how long letters took en route (see also Waugh 2014: 104–106, 108–109).

tions following Western models influenced the ability of the Muscovite government to create the infrastructure for rapid internal postal communications.

In fact, though, after the initial, short-lived experiment with hiring Jan van Sweeden to create a wholly new institution, Muscovy's international post developed as an amalgam with the pre-existing horse relay system, whereby the effort was made within the context of familiar institutions to achieve Western norms of efficiency. That the system involved communication across international borders was new, of course, as was the goal of obtaining specifically Western news on a regular basis. That this could happen when it did illustrates 'the advantage of backwardness' in that the Russian government could take advantage of the state-of-the-art communications network that ran right up to its borders and thus simply connect to it. The fact that the international post connection came into being so quickly and by and large effectively was quite a remarkable achievement. If the result was an institution that in its early decades seemed not to serve Russian 'individuals of middling means' (*litsam srednego sostoianiia*), as Ivan Kozlovskii (1913, vol. 1: 166) lamented, such was not really part of the original intent. But that intent was hardly a scheme on the part of conniving foreigners to impoverish Russia. The Kremlin knew what it wanted for the purposes of state and was willing to employ the people who could effect its goals, irrespective of whether they were foreign-born or newly rebaptized functionaries. What the foreign post did accomplish was to make it possible for the Kremlin to acquire international news on a regular basis, precisely the goal that had been set out in Van Sweeden's contract. Furthermore, to the extent that there was a disadvantage in not having permanent diplomatic representation abroad, the Muscovite government quickly took advantage of the post so that envoys could communicate on a regular basis with the policy makers back home.

For Kozlovskii, the 'commercial character' of the first posts 'was to the detriment of their cultural significance'. Without the baggage of an intervening 90 years of modernization theory that informed Wolfgang Behringer's book, Ivan Kozlovskii was on the same page with the German historian in his understanding of what the post might accomplish, but unlike Behringer, he did not take up the story beyond the end of the seventeenth century to see whether, or at least when, the cultural promise of the post would bear fruit. Had he done so, he might still have been somewhat disappointed.

What the history of the Russian posts other than the international ones makes quite clear is that when the tsar (especially one as impatient as Peter for quick results) and his advisers prioritized, they could marshal the resources to achieve goals that might not have been on the horizon of their predecessors, and this without necessarily emulating any foreign models. After all, to meet some immediate need for reliable and rapid communications meant in the first instance merely ensuring that there be enough riders and fresh horses along any given route. To make this possible, surely there was enough experience from managing the horse relay system and the stationing of Cossack detachments at key nodes in the South, whose riders could be coopted for sending messages. If

there was a problem with the horse relays, it lay not in the basic institutional structure but rather in the lack of incentives, in the tendency of the Muscovite government to conscript individuals and reward them poorly. The Swedes had no better luck when they enrolled ordinary farmers to run their internal posts. Rapid communication by special courier, especially when military affairs were involved, had long been an option which did not require putting in place a potentially costly institution that would at other times be little used. As Nancy Kollmann (2015) has argued with regard to the Muscovite system of criminal justice, the government rather effectively met the challenges of administration, given the vast distances, low population density, and the limited number of trained officials. The challenges and the way the Kremlin met them relying on internal resources were not much different from the practices of other early modern European states.

To adapt the European experience in order to create a really new and effective (by today's standards) system of internal communications throughout a sparsely populated empire, encompassing daunting natural challenges and distances, would have been quite another matter, impossible at the time not just for Muscovy. Indeed, Simonson (2011: 97) argues that the Swedes lost the Northern War and their Baltic empire precisely because they failed to solve the problem of creating an effective communications network that might have better integrated the overseas provinces with the state. That the Russians won that war does not, however, prove they had better communications. The fact that Vinius – postmaster par excellence, when he was placed in charge of the Siberian Chancery in the 1690s – took only modest steps to improve communications across the Urals and in Siberia illustrates the point.[90] Lacking a substantially improved infrastructure of roads and a more compelling sense of the necessity for rapid communication, there was no call to do more than tinker with the existing system of horse relays and couriers (Vigelev 1990: 171–178). Communications continued to be infrequent and confined mainly to the summer months. To hold on to Siberia at the time did not require the same kind of institutions that arguably were necessary if Sweden was to hold on to its territories much closer to its heartland, but separated by the waters of the Baltic. Only much later in an era of modern technology would the tsarist regime be forced to face up to the consequences of not having effective means in ordinary circumstances to govern its far-flung territories or confront threats closer to home on its Western borders, as the grim experience in World War I would reveal.

90. The infrequency and slowness of communications with Siberia and the neighboring Qing empire did not mean, however, that there were no serious efforts to obtain intelligence. On the contrary, as Gregory Afinogenov (2020) has emphasized, beginning in the seventeenth century, serious efforts were made to strengthen the local networks for gathering information of value to the Russian government (and, to the degree it was transmitted, to Europe) concerning the Russian border regions and their neighbors in East Asia.

CHAPTER 19

The *Kuranty* Following the Establishment of the International Post

As the previous chapter has demonstrated, the explicit goal of establishing a Russian international postal connection was to provide the government with a regular source of foreign news. Even if at various times there were problems in ensuring scheduled delivery of the mail, on the whole the service seems to have functioned reasonably well, starting soon after its inauguration in 1665 and on to the end of the seventeenth century. This chapter will examine evidence about the acquisition of foreign news in the first years after the establishment of the post. Previous chapters have emphasized the unevenness of the government's acquisition of foreign news prior to 1665. Did the post in fact achieve its goal of improving the flow of news, both in terms of regular delivery, quantity, and quality of what was being obtained? If so, what was the impact of having a regular supply of foreign news?

The two most recent volumes in the *Vesti-Kuranty* series (V-K VI and V-K VII, covering the 1660s and through to the end of 1672) provide a more thorough idea of what was translated than was the case in the earlier volumes. And, importantly, these two most recent volumes include for the first time a detailed analysis of the probable foreign sources.[1] This means that we have much better data about which issues of which newspapers were obtained and the basis for determining how much of that news was actually translated or summarized.[2] That said, there are important methodological considerations which need to be taken into account when assessing the evidence regarding which newspapers were received. We discuss those matters in some detail before turning to the content of the news.

1. The sources have been identified by Ingrid Maier. The originals (and comments) are in the separate volume V-K VI/2 and occupy approximately one-third of V-K VII. The 240-page monograph which introduces V-K VI/2 (listed in our bibliography as Maier 2008c) is a basic resource regarding the foreign sources and how they were used. Beyond that, for each instance where a foreign source for a translation has been identified, the complete source text is quoted; extensive commentary about its relationship to the original is provided. Our current chapter will rely heavily on that analysis.

2. It should be kept in mind that from about 1668, very exact, verbatim translations were rare; each translation normally was condensed and thus could be called a summary.

While these most recent volumes bring the V-K series down only to the early 1670s, much of the focus of Stepan Shamin's work is on the subsequent decade. He has continued to supplement that material with selective examination of the *kuranty* in the 1680s and beyond. Thus there is a substantial amount of evidence which can extend the analysis in this chapter and assess the impact of the establishment of the post to the end of the seventeenth century. It is important to stress that the continuing publication of the *kuranty* and identification of their sources is essential if we are to obtain a really thorough appreciation of the acquisition of foreign news in Russia in the last three decades of that century. The treatment in this last part of our book perforce can offer but tentative conclusions that will further need to be tested.

The goal of the current chapter is limited, ironically, by our having almost too much evidence at the same time that there are important lacunae in the sources. As with the earlier volumes in the *kuranty* series, there is no completely unbroken series of the texts. This should not be taken to mean that no news was being acquired for certain weeks or months but more likely simply reflects the state of preservation of the manuscripts. Some did not survive, and of those which remain, some are in a parlous state of preservation, so fragile that they cannot be studied before restoration. Where we do have significant sequences of the translations, the coverage in them tends to be quite broad. A great deal of the emphasis in the *kuranty* for these years is on Polish and Ukrainian affairs and the Ottoman Empire, areas of foreign-policy concern that were closely intertwined.[3] The truce of Andrusovo in 1667 by no means settled all the major issues relating to Poland and Ukraine, and those in turn were complicated by the emerging conflict with the Ottomans, which would dominate much of Russian foreign policy during the last third of the seventeenth century. We analyze a few examples that illustrate how the translators selected news about these ongoing concerns of Russian foreign policy. However, we also have chosen as our main focus here news regarding activities *not* directly connected with Russian foreign affairs. Such material, in particular that pertaining to England, the Dutch Republic, France and Spain, will help to broaden our appreciation of the foreign news coverage available in Moscow.

To test the possible approaches to understanding how– or whether – the *kuranty* bore a relationship to what might be perceived as the real interests of the translators and their superiors, in the second half of the chapter we present some case studies. The first of them asks whether two of the diplomatic missions in the late 1660s were in any way informed by the foreign news. If, as seems to be the case, there is a disconnect between the selection of news for the *kuranty* and Muscovite geopolitical concerns, then might we need to look for a different way to contextualize why material in the *kuranty*

3. See in particular the summaries in V-K VI/2: 91–103, where Maier notes (p. 93, note 4) that some 14% of the individual news articles published in V-K VI/1 are reports from Warsaw. Shamin 2012a is an overview of the coverage of Sweden, another important concern of the Russian government. For the last third of the seventeenth century see Shamin's extensive review of the *kuranty* about European affairs with an emphasis on material regarding daily life and culture (2011a, Ch. 4).

might have been of interest? Our third case study, looking at evidence about international trade, addresses that issue. The epilogue to the chapter looks ahead to one small example from the abundant reportage concerning the wars against the Ottoman Empire, in order to suggest that the significance of what was reported in the news might not have been appreciated by contemporaries (in Muscovy or elsewhere). This will illustrate how difficult it may be to establish a meaningful context to assess the selection and translations. What *we* may deem important in retrospective analysis may not in fact tell us how contemporaries of the events would have understood what they were reading or hearing. This epilogue to the current chapter provides a transition to the next chapter, concerned with reports of the paranormal and sensational, where the news, often translated in great detail, may be far removed from what we are told was the predominant 'factual' reporting of political or military events in the European press.

19.1. Statistics on the flow of foreign newspapers into Moscow

Unfortunately, little precise statistical evidence can be produced to demonstrate whether the establishment of the post resulted in a substantial increase in the flow of foreign news into Moscow. We have a more or less complete inventory of the foreign newspapers of the period that are still extant in the Russian archives.[4] Even in the absence of specific data on when most of those papers were received and processed, it is reasonable to assume that they arrived within weeks after they were published. That is, they are not accumulations, deposited from collections made well after the fact and years later. The preservation of foreign newspapers in the archive for the period prior to 1665 and even for a subsequent year or two is so spotty that there are no meaningful data to compare with what we begin to obtain in the late 1660s. This does not mean that *relatively* few foreign newspapers were received. There must have been more, but how many more is anyone's guess. The files of preserved foreign newspapers grow substantially for the rest of the century. On the face of it, we might assume that occurred as a result of the establishment of the post. However, some nuance is required in analyzing what the numbers by themselves may reveal.

Many of the preserved foreign newspaper issues bear notations by the translators, confirming that they were received and probably read even if not translated (V-K VI/2: 60–66). While some extant translations can be matched with original newspapers still in Moscow, other sources had to be located in collections outside of Russia. For many of the preserved translations the originals could not be identified, given the fact that a huge number of seventeenth-century newspaper issues have not been preserved to our day even in a single copy. Where we might identify a source for a translation in a newspaper issue no longer extant in Moscow, this at least provides additional data concerning what

4. Simonov 1979; Maier 2004. We say 'more or less', since some additional issues have been found subsequent to those two seminal articles. For the Dutch papers, see V-K VI/2: 60 n. 22. It is possible that additional copies of newspapers may eventually be located in diplomatic relations files. However, there is no reason to think the numbers will substantially change what we now know.

newspapers were actually received there. Yet the statistics still will fall short of indicating the total number of received issues of a given newspaper.

Once we begin to get a higher level of preservation and can generate additional data from identifying more of the sources for translations, there still are problems with the value of statistics. The Muscovite postmasters contracted with their agents to provide a certain number of newspapers on a regular basis. However, we do not know the specifics of those contracts beyond such general indications as Andrei Vinius' notes (cited in our previous chapter, pp. 653–654) regarding which cities' newspapers were deemed most valuable. Subscriptions might not have included sending every issue of any given newspaper but rather just the ones most recently obtained prior to the departure of the Moscow mail. This then could be a partial explanation for why relatively few of the received newspaper issues have been preserved in the Moscow archive (V-K VI/2: 59–60). For example, the Berlin newspaper *B. Einkommende Ordinari und Postzeitungen* (*BE*) published approximately 210 issues a year. Of that output for 1668, the Moscow archives preserve only 14.3%. For 1669, the figure rises to 44.3% but in 1670 drops to 23%. The case of the Berlin newspapers illustrates one of the problems with a statistical approach. Interestingly, the Moscow collection contains most of the extant copies (anywhere) of the Berlin papers for this period. There are no copies known outside of the Moscow archive for 1668–1670. The translators in Moscow drew on 14 issues (out of an extant 30) for 1668, 13 (out of an extant 93) for 1669, and 16 (out of an extant 60) for 1670. Indeed, the translations for those years contain no long sequences of material drawn from consecutive numbers or weeks of the originals even though many more of the Berlin papers were received. We must allow for the possibility that many additional issues were received but might not have been translated *or* preserved.

The situation is somewhat different for the Dutch newspapers. Only one per cent of the total number of Amsterdam issues and 5% of the Haarlem papers have been preserved in the archive for 1668. Those figures are 9.5% and 12% respectively for 1669 and 5% and 6.3% for 1670, two years for which The Hague newspapers have been better preserved (14.6% and 10.7% respectively). Paradoxically, even if they were better preserved, The Hague newspapers were infrequently sources for the *kuranty*, whereas the Amsterdam and Haarlem ones were much more often mined by the translators. However, the preserved issues of Amsterdam papers for 1665–1672 are too fragmentary to tell us much.

In the case of the newspapers published in Haarlem, the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (*OHC*), one of the most highly regarded Dutch papers of the time, there is an extensive run of copies preserved in Haarlem which can be checked against the Russian translations.[5] From 1665 until May 1667, this paper appeared weekly in Tuesday and Saturday issues. Beginning in June 1667, a Thursday issue was added. Given the very fragmented

5. On the history of the Haarlem paper, see Weduwen 2017: 41–47; 2: 671–676. Its three weekly issues were titled: *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingdaegse Courant* (*OHD*); *Extraordinaire Haerlemse Donderdaegse Courant* (*EHD*); *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant* (*OHS*).

preservation of *kuranty* for 1665 and the fact that the postal system may not have been fully functional until later in the year, we will focus here on the data for 1666–1672. The total number of published issues for that period is 1022, of which 731 are Tuesday and Saturday numbers.[6] Only some six Thursday issues were received for certain in Moscow during those years; the corresponding number for the Tuesday and Saturday issues is 173. Of those 173 issues, 64 have been preserved in RGADA; 109 were received and used for translations but the originals are not preserved. Thus, for 1666–1672, 23.7% of the total print run of the newspaper is known to have been obtained in Moscow. In fact, of course, the percentage must have been much higher. Whether that means at a subscription level of two issues a week is uncertain, though the selected examples discussed below are suggestive about the extent to which the postmasters had regular subscriptions.[7]

While such a suggestion is speculative, if these rather meager statistical data point to worse preservation of the Dutch papers in the archive once they had been translated (in contrast to the preservation of the German ones), possibly the reason was that the translator in this period, most probably Andrei Vinius, kept the originals for himself. We know from his scrapbook containing pictures and various engravings that he saved a number of broadsides which must have arrived in the mail (Savel'eva 2008: 249–251). Whether they were sent to him personally or had arrived in the news packets intended for the government cannot be determined. At very least he would have been in a position to keep items that he considered would no longer be needed, once they had been mined for the *kuranty* translations and summaries. We know from the later evidence in Patrick Gordon's diary that Vinius sent him news, including original copies of newspapers (Waugh 2014: 107–114).

19.2. On the regularity of postal and newspaper deliveries

In our previous chapter we have argued that, once established, the Russian international post by and large met its goal of maintaining a regular schedule of deliveries. One of the ways to document that fact is to examine the runs of the *kuranty* translations, copied into the archival scrolls. To use this material effectively requires a careful critique of the archival and editorial practices, whereby groupings on material under particular headings (be those of the seventeenth-century manuscripts or the modern publications) may be misleading regarding the chronology of the texts and the data about when they were

6. The figures derive from the complete catalogue in Weduwen 2017 (vol. 2), where he lists each individual issue and its publication date (even if there are no extant copies). He also includes variant printings of some issues. We have not counted the variant printings here.

7. Maier (2004: 212–216) lists some 300 separate issues of the newspaper which have been preserved in Moscow for the period from 1660 through 1698. The distribution is uneven, but a number of the copies in Moscow are unique. Beginning in 1681, the acquisition of the Thursday issue seems to have increased significantly. Unfortunately, we have no data yet beyond 1672 to tell us how many additional issues of this newspaper (over and above the preserved copies) may have been received. Such data will be available only when the post-1672 *kuranty* have been compared with all the possible newspaper sources, a task which will take decades to complete.

produced. The current archival manuscripts often have gaps due to the loss or misplacement of the individual sheets.[8] To a considerable degree, that confusion occurred back in the seventeenth century, when archival materials were being rearranged; additional problems were introduced, when the archival scrolls had been separated into their individual sheets by the archivists, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The close examination of the texts and manuscripts might dictate dividing and rearranging the published 'packets' of news in V-K VI into perhaps twice as many separate entities, whose chronological sequence might then be quite different from what we have in the current edition (V-K VI/2: 133–141). These problems notwithstanding, with some caveats it is still possible to establish some clear sequences of the arrival dates of the post and, given those dates, offer concrete evidence about what newspapers it brought. Moreover, in a few instances, where most of the sources for a given packet of news translations have been identified, there is striking evidence about the range of material the translators had in hand which probably can be associated with a specific postal delivery.

The tenure of Jan van Sweeden as postmaster ran from 18 May 1665, when he signed his contract with the officials of the Privy Chancery, to 25 May 1668, when the Ambassadorial Chancery awarded the postal contract to Leonhard Marselis.[9] Van Sweeden's contract and a collection of *kuranty* files for the years 7172–7174 (1663/64–1665/66) were preserved in a single scroll in the Privy Chancery archive, with a header referring specifically to the 'agreement of the foreigner Ivan fan Svedin, regarding why he brought *kuranty* and various letters to Moscow.' At least some significant portions of this scroll can now be reconstructed from the archival file RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11. For the remaining period of Van Sweeden's tenure as postmaster, the translations from the newspapers his service provided are now in f. 155, op. 1, 1667, No. 10, the relevant portions of that file possibly also based on a single archival scroll that was subsequently separated and mixed in with other material. In eleven instances, headers to the *kuranty* translations in these manuscripts indicate that the originals had been supplied by Van Sweeden. In another fourteen cases, the headers state that the originals used by the translators had been transferred from the Privy Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery, reflecting the fact that all of the postal deliveries first went to the Privy Chancery during Van Sweeden's tenure. In most such cases, the date of the transfer seems to fit in the biweekly schedule of postal deliveries which Van Sweeden's service provided. Thus we can assume we have data for some 25 of the deliveries.

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8. For details, see V-K VI/1: 11–46.

9. Recognition of the change in the postmastership may have been slow in coming outside of Russia. At very least the informants supplying news from Moscow assumed Van Sweeden was still postmaster some months after he had lost the contract. In an article datelined Moscow 7 September 1668, describing in some detail a major fire there, the *Königsb. Sontags Ordinari PostZeitung*, No. 89: [7] mentioned that one of the few foreigner's houses which had not burned was that of the 'Postmeister Johann von Schweden' ("Alle Teutsche und Außländische Höfe in der Stadt seynd verbrannt/ außgenommen des Herrn Postmeisters Johann von Schweden und Herrn Warnemüllers Höfe").

From 9 March 1666 through 24 August 1666, there is a nearly unbroken run of such presumed postal deliveries, for which we have the dates when the newspapers were turned in and translated. During those months, for 22 of those 23 weeks, the translators had in hand *at least* one of the two weekly issues of *OHC*; in four (possibly six) instances, they had both the Tuesday and Saturday issues. In addition, in the same period, the Moscow archives preserve three issues of *TVQ* and one issue of *OMC*, both published in Amsterdam. For the period between 19 November 1667 and 1 June 1668 (the first mail delivery after the Marselis contract was signed, but presumably one that can be associated with Van Sweeden's post[10]), we have another substantial, if somewhat broken series of translations, where again the translators can be shown to have used the *OHC* on a regular basis: 14 of a possible 32 Tuesday numbers but only four of the Saturday issues, two of them in weeks when nothing was translated from the Tuesday one. With only one exception in these two long periods of 23 and 32 weeks, this evidence of the use of the Haarlem paper comes only from translations traced to it, not from preserved copies in the Moscow archives.

The significance of these data for assessing the impact of the post should be clear. Prior to Van Sweeden's post, there is no evidence that such an extended and largely unbroken run of a single foreign newspaper was ever obtained in Moscow. The only instance where Muscovite translators had accessed on a regular basis over a period of some months most of the issues of a single newspaper was when the embassy was in Stockholm in 1649 (see our Sec. 13.3). We cannot be certain Van Sweeden had subscribed to receive all the weekly issues of *OHC*, but he might well have done so, as we know the translators in Moscow frequently selected only from some numbers they had in hand but apparently found nothing of interest in others. There is at least some evidence here suggesting Van Sweeden delivered other Dutch papers as well, but the data are too scanty to tell us whether or not he did so on a regular basis. Furthermore, the data are too limited to suggest whether he may have supplied on an equally regular basis German newspapers. There are some scattered examples proving his post undoubtedly supplied newspapers from Hamburg, Danzig and Königsberg. One final caveat here: just because we might associate the receipt of certain newspapers with one mail delivery does not necessarily tell us anything about a postal contract for the supply of news. There are, after all, at least some examples where newspapers were still being obtained on an irregular basis from individuals other than the postmaster, and such may have been the case for some of the deliveries where no name is mentioned in the archival record.

10. It is worth noting here that one copy of the *Königsb. Donnerstags Ordinari PostZeitung* (*KDO* 1668/40) has a notation that it was transferred from the Privy Chancery to, presumably, the Ambassadorial Chancery on 1 June 1668, although it was *not* a source for the translations from German newspapers that also were transferred on that date. In that packet of translations (V-K VI/2: 270–272, No. 89), a source that was drawn on was the *Danziger Ordinari Freytags Zeitung* (*DOF* 1668/19; V-K VI/2: 320). The inscription on *KDO* can be read from the copy scanned into DP Bremen. This evidence at least gives some idea of the German newspapers that presumably were being acquired through the arrangements Van Sweeden had made for the Riga post.

At least at the beginning of Leonhard Marselis' tenure as postmaster, the chancery clerks in Moscow seem still to have treated the postal deliveries as a kind of personal initiative, rather than an impersonal, institutional arrangement. He signed his contract at the end of May 1668 and apparently spent some time then negotiating new agreements with the postmaster in Riga and making the arrangements for the second route to Vilna.[11] Starting in the second week of September, there are at least five packets of news delivered by 'his' post, where the translators specified that the sources had been submitted by him.[12] While the data are somewhat fragmentary (and the evidence from the archival scrolls complicated by possibly misplaced folios), there is enough to suggest that even in the first few months of his postmastership, the frequency of deliveries had increased to weekly (in contrast to Van Sweeden's biweekly deliveries). The Marselis post continued to supply Dutch newspapers on a regular basis. Beginning sometime after mid-summer and through into December 1668, at least nine Tuesday and six Saturday issues of *OHC* are known to have been obtained. Over a 20-week period, issues from 13 of those weeks made it to Moscow. From the 11th through the 20th week of 1669, at least one weekly issue was obtained in seven of these ten weeks, and between weeks 29 and 51 of that year, a 22-week stretch, for 15 of those weeks at least one issue of the Haarlem paper was obtained. Moreover, for that period of roughly the last half of 1669 we have substantial evidence that other Dutch papers were also being received: there are nine extant copies of the newspaper printed in The Hague and three instances where one of the Amsterdam papers was used in translations. If anything changed regarding the Dutch newspaper sources in Moscow at that time, it was the fact that, unlike under Van Sweeden, more of the received copies were preserved in the government archives. This may be a reflection simply of the change of the postal administration or may also be related to the dispute Marselis had with the translators, which resulted in his having to submit the mail bags unopened and refrain from marking news to be translated.

There is reason to think that the contribution of German newspapers in what was now being received in the mail and translated *may* have increased over what had been the case with Van Sweeden's post. (Perhaps, of course, this impression reflects the fact there are more of the extant German papers that can be checked against the translations.) There is at least one period of several months during the first year of the Marselis post where there seems to be a nearly unbroken sequence of mail deliveries and consequent translations from an impressive number of German newspapers that can be checked.

11. The contract between Marselis and the Riga postmaster, signed on 21 August 1668, concerns the route and the handling of the mail packets but contains nothing about which newspapers were to be supplied (*SGGiD* 4: 223–224, No. 64).

12. V-K VI/1, Nos. 93, 99, 110, 113, 125, App. No. 12, App. No. 13. Subsequently, there are several cases (ibid., Nos. 153, 159, 162; V-K VII, Nos. 7, App. No. 1, App No. 5) where the translations were made from sources supplied by Peter Marselis, most likely Leonhard's father, not his brother Peter, who was but briefly associated with the post. Among Peter Marselis' correspondents was Daniel Brandes in Danzig, who was involved in supplying many of the German newspapers now being sent to Moscow, among them ones published in Danzig (see below).

The delivery dates confirmed in the headings are: 12, 25 September; 1, 8, 15, 22, 31 October; 6, 13 November; 12, 17 December. Some packets lacking receipt dates would seem to fill most of the gaps in what probably was a regular, if somewhat unevenly spaced delivery schedule. For this period, it has been possible to identify only relatively few of the Dutch newspaper sources for the translations, all of them from *OHC*. The range of German newspapers which were received is impressive though, among them copies preserved in the archive, even if they were not sources for any of the extant translations:[13]

- *Dantziger Ordinari Freytags Zeitung* (*DOF*, No. 33);
- *Europæische Mitwochentliche Zeitung* (*EMZ*, Hamburg; Nos. 32, 33, 41, 46), the same paper's Saturday edition, *Europæische Sambstägige Zeitung* (*ESZ*, Nos. 35, Sec. 35, 39, 40);
- three different weekly issues of the Berlin paper published by Georg Runge: *Mittwochischer Mercurius* (*MM*) (Nos. 39, 41, 42, [43], 45, [47]), *Sonntagischer Mercurius* (Nos. 32, 38, 40, [42], 43, [47]), *B. Einkommende Ordinari und Postzeitungen* (*BE*, Nos. [CLV], CLVII, CLVIII, [CLXIII]-[CLXX], CLXXI, CLXXII, CLXXVII, CLXXIX, [CLXXXI]);
- two of the different weekly issues of Johann Reußner's Königsberg paper: *Königsb. Donnerstags Ordinari PostZeitung* (*KDO*) (Nos. [70], 74, [78], [84], 94, 96), *Königsb. Sontags Ordinari PostZeitung* (*KSO*) (Nos. [69] 73, [83], 85, 87, [89], 91, 95).[14]

There are, of course, some gaps: weeks for which apparently no number of a given newspaper can be documented. However, there is enough to suggest the likelihood of regular subscription, especially in the cases of the Berlin and Königsberg papers. Every mail delivery undoubtedly included at least some German newspapers. This same 'German selection' continued to arrive over the next year or two, though the preserved translations often seem to draw more on the Hamburg newspapers, including Georg Greflinger's *Nordischer Mercurius* (*NM*). There is a long, unbroken string of translations on essentially a weekly basis for the period between March and July 1671, the file headers specifying mail deliveries via Riga and Vilna (V-K VII: Nos. 1–20). After a short gap, another unbroken weekly sequence extends from September to the end of

13. The bracketed numbers are the archival copies for which we have no documented translation. Here we use the data in V-K VI/2 and in Simonov 1979, from which we include numbers of the papers that can be assumed would have arrived during the span of dates indicated starting in September. It is possible, of course, that one or two of the issues tabulated here should not be associated with those postal deliveries, but on the whole, the tabulation should provide a reasonably accurate picture of the range and coverage of the German press received in Moscow insofar as there are concrete data. For one of the Berlin papers, we use the consecutive Roman numbering rather than a weekly number; for the Königsberg papers, the consecutive numbering includes both of the weekly issues.

14. The issues of the Königsberg paper seem to have been bound together with consecutive folio numbering, presumably added by a modern archivist. Several of them have annotations that they had been translated. Most have no markings of places to translate, and only very few articles from them in fact were translated, even if marked as being of interest. The markings either are crosses or in some cases wavy marginal lines next to the text. The papers have all been scanned into the DP Bremen database.

November (Nos. 21–30), the deliveries via the Vilna post. In both of these cases, for each of the German newspapers being received in Moscow, with rare exceptions, every mail supplied at least one of the weekly issues. The Dutch papers published in Haarlem, Amsterdam, and The Hague also continued to arrive on a regular basis.

It is possible that subscriptions were arranged not directly with the postmasters, but rather through contracts with other people. A case in point, which requires further research in the archive, is Daniel Brandes, based in Danzig. Kozlovskii (1913, 1: 69) states, probably erroneously, that Brandes was the Riga postmaster and the contact through which Van Sweeden first established his post.[15] Brandes was among the correspondents of Peter Marselis at the time when Marselis' son Leonhard had been on a clandestine mission authorized by Ordin-Nashchokin to Breslau in 1666. In a letter to Marselis *père,* dated 17 July 1666, Brandes wrote he was acting as a news agent and acknowledged having received from Marselis payment for his services.[16] The elder Marselis had been in Copenhagen the previous September, and he could well have negotiated a contract with Brandes in person en route there. (On the Russian government's payment to Brandes for supplying news, see also Sec. 19.5.1 below.) Brandes also corresponded with Artamon Matveev, who succeeded Ordin-Nashchokin as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery. When Andrei Vinius reported from Riga while on his diplomatic mission in 1672, he cited news from a letter sent by Brandes from Danzig. In 1672, another payment was sent to Brandes in Danzig (Kozlovskii 1913, 1: 142), but was he 'postmaster' there or simply a merchant who was on contract as a foreign intelligencer? Several of the *kuranty* translations in 1672–1674 contain material supplied by Brandes.[17] It seems likely that he enclosed with his newsletters at least some of the newspapers, which were translated on receipt of the same mail delivery. Brandes died in 1679, at which point his son-in-law,

15. Kozlovskii's evidence pertains to the payment delivered by Christoph Bousch two years later.

16. RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11, fols. 287–288.

17. Here is a compilation of information we so far have: 'Translation [on] 9 June 1671 from a German sheet, which the foreigner Daniel Brandes wrote from Danzig to the foreigner Peter Marselis on 29 May 1671' (V-K VII: 318); 'Excerpt from letters which Daniel Brandes from Danzig and Paul Van Klingenberg from Denmark wrote to the foreigner Peter Marselis, sent through the Vilna post in the present year 1673, 22 June' (ibid.: 324; the Danzig report is dated 10 June, the Denmark one 20 May); 'Translation from a letter which the foreigner Daniel Brandes wrote to *Okol'nichii* Artamon Sergeevich Matveev from Danzig via the Vilna post in the present year 1672, 19 July' (ibid.: 326; the letter dated 8 July); 'Translation from a letter written in Danzig to *Okol'nichii* Artamon Sergeevich Matveev, via the Vilna post 9 Sep. 1672' (the letter dated 26 August; V-K VII: 300); 'Translation from a letter which the foreigner Daniel Brandes wrote to *Okol'nichii* Artamon Sergeevich Matveev from Danzig, 10 Oct. 1672' (ibid.: 311); Vinius' citation of the letter he received in Riga in late November from Brandes and forwarded to Moscow, where it was received on 12 Dec. (*PDS* 4: 883; V-K VII: 337); translations from German newspapers received in the Riga post 5 June 1673: 'In a letter from Danzig written by Daniel Brandes on 26 May' (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1673, fol. 32); 'Translation from a letter which the foreigner Daniel Brandes wrote from Danzig to *Okol'nichii* Artamon Sergeevich Matveev in the current year 1673, 10 Oct.' (ibid.: fol. 36v, the date presumably that of the translation); in translations from German and Dutch newspapers sent through the Riga post, 12 Feb. 1674: 'In a letter of Daniel Brandes from Danzig written to Peter Marselis 2 Feb.' (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1674, No. 7, fol. 20). Brandes' letters from Danzig apparently were all dated according to the Gregorian calendar (N.S.).

Michael Smit, petitioned Vinius to take over the contract for supplying newspapers to Moscow (ibid., 2: 55).

In short, the establishment of the international postal connection to Moscow included arrangements for newspaper subscriptions, which meant that the post achieved its stated goal of ensuring a regular flow of foreign news. Our next task is to illustrate how this flood of news was digested and translated or excerpted.

19.3. The selection and focus of the news

There are relatively few examples where we are confident that the translators selected material from only a single newspaper. While such evidence for selection of but a few items is not unique to the period after the establishment of the post (analogous examples can be cited from the *kuranty* prior to 1665), one such case illustrates the practices of the late 1660s.[18] It contains translations (presumably by Andrei Vinius) from *OHS* 1668/37.[19] Published on 15 September, *OHS* 1668/37 arrived in the hands of the translators 33 days later, on 8 October. Translations – generally quite accurate – were made from five articles; in the case of two, the translator combined material under a single dated header. The Dutch paper had two reports from Venice (31 August and 1 September), which apparently describe the same incident in the Turkish siege of Candia (today Heraklion, Crete), when a bombardment exploded a powder magazine. The translator chose the shorter of these, probably because at the end of it was a sentence mentioning that the Russian ambassador had arrived in Venice and was on his way to Rome.[20] The other

18. The packet is in V-K VI/1: 304–305, No. 109; 567–568, App. No. 10.

19. See the texts and commentary in V-K VI/2: 141, 569–572. This example is especially valuable since we have both a draft and a fair copy of the translation. The facsimile of the original paper (ibid., 692–693, ill. 21) is the copy held in the Haarlem archive, not the Moscow copy, so the marginal markings and underlinings in that facsimile have nothing to do with the selection process in Moscow. With the exception of the item from Venice, the articles which were used by the translator all have been marked with marginal lines in the Moscow copy of the paper.

20. In the translation from German newspapers, which probably had arrived in the same mail (V-K VI/1: 303, No. 108.41), the only sentence translated from a Venice report dated 1 September was one on the arrival of the Russian ambassador (specifying – unlike in the Dutch report – with a suite of 60) and the fact he was heading to Rome. It is possible that one source here was *KDO* 1668/78 (a copy of which is preserved in Moscow), since it has the report out of Venice, in which the sentence about the Russian ambassador comes after a longer entry about the events on Crete. This same report, with the order of the material reversed, was published under a Venice item of 31 August in the Hamburg *WDoZ* 1668/37. It is possible that the translators of the German source in Moscow (in V-K VI/1: No. 108) simply passed over the news about the Cretan war, since it was being translated from *OHS* 1668/37. However, they included a second report from Venice (fol. 42), dated 4 September, which repeated the news of the ambassador's arrival, mentioned his destination and added the perceptive comment that, since the envoys were apparently using mainly Dutch to communicate ('a sam i drugie kotorye govoriat rech' nederlianskuiu…'), there was reason to think this was really a trade mission, not a formal diplomatic one. In fact, as various ambassadorial instructions tell us, it was common practice for the Muscovite government to forbid its ambassadors to engage in commercial activity. The mission, which had first stopped at the imperial court in Vienna, was headed by the merchant Thomas Kellermann (accompanied by the undersecretaries Prokopii Voznitsyn and Fedor Firsov and some of the other Moscow foreign residents); its ostensible purpose was to inform the Venetians about the Truce of Andrusovo. In Vienna, Kellermann spoke German with the court officials. What language was used

articles from Italy (from Genoa and from Rome) were ignored. That there was a particular interest in reports about Russian envoys is evident in the way the translator selected and combined from two lengthy articles dated Paris, 7 September, only the material pertaining to the reception of the Russian ambassador (Petr Ivanovich Potemkin) at the French court, in the process omitting the information that the Russians were wanting French support for their candidacy to the Polish throne in return for a trade agreement. In fact, Potemkin seems not to have posed such a *quid pro quo* (see below, Sec. 19.5.2). The reason for that omission is not clear, since another *kuranty* packet in fact summarized what was believed to be the main Russian proposals (translating from a Paris report of 11 September).[21] None of the other material in these Paris reports of French and Spanish affairs was translated. The selection from *OHS* 1668/37 included a short item from Vienna, 1 September, about a severe earthquake there, an event reported in other contemporary newspapers.[22] In Moscow there was certainly some interest in reports of

in Venice is not clear, though the Venetians had to request from Kellermann a translation of the tsar's letter (presumably preprepared in Moscow in Latin), since they had no one to read the Russian. The envoys brought back to Moscow at the beginning of December a message from the doge about a victory over the Ottomans and the Ottoman siege of Candia, with a plea that the tsar and the Poles mount a military campaign against the Turks. See Bantysh-Kamenskii, 2: 208, and the somewhat fragmentary records of the embassy published in *PDS* 4: 681–746. It is interesting to compare this report of the news with that published in *NM* 1668 (Sept.), p. 554: "Der Moßkowitische Envoye ist mit seiner Suite von Wien allhier angekommen/ und gehet Er gar nach Rom. Er und all die Seinige reden gut Hochdeutsch und Niederländisch/ welches allhier von solcher fernen Gesandtschafft ungemein erachtet wird." There is no evidence that the mission was to go on to Rome.

21. This second report is in the translation from the next Saturday issue of the Haarlem newspaper (*OHS* 1668/38), which probably arrived a week later in Moscow (V-K VI/1: 305–306, No. 109a; commentary: V-K VI/2: 573). A report from Paris, 7 September, noting the apparent *quid pro quo*, also appeared in *NM* 1668 (Sept.), p. 561. The translations from German newspapers in the previous week (V-K VI/1, No. 108) included a short item from Paris 5 September on the reception of the Russian ambassador. News about Potemkin's travels from his arrival in France to his departure were noted in several articles, although usually occupying a minor place in coverage of events across Europe; see, for example, *WDoZ* 1668/36, with a report from Paris 31 August and *KDO* 1668/78, a report dated 5 September, with identical text. This version of the news stated that the Russian ambassador was traveling incognito, which is rather strange, given the size of the ambassadorial suite and what is known about the lavish French reception of the embassy (Jensen and Powell 1999: 132–133). It is likely that the translation in V-K VI/1, No. 108 was based on the report in the Königsberg paper, where that passage was marked in ink, although the Russian version is in fact a rather free rendering of what is in the original. *ODiZ* 1668/37 included a follow-up report from Paris dated 7 September, mentioning briefly the royal audience for the Russians and the fact that they had proposed establishing commercial relations between the two countries. Potemkin's travels on his way back to Moscow also were the subject of a report from Riga (29 Oct.), translated from a Dutch newspaper (V-K VI/1: 318, No. 118.187). The report quite accurately stated he had been in Spain and France and then traveled through Holland and that the translator was one Ivan Gosens who, we suppose, might have been the person who provided the newspaper with its information. Apparently prior to Potemkin's arrival in Pskov on his way back to Moscow in November 1668, Ordin-Nashchokin, at the time the *voevoda* in Pskov, had received German newspapers containing information that the French had allocated a large sum of money for the purchase of goods in Russia and sent a mission to the Volga to explore the possibilities of French trade with Persia. The translations from these reports are not among the texts published in V-K VI/1 (Floria 2013: 211, referring to RGADA, f. 79, 1668, No. 10, fols. 495–496).

22. See, for example, the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1668/37 and *WDoZ* 1668/37, with reports from Vienna

natural disasters, though it would be difficult to see what bearing this news might have had on decisions about foreign policy.

The final item translated from *OHS* 1668/37 was a report datelined Warsaw 31 August about the terms King Jan Kazimierz was presenting to the Diet for his abdication.[23] He requested specific financial arrangements to receive annual payments from certain crown lands, and the assumption by the Diet of the still unpaid debts incurred by his predecessor. He listed several desiderata regarding who might be elected as his successor, the main concern being to ensure the new king would be a Catholic. The translator in Moscow selected only one of those points, that the new king not be a 'heretic', though otherwise the news report was translated largely in full. The ending of the report included the explanation for the king's decision, where in ill health and aging, he wanted to prepare for his death. A separate translation, from a Latin original published in Danzig, is a precise rendering of the king's abdication speech to the Diet, dated 16 September.[24]

The news out of Poland about the abdication and thus the expectation of an international competition to influence the subsequent election occupied a significant place in the contemporary news reports.[25] Obviously in Moscow the subject would have been of great interest, given the historic efforts at nearly every Polish interregnum to place a Russian candidate on the Polish throne. A translation from German newspapers included two related items: a report from Danzig that the Swedes were monitoring the situation, not wanting to see a Russian on the Polish throne, and a report from Riga that the king was already heading off to Rome, and the possible succession either by the Prince of Condé or the Archduke of Lorraine was being disputed.[26] There are many other translations about the interregnum, the election and coronation in the other *kuranty*.[27]

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dated respectively 2 and 5 September. A major earthquake in Iran, mentioned in a report from Portugal dated 16 July 1668, was translated on 12 September from German newspapers supplied by Leonhardt Marselis (V-K VI/1: 282, No. 93.144).

23. Essentially the same report was printed in *NM* 1668 (Sept.), pp. 545–546. A letter written in Rome by the pope to Jan Kazimierz on 21 July is among the translations from German newspapers (V-K VI/1: 286–287, No. 98. 51–54). Apparently it was printed in various newspapers, among them *WZ App*. 1668/36.

24. V-K VI/1: 314–315, No. 114; the Latin original and analysis of the translation is in V-K VI/2: 635–637.

25. An impressive example is in *WZ App*. 1668/37, a report from Warsaw dated 30 August about the proceedings in the Diet, which occupies nearly two full pages out of the four in that newspaper issue. The annual collections of news issued as *Hollandse Mercurius* by Pieter Casteleyn, the brother of Abraham, publisher of *OHC*, frequently included long entries about the events in Poland, some occupying several pages in small print and describing in detail deliberations in the Diet and the like.

26. V-K VI/1: 303–304, No. 108 (the draft is App. No. 10), the manuscript copies of which immediately follow those of the translation from *OHS* 1668/37 and thus may have been made on the same date, 8 October. Unfortunately, there are no extant German sources to compare with these reports. In one later *kuranty* compilation (10 Dec.), based on German newspapers, reports about the election were drawn from the Berlin *MM* 1668/45, *BE* 1668/45, *KDO* 1668/94, and one manuscript newsletter (V-K VI/1: 318–321, No. 119; V-K VI/2: 347–354). For a summary regarding news of the Polish interregnum and election as reported in the *kuranty,* see V-K VI/2: 94–95.

27. An examination of the archival files is still needed to determine the chronology of what and

Although such news arrived through the post quite quickly, we havev to imagine that Muscovite intelligence regarding events in Poland was not dependent on reports published in foreign newspapers. In fact, without undue delay, the Diet settled on a Polish candidate, Michał Wiśniowiecki, whose brief reign (1669–1673) would turn out to be an undistinguished one.[28] The Moscow officials certainly would have known about him, since his father Jeremy had been one of the most important magnates involved in the wars in Ukraine, where father and son at one point had to flee their estates in the face of Cossack attacks.

The German newspapers received, apparently, in the same mail with *OHS* 1668/37 were mined for some additional news, notably a report from Kamianets-Podilskyi (Kamenets-Podol'skii) about fighting in Ukraine between Cossacks and the Crimean Tatars, and a report from Paris concerning Polish negotiations there relating to the succession.[29] The Kamianets-Podilskyi report cited news from Moscow that the Ottomans had taken Babylon (Baghdad) from the Persian Safavids, that the Ottomans were negotiating with the Venetians about the surrender of Candia, and that a Tatar delegation had recently been in Moscow.[30] It is not clear what the translators passed over in the

when the Russians learned about the situation. As early as 1667, concerns about the Polish succession were being raised in the context of Russian diplomatic exchanges, since there were indications already that Jan Kazimierz might abdicate (see, e.g., Floria 2013: 206–207). The archival inventory of the Polish Affairs files lists many relevant documents, some undoubtedly received well after the election was over. However, the dates in the inventory cannot be assumed to specify the dates on which individual texts were received; most are probably the dates on the documents themselves. The items are (cited here from the inventory, RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1): translation of the king's speech to the Diet announcing his abdication, and opinions about the candidates for the Polish throne (1668, fol. 219, No. 23, Sept. 6); arrival in Russia of Polish envoy 'Jan Frantsyshek Goishevskii', sent by the Diet with the information about Jan Kazimierz's voluntary abdication (fol. 219^{v}, No. 25, Oct. 24); letter of the duke of Lorraine to a Polish notable, requesting his candidacy be advanced (fol. 219^{v}, No. 27, Nov. 9); translation of a Latin pasquinade on the exclusion of candidates for the Polish throne, among them from the Russian court (fol. 220, No. 29, Dec.; 1669, fol. 222^{v}, No. 15, June); translation of a Polish pasquinade published by a certain Prawdowski regarding why the Polish king is not a Pole (fol. 222^{v}, No. 14, June 8); intercepted letter to the Crimean Khan Adyl Girey from the crown treasurer Andrzej Morsztyn, informing of the election of Prince Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki to the throne (fol. 222^{v}, No. 16, June 17); description of the election of Wiśniowiecki, his coronation and his genealogy, excerpted from printed news (fol. 222^{v}, No. 17, July–Sept.); translation from a book containing the genealogy of the newly elected king, written by Sternberg (fol. 223, No. 19, Sept. 20); two intercepted letters from Poland to the Crimean Khan and his vizier, sent with the Crimean envoy Attalisk, informing of the coronation of the new king and on his desire to maintain good relations (fol. 223, No. 20, Oct. 17). These listings alone suggest that there is a great deal of additional material which needs to be processed to complement the often sparse reports in the *kuranty* translations if we are to obtain a full picture of the degree to which Moscow was informed of Polish affairs. The book by 'Sternberg' (Stanisław Temberski) may well be *Chronolgia Synoptica, Palmitis Coributei; Ad Augustissimam Coronationis Diem, Serenissimi ac Potentissimi Domini, Domini, Michaelis I, Dei Gratia, Regis Poloniae* […] Krakow: Piotrkowczyk, 1669 (Estreicher 31: 85).

28. For his biography, see Przyboś 1975.

29. V-K VI/1: 303–304, No. 108.43–44.

30. Note that the geographical dictionary compiled by Andrei Vinius in the summer of 1667 contains an entry 'Bogdat city, which is also called Vavilon, at a distance [on the route] from Moscow to Astrakhan of 3400 [*versty*]'; Petrov 1950: 150). Presumably there is a connection between his work

unidentified German papers, but what they ignored in *OHS* 1668/37 was certainly substantial.[31] Apart from the items already noted, where certain reports were but excerpted, the translations omitted all of the news from England about events involving the court and diplomatic relations with, inter alia, the Dutch. They also neglected the court and diplomatic news from Vienna and all the reports from both Holland and the Spanish Netherlands, some involving religious policy, some international diplomacy, and some the arrival of merchant shipping, as well as a report from Hamburg on Swedish affairs.

This limited example would seem to suggest that the translators in Moscow had a rather narrow view of what news was relevant for their employers: an undue emphasis on reports about Muscovite missions abroad, some interest in the war for Crete and other events involving the Ottomans, some interest in the interregnum in Poland and in fighting between the Cossacks and Tatars in Ukraine. The translators might also take note of an unusual natural occurrence. Yet even in these areas of interest, the tendency appears to have been the selection of only short passages from longer articles. There may have been a certain amount of coordination between those working on the Dutch and those working on the German papers. This at least hints that there may have been a surfeit of foreign news. It would be a mistake to generalize on the basis of selection and translation from a single newspaper.

Several packets of news were translated in the two-and-a-half week period between 27 August and 15 September 1669.[32] The sources which so far we have been able to identify include an unbroken sequence of *KSO* and *KDO* 1669/64–68 and a nearly complete sequence of Dutch newspapers: *OHD* 1669/32, [33], 34 and 35; *OHS* 1669/34, 37; *ODC* 1669/33.[33] Two of the deliveries (on 27 Aug. and 3 Sept.) are attributed to Peter Marselis, probably ones that had arrived in the regular post; another – containing one of the same newspaper issues which had been provided by Marselis – was transferred from the Privy Chancery on 6 September. Possibly it had arrived there from some other informant. Examination of this evidence illustrates the approaches to selection and translation from multiple issues of foreign newspapers, even if there still are some important gaps in the source base.

With one exception, the translation packet No. 161 is comprised entirely of news drawn from the Königsberg paper's issues Nos. 64–66. The exception is the opening, short item

on the *kuranty* and the material in this little reference text, which we discuss further in Sec. 19.6.1.

31. Assuming that *KDO* 1668/78 was one of the German sources, it certainly contributed very little to the translations in V-K VI/1, No. 108. That issue included quite substantial reports from Brussels, Vienna, Hamburg, Adrianople, Lisbon, London and Stettin, none of them used by the translator.

32. V-K VI/1: 368–391, Nos. 158–166. The texts of Nos. 161 and 159, both based on material received on 27 August, are on consecutive folios in RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1667, No. 10. The texts of Nos. 162 (received 3 Sept.), 160, 166 (received 6 Sept.), 163 (received 8 Sept.), 158, 164 (received 15 Sept.) and 165 are on consecutive folios (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1669, No. 8).

33. For the source texts and discussion of their relationship to the translations, see V-K VI/2: 372–380, 590–597. We have bracketed the copy of *OHD* 1669/33 since, while it is preserved in Moscow, no translation has so far been traced to it.

from Vienna, 27 July, reporting unprecedented thunder and lightning 'in the Turkish land', which caused great destruction and many deaths. The interest in this coincides with what we have seen earlier about selection of news concerning natural disasters, though in this case also connecting with news about the Ottomans. Reports of presumably this same event, generally but a sentence in much longer articles, appeared in other papers.[34] The only instance where an article drawn from the Königsberg newspaper was translated essentially in its entirety is one concerning Hetman Petro Doroshenko's support for the Poles against the forces of the Tatars and other Cossacks. Following this was a lengthy excerpt from a letter Doroshenko had written to his brother, also published in the Königsberg paper. Although a shorter version of this same letter was published in *OHD* 1669/35 (which the translators also were using), the German text must be the one that was translated, albeit with some substantial cuts (V-K VI/2: 372). The other selections based on the Königsberg newspaper are excerpts from longer reports, generally accurately translated or summarized. With the exception of a summary from a report about the arrest and death sentence in England for two of the former judges who had condemned King Charles I (his execution had provoked the displeasure of the Muscovite government), the other items in No. 161 either related to the war against the Tatars in Poland or the Ottoman-Venetian war over Crete. News about both topics frequently dominated the Western press in this period, with particular attention to the war for Crete, which was coming to a climax, the desperate situation of the Venetian defenders prompting promises of assistance from several European states.[35]

The seven articles which served as sources for the translations in packet No. 161 represented only one quarter of the total number of dated reports in those three issues of the Königsberg paper. Among those ignored by the translators were articles from The Hague, Brussels, Stettin, Nuremberg, and Cologne. But it was not just a matter of omitting news about political events pertinent to regions far from Muscovy's borders. The newspapers printed so many reports about the war for Crete, for example, that there was no need to translate all the articles with details on that conflict. It would not have taken much to inform a reader in Moscow about the desperate final months of the siege before the Ottomans won the war. Translations produced at the same time from Dutch newspapers also included reports on the war. As a selection from the foreign newspapers was being made for translation, there could have been some consultation in the Ambassadorial Chancery so as to avoid excessive duplication of essentially the same reports.

Issues 67 and 68 of the Königsberg paper, which presumably had arrived in the next mail, also were sources for translations (the *kuranty* packets are Nos. 162, 163 and 166, the translation dates 3, 8 and 6 September). Only five of the nineteen datelined reports in the two issues of the newspaper were drawn on by the translators, the material filling translation packets No. 162 and No. 166 but providing only one article in the long

34. See *WDoZ*, 1669/32: [2], article from Vienna, 28 July; *ODiZ* 1669/33: [2], Vienna, 1 August.
35. On the focus in the *kuranty* regarding this war, see V-K VI/2: 97–99.

No. 163.[36] While in one case substantial portions of the German original were omitted, the other four reports were only slightly condensed, with no major omissions. The quality of the translations is somewhat mixed, with laudatory clarification (sometimes by the addition of a phrase or an identifying name) along with some errors. As in the case discussed above, the news that was selected related to the war for Crete, the Polish succession, and the Cossacks in Ukraine. It is of some interest that a report from Vienna, which cites as its source the Polish ambassador there, included what was obviously an unverified speculation that, just as Jan Kazimierz was abdicating and planning to enter a monastery, so also was the tsar planning to do the same (V-K VI/1: 391). Such 'news' would surely have interested the Russian officials and indeed was translated.

Apart from the one issue of the Königsberg paper, the translator who produced packet No. 163 drew on sources which have not yet been precisely identified, even though at least one Hamburg paper is known to have published similar or identical texts. Of particular interest is the list of 37 conditions, agreed to by Michał Wiśniowiecki so that he would be elected to the Polish throne. While it seems possible that the list might have appeared in a separate pamphlet, so far no such source has been located. It is reasonable to assume that for the proceedings of the electoral Diet in Poland, the original text would have been in Latin or Polish. The Hamburg newspaper *ESZ* 1669/Sec33 published a German version but, as was typical in newspaper reports of the time, interlaced with a lot of Latin phrases.[37] The translator of this text in Moscow clearly had problems with some of those phrases; his draft translation thus contains numerous corrections, perhaps made by a colleague who knew Latin. A few sections of other articles in *kuranty* packet No. 163 overlap with ones published in other issues of the same Hamburg newspaper, though again it seems likely the Russians took them from a different German source.[38] In the circumstances where the translators seem to have been increasingly selective and commonly would substantially condense their sources, the apparently faith-

36. It is possible that the division of these *kuranty* translations into distinct numbered packets in V-K VI/1 is misleading, due to some reshuffling of the individual folios. As currently divided, the material in No. 162 draws on both *KDO* 1669/67 and *KSO* 1669/68. The lone item in No. 166 is from *KDO* 1669/67, and but one item from *KSO* 1669/68 is in the lengthy packet No. 163. There are many instances where a new datelined report in the translation begins at the top of a sheet or ends at the bottom of one. Along with one packet of translations from Dutch newspapers (No. 160), these packets occupy in the archival scroll an unbroken series of sheets (fols. 35–53). The texts all seem to be draft copies, with numerous corrections.

37. That this Hamburg paper was not the direct source for the translation made in Moscow becomes clear from the fact that it appends the list of conditions to an article 'Preussen, 12 dito [August]', whereas the Russian translation has Warsaw, 7 August, and none of the other material that prefaces the Hamburg text. Prior publication, for instance in a Danzig newspaper, is a possibility here.

38. In particular, the Vienna 14 August entry (V-K VI/1: 379, No. 163.46) includes material found also in *ESZ* 1669/Sec34 and in *ESZ* 1669/Sec36, the subject the reception of the Polish ambassador and the politics of the Polish succession. However, reports containing similar information seem to have been widespread in the contemporary press. The *kuranty* material on fols. 46–47 (the latter with a brief summary of news about the war for Crete) could be a compilation by the translator, based on more than one source and possibly incorporating what he remembered having read in a newspaper, even if what he put down on paper is not in fact a direct translation from it.

ful translation of the entire list of the conditions to which Wiśniowiecki agreed stands out. We currently do not know whether this important information arrived in Moscow via any other source.

Since Dutch newspapers generally printed a lot of news that was not reported in the German ones, the regular supply of at least the respected *OHC* gave the Ambassadorial Chancery a broader array of news than would be the case if it had to rely on the German press. Naturally events of direct relevance for Dutch security and economic prosperity were a particular focus; hence often long articles on events in England, France or the Spanish Netherlands. The importance of the international maritime trade for the Dutch meant that news about the merchant fleets or the most recent arrival of some rich cargo from the Indies would make it into the news (see our Sec. 19.6). This interest in the maritime trade was reflected as well in one of the significant areas of overlap between the German and Dutch press: news about the wars in the Mediterranean against the Ottomans. There were regular reports from the Baltic and regarding events in Poland, though understandably not as much space devoted to them as in the German press.

Despite its potential to broaden the range of international news being translated in Moscow, to a considerable degree, the priorities of selection from the Dutch press were little different from those applied in translating the German newspapers. The raw numbers of articles published and those translated are but a rough basis to illustrate how much the translators actually took from the Dutch papers. However, the statistics at least provide a starting point for discussion. The seven issues of the Dutch papers known to have been received in Moscow in the period between 27 August and 15 September 1669 contained 130 articles, of which only eleven (8.5%) figured in any of the translated packets from that period. The packets, of course, could be incomplete, in which case the percentage might increase, but there is every reason to believe the number still would be low.[39]

Of course more is needed here: where Dutch articles were used, were they translated in their entirety? On the whole, the translators extracted only some parts of the reports, and the sentences they 'translated' in some cases were condensed. In the case of one especially long report from Venice (some 40 printed lines) dated 2 August, only a final sentence about a revolt in Istanbul was translated, in the process rendering the news as more certain than in fact the Dutch newspaper had suggested.[40] Other selections from the Dutch papers did emphasize the war for Crete, but there was so much of that news, much of what was printed about it in Haarlem also was passed over in the translations. The translator did select news from Florence, 3 August, about the death of the Duc de Beaufort, probably because, as an important military com-

39. If we were to posit that in this same period *all* of the Tuesday and Saturday numbers of *OHC* were received but simply never were used in translation or preserved in the archive, the total number of Dutch news articles for that period would have been 244. In that case, only 4.5% of them figured in translations.

40. *OHD* 1669/34; V-K VI/1: 369, No. 158.56; V-K VI/2: 593.

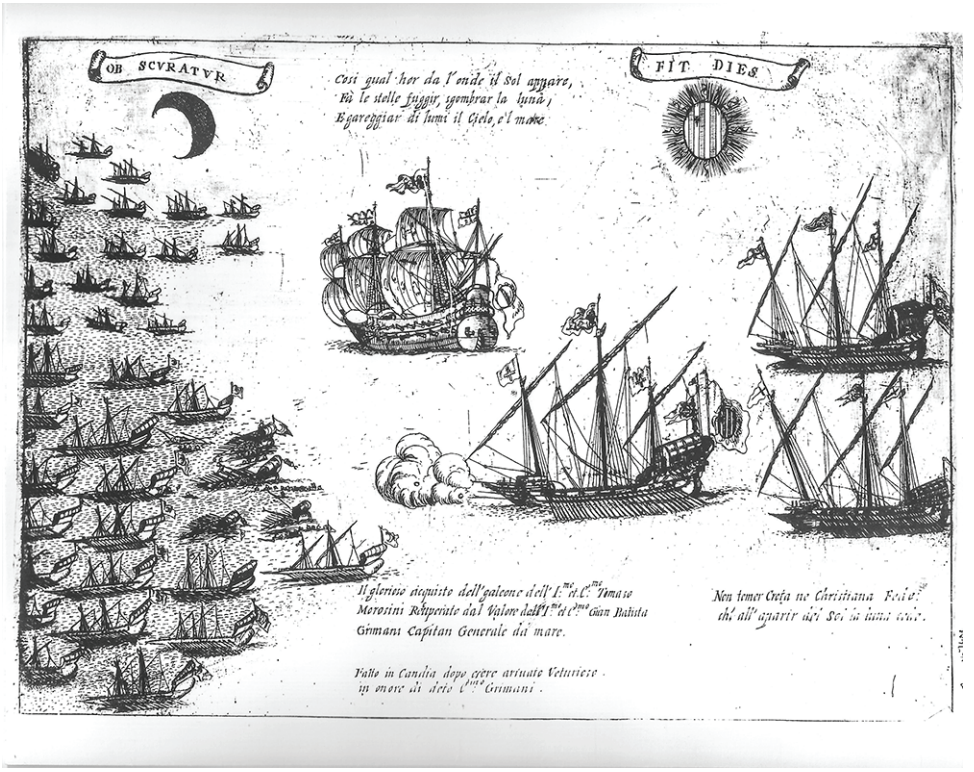

FIG. 19.1. An engraving owned by Andrei Vinius showing Venetian ships attacking a fleet of Turkish galleys near Crete.

mander in the war for Crete, he had figured in a couple of earlier reports.[41] It is worth remembering that the attention given in Moscow to the war for Crete was a longstanding one, not necessarily because of any concern over Venice but rather because the effort in the Mediterranean kept the Ottoman military forces occupied.[42] Indeed, soon after Crete had fallen in 1669, the Ottoman armies invaded Poland and Ukraine. Quite apart from Russian government concerns, the war for Crete seems to have attracted the personal attention of Andrei Vinius, who was most probably the translator of the Dutch newspapers in the late 1660s. A scrapbook he kept included engravings of naval actions in the war for Crete, the earliest dating from the beginning stages of that war in the 1640s (FIG. 19.1; Savel'eva 2008: 249, 251).

41. *OHS* 1669/34; V-K VI/1: 386, No. 165.64; V-K VI/2: 594.

42. The limits of Moscow's interest in the war can be seen in the fact that pleas from Venice for assistance did not lead to any kind of meaningful assistance. The Venetian embassy to Moscow headed by Alberto Vimina in 1655–1656 was a failure. The reciprocal Russian embassy led by Ivan Chemodanov in the following year even brought back to Moscow a plea from the sizeable Orthodox community in Venice to the tsar and patriarch for Russian intervention (Waugh 1979a). However, the Russians were preoccupied with Poland, Ukraine, and Sweden on through the years of the war for Crete. In general, going well back even to the late fifteenth century, Muscovy rejected pleas that it intervene militarily against the Ottomans in support of Christians against the 'infidels'. If there were to be any meaningful participation in a war against the Ottomans, it would have to be as part of a larger coalition, which Russian diplomacy at least began to explore in several missions to European states starting in the late 1660s. The Ottoman offensive in Eastern Europe that began in the 1670s was the catalyst for a serious Russian military commitment.

The abdication of Jan Kazimierz was of sufficient interest so that a letter to him from the newly elected Michał Wiśniowiecki was translated in its entirety.[43] Other news in the original report from Vienna was substantially condensed. An article in *ODC* 1669/33 from Stockholm, 27 June, reported on the reception there of the English ambassador, Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle, who had traveled via Copenhagen and was to present the Swedish king with the Order of the Garter. However, the Russian text merely noted his reception, not the purpose of the mission.[44] At least on two earlier occasions, short mentions of his mission (first to Denmark) had made it into the Dutch newspapers received in Moscow and were at least summarized in the Russian translations.[45] Probably the interest here in part was due to the fact that Carlisle had headed an English embassy to Denmark, Sweden and Russia in 1663; of course English alliances with the Baltic powers always had to be of concern in Moscow. If the Russians had wanted to read a detailed description of the actual ceremony in Stockholm where Carlisle made the presentation, there was one from Stockholm, 14 August, in *OHS* 1669/35, an issue that *might* have been received in this period in Moscow but has left no trace in the *kuranty*. The translation based on the Stockholm report in *ODC* 1669/33 included – perhaps more significantly for the Kremlin – the final sentence of the original, indicating that a satisfactory settlement of the Russian dispute with Sweden over Livonia was to be expected.

19.4. The Anglo-Dutch war and the War of Devolution

Arguably the most important European news in these years concerned the Second Anglo-Dutch War, declared by the Dutch on 4 March 1665 and settled by the Treaty of Breda on 17 July 1667, and the so-called War of Devolution between France and Spain over control of the Spanish Netherlands, which began in May 1667 and ended in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) on 2 May 1668.[46] There was in addition a long war between Spain and Portugal (several other powers were involved); it would end in a Portuguese victory and Spanish recognition of Portuguese independence.[47] Apart from a deluge of news about battles on land and at sea, these events involved lengthy diplomatic negotiations and calculated deception by various parties. Whether the Dutch or English would achieve supremacy at sea was still an open question, and of even greater portent for any hope of lasting European peace was the fact that King Louis XIV's goal of annexing Flanders was but temporarily thwarted. The issue there was his claim that the terri-

43. *OHD* 1669/32; V-K VI/1: 370, No. 159.318–319; V-K VI/2: 591.

44. V-K VI/1: 371, No. 160; V-K VI/2: 591–592.

45. V-K VI/1: 345, No. 135.282; 359, No. 148.306–307; V-K VI/2: 588–589.

46. Zeller 1955: 26–30; André 1950: 97–115; Rowen 1954.

47. In the discussion below, for the sake of economy, we will deliberately leave aside most details of what the *kuranty* contain regarding the Spanish-Portuguese war. Suffice it to say that there were several translated or condensed articles regarding military events, the involvement of other powers, and the opening of negotiations for peace. The longer history behind the conflict and the political settlement within Portugal where the king was deposed in a palace coup would probably have been difficult for anyone relying solely on the *kuranty* to understand. Spanish affairs to a considerable degree were *terra incognita* to Moscow prior to the Potemkin embassy.

tories represented his Spanish Habsburg wife's unpaid dowry. The Austrian Habsburgs also had a dynastic claim to Flanders (via marriage into the Spanish royal family) but managed to negotiate a potential peaceful settlement with France in the event the king of Spain would die. In fact, the sickly boy King Carlos II (who succeeded to the throne on 17 September 1665) would live on to 1700, his death then igniting the War for the Spanish Succession between France and Austria. Of particular importance in the complicated diplomacy of the period was the so-called Triple Alliance of England, Sweden, and the Dutch Republic, whose creation in May 1668 was intended to enforce the settlement reached between France and Spain at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Even if details and some of the underlying issues in all these complicated events were likely little known or understood in Moscow, it should have been possible for the tsar and his diplomatic officials to track the basic outlines simply on the basis of what was translated for the *kuranty*.[48] In Western Europe too, a person who might read a newspaper with a report of the latest battle or the reception of a diplomat generally would not understand the context for that news unless he had been following the story on a regular basis. Without some kind of insider information, nuances and motivations might be obscure. While the Russian government now seems to have been receiving the newspapers regularly, what actually came to the attention of the key decision makers in the Kremlin was but a substantially condensed and selected set of translations. Maybe sufficient for tracking the key moments in European politics, maybe not. Whether this material was actually absorbed and had any bearing on Muscovite diplomacy is difficult to know, but as we shall suggest, it seems that much of it mattered little.

19.4.1. Reporting on the Anglo-Dutch war[49]

News from and about the Dutch Republic had long been of interest in Moscow, given the importance of Dutch merchants in the Russian trade. In 1664 and especially 1665, even before the new international postal route to Riga was up and running, there is a long series of translated reports, in which it was possible to trace a number of key moments in Anglo-Dutch relations. Diplomatic efforts to head off open conflict, the expectation that they would fail, and also military preparations for war were mentioned in reports translated as early as late summer 1664.[50] There was a quite detailed report about what would prove to be one of the final provocations, the English attack not far from Cadiz

48. Learning the details after the fact, when they were already history, was certainly not out of the question too. While we do not know when he acquired the book, Andrei Vinius owned a 440-page Dutch account of the Anglo-Dutch war, published in Amsterdam in 1668, the year after it had ended: *Den Engelsen en Munstersen Oorlogh, Tegen de Vrye Vereenighde Nederlanden. Beginnende in den Jare 1664, en eyndigende met het sluyten van de Vrede tot Breda, Anno 1667*. Amsterdam: Marcus Doornick, 1668 (Savel'eva 2008: 84). At very least this reinforces the idea that Vinius would have had a particular interest in the war, an interest that conceivably influenced his selection of newspaper articles to translate for the *kuranty* (or conversely, had been stimulated by the translation of the news).

49. A version of this section also is in Waugh 2023c, as part of that study regarding all the *kuranty* translations of Indies convoys' lading lists.

50. V-K VI/1: 104, No. 12.7; 105, No. 13.2.

on a Dutch fleet from Smyrna in December 1664.[51] A document translated probably no earlier than the end of March 1665 seems to have derived ultimately from a broadside, publishing a decree issued on 27 January by the Dutch Government, establishing levels of prize money to be given privateers who might capture English ships.[52]

The last-minute efforts of France to head off the conflict were mentioned in a translation made on 27 April, after the actual declaration of war. Translations from newspapers sent by Ordin-Nashchokin from Pskov in late June included brief accounts of the failure of the French effort to mediate.[53] Reports published beginning in late June documented growing tension between France and England, in part due to English attacks on French shipping. Such accounts, albeit condensed and speculative, were translated in some of the *kuranty* by late summer and early autumn.[54]

News printed on 20 February 1666 (N.S.) in *OHS* 1666/8, delivered by Van Sweeden on 26 March (O.S.) and translated, emphasized the imminence of conflict between England and France and the involvement of the armies of the prince-bishop of Münster against the Dutch.[55] A report out of Königsberg, 23 February 1666 – in German newspapers from Van Sweeden's next mail delivery on 8 April – elaborated in some detail the English grievances with France for its supporting the Dutch, because Charles II had sent Louis XIV a letter announcing his intention of going to war.[56] Apparently the same news packet delivered by Van Sweeden contained a copy of *OHS* 1666/10, from which

51. V-K VI/1: 106, No. 14.16, from *OHD* 1665/4, obtained by Andrei Vinius on 28 February from a Dutch merchant. The entire first page of *OHD* 1665/4 was devoted to reports about the battle and related events. For another contemporary Dutch report on the battle, see *HM* 16 (for 1665): 16. This is the report printed in *OHD* 1665/4 immediately above the one chosen to be translated in Moscow. One more contemporary account appeared in *OMC* 1665/4 (published on 27 January, the same day as *OHD* 1665/4).

52. V-K VI/1: 114–115, No. 21. The editors have assigned this a date of 31 March 1665, apparently because it is found on consecutive folios following translations from Dutch newspapers made on that date. So far it has been impossible to locate either a copy of the original broadside or of a Dutch newspaper that might have printed it, if such was the source used in Moscow. The last dated entry in the translation that preceded this text (V-K VI/1: 109) is from Amsterdam, 13 February, referring to another Dutch decree (dated 26 Jan.) about maritime restrictions following receipt of the news concerning the attack at Cadiz. A possible source would be *OHS* 1665/7, published on 14 February, but there is no extant copy to check. Either that number or one of the immediately succeeding ones could have included the text of the decree of 27 January. Such decrees were issued both as broadsides and in pamphlet form. A pamphlet containing the decree of 27 Jan. is: *Extract Uyt 't Register van de Resolutien van de Ho. Mo. Heeren Staten Generael, Der Vereenichde Nederlanden. Den 27. Januarii 1665.* 's Gravenhage: Wouw, 1665 (Tiele No. 5216; Knuttel No. 9020). It has a different preface from what is in the Russian translation, hence is not the direct source. In his massive compendium and discussion of Dutch history (the relevant volume published in 1668), Lieuwe van Aitzema quoted both the decrees of 26 and 27 January and subsequently discussed the material (Aitzema 11/2: 710–713, 866, 871, 873). A close comparison of the translation in V-K VI/1: No. 21 with the Dutch original remains to be done, but we note that the translator did add Russian ruble equivalents for the values in Dutch guilders and seems to have shortened considerably at least the final section of the decree.

53. V-K VI/1: 109, No. 17.10; 105, Nos. 22.33, 22.36–37.

54. Ibid.: 132, No. 25.84; 143, No. 30.64–65; 153, No. 34.83.

55. Ibid.: 166, No. 40.30–32.

56. Ibid.: 162–163, No. 38.45–46.

the translators drew on three articles to produce a single report datelined London, 22 February. The opening sentence reported that a French courier had just delivered Louis' declaration of war against England.[57] A separate set of translations (possibly from news that had arrived in the next mail?) included an item from Riga, 22 February, summarizing the actions by several of the parties to the conflict: the French declaration of war against England, a promise from Brandenburg to support the Dutch, the inclination of the king of Spain to support England, the dispatch of English troops to support the forces of the prince-bishop of Münster in their attack on the Dutch, and a dispatch of Swedish troops with the same aim.[58] The translators selected from an article in *OHS* 1666/9 only the sentence mentioning that Brandenburg had now agreed to send troops in support of the Dutch.[59] Although the Dutch negotiated support from Denmark, this failed to convince Münster to continue negotiations with The Republic for a peace settlement.[60] However, the bishopric's precarious financial position, given the failure of the English to send a promised subsidy, seems to have led quickly to a renewal of negotiations, and a news item in *OHD* 1666/16 and *OMC* 1666/15, from Amsterdam, 19 April, reported that a treaty had been drafted.[61] The treaty was in fact signed on 19 April in Cleve. A separate brochure with a German version of it a served as the basis for its translation in Moscow, often very precise but with some condensation.[62] A Dutch report from The Hague dated 23 May described the celebration of the peace there. It probably was printed in a newspaper on or immediately after that date and was translated in Moscow before the end of June.[63]

The naval actions in the Anglo-Dutch war seem to have attracted the greatest attention from the translators in Moscow. More than one report contained data on the Dutch and English fleets, in one case with considerable detail.[64] This description of the two

57. Ibid.: 163, No. 38.48.

58. Ibid.: 165, No. 39.29.

59. Ibid.: 167, No. 40.34; V-K VI/2: 490.

60. V-K VI/1: 177, No. 44.145–147. For the Dutch agreement with Denmark, see *HM* 17: 30, and for the defensive alliance with Brandenburg, ibid.: 33–38.

61. V-K VI/1: 179, No. 45.152; V-K VI/2: 503. The news was confirmed in a longer report datelined Stettin 23 April in that same packet of translations (No. 45.153–154), and in *kuranty* based on Dutch newspapers delivered on 10 May by Van Sweeden, where the report out of Stettin was dated 27 March (V-K VI/1: 182, No. 47.125).

62. Ibid.: 187–190, No. 49.156–161; V-K VI/2: 300–305. We cannot be absolutely certain that the German pamphlet was the exact source used in Moscow (see V-K VI/2: 304). However, there is no reason to posit that the Moscow translation was based on the Dutch original used for the German edition. A copy of the Dutch text was published in the annual compendium *HM* 17: 55–59, probably copied from a Dutch separate. It is likely that a copy of that annual, published in 1667, was received in Moscow in late summer or early autumn that year (see below).

63. V-K VI/1: 187, No. 48.186–187.

64. V-K VI/1: 110–111, No. 18. Such reports, which might include a complete list of ships – their names, commandants, the number of cannon and crew – seem to have been standard features in Dutch newspapers; many such lists were published as broadsides. Since we do not have the direct source for the *kuranty* translation, it is hard to know whether it is but a summary, based on one of the more complete listings. However, the nature of the summary suggests that the condensation might

fleets apparently dates from late April, anticipating what would be the first major sea battle of the war. The Battle of Lowestoft involved the maneuvering of the two fleets over several days, with the actual fighting occurring on 3/13 June 1665 (Fox 2009: 83–101). Reports during May in German newspapers were at least summarized by the translators: information on the movement of the huge English fleet under the command of the Duke of York and speculation that a major battle was imminent.[65] An English summary of the Battle of Lowestoft treating it as a great victory was translated twice in Moscow on 16 July from a supplement to the *Königsb. Sontags Post-Zeitung* (*KSP*).[66] Two substantially longer Dutch accounts, possibly laying out some accurate details of the engagement but also lauding Dutch heroism, at the same time that they were identifying scapegoats, appeared in *CID* 1665/25, published in Amsterdam on 20 June, N.S. One of these was translated in its entirety and the second with some condensation in Moscow on 15 or 16 July, along with portions of other articles about the battle and its aftermath, where at least one of the Dutch commanders was accused, if falsely, of having fled the scene.[67] This news thus would have reached Moscow within about five weeks of when it

have been done in Moscow, generalizing in a way that would have been less likely in circles more familiar with the warships of the times. The ultimate source in this case would have been complete lists, such as those published by Pieter Casteleyn in his annual compendium *HM* 16: 69–71. The summary figures in the translation and the list published in *HM* for the English correspond quite well to that compiled by Fox (2009: 316–322, App. B) for the forces actually engaged in the Battle of Lowestoft. However, the summary figures for the Dutch fleet seem to have been based on a different (and more comprehensive) list than that used in the other tabulations (cf. ibid.: 323–326, App. C). It is important to note that the published statistics about fleet strength and any translations or summaries made from them do not of themselves provide an accurate description of the relative strengths of the two navies. The size of the cannon of English ships and their sturdy construction exceeded that of the Dutch ships; at least in the early stages of the conflict, the English also had superior naval tactics (ibid.: 36–65). Regardless of the precise numbers, it is clear that huge forces were involved. The translation is included in a packet labeled 'Translation from Dutch newspapers,' received on 28 May from the Dutchman Werner (Vakhromei Petrovich) Müller. About Müller, see Amburger 1957: 128–129. The manuscript originally had indicated Vinius supplied the original newspaper(s), but then his name was crossed out and the credit given simply to Müller.

65. V-K VI/1: 117–119, No. 22.37–37.

66. Ibid.: 123–124, No. 23.57–58; 126, No. 23.63–64. This is an unusual instance of two different translations apparently made from the same source, the copy of the Königsberg newspaper in fact preserved in the archive in Moscow and bearing a notation that it had been translated (V-K VI/2: 150–151, 281–282). The caption heading in the newspaper supplement confuses the dating of the event, suggesting that the battle spread over three days (the dates given in N.S.). This seems to have been true of some of the preliminary maneuvering, although the serious fighting occurred only on 3/13 June. The German report used by the translators is from London, 6 June (this would have to be O.S.), even though one of the two Russian translations renders the date as 16 June (thus 'corrected' to N.S.). A likely explanation is that two different German sources might have been used here, as suggested in ibid.: 151. The battle was the first major sea engagement of the war, involving huge forces on both sides. Contemporary English pamphlets, published within days of its having taken place, consistently portrayed it as a great English victory. They can be viewed in the Early English Books Online database with a simple search using the terms 'fleet' and '1665'. For contemporary Dutch treatments, including a translation from one of the English accounts, see Aitzema 11/2: 765–776; *HM* 16: 72–74.

67. V-K VI/1: 136–138, No. 27.91–97; No. 20; 546–549, App. 2.70–73, 99–102; V-K VI/2: 465–472; 676–677 (Ill. 12). The heading to the translation states that the newspaper was handed in by the Hamburger Philip Verporten (Van der Poorten) and Dutchman Werner Müller and translated on 16

was published. Other, shorter news items dealt with some of the immediate aftermath of the battle, describing casualties, celebrations, and subsequent naval actions.[68] Both sides claimed victory, although relatively few ships were destroyed – significantly, one was the Dutch flagship, whose explosion killed the chief admiral. The English clearly were justified in claiming the immediate advantage, but the fact is that the Dutch fleet survived to fight another day and under more effective leadership. As Fox (2009: 100) summarizes, "The fruits of victory were decidedly disappointing."

In the Netherlands, the critical issue was whether English efforts to blockade the Dutch ports would be successful. Newspaper accounts reported about the military escorts for merchant convoys and the arrival of the fleets from the Mediterranean and the Indies and printed lading lists of the goods they brought whose sale fueled the Dutch economy. In temporary control of the seas after Lowestoft, the English hoped to be able to intercept a Dutch fleet commanded by Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, the 'greatest seaman of the age' (Fox 2009: 133), which had raided English outposts along the coast of Africa, crossed the Atlantic, and attacked English shipping in the West Indies. *OHD* 1665/26 (30 June 1665) reported from Guadeloupe, 11 May, on de Ruyter's raids in the Caribbean.[69] The translators selected from this newspaper, presumably received in Moscow by the beginning of August, several items, including the opening lines of the report from Guadeloupe and reports about the Battle of Lowestoft.[70] The English received intelligence in early July that De Ruyter was headed home. To avoid the English warships in the Channel, his and other Dutch fleets would sail around Scotland and come down along the Norwegian coast (politically under Denmark) in order to approach Dutch ports from the east. The English were trying to persuade a reluctant Denmark to break with The Republic and assist in interdicting the Dutch ships. Without waiting for the conclusion of those negotiations, Whitehall dispatched a fleet on 17 July, hoping to intercept De Ruyter. However, he managed to slip through untouched and returned home in triumph with his prizes.[71]

July. The copy of the original newspaper, preserved in Moscow, has a note that the translation was made on 15 July. This copy, which is quite legible, can be viewed as well in Delpher, where the Russian note has been partially cut off. On the circumstances involving the accusation against the Dutch admiral, see Fox 2009: 124–125.

68. V-K VI/1: 120, No. 23.47; 127–128; 133, No. 25.87; 135, No. 26.79–80.

69. Since it is very likely Andrei Vinius was responsible for the translations from the Dutch newspapers at this time, of some interest is the fact that his library contained a copy of Prince Jeurian, *Journael, Ofte Dag-Register, Van de Reyse die gedaen is door 's Landts Vloot, onder den Manhavten Heer Admirael Michiel A. de Ruyter* [...] Amsterdam: Imbrechts, 1666. This is the diary of de Ruyter's raids on the English outposts. The book was dedicated to Nicolaas Witsen, who might well have sent a copy to Vinius. Vinius' own notation on the book seems to mean he acquired it in 1667/68 (the year 7176; Savel'eva 2008: 149, 153).

70. V-K VI/1: 127–130, No. 24; VI/2: 472–474.

71. De Ruyter's brief report about his return voyage was published as a news separate *Brief Van de Heer Vice-Admirael de Ruyter, Aen de Ho. Mog. Heeren Staten Generael, Der Ver-eenighde Nederlanden*. N.p., [1665] (Tiele No. 5258) and reprinted in *HM* 16: 96. A diary or log of his expedition was published as *Journael, Gehouden op 's Lants Schip de Spiegel* [...] Amsterdam: Pieter la Burgh, 1665 (Tiele, No. 5261). *HM* 16: 90–96 published a lengthy account of the voyage, accompanied by a fold-

Verhael van het Scheep-gevecht , voor Bergen in Noorwegen. Op den 10. Augusti. 1665.

EER wy tot het verhael komen , van het Scheepgevecht van de Schepen van haer H. Mog. en de Engelsche oorloghs Schepen : soo heb ick noodigh geacht , een korte beschrijvingh te doen van de gelegentheyt der Stadt , ende Sterckten , als oock de gelegentheyt der Haven en Stadt Bergen in Noorwegen.

DE Stadt is groot / bestaende in menighte Buygers / 4 Noortsche / en twee Hooghduytsche Parochien : Sy is smal en heel lang / gebout in een Ovael-ront / wegen de situatie tusschen de Bergen ; maer met een Fort versien tegen de Walsyen en staepe Plepnen van 't vaste lant / waer hier en daer verscheyde Meeren seer plaisierlijck zijn te sien : Als te landt nergens by te komen / wegens de afhangende ende in de wolcken steilende Bergen ; noch te water wegens Barningen / klippen / steyle rotzen / sterke Casteelen / en Forten. De haven mocht wel 6 à 700 passen wijd zijn. De grootste Schepen ontladen dicht aen de huysen en pachhuysen.

Daer is noch een Blockhuys tegens over 't Casteel op Nordnes 't geen Horizontal schiet / dat hier niet kan gerepresenteert worden.

A Dese Toorn , van outs de *Rodskraents-Toorn* , heeft boven op acht groote metale stukken , om alles te konnen beschieten.
B Op dese muyr leggen andere 8 stukken van minder *Calibre*.
C Het Bol-werck , *Friderick*. Ligt vol heele Cartouwen , Behalven andere wat minder langs de cortijnen.
D Dit uitboordsel is van hout , maer soo veel krachtiger , om dattet *Horisontal* schiet met grove Canons.
E De Poort in de Aerde wal , om 't Casteel.
F Dese plaets , de *Commun* genoemt , is wijt ende breet , met een groot vischpark. Tot onder de steyle Bergen is niet als moras.
G Een kleyne huysje à part , daer inen de peck kookt voor de Schepen.
H De kraen , geheeten de *Bradebanck* , is wegen sijn vast gebouw onder de Zeevarende seer beroemt.
I Het Waterpoortje.
K Hier begint de *Brug* van 't *Contoir* der Anzee-steden.
L Dese schans ofte redout het *Swarresborg* , Is seer oud , maer heel net gebouden , van aerde , op steyle maer staeye groene bergen , is niet om by te komen als by smalle wegen , schietende over 't Casteel henen.
M *Friderichs-Holm*. Een eylandke seer wel met Canons , Officiers , Soldaten en ammonitie versien , niet aen te komen van wegen de rotzen.
N Het Fort *Nordnes* , wiens hoeck men om slaet uyt Zee komende , om in de Baey te keeren , is van aerde , niet hooger als de Borstwering van een wal , van de Burgers bewaeckt , en met veele stukken versien.
O De Papegayestang , daer de Burgers op sekere feesten , of anders met kogels na schieten.
P De ton , buyten dewelke geen gront en is op 2 à 300 vademen.
R De Tolbode , binnen welke een deel van de Engelsche waren geavanceert , om de Oost-Indische en andere te canoneren , mits dat 6 à 7 het Casteel aenranden , en andere 4 het Fort *Nordnes* in devoir hielden.
R De Nieuwe Kerk.
S De Muer , zijnde een groote toorn van d'oude vest.

Verhael van 't bedrijf / en 't slaen der Engelsche Voor de Haven van

BERGEN in NOORWEGEN,

Met de uitkomst.

Op den 10. Augusti. Des Jaers 1665.

WAnneer de Engelsche kennis gekregen hadden / dat 10. Oost-Indische Hollandsche Retour-Schepen in de Haven van Bergen waren gearriveert / tot haer groot leetwesen / geen andere gedachten gehadt hebbende als souden haer in den mond gelooven zijn / soo hebben sy / naer een groote krijgs-raed gehouden / de genoemde Oost-Indische Schepen met andere Koopvaerders / in die gesegde Haven komen aentasten met 15. Oorlogh's-Schepen / sommige met seslig en eenige wat minder stuckjen gemonteert / neven 4. Kuiten / en 12. Branders / alles onder 't beleid van den jongen Graef van Sandwijch / en de ervarentste Capiteinen / sijnde 's avonds te voren tot dicht onder de Casteelen gest / eisschende van den Deensschen Oversten de Hollandsche Schepen uyt die Haven te doen vertrecken / maer hy bleef stijfs weigeren / met harde dreygingen / soo sy haer wilden attaqueeren : dies wierden de Nederlanders gedwongen sich in postuur van defentie te stellen / 't welck sy ooch sloetselijk hebben gedaen en sich verweerd / wanneer sy van de geseide Engelsche / in een halve maen gest / seer hard wierden beschooten en bevochten / de selve meyt schuldigh blijvende / in een gedreght van wier'd-half uur ; waer in ooch / tuit het Casteel van Bergen / op de beschijngers gewaedig wyer wierd gegeven / soo dat sy eindelijk gedwongen wierden hare Ancliers te kappen / en schandelijk de vlucht te nemen. Onder wegen zijn twee van hare Schepen gesonken / en de reste soo reddeloos gewoden / dat sy onbequaem waren in eenige Battaillie meer dienst te konnen doen : sy hadden wel 1000. dooden en veel gequetsten / waer onder was de voornoemde Graef / en twee Kapiteynen. Van de Hollanders zijn gebleven 25. dooden en 70. gequetsten / soo dat alles tot voordeel en eere van de Nederlanders / Godt zy gelooft / loffelijck is afgelooven / die sich in de selfde Haven nu soo hebben verlengt / dat sy geen vyand te vreesen hebben. Godt wil spaer gelukkigh in 't Vaderland brengen.

A *Buschouwers sint die sinne breld ,*
'En's geen u daer word niet gedeelt.
Siet sy't met gactuse oogen aen ,
Sy sullt dan haest den sin verstaen.
Fidel Lion weer tergen koomt ,
Maer 't maeckt Lion niet eens beschroomt ,
Al loke hy hem seher uit sijn neck ,
A *Hy mag wy noch wel doen sijn beck ,*
Dat is gewis soo wel bewaert ,
Hy word niet voor Fidel verwaert ;
Of walt hy schoon hem op het lijf ,
Soo houd Lion sich even stijf ,
Hy heeft sijn klauwen uitgebreid ,
En sich tot bijten sel bereid ;
Hy geeft Fidel nu slag op slag
Dat hy schier haest op 't swijmen lag :
B *Sijn dreygen wechen al te smal.*
Lieftebbers let op ons verhael :
Siet hoe Lion noch hulp bekomt ,
C *Van d'Ohsens in Lieuw vermomt ;*
Die met sijn fellen moet verheft ,
En maeckt dat hy alsus maer treft ;
Hy kapt haer al de staerten af ,
En wijst haer na Neptunus graf ,
Of na vrouw Thetys holle schoot ,
Al sleddevende na haer doot.
Maer siet toch hoe dat groove beest ,
Wil staeer van lijf , doch kloek van geest ,
D *Haer slaet ter neder met sijn stuit ,*
En drijft haer al sijn booten uit.
E *Siet Reinard komt gelopen aen ,*
En dreygtse wat sijn stek te slaen ,
Indien sy noch niet laten af
Van al haer bijten , en gekef :
Hy heeft Lion toch al te lief
Hy slaet bereid tot sijn gerief.
Wanr die tes slaen eens sa gesint
Seer lichte een stok of kuippel vint.

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FIG. 19.2. *Verhael van het Scheep-gevecht, voor Bergen in Noorwegen. Op den 10. Augusti. 1665.*

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Soon after he would be appointed to the supreme command over the Dutch fleet.

Some of the English ships turned back, but a squadron proceeded to the still neutral harbor of Bergen (arriving there on 1 August) where, as it turned out, there was a large

out engraving showing some of the action off Africa. The Dutch embassy to Moscow, headed by Jacob Boreel, was on its way home when it learned in Lübeck the news of De Ruyter's brief stop in Bergen, information that Boreel immediately sent on to The Hague (Scheltema 1817–1819, 1: 278–279). The Dutch mission had arrived in Lübeck on 25 July and departed from there to Hamburg on the 29th (Witsen 1966–1967, 2: 260–261). See also Fox 2009: 103–105.

Dutch merchant flotilla, including some of the richly laden ships from the East Indies. Not having received instructions from Copenhagen, the local Danish commandant refused to allow the English warships into the harbor, giving the Dutch (whose vessels were well armed) time to mount what would turn out to be an effective defense against the English attack.[72] So the English fleet was driven off with losses of several hundred men and headed home. De Ruyter then sent a large force to convoy the merchant ships back. However, severe storms scattered them en route. Only three of them managed to reach Dutch ports in the third week of September, some of the others not making it home for weeks afterwards.[73] Two of the ships were captured by the English. The battle of Bergen obviously attracted considerable attention in the Netherlands, where it was the subject of an impressively illustrated broadside (FIG. 19.2). One of the most famous Dutch artists who specialized in nautical scenes, Willem van de Velde the Elder, commemorated the event as he imagined it three years after the battle.[74]

Although the Dutch newspaper files have significant gaps for the weeks surrounding this Bergen episode, it is clear that the news of the returning fleets and the related events along the Norwegian coast was being followed closely, reports often based on information that arrived via fast packet-boats. On 25 October 1665, the translators in Moscow received copies of several Dutch papers: *OHS* 1665/39, *OHD* 1665/40, *CID* 1665/39, and *ODC* 1665/39, from which they extracted information about the storms in the aftermath of the Bergen battle and the fate of the ships that were heading home.[75] Those translations referred to the location where the ships had been as 'the Danish land'; so it is uncertain whether the officials in Moscow would have had a clear idea of the geography involved and the underlying strategic issues explaining the actions of the fleets. Assuming that descriptions of the actual battle appeared in the Dutch papers, those accounts would have been in the issues published not long before the ones known to have

72. For a good summary treatment of the whole episode, see Fox (2009: 102–119). The well-documented monograph by Michael Breet (2007) on the Bergen battle publishes in its appendices Dutch translations of several contemporary English accounts.

73. For details about the fate of all the Indies ships in the convoy, see below, note 112.

74. The painting is now in the collection of the National Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, Inv. No. 1996.1513. Van de Velde's expertise in accurately recording details of ships and nautical conflict, based on his eyewitness observations, has left an invaluable record mined by naval historians such as Fox when they have reconstructed the details of battles (Fox 2009: 188 and passim).

75. V-K VI/1: 140–144, No. 30; VI/2: 475–483. One of the items (Elsinore, 22 Sept.) mentioned Bergen, but in condensing the article from *OHD* 1665/40, the translators omitted the name of the port (V-K VI/1: 142–143, No. 30.63–64). The sources for the other items about the ships that had been in Bergen are datelined Amsterdam, 17 and 21 Sept. (copies of the source newspapers have not been found). Given those dates, it seems the likely candidates would be *OMC* 1665/38 or *OHD* 1665/39, both published on 22 Sept. While there is no evidence about the newspaper source or the date when the translation was made, a very condensed summary of several reports (V-K VI/1: 226, No. 63.320–319, folios in reverse order) contains news from Amsterdam about the Indies return fleet in 1665, an item specifically from Norway dated 8 Sept. mentioning the battle at Bergen, and the departure of the Dutch ships for home. Amsterdam news of 11 Sept. clearly was based on the report sent ahead from the Indies fleet, mentioning the news from the Indies about the sighting of the comet that had appeared in late autumn in 1664, just before the fleet had sailed from Batavia.

made it to Moscow. Yet, even if lacking published details, the translators obtained via one of Moscow's most trusted agents a very accurate and concise account explaining what had happened in Bergen (the port was not named) and what the fate of the ships had been. The description was in a letter Peter Marselis had written on 14 September from Copenhagen, where he reported first news relating to Polish affairs and then explained how the English had failed to obtain Danish permission to attack the shipping and had been driven off with considerable losses.[76] Before heading home, the Dutch had generously rewarded the local commandant, but the storm had cost them several ships, taken as prizes by the English.

A new set of summary statistics about Dutch and English fleet strength, reported in March 1666, anticipated the most famous naval battle of the war, which extended over four days from 1/11–4/14 June.[77] Thanks to the action on the fourth day, the Dutch could legitimately claim a victory, but there were huge losses on both sides, with exaggerated intelligence and news reports misleading both governments about the extent to which the enemy had been weakened. In fact, the outcome did little to change the status quo and ensured that the war would continue unabated. Within little more than a month, there was yet another major encounter of the fleets, this time resulting in an English victory in the so-called St. James Day Fight (25 July; Fox: 288–295). In early August, the English staged a successful raid on the Dutch coast, managing to burn a large number of merchant ships, and just prior to the signing of the Peace of Breda, a bold Dutch raid on the lower Thames (13 June 1667) resulted in the destruction of several major English

76. V-K VI/1:145–146, No. 31.68–70. The translation from Marselis' letter and other Dutch manuscript newsletters follows immediately (and with no break) in the original archival scroll the set of those from the printed Dutch newspapers, received on 25 October. So it is reasonable to posit that both the printed and manuscript news arrived in the same mail packet. It is not clear to whom Marselis addressed his letter, though most likely it would have been a report for the tsar sent via the Ambassadorial Chancery.

77. V-K VI/1: 160, No. 37.119, 37.120–121. For a full treatment of the battle, see Fox 2009: 182–270. His appendices F and G (pp. 330–340) contain a discussion and tabulation of the statistics regarding the actual strength of the two fleets. The statistics in the Russian translation (probably derived from a newspaper article published some three months prior to the battle) show in the English case the overall fleet strength (larger than the forces actually engaged in the battle). The newspaper summary for the Dutch fleet is only for the squadron raised by Amsterdam and its immediate region and does not include the several other squadrons from other provinces. *HM* 17: 78, 80 provides fleet statistics for June which seem to correspond reasonably well with what Fox has compiled for the battle. However, the division of the forces into the various squadrons at the time of the actual battle is quite different, as there were many changes made at the last minute. English failures to obtain in timely fashion and accurately assess intelligence reports (including information actually published in the *London Gazette*) provide a case study in the importance of rapid communication and clear headed analysis for effective decision making (Fox 2009: 141–158). The flawed decision to divide the fleet in order to head off a supposed French naval threat in support of the Dutch had a major impact on the outcome of the battle. As Fox summarizes (ibid.: 168), "The truth was that the whole English campaign had been built around non-existent threats. Nearly every piece of intelligence the high command had received about the French was false, out of date, or had been misinterpreted." In the immediate aftermath of the battle, reports of a great English victory led to celebration in London – a reminder that premature news from a conflict, compounded by wishful thinking, could turn out to be totally erroneous (ibid.: 271–272).

FIG. 19.3. Engraving of the bold Dutch raid on the lower Thames at Chatham, 13 June 1667.

warships (FIG. 19.3).[78] Were it not for the imminent danger posed by the French invasion of Flanders, which both the Dutch and English perceived as a major threat, the war might well have continued.

The Four Days' Battle obviously attracted the attention of the translators in Moscow. They selected out of a longer article in *TVQ* 1666/22 from London, 21 May, a passage about the king's reviewing the fleet on the eve of its sailing.[79] Apparently the same mail had also brought copies of *OHD* 1666/22 and *OHS* 1666/23, published on 1 and 5 June respectively, and at least one other Dutch paper, published on or soon after 5 June. From these the translators extracted brief indications that both fleets had sailed and a battle was imminent.[80] Reports excerpted from German newspapers received on 29 June also contained the information that the fleets had sailed.[81] Van Sweeden's mail delivery on 12 July included several Dutch newspapers, among them *OMC* 1666/23 (published 15 June), OHS 1666/24 (12 June), and *OHS* 1666/25 (19 June).[82] The earliest of the reports extracted from them by the translators mentioned again that the fleets were at sea, but the most recent of the newspapers contained long accounts of the battle, which the translators condensed. In the case of the report from Amsterdam, the section about the events of the ten days leading up to the actual battle was largely ignored. But the resulting translations still were much longer and more detailed than was typical for the *kuranty* of this period. Several other articles in *OHS* 1666/25 were translated at least in part, and at the end of this long packet of news was yet one more Amsterdam report (dated 22 June, hence probably from another Dutch paper published in the following

78. Pieter Casteleyn's news compendium, *HM* (Vol. 18, following p. 88), contains this engraving in two scenes, one showing the Dutch raid on the Thames. Likely this depiction (or a separate version of it) served as the source for a contemporary painting by Willem Shellinks, now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Inv. No. AM SA 22660). Casteleyn's annual volumes, containing voluminous details of the war, were in Andrei Vinius' personal library, although we do not know whether he acquired them soon after the events or at some later date (see note 105 below).

79. V-K VI/1: 195–196; V-K VI/2: 516–517.

80. V-K VI/1: 197–198; V-K VI/2: 521.

81. V-K VI/1: 200–201, No. 53.197–198.

82. V-K VI/1: 202–206, No. 54; V-K VI/2: 522–530. It is possible that this 'packet' contains translations made from originals that arrived in more than one mail delivery. It would not be unusual for a newspaper published in Haarlem on 9/19 June to have arrived by 12/22 July. However, the final entry in the packet (copied on a new sheet), with news from Amsterdam, 12/22 June (presumably published on or right after that date), would have taken but a month to reach Moscow – a not impossible, but still a very fast delivery.

week) with news just received from London about the allegedly horrified reaction there to the battle.[83]

19.4.2. Reporting about the War of Devolution

The Anglo-Dutch war might have dragged on, but for the increasing threat posed by Louis XIV's aggression aimed at seizing the Spanish Netherlands. German newsletters translated on 19 November 1667 reported from The Hague, 6 September 1667, about Dutch complaints regarding French depredations along the border with Flanders. There was another report about the possible involvement in the War of Devolution by a number of states and the destruction in Flanders on account of the fighting.[84] A translation from Dutch newspapers of a report out of Paris 23 September 1667 reinforced the news that several states were hoping to mediate a peace, but there were signs that the French were pushing ahead with raising more troops to send to the front not only in Flanders but as well to Catalonia.[85] The French determination to continue the war (and send forces as well against the Austrians) was reiterated in a report from Paris on 14 October, translated from Dutch newspapers, and again in news from Paris, 12 December.[86] Another Dutch report, datelined The Hague, 29 December (probably received in Moscow no earlier than the beginning of February 1668), provided a compact summary of the dynastic crisis and coup in Portugal.[87] At the beginning of the second week in February, there was a cryptic note about a peaceful settlement between Spain and Portugal, anticipating the Treaty of Lisbon, which would be signed on 13 February.[88] However, a Dutch newspaper excerpted in Moscow on 21 February reported from Paris that the French were sending a fleet to support Portugal in continuing the war against Spain.[89] There were various reports about Anglo-Dutch negotiations, anticipating the Triple Alliance, among them a letter from King Charles II to the States General.[90] The news from Hamburg, 28 January – translated from German newspapers on 9 March – suggested that even in such a well informed city, there were uncertainties about the outcome of the war, whether the

83. The long description of the battle published in *OHS* 1666/25 also appeared in *CID* 1666/25 (V-K VI/2: 527). Since several other articles from the Haarlem paper were drawn on by the Russian translators, that makes it the most probable source for the translation in No. 54.229–233. While there are still many questions about exactly how the translator Andrei Vinius used the best Dutch maritime atlas of the period which he cites as a source for the geographic 'dictionary' he compiled in 1667, assuming that indeed there was a copy available in Moscow, several of the detailed maps the atlas contained would have enabled the translators to follow very closely the events of the naval war off the Dutch and English coasts and in the larger area of the North Sea. On Vinius' use of this atlas, see below pp. 796–799.

84. V-K VI/1: 233–234, No. 66.

85. Ibid.: 235, No. 67.18.

86. Ibid.: 239, No. 68.10; 244, No. 71.49–50.

87. Ibid.: 246, No. 73.63.

88. Ibid.: 249, No. 75.65. The source here was a German newsletter, transferred from the Privy Chancery to the Ambassadorial Chancery on 8 February. The note about the treaty is at the end of a report datelined Vienna, 5 January, whose first sentences concern the war against the Turks for Crete.

89. Ibid.: 255, No. 78.80.

90. Ibid.: 253–254, No. 77.77–79; 255, No. 78.

French were attacking the Austrians and on which side the Swedes might intervene.[91] A news item written on 7 February by the commandant in Kamianets-Podilskyi and translated in Moscow on 23 March proves that even way off in Ukraine, reasonably accurate – if perhaps somewhat obsolete – updates on the war in the West were being received.[92] A long excerpt from a letter (apparently printed in a German newspaper), translated in Moscow on 7 April, laid out in some detail the fact that, having conquered much of Flanders, France was now turning to the Rhine and planning to attack Strassburg.

However, the pressure from the several powers opposed to French expansion was probably going to result now in the signing of a peace between France and Spain.[93] Even though several reports (translated in Moscow from *OHS* 1668/15 and *OHD* 1668/14) suggested that, anticipating the failure negotiations, the French were continuing their military preparations in Flanders; at the same time, there was news from The Hague, 1 April, that the diplomats were arriving in Aachen to begin negotiations for the peace.[94] The actual signing of the treaty finally was reported (with no details of its content) from The Hague on 6 May in *OHD* 1668/19 and would have become known to the translators roughly a month later.[95] However, a comment in a German report from Hamburg, 1 May (received in Moscow 1 June), anticipating the signing, cautioned that it could not be expected to settle permanently disputes between Spain and France.[96]

19.5. The *kuranty* and diplomacy: two case studies

Given this record of a fairly steady, if not detailed, acquisition and translation of news about the Franco-Spanish War and the conflict between Spain and Portugal, can we find evidence that it was somehow deemed relevant to the concerns of Russian diplomacy? The quick answer seems to be that it was not, but a conclusive response has to await additional work in the unpublished archival materials for the history of Muscovite foreign relations. That said, to look at certain well-documented diplomatic missions that were undertaken precisely in the period of the War of Devolution is instructive for what we can learn about the interest in and acquisition of foreign news. Following the negotiation of the Truce of Andrusovo, which was finalized on 30 January/9 February 1667, the Russian government sent a number of diplomatic missions, whose main purpose was to tell the receiving governments about the treaty that for the moment ended the long war between Muscovy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and formalized at least on a provisional basis the rearrangement of borders in Eastern Europe (Floria 2013, Ch. 7). These missions often had other goals: to reaffirm cordial relations, and in some cases to promote possible commercial relations.

91. Ibid.: 258–259, No. 81.84.
92. Ibid.: 260, No. 82.90–91.
93. Ibid.: 262, No. 84.99–100.
94. Ibid.: 264–265, No. 85; for the originals, V-K VI/2: 554–557.
95. V-K VI/1: 270, No. 88.123–124; original, V-K VI/2: 560–561.
96. V-K VI/1: 271, No. 89.116–117.

19.5.1. Christoph Bousch's mission to Brandenburg-Prussia in 1667

One of the missions, for which we now have extensive documentation, was that sent to Brandenburg-Prussia, headed by a translator, Christoph (Vasilii) Bousch (a Livonian German), accompanied by an undersecretary Samoil Lisovskii and an interpreter Aleksei Pletnikov.[97] The mission was dispatched in the first week of June 1667, exactly the time when the first significant battles in the War of Devolution were occurring. Even if the officials in Moscow could have been aware that events were leading to open conflict between France and Spain, there is no evidence that such knowledge had any bearing on Bousch's mission. It was, after all, a low-level one with the modest goal of communicating the Kremlin's position regarding the truce with Poland and politely declining the Great Elector's offer of mediation in negotitions for a truce or even a permanent peace. Bousch was given the usual generalized instructions about the acquisition of foreign news, which he was to report as quickly as possible to the Ambassadorial Chancery. In particular, the officials in Moscow wanted to know the whereabouts of King Jan Kazimierz, Duke Jacob of Courland, and the Great Elector Friedrich Wilhelm, whether they were at war with anyone and if so, for what reason and with what disposition of military forces. From the standpoint of the Kremlin, probably the most interesting news in the brief report Bousch sent on 15 July from Mittau, the capital of the duchy, concerned events involving some of the Lithuanian magnates. He had also heard that the wives of both the elector and the duke had recently died, and that due to Queen Christina's conversion to Catholicism, the Swedish authorities were planning to restrict her freedoms.

While the death (on 18 June) of Louise Henriette of Nassau, the electress of Brandenburg, even in the West had not attracted more than passing mention in the news, it did figure in the discussions which Bousch had at the elector's court. When he arrived there, the court was in mourning, and the officials somewhat apologetically explained the reason, in the process letting Bousch know that most of the other important governments had sent their condolences, an indication that they were on friendly terms with Brandenburg. Although he had had no instructions on the matter (the death, after all, occurred when he was already on his way west), Bousch was agile enough to convey the Russian government's condolences, explaining that since the tsar had not known, he had not provided an appropriate written message. Bousch seems to have gleaned little more about Brandenburg relations with the other powers.

A topic which did come up in his direct exchange with the elector was relations with the Ottoman Empire, where Friedrich Wilhelm was particularly interested to know whether the Russian government was at peace with the Ottomans, and the possible bearing of those relations on the situation in Poland and Ukraine, following Andrusovo. Bousch seems to have been well informed about recent diplomatic exchanges between Moscow and Istanbul and shared the information, suggesting that at the minute the relations were peaceful. The elector then offered to help keep the Russians informed, which he

97. For the documents, *Rossiia i Prussia* (2013: 216–328, 430–446).

could do by sharing with them in the future any reports his resident in Warsaw might send. Whether or not he subsequently did so would be worth investigating.

Bousch's mission is of interest for one additional reason pertaining to the Russian acquisition of foreign news. As was typical for Russian diplomatic missions abroad, he was provided with a 'treasury', consisting mainly of valuable sables, which were to be used primarily as gifts or a form of payment to informants. He was also commissioned to deliver some 100 rubles worth of sables to Daniel Brandes in Danzig, the consignment specified as a payment for Brandes' services in supplying news (*Rossiia i Prussia* 2013: 312):

> Having arrived on 20 September in Danzig, he sent for the Danziger Daniel Brandes and gave him the Sovereign's compensation (*zhalovan'e*), six pairs of sables […] and took his handwritten receipt and said to him that he should in the future as well work for the Great Sovereign and, when he learned about any kinds of news, write to Moscow.

So Brandes, who had been the source of some news translated in the *kuranty*, had corresponded with Marselis and later would correspond with Artamon Matveev – when he replaced Ordin-Nashchokin as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery – indeed was on contract to send news through the post.

19.5.2. Petr Potemkin's mission to Spain and France

We might suppose that the mission headed by Petr Potemkin to Spain and France in 1667–1668 would have had some connection with the fact that the two countries were engaged in a war that might have serious consequences. An examination of the records of Potemkin's embassy, though, reveals very little to suggest that the War of Devolution was on the minds of the tsar and his officials. However limited the selection of news relating to it in the *kuranty* translations, there was enough such information available to the Ambassadorial Chancery so that the officials there could hardly have been oblivious to the events. Yet in at least one case, what might be deemed a serious lapse in drawing up the instructions to Potemkin suggests that the evidence in the *kuranty* was not always absorbed and used.

Potemkin's instructions make it clear that his mission had the limited goals of establishing (in the case of Spain, for the first time) or reaffirming friendly relations and informing the other governments about the successful conclusion of the Russian war against Poland-Lithuania with the signing of the Truce of Andrusovo.[98] The envoys were to express sentiments of the tsar about all the Christian countries maintaining peaceful relations in the face of threats from the enemies of Christianity, such as the Turks. If asked about relations with other countries, the response was to emphasize that Russia currently was at peace with, among others, France. Should the Spanish officials ask about the possibility for Spanish merchants to trade in Russia, the response was to reassure them they would be welcome with freedom to trade, providing they paid any requisite

98. *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 182–220, esp. 189, 193–194.

customs duties. However, the task of the embassy seems not to have included proposing any kind of alliance or initiating discussion of possible trade relations. The instructions about gathering political intelligence were the generic ones of reporting on the foreign relations of Spain with various governments, France listed among them but without any explanatory comment (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 201). In short, the mission had a very limited objective, unrelated to the pressing current issues of European affairs.

One of the puzzling aspects of the Potemkin embassy to Spain concerns the fact that the official letters he took with him were all addressed to King Philip IV, who had died on 17 September 1665, more than 20 months prior to the drawing up of Potemkin's instructions (dated 4 June 1667). This certainly was not the first instance where a Russian embassy had been sent to a deceased ruler, and rumor often reported in the European news the deaths of political leaders or the pope, where in fact the individuals in question were still alive. For example, Van Sweeden's mail which brought *OHS* 1666/8 to Moscow on 26 March included as well a source, reporting from Königsberg on 10 March. Its translation states that 'supposedly' (*budto*) the Polish king had died, this then seeming to explain why many people were now assembling for the Diet that was to open on 17 March.[99] In fact, as the Kremlin surely knew from its many sources out of Poland, King Jan Kazimierz was still very much alive. Rumors about the king of Poland were common merchandise, often containing wildly inaccurate speculation. It could be, aware of the unreliability of such reports, when dispatching Potemkin, the officials in Moscow simply chose to ignore a brief article in *OHS* 1666/8, translated for the *kuranty*, about a ceremony planned for Antwerp in February to celebrate the coronation of King Carlos II.[100] Another report (Paris, 5 March 1666), translated from Dutch newspapers, received on 23 April, summarized somewhat cryptically the underlying issues which would lead to the outbreak of the War for Devolution, mentioning in passing the 'deceased king of Spain'.[101]

Having decided to address the letters to Philip IV, the Moscow officials found it necessary to solicit information from a foreign colonel in Russian service regarding his proper titles. At the same time, it seems quite clear that Potemkin's instructions fully anticipated he might expect to be received by a king who was a minor and needed to be aware of the protocol if he was told he could not meet him personally and would have to deal instead with a regent or regency council.[102] He was to insist that, following the tsar's in-

99. V-K VI/1: 167, No. 40.34.

100. Ibid.: 166, No. 40.32. The editors of the documents about the Potemkin mission have suggested this may be explained by the fact the officials in Moscow were uncertain about the current situation and the protocols of addressing a king who was a minor and a regent queen mother (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 30).

101. V-K VI/1: 158, No. 37.114.

102. *Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 185, 187, 202–203. Christoph Bousch translated from German a text with King Philip's titles (the information from a Christian Lubenau von Lilienklow; ibid.: 222, 272–273). The Russians were not the only ones who had to devise solutions for proper protocol with no previous experience of relations between the two countries. In preparing to receive the Russians,

structions and Muscovite diplomatic tradition, he was to meet with the king, and only as an exception he might agree also to meet the regents. When the matter of the addressee of the tsar's letters to the king came up early in the negotiations in Spain, Potemkin apologized to his hosts with the excuse that the two countries were far apart and had not had any exchanges by which Moscow could have learned of the news.[103]

Whether Potemkin had been fully briefed about any recent or current news about Spain at the time he received his instructions is uncertain. However, following the directive that even before leaving Archangel on a ship to take him to Spain he was to report any news he heard in the northern port, he wrote an interesting letter back to Moscow on 31 August.[104] On 26 August, the day after he arrived there, Peter Marselis told him that the king of Spain in fact was Carlos II, not Philip, and as proof showed him 'a printed book in Dutch, and in that book was printed on page 24: Carolus the Second, King of Spain'. Potemkin sent along with his report the actual book, which most likely was a copy of the sizeable retrospective news digest, published by Pieter Casteleyn in his Haarlem annual for the year 1666.[105]

On 30 August, two Hamburg merchants who had arrived the previous day told Potemkin about a major battle between the Spanish and French. The French had captured two cities, but which ones the informants did not know.[106] And apparently these same mer-

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the Spanish officials explored what diplomatic protocol might be appropriate and decided that the reception of an Ottoman Turkish envoy many years earlier was the model to follow. See the various documents published from the Spanish archives with a modern Russian translation in ibid.: 285–303.

103. Ibid.: 182, 104–105.

104. Ibid.: 244–245, the letter misdated by the editors 29 August.

105. Of course it is possible that some other Dutch book also mentioned Carlos II on p. 24, but in any event that particular volume of *HM* did include his name and title on the given page. We do not know the publication date in 1667, but presumably it could have been printed in time for delivery to Archangel on a Dutch ship before the end of August. Normally Casteleyn's volumes appeared in early spring. For anyone who might have seen the book in Moscow, it would have provided a much fuller treatment of the Anglo-Dutch war of 1666 than reported in the newspapers – unless, of course. they were being read regularly. A notation made in Moscow on Potemkin's report states it should be copied into a scroll and the 'tetrati' (quires) translated. Of course, that might then raise doubts as to whether the whole volume was to be translated and whether in fact the reference might not be to some shorter pamphlet. Potemkin used the term 'book' (*kniga*) in reference to it. At least so far, there is no evidence that any of Casteleyn's volumes were translated. Andrei Vinius owned an extensive set (Vols. 11–40) of *Hollandse Mercurius*, but we do not know when he acquired the books. There is no particular reason to think the copy in question here ended up in his personal library (see the listing in Savel'eva 2008: 105). It appears he may have filled in his set with reprint editions of the earliest volumes, but starting with Vol. 16, the books are the original editions. Conceivably he made an arrangement to receive them on a regular basis from Nicolaas Witsen, with whom he interacted when the Dutch embassy was in Moscow in 1664–1665. The publishers of such retrospective newsbooks frequently reprinted them and continued to sell sets; this has been documented for the *Hollandse Mercurius* (Koopmans 2018: 18, 115). The first essay in Koopmans 2018 – which reprints his previously published work – provides a good introduction to the news digests, contextualizing them with reference to the regularly published newspapers that often were selectively mined for the larger, retrospective volumes.

106. The Hamburg *WZ* for this period has a steady stream of reports about the French military advances in Flanders. Various cities were taken or besieged; it is difficult to know which ones the Hamburg merchants had in mind. Among the most significant of the French conquests were Charleroi,

chants related that back in June there had been a major naval battle between the Dutch and English. The Dutch had destroyed some twelve English ships and captured another six, but now the two countries had made peace. The Hamburg merchants did not know the terms of the peace and stated that they had no newspapers with them. The battle in question was the famous raid by the Dutch on the Medway at the mouth of the Thames on 13 June (see FIG. 19.3), one of the decisive events of the war, which indeed hastened the decision to conclude peace at a time when the French conflict with Spain in Flanders was deemed particularly threatening both to the English and Dutch. The peace treaty was signed at Breda on 31 July, so news of its negotiation could have reached Archangel a month later.[107] Whether or not he had been fully briefed on the international situation, certainly while waiting to secure passage, Potemkin had the opportunity to learn a great deal about what was happening in the West. The tsar's response to his report, dated 19 September, made no reference to any of the news and merely contained the emphatic instruction that Potemkin was to hire a ship and be on his way without delay. He finally managed to book passage for his sizeable entourage on a ship which had arrived to collect a cargo of caviar, brought by Armenian merchants for delivery in Italy, and sailed on 10 October, a late season departure that guaranteed he would encounter serious storms before arriving at his destination on 4 December.

In Madrid, Potemkin engaged in what appear to have been friendly exchanges of information with the Spanish officials; these reveal the limits of the instructions he had received for the mission (*Posol'stvo Potemkina* 2018: 96–98). Such an exchange was analogous to those discussed earlier about the ways in which the Russian escorts assigned to embassies visiting Muscovy would try to talk up the visitors to get information. In the early exchanges, when asked about their journey, the Russians explained that they had traveled on a merchant ship carrying Armenian caviar for Italy, since the current Anglo-Dutch war prevented their being able to do so on a warship. The Spanish official then asked whence the Armenian caviar, to which the Russians described how a great deal of it was brought up the Volga from Astrakhan along with other products such as salt, grapes, wine, and silk. In this perhaps exaggerated telling, they said the ships carrying the goods from Astrakhan were huge, with crews of as many as a thousand men. Discussion of foreign relations focused first of all on Muscovy's war in Ukraine, involving the Tatars; the Russians were interested in Spanish relations with the Ottomans. Citing issues of protocol, the Russians refused to agree to a visit requested by the Austrian imperial ambassador. The only time the Austrian Habsburgs came up in the exchanges was

taken at the beginning of June, and Tournai, which fell to them at the end of July. There is a gap in the *kuranty* for this period, but the Moscow archive has preserved copies of *CID* 1667/25 (18 June), *TVQ* 1667/26 (25 June), *OHD* 1667/26 (28 June), and *OHD* 1667/27 (5 July), all of which include coverage of the war in Flanders. Thus there is at least good reason to assume that Moscow was able to keep abreast of this news from the deliveries in the regular mail.

107. However, the negotiations dragged on for many weeks prior to the signing of the treaty, as a survey of the news reports in *WZ* reveals. Possibly the news conveyed in Archangel is of somewhat earlier date, when its conclusion had been pretty much settled prior to the final signing.

in the context of disputes over protocol, where the Russians claimed Muscovite missions were treated with particular ceremony at the imperial court, even if the Spanish then questioned whether such diplomatic formalities were the norm.

Potemkin's intelligence report, appended to the chronologically organized main report in his *stateinyi spisok,* shows that he was diligent in quizzing his interlocutors about Spanish relations with other powers. He was given a quite detailed and accurate account of the issues and events in the War of Devolution with France (ibid.: 132–133). Even though there was word that a peaceful settlement had been reached (the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 2 May 1668), it seems that the Spanish official offered as well the frank opinion that the peace would not last and that Louis XIV would tear up the agreement at the first opportunity. There was an equally interesting and accurate description of Spanish relations with Portugal, prefaced by an account about the history of the Portuguese trade in the riches of the East Indies. This trade had benefitted Spain in the decades before the Portuguese had wrested their independence in the war that ended with the Treaty of Lisbon in February 1668 (ibid.: 133). Potemkin elicited a great deal of additional information from his interlocutors, including a considerable amount about the earlier history of Spain, starting in late medieval times. His report contained a lot about key nobles and ranks, about the administrative divisions of the country, important churches, social customs and more – a veritable encyclopedia article that surely would have had much new for the officials at the Muscovite court, when Potemkin finally turned it in at the end of his mission.

It was only on the eve of their departure in late May 1668, after having been in Spain for several months, that the Russian envoys told their hosts they had instructions to proceed to France (ibid.: 128–129). This came as a surprise to the Spanish, who wondered why they had not been told earlier; the response was that the matter had nothing to do with their mission to Spain, hence there had been no reason to mention it. So, apart from expressions of good will and an interest in further diplomatic exchange, and the offer that Spanish merchants would be welcome to come to Archangel, there was nothing of substance to the negotiations in Madrid. Most of the energy seems to have been expended on arguments over protocol and titulature. That Spain was at war with France was simply not an issue in any of the official exchanges.

Much the same can be seen in the records of Potemkin's mission in France between July and mid-September 1668. Unlike the Spaniards, the French seem to have been proactive in pursuing the possibility of trade with Russia, wanting to have Potemkin sign some kind of trade treaty on the spot. He correctly responded that he was not empowered to do so, and that the French would have to send a mission to Moscow to negotiate one. A delegation of French merchants arranged a meeting with the Russians to express their support for opening trade relations, to learn about what terms might be expected in such an agreement, and to discuss what products each side might find beneficial to exchange. The Russian list of desirable imports included gold thalers, various silk textiles (some

with gold and silver designs), velvets, satins, coarse cloth, and red and white wine.[108] Potemkin also made it clear that certain products could not be imported into Russia: fortified wine and tobacco. Although Potemkin continued to insist any agreement had to be negotiated in Moscow, the French officials nonetheless provided him with a draft of the trade terms that might form the basis for one. They expressed a specific interest in whether the Russians would allow them to trade to Persia and through Russia to other states. Contrary to what some newspapers reported, there was no discussion at all of Russia's granting of trade privileges in return for French support for the candidacy of the tsar's son on the Polish throne (see above, p. 674). Likewise, it is not clear from such reports that a French exploratory mission was sent to go down the Volga. Presumably this news garbled information concerning the Russian initiative to build the warship for the Caspian.

Nothing in the Russian negotiations in Paris had any direct relationship to the War of Devolution (which had ended prior to the mission's arrival in France), even though the French interest in the Russian trade probably was in part aimed at trying to undercut the Dutch domination of that trade. Potemkin's intelligence report about French foreign relations complemented and reinforced what he had learned in Spain. His informants in France told him details about the dynastic relations and marriages, which lay behind some of the political tensions. As with the information from Spain, he was warned that the temporary peace between France and Spain surely would not last. There was more here on Anglo-French relations, with a retrospective account of how, after the execution of Charles I, the Stuarts had taken refuge in France. Given the continuing French involvement in Polish affairs, Potemkin's report disussed the French support for the candidacy of Philipp Wilhelm of Neuburg, Elector Palatine. Apart from the political information, Potemkin provided compressed but very positive descriptions of the French interest in learning and the military arts, of the size and grandeur of Paris, and the wonders of the king's palace and the zoo, among whose exotic species were birds from both the East and West Indies. While he did not write about the experience, we know from French sources that Potemkin visited the theater in Paris (Jensen and Powell 1999). None of what Potemkin had assiduously recorded about current events or the countries he visited would have reached Moscow before his return in late November 1668, when he filed his end of mission report. Ironically, prior to that, the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery were tracking his travel in Europe through the newspapers (see above, p. 674).

Although other examples of Muscovite diplomatic activity in the second half of the 1660s might somewhat change the tentative conclusions we can draw from these case studies, what they tell us is hardly a surprise. The newspapers now being received on a regular basis in Moscow reported a wide range of material from all over Europe and even from more distant locations. The selection of news to print certainly varied from city

108. On the discussions about trade with the French officials and the merchants, see *Puteshestviia* 1954: 264–267, 271–274, 276–278. The list in the *stateinyi spisok* is: 'zolotye efimki, altobasy, barkhaty, ob'iari zolotnye, otlasy, kamki, sukna i inye tovary, i vino krasnoe i beloe' (p. 278).

to city; the Dutch papers, for example, tended to have more news from the Low Countries and England, whereas German papers in the Baltic region often were full of news from Poland. Yet over and over again, we see examples where the Russian translators selected primarily the news pertaining to Poland, Ukraine or the Ottoman wars. Even if this selection provides a somewhat distorted sense of the focus in the published news sources, it fed into the Russian preoccupation with the conclusion of the long war in Poland-Lithuania and Ukraine, the ongoing unrest of the Cossacks, the threat of Tatar and perhaps Turkish invasion. To determine how much the Russians learned from such news that they did not already know would take a separate chapter.

In and around the reports about events 'closer to home' there was a lot of translated news about events in Western Europe, cryptic in many cases, but enough to have provided some understanding of their immediate importance. The case study of the embassies of Bousch to Brandenburg and Potemkin to Spain and France, especially the latter, suggest that whatever the Ambassadorial Chancery may have known about the Western alliances, wars and treaties, the goals of those missions were so narrowly conceived as to have no relationship with news of what for most of the countries of Western Europe were events of major consequence. Even though Brandenburg did not play a major role in the Anglo-Dutch war, nonetheless that war was of interest to Berlin. Yet the subject never comes up in Bousch's instructions or report. In sending Potemkin to the two major powers fighting the War of Devolution, the Russian government might have provided him with some specific guidance about the international situation and the potential pitfalls of diplomacy with the contending powers. In the first instance, the mission was to confirm friendly relations and inform the hosts about the successful conclusion of the war against Poland. There was at least some recognition that trade might come up, but to discuss it, unless asked, was not Potemkin's task. We might wonder what, if anything, was the value to the Russian officials in having the news about the wars of 1665–1668?

19.6. A case study for contextualizing kuranty translations: the Dutch lading lists

Perhaps to focus mainly on political news reports is too limiting for an appreciation of what the translators in Moscow were selecting. Certainly we can suggest that even the passive accumulation of knowledge about European affairs might serve the interests of the tsar's government, if not for any immediate purpose, at least as a kind of investment for possible future diplomacy. Indeed, the steady stream of items chosen for translation, if generally condensed, must at least have satisfied some curiosity on the part of the tsar and the officials in his Ambassadorial Chancery. The instructions to Potemkin remind us that the generic directives to ambassadors specified they learn about the allies and enemies of the countries to which they were sent. In the absence of regular diplomatic exchange, the *kuranty* could fill an important void for Muscovite intelligence. Certainly the information Potemkin brought back from his informal discussions with his interlocutors in Spain and France would have served that purpose well. In the *kuranty*, there

are many examples of items with no obvious immediate geopolitical significance that had been selected for translation. By taking a close look at such material, it may in fact be possible to discern a context which in fact would explain that such 'curiosities' might actually have been relevant for the tsar and his advisers. The case in point here is the translation of lading lists, specifying in considerable detail the cargoes of Dutch East Indies fleets. To what degree such lading lists can be considered accurate and timely news when first published is another question worth addressing.[109]

The Dutch East Indies Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC), incorporated in 1602, became one of the commercial powerhouses of the seventeenth century. Its colonies and commercial network in Southeast Asia supplied a major part of the economic riches for the Dutch Golden Age. Convoys of large merchant vessels (which were heavily armed to ward off pirates or hostile fleets) would depart the Indies every year in autumn or early winter, stopping at the Dutch station at the Cape of Good Hope, and arriving in the Netherlands by late summer or early autumn.[110] Always very precise in their record-keeping, the VOC administrators in Batavia and at the Cape would supply the fleets with detailed cargo lists for all the ships in the fleet. Generally before the ships would dock, a copy of the lading lists would be brought ashore by fast packet boats sent out to meet them.[111] The directors of the VOC then could immediately publish the lists as a kind of advertising for the merchants who over the next weeks would bid on the goods in the several major Dutch commercial cities. The lading lists thus would be distributed or posted as individual placards and also commonly would be published in the most important Dutch newspapers.

There is a substantial amount of evidence about their publication and the Kremlin's interest in such lading lists in the 1660s and early 1670s. In that period, the *Haerlemse Courant* and one or more of the Amsterdam papers might both publish the same list on the same day, placing it toward the end of the issue in the section devoted to the Netherlands, where there might be other information about the fate of commercial vessels and their cargoes, news obviously of considerable interest for Dutch merchants. These lading lists by themselves might be misleading, since they were inventories of the ships that had set out for home, not those which had safely arrived. The return of the Indies fleet obviously was significant news. However, we should view the lading lists not mere-

109. For the lading lists translated in 1628 and 1646, see above pp. 315–317, 395–396; for a discussion of all the translations, including the material which follows here, see Waugh 2023c.

110. An overview of the VOC shipping is in Bruijn et al. (1967–1979, Vol. 1). Volumes 2 and 3 of the study, based on the data in the VOC archives, list all the VOC ships individually, with details about size, date of construction, dates of main voyages, etc. The online database thus makes it possible to check references to individual ships that are found in the headers to the lading lists and in some separate news reports.

111. An example is the report on the Indies fleet published in *CID* 1660/28 on 10 July, in which there was information dated 9 July how on the previous day, the director of the VOC had learned from a galiot that ten ships of the return fleet were about to land. Several of the ships would land only on the 18th. However, following this article, the newspaper published the lading list for all ten return ships which the VOC had provided in advance of their all having reached port.

ly as objective reporting but also as a kind of promotional literature at the time they appeared, placed in the newspapers generally just above a section of advertising that usually focused on offerings of books by various publishers.

The relevance of such lists in Moscow could have differed substantially from their importance in the original Dutch context. With the exception of an occasional item that might affect the safety of the navigation by commercial fleets to Archangel, where Dutch and Hamburg merchants were heavily involved in the middle of the seventeenth century, news reports translated for the *kuranty* in the 1660s that dealt with maritime events commonly focused on military affairs, such as the movement of fleets in the war against the Ottomans for control of Crete. The preparation of warships to sail was news, even if the harbors (in the case of the French) might be Marseille or Toulon. While Mediterranean commercial shipping often made the news, attacks on commerce were important mainly for their possible bearing on international relations. The Dutch and English convoys from the West and East Indies at least indirectly might have some relevance for the Muscovite authorities to the degree that some of their products might eventually make it to the annual fair in Archangel. However, there is no evidence that such foreign news reports were attracting any kind of regular attention from the government in Moscow. The Russian authorities had ample domestic resources to keep track of the Archangel trade.

As discussed above, the naval war in 1665 figures prominently in *kuranty* translations. In Moscow the government even learned some details relating to the events at Bergen involving the Dutch commercial fleet. However, the lading list for the Indies ships which were among those in Norway either never made it to Moscow or was ignored there.[112] This should not come as a surprise, since the Russian translations of reports re-

112. We cannot be certain the list was published in one of the contemporary newspapers, since files from 1665 are very incomplete. Peter Casteleyn's annual compendium, *HM* 16: 106–108, summarizes the information about the arrival of the ships in Norway and the situation in Bergen. The fleet commander there wrote a letter back to the Netherlands on 25 August. Casteleyn prints it and the lading list, which presumably had been enclosed with that message. Given the fate of this convoy, possibly the lading list never appeared in the newspapers. It is of some interest for what it contains but also for what it fails to convey. It lists the cargoes of all the ships which had set out from Batavia in the 'first return fleet' on 23 Dec. 1664. One of the eleven ships, the *Notenboom*, was wrecked near the Cape in February 1665, but its cargo apparently was still included in the totals of the lading list. Two more ships (*Nieuwenhove* and *Kogge*, the second return fleet) left Batavia on 31 Jan. and joined the remaining ten of the first fleet a week before the convoy departed the Cape on 22 April 1665 for the long route that would take them north around Scotland. The cargoes of the two late additions are not part of the published lading list. Of this convoy, now numbering twelve, two ships made it to Trondheim in Norway, the others taking refuge in Bergen. After the failure of the English attack in Bergen, the ships from there set out for home on 2 Sept., only to be scattered by a major storm. Two of them (*Slot van Honingen*, the largest in the fleet, and *Phoenix*) were captured by the English on 13 Sept., two arrived safely on 17 Sept. (*Walcheren*, the flagship, and *Brederode*); one (*Rijzende Zon*) made it back on 8 Oct. via Kronberg in Denmark, and another – not clear where it was – after a long delay on 28 Nov. Three returned to Norway, one (*Amstelland*) setting out again only to be wrecked just off the Dutch coast on 25 Oct. (most of its cargo recovered), but the other two (*Jonge Prins* and *Kogge*) waiting to return until late March 1666. One of the Bergen ships (*Wapen van Hoorn*) had taken refuge at Glückstadt on the Elbe, returning home only in mid-May. The two ships that had sailed via Trondheim made it to port with some delay, one (*Ooievaar*) arriving on 20 Sept. 1665, the other (*Nieuwenhove*) on 31 Oct.

garding maritime affairs generally omitted details about the commercial voyages.[113] The lading list for 1665 must have been the inventory compiled in Batavia for the cargoes of the eleven ships of the first return fleet, although one of those ships was wrecked short of the Cape, two fell into the hands of the English, and the beleaguered remnants of the convoy which reached home port did not finish arriving until spring of the following year. If this lading list were to have been distributed to inform the Dutch merchants of what could be expected in the trade auctions which normally would have taken place in the weeks soon after the arrival of the Indies fleets, it would have been very misleading.

The fragmentary preservation of both Dutch newspapers and *kuranty* translations around the time when the Dutch Indies convoy was arriving in early autumn 1667 makes it difficult to be sure of the degree to which tracking the progress of that return fleet was of any interest in Moscow. Nonetheless, its entire lading list was translated there, a fact that invites us to explore the reporting and the possible circumstances for that interest. Cryptic indications in a number of Dutch newspapers from the weeks before the arrival of the Indies fleet suggest that for the Dutch it was being anticipated, with some trepidation about whether it would return safely. A typical report was buried in a longer article from The Hague, 14 September, published on 17 September in *TVQ* 1667/38: Dutch fleets were still at sea, expecting the arrival of the Indies fleet, but there was still no news of it. A copy of this newspaper was received in Moscow, but we have no evidence as to whether it was translated. Wishful thinking about the Indies fleet led to optimistic, if apparently erroneous reports of sightings of it.[114] Another of the Dutch papers obtained in Moscow, *ODC* 1667/39, reported from The Hague on 25 September the sighting more

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Casteleyn also printed a lading list for the English Indies fleet which had arrived in August (ibid.: 109), apparently wanting to underscore that even if the Dutch fleet had not made it home intact, the value of the cargo which did arrive was more substantial than what the English had received in their fleet.

113. The Dutch newspapers did sometimes publish the lading lists for the English ships returning from the Indies, since presumably that information was of interest for merchants to be able to anticipate market availability and prices. An example is in a report from London dated 27 August 1669, which details the cargoes of one ship that had arrived from Surat and two others from Fort St. George (an English outpost on the Coromandel coast of southern India). The report was printed in *OHD* 1669/36, no copy of which can be identified as having made it to Moscow, even though in the weeks immediately preceding and following when it might have been received, there were unbroken sequences of Dutch newspapers being received there, including those printed in Haarlem. Another of the Dutch newspapers which *might* have been received in Moscow at this time was *OHS* 1669/32 (there is no translation identified as coming from it). It contained a report from Amsterdam, 9 August, about ship arrivals from both the West and East Indies and an abbreviated cargo listing for two of the six ships of the East Indies fleet. Following that list is the announcement by the VOC of the schedule for its upcoming auctions; it also lists some of the quantities of the goods that would be included in them.

114. For example, *OHD* 1667/38, published on 20 Sept., printed a report from Amsterdam, 18 Sept., about the sighting of nine large ships that some supposed must be the Indies fleet but in fact was probably the return ships from Archangel. Another Amsterdam report on the next day noted simply that there was no news of the Indies fleet. *CID* 1667/39, published on 24 Sept., had a single sentence in a longer report from The Hague dated 21 Sept.: the Dutch fleet was expecting to remain at sea until 20 Oct. in order to be able to convoy the Indies fleet home safely. This issue of the newspaper reached Moscow; however, there are no preserved translations from it.

than two weeks earlier of what was assumed to be nine East Indies ships and a report that three others from the return fleet had foundered before reaching the Cape of Good Hope. However, already on the following day a report from Amsterdam stated that this news was false.[115] The earliest such reports could have reached Moscow was probably late October.

The return fleet of 1667 consisted of twelve ships, nine of them having sailed from Batavia in late January and three, which had departed earlier from Ceylon, joining them at the Cape of Good Hope. The fleet left the cape on 8 June, with ten of the twelve ships reaching home port between 9 October and 25 October.[116] As it would turn out, two of the ships never made it back, both wrecked in the North Atlantic in the stormy seas between Iceland and the Faroe Islands. The Dutch papers reported the delays, concerns, and finally the bad news.[117]

115. A second refutation of the news, in a report from The Hague, 28 Sept., appeared in *EHD* 1667/17.

116. The ships which returned safely were: *Eendracht*, *Opperdoes*, *Zuidpolsbroek*, the flagship (all arrived on 9 Oct.); *Hazenburg* (arr. 10 Oct.); *Esperance* (arr. 21 Oct.); *Sparendam* (arr. 22 Oct.); *Kasteel van Medemblik*, *Amersfoort*, *Middelburg*, *Cecilia* (arr. 25 Oct.). *Wapen van Amsterdam* foundered south of Iceland on 19 Sep., though some of its crew were rescued; *Walcheren* also was wrecked in September, near the Faeroe Islands, losing many of its crew. It had been the flagship of the 1665 fleet. The three ships from Ceylon which had joined the original fleet at the Cape were *Cecilia*, *Opperdoes*, and *Sparendam*.

117. There are no extant copies of many of the Dutch newspapers which presumably would have been printing regular updates. Since we have a complete set of the Hamburg *WZ* for this period, it is possible to track what we assume at least summarizes news that was appearing in the Dutch papers on the fleet's progress: *WZ App*. 1667/40 (Amsterdam, 10 Oct.), on arrival but not yet landed; *ODiZ* 1667/41 (Tessel, 13 Oct.), two ships landed, two sighted, fleet survived a storm; *WZ App*. 1667/41 (Amsterdam, 17 Oct.), two ships lost but rest survived; *WDoZ* 1667/42 (21 Oct.), still uncertainties on return; *WZ App*. 1667/42 (25 Oct.), one return ship at anchor; *ODiZ* 1667/43 (28 Oct.), at least two ships still at sea. *WDoZ* 1667/44 (Amsterdam, 4 Nov.) reported that there was still no word about the fate of the ship and thus concern that either it had been damaged or been lost ("…dahero man nicht wenig besorget ist/ es mügte dieses entweder Schaden gelitten haben/ oder wol gar geblieben seyn"). Possibly the same presumed Dutch source informed *DOF* 1667/46, which also reported from Amsterdam 4 Nov. the concern that maybe the *Wapen van Amsterdam* had been lost ("Wegen des Ost-Indischen Schiffes/ das Wapen von Amsterdam genant/ ist Sorge daß es verlohren sey"). *OHD* 1667/44 (1 Nov.) mentioned in its brief final story from Amsterdam, 31 Oct., that various ships which had arrived from Norway had no news of the missing *Wapen van Amsterdam*, but that there was still hope it might have found refuge somewhere in Iceland. In the *Gazette d'Amsterdam* 1667/44 (3 Nov.), the final article from Amsterdam reported that ten ships of the fleet had safely arrived, but there still was no information about the one with which contact was lost near the Faroe Islands. The VOC had sent out some galiots with supplies in the hope of helping it return. The article concluded with an upbeat note about the fact that VOC business was prospering. In reporting on the fate of the fleet for his annual retrospective news compendium (*HM* 17: 154–155), Pieter Casteleyn reprinted its lading list as it had presumably been printed prior to the return of the entire fleet, but omitted from it the information on the loss of the *Walcheren* and the concern over the fate of the *Wapen van Amsterdam*. Immediately following the list, he summarized a report that had arrived with the first of the returning ships concerning the wreck of the *Wapen van Amsterdam*, with the survival of some of the crew in a harrowing long voyage on a small Icelandic craft. To reassure readers, he added a statement that the cargo of the fleets was good, so that the shares of the VOC stock had risen and a generous dividend had been declared. His retrospective treatment of the news provides an interesting example of how it might be edited in hindsight and cautions us against assuming that when he quotes a source published

It is unlikely that in Moscow there necessarily would have been a reason to track closely the news and speculation about the Indies fleet *before* it would have arrived, although there are occasional summary notes in the *kuranty* regarding convoys whose wealth obviously would have been significant for their home countries.[118] At least two summary translations apparently refer to the Indies fleet, one in a report from Hamburg, 18 October, with news of a major storm, survived by Dutch ships with a rich cargo from the Indies (V-K VI/1: 241, No. 68.15). A second one, translated from a German newsletter received in Moscow on 19 November, mentioned that four of the Dutch Indies ships had not yet arrived, and there was no news of them.[119] It seems likely this news would have dated from late October or very early November. In any event, despite the fact that the paragraph introducing the lading list that was received in Moscow in a copy of *EHD* 1667/19 (published on 13 October) contained the list of all the original ships of the fleet and the information about the loss of the *Walcheren* and presumed loss of the *Wapen van Amsterdam*, this information was ignored by the translator(s). They did, however, produce an essentially complete rendering of the detailed cargo list.[120]

In similar fashion, when they translated another lading list, for the return fleet in 1671, the introductory material was summarized and altered to suggest all the ships had reached port, even though the Dutch paper had reported only five of the eleven had arrived, with four to six others still expected.[121] The same mail from Vilna, which brought the Dutch source for the lading list (*ODC* 1671/24, received in Moscow on 6 July 1671), also supplied at least three Berlin newspapers. One of them included in a longer article with the header The Lower Elbe (i.e., Hamburg), 6 June, a summary about the expected

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in the previous year, he transmits it fully and accurately. Since the *Walcheren* and *Wapen van Amsterdam* had some of the most valuable cargoes in this fleet, we know from the VOC ship records that their loss amounted to approximately 23.5% of the total value of the fleet's goods in the prices paid for acquiring them in the Indies.

118. For example, a translation from Dutch newspapers (V-K VI/1: 235, No. 67.18) included a brief mention in a report from Madrid, 6 Sept., that the Spanish silver fleet from the Americas had arrived safely in the St. Luke Islands. The identity of the islands is not certain: normally the Spanish treasure fleets sailed via the Azores on their way home. This news packet also contains the translation of the 1667 Dutch lading list.

119. V-K VI/1: 233, No. 66.1. The newsletter source here opened with a line about a comet, which supposedly predicted the war involving the French, English, and Dutch, to which the news of commerce was juxtaposed: the lack of information on the Dutch ships but the positive news that French commerce in the East and West Indies was not harmed by the war. However, there was a report from Antwerp dated 23 Oct. that the Dutch had imposed a tariff on French wine in response to the French imposition of a tariff on imports of cloth from The Republic. Trade between France and Spain was at a standstill on account of the war.

120. The Russian text is in V-K VI/1: 236–238, No. 67.23–26, the Dutch original with a brief analysis in V-K VI/2: 542–545. For a detailed discussion of the translation, see Maier and Pilger 2003a.

121. V-K VII: 162–164; 548–551. Although this list also was published in *EHD* 1667/24, a small difference identifies the Amsterdam *ODC* as the source used in Moscow (ibid.: 550). A copy of the Amsterdam paper has been preserved in RGADA and was the source for all of the other translations from Dutch contained in the packet of news that was received via the Vilna post on 6 July (V-K VII: 161–162, No. 20.167–169^{v}; 544–548).

return any day now of the Indies fleet, citing a copy of the same lading list from which the editor quoted the impressive statistics for three of the products: black pepper, Malacca Tin, and Guinea fabrics.[122]

It is of some interest to compare the translations of the two lading lists, since that reveals the degree to which those working in the Ambassadorial Chancery could cope with often unfamiliar terminology and how sometimes hasty work could lead to errors in rendering the foreign news.[123] While we might assume both translations would have been done by Andrei Vinius, it is possible that the first of them is not his work.[124] It would have been made most likely in late autumn 1667, at a time when he might not have been available due to other obligations in connection with the building of Russia's first European-style warship (see below). The translation of the list in 1667 is quite careless, suggesting great haste and lack of attention to detail. Some of the mistakes would seem inconceivable for Vinius, given his family background and what we know about his interests. For instance, numerical quantities of some goods were rendered erroneously in the Cyrillic numbering, and there was a systematic and seemingly inexplicable error in reading the abbreviation for 'pieces' as 'picols', a unit of weight, which resulted in great exaggeration of the amounts of the given goods.[125] (On the other hand, the 1671 list cor-

122. For the German sources and a discussion of the translations in V-K VII, No. 20, see ibid.: 417–425. The translator committed the same error here in rendering the original number for the quantity of pepper as did the translator of the full lading list from the Dutch source (ibid.: 424). The apparent discrepancy that this news was reported ten days before the ships actually docked in Amsterdam can easily be explained by the practice the VOC had of distributing the lading lists ahead of when the boats would have landed.

123. For the 1667 list we rely on the detailed study Maier and Pilger 2003a. So far there is no equally detailed analysis of the translation of the 1671 list. It is important to remember that some of the problem renderings may have been introduced by the copyists of the texts.

124. Other translators who could handle Dutch might have been available, though the records for the Ambassadorial Chancery do not indicate exactly when there would have been a qualified person on the staff. One intriguing possibility is Timofei Angler, who had been selected to go to the Netherlands in the previous year to complain to the Dutch government about the fact that Dutch newspaper publishers were referring to the tsar not by his proper title but as 'Grand Duke'. Angler's mission was called off when Dutch merchants in Moscow stated they could make proper representations to have the matter corrected (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 187).

125. The Dutch newspaper source here (and its reprint in *HM*) both use the word *stuckx* and its abbreviation *st*. or *sts*. after the first usage. In the 1665 lading list, the term for the textiles was *pieces*, abbreviated *piec*. and then *ps*., which distinguishes it from *pont* (pound) and its abbreviation *p*. In the one case in 1667 where a product is measured in *picols*, the term is written out. Were the translation made from a list such as that of 1665, it is easy to imagine how the various terms beginning in 'p' could have been confused by some eye-skip on the part of the translator. Possibly the explanation for the mistake in the 1667 translation derives from the layout of the tabulation on the newspaper page, where the second column has '*p*.' for *pont* and below it '*picol*'. A possible eye-skip here could explain the substitution for the correct *stuckx* and *st*. in referring to the textiles and some of the other products. The quantity for diamonds is erroneously given in *picols*, where they are listed in the original between items measured in *ponts* (*p*.) and ounces (transcribed in Russian as *untsy*). Marginal notes to the manuscript copy of the 1667 translation supply equivalencies for the measures in the list: 'in each picol [are] 120 Dutch pounds (*funtov*)'; 'in each catty, one and three-fourths Dutch pound (*funt 3 cheti*).' Such equivalencies were actually printed with some of the other lading lists; for example, at the end of that for the 1671 fleet: "Nota 1 picol is 120 pont. 1 Catti 1 1/5 pont." The translator(s) in 1667 must have

rectly rendered the Dutch 'stuckx' and its abbreviation 'st.'[126]) Clearly a number of the specialized terms, especially those designating particular fabrics, were unfamiliar, but at least the translator understood that textiles were involved and indicated as much. An exception was for the 1000 pieces of 'Cassa Bengale', a kind of muslin, which he understood to be a reference to 'Cassia', the Dutch term for a cinnamon-like spice, and thus rendered it as 'Indian cinnamon' (*karitsy indeiskoi*). Somewhat puzzling is the rendering of 'Chineese Thee' as 'Khinskie travy khe' ('Chinese herb khe'), since one would assume that the translator, if Andrei Vinius, might well have known the word for tea, and tea drinking in China certainly was known earlier in Russia in the seventeenth century, although called *chai* (a word of northern Chinese origin).[127] The 'Negros Kleeden' of both Dutch texts is designated as 'Indian' in 1667, as 'Arab' in 1671.

As in the 1667 translation, that of 1671 contains many specialized terms where there seems to have been no Russian equivalent; those terms were either transliterated or explained in plain Russian. Prefacing the listing of the textiles, the translator in 1671 added a note that the Indian fabrics, both coarse and fine, have different names (*roznymi imiany*). There are some variations: in 1667, 'Parcallen' is transliterated (*parkalov*), whereas in 1671, the word is translated as 'pisanye zavesy'. In 1671, the translator adds to the transliteration *garas* the explanation 'krashenogo polotna' ('colored cloth'). Where in 1667 'Adatheys' was translated 'kisei' ('muslin'), in 1671 the word was transliterated. The same was done for 'Baftas'.

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either known the Dutch terminology or had other sources for reference.

126. However, in the 1671 translation, the translator was inconsistent, using the term *kosiak* in some instances for *stuckx* but in other cases the loanword *shtuk*. This translation contains at least one mistake in rendering the numbers, where the quantity of black pepper has been reduced by a whole order of magnitude from 5,390,208 22/25 to 539,209 pounds (the final digit rounded up), possibly because the translator could not believe a cargo might contain millions of pounds. The larger figure of the Dutch text is realistic, where the lading list is combining the cargoes of all the ships in the fleet. Also, while rendering a note from the original list with the equivalencies in pounds for picols and catties, he added, presumably from his own knowledge, the equivalence for ounces in *zolotniki*. The *zolotnik* was a standard unit of weight (equivalent to 4.25 gr) used for small quantities of valuable goods such as precious stones and metals.

127. As noted in Maier and Pilger (2003a: 205), the word 'Thee' may not have been known in Russia prior to the eighteenth century, and they suggest that the initial 'T' could easily have been mistaken for 'C', giving a word 'Chee' which would have mystified the translator. Alternatively, in his haste, the translator could simply have eye-skipped over the initial, perhaps semi-legible 'T' (the rest of the word 'hee' would be clear) and interpolated the descriptor in the way that he did for other products with unfamiliar names. One needs to remember too that tea often was used as a medicament; so *trava* would not have seemed inappropriate. That the Dutch would have used the word 'Thee' is not surprising, since it would have been common in Southeast Asia, based on a southern Chinese word for tea. Boris Kurts (1915: 310) notes in his commentaries to Kilburger's 1674 treatise on Russian trade that Russian envoys sent to China brought back *travy chaiu* in 1658 and 1663, the latter case some 10 *puds*, a rather substantial quantity (1 *pud* = 36 lb.). In his last years, the early eighteenth century, Vinius owned a book by Cornelis Bontekoe published in 1701 entitled *Drey Neue Curieuse Tractätgen von dem Tranck Café, Sinesische The, und der Chocolata* [...] (Savel'eva 2008: 58, No. 37), which presumably reflects his professional interests, developed while he headed the Apothecary Chancery.

The cargoes included several varieties of wood, at least some of which may have been the raw material for preparing dyestuffs, but none appear to have been familiar to the translator, who knew only the term 'sandal' to designate oriental wood. In one place in 1667, the translator rendered 'Sappanhout' as 'sandal'; yet in a later listing for 'Siams Sappanhout' he wrote 'siiamskogo dereva'. (We might wonder whether Siam/Thailand, one of the major sources for this wood at the time, was a place known in Russia.) In 1671, the Russian rendering of 'Sappanhout' as 'sapanova dereva' transliterated the first part but translated the second. This is the same technique applied in 1667 to 'Calantours Hout' (*dereva kalanturskago*) – a wood in the mahogany family – whereas in 1671, it was rendered as 'sandal'. 'Ebenhout' ('ebony') in 1667 became 'krasnyi sandal'; in 1671 the Russian was 'ebnovoe derevo'.

Quite appropriately, some of the place names in Southeast Asia, which for the Dutch designated the specific provenance of certain products – but which may have been unfamiliar in Moscow – were transliterated, while the rest of such listings could be either transliterated or translated (Tonquinse Muscus> *tonkvinskago mskusu*; Tutucorinse Peerlen> *tutakarinskogo zhemchiugu*; Manaers Peerlgruys> *manarskogo zhemchiugu mělkova i oblomkov*). These examples come from the 1667 list, where the cargoes for the three ships that had originated in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) were given separately from the cargoes of the Batavia ships. Tuticorin (Thoothukudi) on the Coromandel Coast of Southeast India and the Gulf of Manar, between India and Ceylon, historically have been among the most important locations of pearl fisheries. The Tonkin 'muscus' ('musk'), transliterated in 1667, was erroneously rendered as 'silk' in 1671, since the original there reads 'Tonquinse dito', the previous item in the list being Ceylon silk. Assuming that in fact musk is involved here, the appellation 'Tonkin' might suggest a provenance, where shipments of this valuable aromatic would have arrived from a source most probably in the highlands of Tibet.[128]

While both of the translated lading lists apparently belong to the manuscript packets of translations made from specific deliveries of Dutch newspapers, the lists are self-contained on separate sheets. They are known only in single copies. In normal practice the translated packets of news would have been read to the tsar and his advisers or at very least copied for his Privy Chancery. However, it is hard to imagine anyone just reading off a long and complicated listing of numbers and products.

19.6.1. Andrei Vinius' interest in the eastern trade

What could have inspired the translation of such lading lists at all? Might they reflect simply the personal interest of Andrei Vinius, the son of a merchant-entrepreneur and

128. Musk in fact was known, if not common, in Moscow at least as early as 1672 (Hellie 1999: 185). It is certainly possible that musk the Dutch might have supplied would have found a market in Moscow. In 1674, the observant Johan Kilburger reported that in winter the Russians would buy it from Siberians (Kalmyck Mongols), but in summer they would turn to German merchants for their supply (Kurts 1915: 105–106).

later head of the Apothecary Chancery with its stores of exotic foodstuffs and medicaments and a library of reference works? Vinius surely would have been well informed of Dutch maritime affairs simply from reading the newspapers and the books he was accumulating for his personal library.

His knowledge would have been relevant to the role he played in translating the documents concerning the hiring of Dutch shipwrights in 1667–1668 to build the *Orël*, Russia's first serious European-model warship. As is well known, it never made it out to the Caspian where it was supposed to defend the maritime trade; Stenka Razin's rebels captured the ship in Astrakhan and burned it. The story of its construction is an interesting one. The tsar's Privy Chancery had commissioned Jan van Sweeden (yes, Moscow's first postmaster) to go off to Amsterdam in 1667 to hire the necessary specialists. The contracts and various documents pertaining to payments and procurement had to be translated from Dutch, several of the Russian texts specifying that Vinius had made the translation.[129] Since Vinius probably interacted directly with David Butler, who was hired by Van Sweeden to captain the ship being built in Russia, it is possible that Butler could have provided the Muscovite translator with information about the Indies trade. The initial hiring documents mention specifically that Butler had been involved in the Indies trade and knew the languages, details of trade and customs of India as well as techniques of celestial navigation (*DAI* 5: 218). Presumably these qualifications were seen as one of the selling points for hiring Butler, since his employment was to involve protecting the commercial traffic that might bring Indies goods via Persia to Muscovy.

Around the same time that he was involved in translating the Dutch documents and engaged in at least two other translation tasks, Vinius was compiling a geographic 'guide',

129. *DAI* 5: 211–215, 231–234, 249; see the discussion in Iurkin 2007: 88–95. The interaction with the Dutch who came to work on the project may well have supplied the officials in Moscow with maps, images or books that could have been added to the reference library in the Ambassadorial Chancery or to the tsar's own collection in his Privy Chancery. While some details are unclear, there apparently was a dispute between David Butler, who was hired to captain the *Orël*, and the merchant Jeremy van der Gaten, who was also involved in the undertaking and accused Butler of faking his credentials and perhaps misstating financial records about purchases. The Russian officials then temporarily confiscated from Butler what the sources call 'letters and documents and foreign books with draft notes, and handwritten inventories and various kinds of other writings.' The dispute was decided in Butler's favor after an investigation by the Ambassadorial Chancery; the written materials were returned to Butler (*DAI* 5: 265–266, 268–269). The books and papers may have been his correspondence, financial ledgers, lists of supplies and diaries or other notes. Apparently Butler's earlier naval service had been at a lower rank (termed a *dozorshchik* in the Russian documents, lit. 'watchman', but possibly something like a 'mate', or possibly a shore job as construction inspector in a shipyard). Butler provided the officials with a copy of the foreign naval regulations regarding discipline for ships' crews, since he was empowered to follow them during his command (ibid.: 276–277). The list of the various supplies Butler brought with him to Russia includes this notation: 'two drawings on parchment, twelve on Alexandrian [i.e., large format] paper, and among them one was taken to the Great Sovereign and two to the Ambassadorial Chancery' (ibid.: 275). Most likely these were plans or drawings for the ship. Proper decoration of the ships, including painting and carving, was involved; apparently there were paintings on canvas actually showing both the frigate *Orël* and the smaller 'yacht' (ibid.: 280). The reference also could be to engravings of ships, for which the Dutch artists and publishers were famous.

an alphabetical listing of major cities, with descriptive phrases identifying them, and an indication of their distance from Moscow (Petrov 1950: 149–158). A reference work such as this obviously would have been useful in the Ambassadorial Chancery, when the translators needed to provide an explanatory note about a place name in the *kuranty*. However, questions remain about why and how he compiled it, and why he did so in 1667. The colophon, signed on 1 August 1667, states that he had drafted the work in May.

The heading for this work states explicitly that it had been done 'according to the scale of distances of a book called The Water World and other relevant descriptions of the Russian state' ('po rozmeru knigi, imenuemyia Vodnyi Mir i inykh, prinadlezhashchikh k tomu opisanii Rossiiskago gosudarstva'). There is no plausible reason to doubt the accuracy of this statement. The most careful recent analysis of the composition of the work is by Olena Jansson, who concluded that further study is needed to determine what, exactly, were Vinius' sources.[130] Of particular interest here is Vinius' reference to one of his sources, *The Water World*, which undoubtedly is to an elegant and important Dutch maritime atlas that was available at the time. There is no copy of this atlas listed among the books in his own library, nor does there seem to have been a copy among the books of the Ambassadorial Chancery. However, of itself, that does not prove he could not have seen it, given his contacts in Moscow with the Dutch merchant community and his interaction with members of the Dutch embassy that was in Moscow in 1665. Later in the seventeenth century, as Sobolevskii established, a translation from the introduction to that atlas circulated in Moscow, but there is no evidence so far to suggest it may have been made from a copy that had been used by Vinius which, perhaps, was still in the archives.[131]

Even though there is an earlier maritime atlas published by Joan Janssons in 1650 and often referred to by the same generic title, given its specific content, the atlas Vinius most likely referred to is one printed in several editions by the cartographers Hendrick Doncker and Pieter Goos.[132] At one time collaborators, when they began to produce their

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130. See her Uppsala senior thesis (Pashnyk 2014), which is a valuable description and discussion of the manuscript of Vinius' work, now in the collection of the Uppsala University library. In connection with that work, she undertook a careful analysis of the source issue, and has generously shared her unpublished notes with us. Jansson (2015) summarizes briefly her conclusion that further work is needed with regard to Vinius' sources, and more recently, in Jansson and Shamin (2018), there is valuable analysis demonstrating how among the seventeenth-century copies of the text are ones which can be dated on the basis of additions in them from the *kuranty*. This attests to the fact Vinius' work continued to be used in chancery circles. Here we follow her lead in the analysis of the sources, with some additional observations based on our own study of the material.

131. Sobolevskii (1903: 67) compared that later translation to a 1693 edition of the atlas (whose introduction is dated 1666). However, it is hard to prove in one way or another whether an edition that Vinius could have used was still around in Moscow to be the source for the later translation. The 1693 date of the edition Sobolevskii used certainly cannot be proof that Vinius could not possibly have seen the atlas in another edition in 1667. That the book seems to have been available in Moscow is significant for our knowledge of important foreign books which were being received and used there.

132. On practical navigation and the development of cartography, see, respectively, Ash 2007 and

own editions, they shared the same engraved map plates, adding their individual decorative elements and some of the captioning. Doncker's first edition appeared in 1659; Goos' first edition in 1666. The Doncker/Goos atlases include prose introductions with general comments on geography and descriptive paragraphs on individual countries, a kind of geographic dictionary, highlighting products found there, naming important cities, and so on. The maps follow the tradition of the portolans drawn on the basis of navigators' observations, starting back in the Middle Ages. That is, they show coastal outlines and coastal cities, but not topography or inland cities. The maps have compass roses connected by crisscrossing rhomb lines, which, it is assumed, could be used by a mariner for taking bearings and to determine when to change a course in a different direction. Whether the atlases of themselves would have been used by navigators at sea is a good question, but the maps bound into them were also sold separately and would have been of practical value on a voyage. Many of the maps we know now, thanks to their preservation in these atlases, were very detailed, showing soundings, the location of sandbars, and with very precise rendering of inlets and harbors. In book form this kind of detailed information could have been of value for someone wishing to follow the latest news about a naval engagement or the movement of an important convoy. All of the detailed maps include scales of distances, in most cases first for German miles, and then as well for English and Spanish ones. So it would be a simple matter to lay down a straight-edge on the map and calculate the distance along any likely sea route.

Vinius' geographic guide lists 54 numbered cities and specifies the political entities in which they are located. In the first instance, the entries specify the distance of the cities from Moscow in *versty* (1 v = 1.08 km). In a number of cases there may be more than one distance: one for land travel and one for sea travel via Riga or Archangel. As Olena Jansson discusses, one of the first questions about Vinius' work is how he decided what cities to include (and whether all of them might be numbered amongst the most important or famous ones). There are several possibilities here. The majority of the cities are ones which figure in *kuranty* translations and their foreign newspaper sources. These include both port and inland cities; some frequently made the news, others rarely. Many of the cities (but only the ports) are on the detailed maps in the atlas, and in a few instances, cities may have been chosen from their mention in the introductory paragraphs of the atlas (e.g., Mexico, Toledo). Russian sources – for example ambassadorial reports or interrogations of merchants – could have been the source for some of the relatively few places named in Vinius' guide that are not registered anywhere in the atlas (e.g., Isfahan, Lahore). It is also possible that his choice of some locations can be explained by his personal interests (in Dutch commerce) or some recent experience he had at work,

Schilder and van Egmond 2007. The latter tabulate on p. 1432 the several seventeenth-century Dutch sea atlases which included in their titles (in variant spellings) 'Water-weereld'. The full title of Goos' 1666 edition is: *De zee-atlas/ ofte Water-weereld, waer in vertoont werden alle de zee-kusten van het bekende des aerd-bodems. Seer dienstigh voor alle schippers en stuurlieden, als oock voor alle heeren en kooplieden*.

for example, in producing the extensive set of translations about the unrest in the Ottoman Empire in connection with the false messiah Shabbetai Zvi. Existing Russian route books (one in particular travels in 'convoy' with copies of Vinius' guide) indicate distances between locations within the Russian state. Certainly he would have known the distances between Moscow and the ports of Riga (the terminus of the international post from Moscow) and Archangel, where Dutch ships regularly arrived during the summer navigation season. The absence of Moscow in the maps of the atlas is no reason to doubt that he could have used the atlas for at least the nautical distance measurements beyond the Russian borders.

For those maritime distances, indeed he would have had to rely on some foreign source: oral communication, a descriptive text (such as an account of voyages) or an atlas such as the Doncker/Goos one, in which he could actually measure distances from its maps. Most of the locations for which he provides the distance for sea travel can be found on a single map in the atlas, that showing all of Europe, the Mediterranean basin, and the northwestern coast of Africa. The map includes the far north and the archipelagos of the Atlantic off the Spanish and African coasts. In attempting to replicate how he might have used the maps in the atlas, we obtain mixed results. There is a methodological challenge, in that most sea routes do not follow a straight line but wind around coastlines, change direction to avoid land masses and, in practice at any given moment, may take detours on account of political or other threats, as we have seen with the Dutch Indies return fleets during the Anglo-Dutch War. Nautical routes are not mapped but must be approximated. So we cannot know exactly how Vinius would have laid down his straight-edge or even how precisely he attempted to do so. As a result, some of his distances by sea seem to be quite good approximations – for example, to London, Amsterdam, Iceland or the Strait of Gibraltar. The discrepancy of his measuring Amsterdam as slightly more distant than London (in fact the reverse is the case) is insufficient to show he could not possibly have been measuring from the atlas. There are others of his distance measurements which seem to be inexplicably wrong and not simply a result of rounding errors. In some cases, where in theory a sea route (from Riga) over most of the distance would be possible, he seems instead to have preferred a land route that, arguably, would have followed the normal postal roads.

One comes away with the impression that Vinius' compilation is nothing more than a rough draft, perhaps produced in haste and never completed, the choices for inclusion somewhat random. Might Florence be there mainly because there had been several Russian missions in recent years, and might not Madrid and Toledo be anticipating the Potemkin embassy, the first-ever Russian mission to Spain, which was setting out just at the time when Vinius signed his colophon? As we have suggested (Waugh (2023b) and as we know from the *kuranty* texts most likely the work by Vinius, his approach to his sources seems to have involved very rapid selection of bits and pieces, probably because he was so over-worked and under time pressure. So it would not surprise us if he spent

relatively little time measuring the maps, even if he felt it important to cite the authority of that atlas as an explanation for his inclusion of bays and islands and nautical distances.

In connection with the translations he was assigned to do during the building of the *Orël*, in early December 1668, Vinius wrote a memorandum for his superiors in the Ambassadorial Chancery, proposing what he considered to be the most sensible way to create a workable fleet on the Caspian (*DAI* 5: 404–405, No. 80). He explicitly referred to a translation he had made of a letter from the captain hired for the warship, David Butler, which mentioned the desirability of at least one galley to accompany the sailing vessel. Vinius argued that a whole fleet of galleys would make a lot of sense and that it was wrong to think a sailing vessel such as that which was being constructed could be of use in the Caspian.[133] The winds blew the wrong way; such a sailing ship thus could not always make its way to its destination. Furthermore, being of deep draft, the ship could not go upriver in places where it might be needed. Of shallow draft and not dependent on the wind, galleys were much better suited to the geography, and they could travel under sail when the wind allowed. They had the additional virtue that they could be powered by captive Muslims and criminals. The creation of such a fleet with its guarantee of being able to protect commercial vessels would attract many more merchants, and the customs duties they would pay then would enrich the treasury. If a route could be discovered to India via the rivers and direct trade there undertaken, the benefits would be substantial.

The difficulties of getting the *Orël* down to Astrakhan demonstrated the wisdom of at least some of what Vinius proposed. The decision had been made to build the ship on the Oka river southeast of Moscow. By the time it was completed, the water in the river was too low, winter was setting in, and even when the ship finally set off in the spring, there were issues of avoiding the sandbars on the way south. It is not clear how Vinius would have known about such things as prevailing winds in the Caspian, but he surely was aware that war galleys were still very much a part of naval strategies at the time. Several of the engravings he collected in his scrapbook show naval battles, including those between the Ottoman and Venetian fleets, in which galleys played a major role.[134] Reports from escaped captives of the Tatars and Turks, who in some cases had been forced to serve on galleys, were well known in Moscow. Vinius modestly suggested that if his superiors felt his proposal to be of interest, they might bring it to the attention of the tsar. However, we have no evidence that Aleksei Mikhailovich ever saw it.

133. The letter to which Vinius refers is not in the published collection of documents about the building of the *Orël*. In fact, apart from that ship, akin to a small frigate, the construction project included building a *iakhta* – a small sailing vessel – and three additional craft that were at best enlarged rowboats. No multiple-oared war galley seems to have been in the plans. For an explanation of the names for the boats that were actually constructed for the project, see Filin and Kurnoskin 2016, s.v. *korabl'*, *iakhta*, *shniaka*, *bot*.

134. Savel'eva 2008: 149, Inv. 7398, 7401; 251, Inv. 7428. For an example, see our FIG. 19.1.

Apart from his having at least seen a copy of the Dutch sea atlas, we cannot be certain what else Vinius was reading in these years. The catalogue of the over 350 titles that are known to have been in his possession attests to the breadth of his interests and includes numerous volumes devoted to naval affairs, world geography, and exploration. However, some of the items relating to events we are focusing on here were published in later years, and even where the imprints antedate the 1660s, there are but rare indications when he might have acquired them. His inscriptions on a few volumes date their acquisition to the period when the Dutch embassy headed by Jacob Boreel was in Russia, for which Vinius served as the Russian translator.[135] One book was a condensed popular historical geography. Among the others was an account of travels in the Holy Land, apparently a gift from Nicolaas Witsen, who was a member of the Dutch mission. Vinius specified that two of the other books (both multi-lingual dictionaries) were gifts from the pastor who was attached to the mission, received as the Dutch were leaving Moscow.

Among Vinius' later acquisitions, as noted above, was a 1666 account of De Ruyter's voyage down the African coast and across to the Caribbean to attack English outposts and a large history of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, published in 1668 (Savel'eva 2008: 84). Vinius owned a book on the Venetian-Ottoman war over Crete, published in 1670, and Olearius' 1651 edition of the travel account to Persia and India by Johan Albrecht Mandelslo.[136] Apart from the engravings relating to the war for Crete, his album included a series of Dutch engravings depicting various Chinese cities, among them the important port of Canton (ibid.: 250). Of particular interest is a book that could have been in his possession at the time of the project for a warship on the Caspian. Published in Amsterdam in 1648, this 1200-page compilation contained an account about the late sixteenth-century Dutch search for a Northeast Passage and a dozen narratives of the first Dutch Indies voyages through the year 1629.[137] Vinius' copy ended up in the collection of the Moscow College of Foreign Affairs, which succeeded the Ambassadorial Chancery in the eighteenth century. As we have argued in a separate study (Waugh 2023c) and summarize below in Sec. 19.6.3, it seems very likely Vinius used it as a source in writing

135. Ibid.: 67 (No. 53), 116 (No. 34), 119 (No. 141), 177 (Nos. 235, 236).

136. Ibid.: 95, 130–131, 142–143. When Vinius obtained the Olearius edition is uncertain. An inscription on the book says that on 20 April 1669, its owner was one Volodimer Ivanov (possibly Vinius' brother-in-law, Wouter Jansz. Houtewall).

137. The book is *Oost-Indische Voyagien Door dien Begin en Voortgangh/ van de Vereenighde Nederlandtsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie* [...] *Eerste Deel. Amsterdam:* Joost Hartgerts, 1648. It has an engraved frontispiece with the title *Oost en Westindische Voyagien: Met de Beschrijvingen van Indien. Eeerste Deel.* It contains more than a dozen separate sections, each with its own title page and pagination. For Vinius' copy, see Belokurov (1898: CCCXXI), who cites the library inventory compiled in 1784 in which the book is annotated 'ex libris Andrias Winius'. Apparently Savel'eva (2008: 248, Inv. 7392) was unaware of this book, though she noted that the engraved frontispiece is one of the plates pasted into the 'Vinius Album', his picture scrapbook. There is a Russian translation probably made some time after 1628 by a Ruthenian from a large collection of voyages and history of the Indies, which had been published in Frankfurt, However, that clearly is a different book (Sobolevskii 1903: 71–72).

about what routes were and were not possible to reach East and South Asia. In short, there is a lot of evidence that Vinius would have been quite knowledgeable about the Dutch Indies trade and had a personal interest in it. He certainly was in a position to have known about a number of other Russian initiatives to promote eastern trade.

19.6.2. The government's interest in the eastern trade

Of course, Vinius' interests and activities may not be the most compelling evidence to help us understand why he translated the lading lists. In the first instance, we still assume the decisions about what to translate from the foreign newspapers were guided by perceptions of what was known to be of interest to the tsar and the foreign-policy specialists. However curious and open to exotica the tsar was, he also was very focused on affairs of state, including the development of trade and other economic resources. Activities he deemed of particular importance in that regard were managed through his Privy Chancery. By looking at such evidence, we can further develop plausible hypotheses to contextualize the translation of the lading lists.

One way to approach answering these questions is to ask to what degree the products listed in the Dutch lading lists match 'Eastern' wares known to have been of interest and thus imported into Muscovy. We have seen how in the 1640s, at least a selection of items from one such lading list seems to have focused precisely on products sold in Russia. To the degree that the government and the tsar personally may have been involved in cultivating Muscovy's international trade in such goods, we may have a plausible explanation for why the lading lists could have attracted interest in Moscow. There is in fact much evidence about commercial connections between Muscovy and Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia and China, where government initiative and control over such trade became particularly important during the seventeenth century.[138] Unlike in the case of most diplomatic missions to Europe, where envoys were explicitly forbidden to engage in trade, missions to Persia, Central Asia, or India might double as trade missions. Russian merchants who had a particular interest in trade in Siberia or down the Volga and into the Caspian often were specifically commissioned as the tsar's agents, a *quid pro quo* for their being able to engage in private commerce. The initiative to engage in such

138. A descriptive chronicle of the exchanges with Central Asia is Zhukovskii (1915). Among the missions for which we have substantial published documentation are that of Ivan Khokhlov to Bukhara and Khiva in 1620–1623 (Khilkov 1897: 388–445, with an appended chronological survey of relations with Bukhara, 446–484) and that of the Pazukhins to Bukhara in 1669 (*RIB* 15, 7th pagination). The Privy Chancery archive inventory compiled in 1713 lists a 'Note about the procession of the Khan of Bukhara to the mosque and about the price of grain sold there' (*Opis' PTD* 1713: 7). Russian officials meeting with an envoy from Bukhara to Moscow in 1671 interrogated him regarding Bukhara and its neighbors (Khilkov 1879: 527–528). The earlier inventories of the Privy Chancery, compiled soon after Aleksei Mikhailovich died, included documents relating to a mission by Ivan Khastov to Persia in 1661/62 and another by Fedor Narbekov in 1665/66 (*RIB* 21: 3). This is but a small sampling of the evidence regarding the active exchanges with the Islamic regimes in the East. Also of possible relevance here is the fact that among the books sent to the Kievan Academy after the death of the monk Epifanii Slavinetskii, who had come to Moscow in the 1650s and had a long career there as a translator, were a 'Book about the Turks', and a 'Book about Persia' (possibly a copy of Olearius; Undol'skii 1846: 71–72).

trade also came from entrepreneurs or commercial entities in the 'East'. A good deal has been written about the involvement of merchant entrepreneurs from Central Asia, India and Persia, in the last of these cases in particular by the Armenians whom the Persian shah had put in charge of the trade in Persian silk.[139]

There are two remarkable contemporary analyses of Muscovite trade, one written by the Swedish resident Johan de Rodes when he was away from his post in Moscow, visiting Reval (Tallinn) in October 1653, the other compiled in 1674 by Johan Kilburger, who had spent some months in Moscow as a member of a Swedish embassy.[140] Both of these extensive reports include lists of goods from the Russian customs registers and also tabulations of prices for a wide range of goods that were obtainable in Russian markets. Writing as he was in the middle of the first Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654), which had been detrimental to the Dutch trade to Archangel, De Rodes argued for redirecting the flow of Eastern goods from the Volga-White Sea route to a route through Swedish-held territories in the Baltic. Kilburger was writing during the Franco-Dutch War (1672–1678) and in the immediate aftermath of the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672–1674), a time when merchants active in the Russian trade had to cope with the so-called New Trade Statute (1667), by which the Kremlin imposed strict limits on the commercial activities of foreign merchants. Both De Rodes and Kilburger were well informed about the sources and value of the eastern wares.

While many of the products brought to Europe by the Dutch East Indies ships are also recorded as imports to Muscovy, that was not necessarily thanks to the European ships arriving in Archangel. When a Russian embassy to Mughal Shah Jahan, led by two merchants, departed in 1646, they were instructed to collect commercial intelligence. The instructions specifically mentioned a variety of luxury goods, including textiles that are documented in other sources from Russian markets (*Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 58). As Stephen Dale (1994: 92) has suggested, this presumably is evidence that such products were already known from the trade at Astrakhan. An Indian merchant who arrived in Saratov on his way to Moscow, in December 1649, brought for sale a wide variety of textiles, many possibly inexpensive cottons, but at least some probably more elab-

139. For a well-informed summary discussion of Muscovite trade with Persia see Kurts 1915: 343–362. One of the best, detailed treatments of the Russian documentation regarding trade from India through Central Asia is Baikova (1964), where much of the evidence she discusses had been published in *Russko-indiiskie* (1958). Her book can serve as a guide to the most interesting of those documents. In English, there is a good summary in Matthee (1999, esp. pp. 168–171, 192–197), his focus being the trade with Persia and the role of the Armenians. Other monographs treating broadly the role of Indian merchants are Dale (1994, esp. Ch. 4) and Levi (2002: 225–232). Dale's study drew heavily on the Russian documentation first published in 1958 for his discussion of the Indian community in Astrakhan, the seventeenth-century trade, and the early Russian missions to the Mughal Empire, first undertaken in the middle of the century.

140. In the discussion below we rely on the publication and detailed analysis of these reports by Boris Kurts 1915 (Kilburger) and 1914 (De Rodes). He publishes Kilburger in Russian translation (many of the original terms for goods are in his notes) but includes both the original German and the Russian translation in his publication of De Rodes. Kurts' work provides many details about Russian trade which have not been superseded by more recent studies.

orately woven silk from northern Persia.[141] It is difficult to determine whether similar wares were among the fabrics described as 'Indian', which in 1616 and 1619 had been purchased for the tsar from an English merchant, or in 1651 would be purchased on the wharves in Archangel from the Dutch.[142] The tsar's purchases in 1651 seem to have been the more elaborate damasks, velvets and satins, whose place of manufacture generally is not indicated.[143] That list specifies some 75 different fabrics, grouped by types (taffetas, damasks, velvets, satins, etc.) and identified by their colors. Many such textiles probably were ones woven in Europe. The lading list translations of 1667 and 1671 have few specific fabric names – the generic *polotno* is used for most of them in 1671. The translator distinguished the different items on that list in the first instance by transliterating the term in the Dutch original. So it is almost impossible to match those lading list textiles with the listings in the contemporary Russian economic documents.

Throughout much of his reign, Aleksei Mikhailovich seems increasingly to have been interested in expanding commercial relations with the East. Indicative of how the tsar may have been thinking regarding the Eastern trade is the fact that in September 1662, while in Riga during a diplomatic mission to Western Europe, Ivan Zheliabuzhskii had a conversation with the chancellor of Courland, in which the Russian envoy asked whether Courland could arrange to construct a merchant ship for the Russians that they could use in trade from India (*Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 139–141). The Courland official answered that theoretically it was possible, but it would be less expensive to have the ship built in Archangel. Apparently there were no further inquiries or action on the matter.

The political obstacles and continual wars involving European countries would have provided an incentive to explore alternatives for the trade in eastern products, and the continual search for new sources of government revenue made the collection of customs revenues of considerable importance. In a culture where gifting by the ruler was an activity of some consequence, being able to draw on a store of lavish and unusual goods was a priority. Foreign missions to the Russian court often brought with them elaborate textiles and garments, which undoubtedly had some influence on the tsars' interest in amassing their own stores of such goods.[144] Aleksei Mikhailovich arranged through his Privy Chancery one very successful purchasing mission to northern Persia in 1663–1665, which brought back substantial quantities of expensive finished textiles and some other

141. *Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 93–94, Nos. 42, 43.

142. Ibid.: 25–27, Nos. 2, 3; Kurts 1914: 221–224.

143. *Adamashka*, a term used in the list of purchases from the English merchant Fabian Smith, refers to damask woven in the eponymous Syrian city, Damascus, though it is hard to know whether it really was of Syrian origin. A category of woven silks called *daragi* or *dorogi* describes wares brought by the Indian merchant in 1649; the fabrics seem to have come from northern Persia – Ardebil and Kashan are mentioned specifically.

144. See the listings compiled by Zhabreva (2016: 274–280) from the documents published in Kologrivov 1911. See also the large collection of documents in Zabelin (2000–2003, vol. 3, passim), which provide details, searchable through the index, regarding the textiles used in gifting and the production of garments for royal and court use.

products. Led by an undersecretary of the chancery, Kirill Demidov, the mission set out in summer 1663 with a substantial treasury of furs, imported European textiles (known to be in demand in Persia), copper, and cash.[145] Its route took him to Shemakha (today's Azerbaijan) and on through Ardebil, Rash, Tabriz, Qazvin, Kashan, and the capital, Isfahan. Demidov kept careful financial records, so that we know where and when he sold or bought something, exactly what the quantity and price were. His purchases included *zarbafy* (brocades with varied decorative schemes, created in part with gold and silver thread), *otlasy* ('satins'), *kamky* ('silk brocades'), silk and wool carpets, velvets, *daragi* (an embroidered silk), *kisei* ('muslins'), *saf'iany* ('morocco leather'), *belyi ladon* ('white incense/frankincense').[146] It seems likely most of the textiles were local production; in some cases a specific provenance was indicated (e.g., *zdelano v-Yspogani kindiakov*, *lagazhanskie daragi*, *tevrizskie saf'iany*, *kindiaki lekovrovye*, *kindiaki ferespirevye*). On Demidov's return, the goods were placed in a special storage area from which, over the next years right up to the tsar's death, individual items or portions of the stock would be removed for gift giving, bonuses, or payment for services. Each year a new inventory was drawn up for that which remained. Some of the textiles undoubtedly were for making garments for the royal family, and there are records that small quantities were sold, but for the most part these luxury items did not seem to have principally a commercial purpose.

Attempts to negotiate any kind of direct trade agreement with the Safavid government proved abortive. However, on 31 May 1667, an agreement was negotiated with an Armenian merchant 'corporation' (probably in fact unofficially representing the Persian government) regarding the silk trade.[147] The Armenians were given free access to the Russian market and the ability to send goods through Russia that would be sold to merchants of other countries, providing that the appropriate customs duties were paid. The agreement was specifically for the trade in raw silk, and the terms included the presumably unrealistic promise that henceforth the entire export of Persian silk would pass through Muscovy.

This agreement is striking for its encouragement of foreign trade only a few weeks after the issuing of the so-called 'New Trade Statute' on 22 April 1667 in response to Rus-

145. For a discussion of the Privy Chancery's involvement in the Persian trade, see Gurliand 1903: 193–196. The main collection of documents pertaining to this venture have been published in *RIB* 23: 1413–1582. The European textiles – specified as *karmaziny*, a high-quality fabric though not clear from what it was woven; *stamedy*, 'woolens; English cloth' – were purchased from a Dutch merchant Justus Abramov (Bloemaert; ibid.: 1419).

146. A summary listing of the Persian goods in the inventory reads: 'zarbafy, otlasy, kamki zolotnye i serebrenye, i kovry zolotnye i serebrenye i sholkovye, i kovry zh' po bumazhnoi osnove sherstianye, i barkhaty zolotnye i volnistye i polosatye i glatkie, i parchi zolotnye i serebrenye i dorogi Kashanskie, Riashskie, Lagozhanskie, i kisei, i sholk, i kindiaki, i saf'iany, i inye tovary' (*RIB* 23: 1449–1450).

147. For the text, see *SGGiD* 4: 204–208, No. 56; *PSZ* 1: 692–695, No. 410; a summary is in Matthee 1999: 193–194. What the Armenian merchants could offer certainly was well known to the Russians prior to this. See the list of goods purchased from some of them in 1663, including Indian wares (*Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 143–147).

sian merchants' complaints about unfair competition within Russia from foreign merchants.[148] The new statute thus limited foreign traders to a few border 'ports' (Archangel, Novgorod, Pskov, Kazan, Astrakhan) and allowed them to engage only in wholesale trade with Russians. Uniform customs duties were imposed as well. Two of the provisions seem to have particular relevance to the trade we are discussing here, one directed at preventing foreigners from offering Russians poor quality goods or imitations of ones that had real value, and the other, citing western sumptuary laws as a justification, attempting to control concealment of certain luxury goods such as pearls – that is, so that they could not be sold to ordinary people but rather reserved to the tsar.[149] Indeed, of all the products we know the Dutch had been bringing to Archangel on a regular basis and which also figure in the lading lists, pearls were among the most valuable. There was a great demand for them to use in embroidering rich fabrics and also for the incrustation of the *oklady*, the elaborate frames of precious metals which decorated icons.

The Razin rebellion, which started with Cossack attacks on merchant shipping in the Caspian and peaked with the takeover of much of the lower Volga in 1670–1671, clearly had a negative impact on Muscovite trade with the East (Kurts 1915: 350–351, 356), although it is difficult to come up with any exact statistics, since presumably there were some alternative overland routes which could have avoided the blockage on the Volga. It is not clear to what degree the agreement with the Armenians of 1667 actually went into effect.[150] If the tsar might have contemplated sending to Persia another trade mission such as that of 1663–1665, for the time being that was impossible. Likewise, when envoys from Khiva were in Moscow later that year and told the Russian officials about the opportunities to obtain Indian goods (*kindiaki*, *kisei*, *gvozdika*, *koritsa*, *kraska*) thanks

148. *SGGiD* 4: 189–204, No. 55. The government followed up on the statute by sending on 9 May a lengthy set of instructions to the *gosti* (leading merchants) who were to be responsible for collecting the customs duties at Archangel (*DAI* 5: 181–206, No. 40). The instructions included a long historical preamble about the earlier activities of foreign merchants, in particular focusing on what were deemed the abuses by the English, who in return for obtaining customs-free trade were supposed to ensure the supply of precious goods for the tsar without marking up the prices but in fact were overcharging for what they supplied. At the end of the document was a brief discussion of the negotiations with the Boreel embassy, in which the Dutch were pressing Moscow to make the customs collections more efficient, since delays were costing the Dutch merchants money.

149. Perhaps simply to undermine the bona fides of the Dutch competition with the English for the Muscovy trade, Samuel Collins, who spent some years as the tsar's personal physician, wrote about how the Dutch were foisting off on the ignorant Russians substandard goods that they could not sell anywhere else (Kurts 1915: 474). In the New Trade Statute, the article in question is paragraph 45, and that referring to pearls and sumptuary laws is paragraph 94.

150. The agreement was renegotiated in 1673 (*SGGiD* 4: 280–283, No. 83; *PSZ* 1: 883–884, 916–923, Nos. 514, 539). Soon after the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich, the Dutch envoy to Moscow, Kunraad van Klenck, petitioned Tsar Fedor to allow the Dutch privileges analogous to those of the Armenians in the silk trade through Russia. The Russian officials consulted with several leading Russian merchants about this proposal; understandably they voiced their opposition to the new Dutch initiative and their reservations about the existing agreement with the Armenians. The central concern here was to keep the European merchants from undermining the ability of the Russians to profit from this trade within the country; in this the merchants seem to have been successful, thus reaffirming the limitations that had been decreed in the New Trade Statute.

to the trade between their emir and India, the blocking of the Volga route at least for a time would have stood in the way (*Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 162). We might suppose that if a normal flow of some eastern products was temporarily blocked, there would have been a greater interest in the possibilities offered by the Dutch via Archangel in the relatively brief period between the Second and Third Anglo-Dutch wars. Thus, in this context there would have been good reason to look at listings of the goods brought to Amsterdam by the Indies fleets. At least some of those items were ones normally marketed in Russia and sought after by the tsar, and there might have been others, as yet unfamiliar, which could have sparked Russian interest. The tsar's other initiatives in the last decade of his reign which are relevant to the issue of the Eastern trade included the building of the *Orël* recounted above and what would be fruitless attempts to start a Russian silk industry in a country whose climate was too cold for it to flourish.

Although Kilburger quotes in detail the customs registers of Archangel for 1671–1674 and provides as well price lists for 1674, without more comparative data for previous years it is impossible to be certain whether in fact there was any shift in the assortment or relative quantities of the goods that might be connected with the disruptions of the eastern trade.[151] Large amounts of both large and small pearls continued to be imported; there were many different kinds of fabrics, including silks, but usually with no specification of their provenance. Presumably for their use in making dyes, there were large shipments of exotic woods from the Americas (Brazil, Pernambuco, and blue wood), not from southeast Asia; there were two types of indigo, designated as Guatimalo and Lauro, and there were some other dyestuffs. Some products – especially spices, which undoubtedly came from South or Southeast Asia – had long been known in Muscovy: pepper, cinnamon, saffron, nutmeg, cardamom, cloves. There also had long been a demand for incense (*ladan*, which may be a generic term), and there was an item called *Radix Chinae* (*khinnyi koren'*), a treatment for venereal disease. That medicament traditionally had been obtained from Siberian merchants, but the better quality also came from Germany. While the Dutch were bringing at least some Persian carpets to Amsterdam, the Russians obviously had been able to obtain many of them via the Volga route and in fact still had some in the store managed by the Privy Chancery.

This example of what on the face of it might have seemed unusual choices by the translators, at a time when they obviously were being very selective of what news might interest the Russian government, shows how it may be possible to suggest a plausible context to explain the choices. As we have seen in an earlier chapter (Sec. 12.3), the correspondence of the foreign merchants in Moscow that focused on the silk trade clearly had attracted attention at a time when there were increasing pressures by the Russian merchants to limit the ways foreigners could trade in Russia. The situation in the 1660s

151. For the lists, see Kurts 1915: 123–147 and his explanatory notes 229–234, where he gives the complete text of one of the 1674 price lists. For prices of spices, from a different document dated 1673, see ibid.: 517.

involved similar concerns, which came to a head with the issuing of the New Trade Statute. But beyond that, and perhaps unlike the situation in the 1640s under his father, Aleksei Mikhailovich had a broad curiosity, something of an entrepreneurial spirit in the development of the Russian economy, and a will to intervene directly in matters that might affect the trade in exotic goods. Thus there is a plausible explanation for the translation of the lading lists. They were not just evidence of some personal interest on the part of the son of a Dutch entrepreneur who now worked as a translator in the Ambassadorial Chancery and had only recently had direct contact with members of a Dutch embassy in Moscow. Andrei Vinius probably understood well that such material would be of interest to the tsar.

19.6.3. A compendium about possible routes to China and India

One small but very interesting file preserved in the Privy Chancery archive offers some intriguing additional evidence about the tsar's interests relating to Asia and the Asian trade, as well as the possible involvement of Vinius in producing some of the documents.[152] There is a single manuscript copy, now divided into two archival units (Nos. 333 and 485), at least the first of which is a fair copy (not a draft) in a typical, neat chancery hand, similar to what can be found in the *kuranty*.[153] So far it is impossible to date the manuscripts precisely; however, the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich and the closing of his Privy Chancery in early 1676 is a *terminus ante quem*.

The subject of the texts is routes to China and India (or the Indies). MS No. 333 contains several parts: a narrative about the unsuccessful attempt of the Dutch, led by Willem Barentsz, to find a Northeast Passage in 1596–1597; a short description of Novaia Zemlia; and a summary of why it was impossible to travel to the east via the Arctic (the Northeast Passage). Having established from these texts that a Northeast Passage was impossible, the compiler of the file for the Privy Chancery added the texts in what is now MS No. 485, describing several viable routes to Central Asia, Persia, India, and China, starting in Astrakhan. All of the texts relating to the Arctic reflect some knowledge of Western geographic literature on the part of their author(s), and there is at least one passing reference to foreign knowledge about the routes from Astrakhan. Even though it may be difficult to identify some of the foreign sources, given the generalized nature of the references, it seems quite certain that we know the exact source for the narrative regarding the Barentsz expedition.

152. Here we provide a summary, based on the detailed study in Waugh 2023b, where readers will find a more complete analysis of the texts and fuller references to the relevant literature.

153. *Opis' PTD* 1713: 5, 23. The files are now in RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, Nos. 333 and 485 (listed in the online inventory on fols. 34, 49). No. 333 is in a single hand; a facsimile, along with a transcription of the text, has been published in Boiarskii et al. 1993: 56–60. The earliest publication of the texts in No. 333 was by Belokurov (1893, 1895). The end of these texts has a reference to the separate composition (now No. 485), indicating that it already existed at the time the copy in No 333 was made. Its text was first published by Kobeko (1884: 19–25). Although the current archival inventory suggests there are annotations on the manuscript in the hand of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, there is reason to doubt that identification.

FIG. 19.4. Artifacts recovered from the site of Barentsz' winter camp on Novaia Zemlia and a seventeenth-century map based on his expedition data showing its location.

On the third Dutch attempt to find the Northeast Passage in 1596–1597, led by Willem Barentsz, his ship was caught in the ice just beyond the northeastern tip of Novaia Zemlia. His party was forced to winter on the island, some members succumbing to attacks by voracious polar bears, others dying from disease, starvation and the cold (FIG. 19.4). Small boats constructed from the remains of their ship enabled some dozen of the Dutch to sail to safety when the ice melted during the brief Arctic summer, although Barentsz himself died on the voyage.

One of the survivors, Gerrit de Veer, had kept a detailed diary of the expedition, which he published in 1598, along with shorter diaries of the two previous Dutch attempts in the Arctic. De Veer's diary was translated into other European languages and was cited in many geographies and atlases during the seventeenth century.[154] Among the popular condensations of De Veer's account was one published in several Dutch editions in the middle of the seventeenth century, one of them reprinted in Amsterdam in 1648, in the large collection of Dutch voyages which Andrei Vinius owned.[155]

A great deal of De Veer's diary was devoted to the daily record of navigation, celestial observations, descriptions of the weather – in other words, what typically would be contained in any navigator's log. Most of those details were ignored by our Russian author, who selected but a few highlights from the frequently repeated descriptions of encounters with polar bears, the efforts to save the ship as it became trapped in the ice,

154. The standard scholarly edition is Veer 1917. An early seventeenth-century English translation is available from the Hakluyt Society.

155. See above n. 138. The section of that edition devoted to the condensed account about the Barentsz expeditions is titled *Verhael van de eerste Ship-Vaert Der Hollandische ende Zeeusche Schepen, Door 't Way-Gat, By Noorden Noorwegen, Moscovien ende Tartarien om, na de Coninckrijcken Cathay ende China* [...] Amsterdam: Hartgers, 1648. Presumably it was printed to be sold as a separate pamphlet in addition to its being bound into the larger volume of voyages published by Hartgers.

the lengthy descriptions of the struggle to survive through the winter, and the harrowing voyage to safety when the ice melted. One passage which caught his attention described what he termed a 'miraculous vision' (*chiudnoe videnie*), seen by Barentsz early in the voyage. An illustration of the sighting appeared in the various editions of De Veer's text, including a small woodcut in the Dutch volume we suggest was the source used by our Russian author (FIG. 19.5). The celestial phenomenon was a parhelion, often seen in the Russian north. Another file in the tsar's Privy Chancery included a depiction of one, to which had been added various imaginary 'signs' to make of it a prophetic bit of anti-Turkish propaganda in the early 1670s.[156]

Since we know that Andrei Vinius owned a copy of the book, which is the likely source for the Russian account about the Barentsz expedition, it is reasonable to suppose that he is the author of that Russian text. He seems to have been the translator of choice for Dutch material at the time, and the subject relates to his interests. The Russian text contains little direct quotation but summarized and extracted specific passages, drawn from what may have been a fairly rapid skimming of the Dutch original. What caught his attention often was the beginning of a new paragraph or a printed marginal notation about the content of the adjacent text. In other words, this approach to the use of the foreign source is analogous to what we can establish about Vinius' modus operandi with

FIG. 19.5. Foldout frontispiece to *Verhael van de eerste Ship-Vaert* (Amsterdam, 1648), with scenes illustrating De Veer's account of the Barentsz expedition. The parhelion they observed is depicted in the panel at lower left, and the winter refuge hut in lower right.

156. For a discussion, see our Sec. 20.4; a more detailed, illustrated discussion is in Waugh 2022a.

the *kuranty* and what we have suggested about the compilation of his geographic guide. One of the interpolations into the Russian account about the third Barentsz expedition comes from the short narratives of the first two Dutch expeditions in the Arctic (published in the same book), the passage referring to their discovery of what may have been gold. The search for precious metals would occupy Vinius, who even would bring back ore samples from his mission abroad and launch a mining venture in the Urals in the 1670s.

The two shorter texts relating to Novaia Zemlia and the impossibility of the Northeast Passage also could be his work, since he would have had various ways to locate additional information in the European geographic literature. We note, for example, that in one of those texts is a notation that the distance from the strait of Waigats at the southern shore of Novaia Zemlia to the location of the refuge where the Dutch wintered beyond its far northeastern tip is about 1000 *versty*. That figure may not come from any descriptive text but rather from measuring the distance on one of the detailed Dutch maps which had been drawn to illustrate the voyages (see FIG. 19.4). A later account about Muscovy by Jacob Reutenfels noted that Vinius had at one point traced out on a map a route to China, but we have no information on what route, or what map might have been involved (Reitenfel's 1905: 98).

Given his connection with the effort to build the *Orël*, his obvious interest in Caspian navigation (and thus the Persian trade) and the access he would have had to the archival files with descriptions of travel to the East, Vinius also might have been responsible for compiling the itineraries in MS No. 485, which contain information analogous to what he had compiled for his geographic guidebook. A standard part of ambassadorial reports was an often cryptic itinerary of the routes they took and either the number of days spent on each leg of a journey or the actual dates of arrivals and departures. Instructions for intelligence gathering could specify that routes of travel be recorded. Travelers coming from abroad were regularly interrogated about where they had been, so there was an abundance of such material available in Moscow for the compilation of geographic route books. The increasingly detailed Russian maps covering Central Asia incorporated the data both for travel following rivers and for overland routes, which sometimes were approximated with dotted lines connecting towns (Waugh 2015b: 73–74).

The text in MS No. 485 concerns primarily Central and South Asia. China is but briefly mentioned, with a reference to the fact that it had been visited by Fedor Baikov (sent there on an embassy in 1654–1657).[157] In 1658, he submitted his end-of-mission report in Moscow, where it was filed presumably both in the Ambassadorial Chancery and in one of the government fiscal offices. While he may have reported orally to the tsar, there is

157. It would be important to examine the actual manuscript, two pages of which duplicate what is copied on the other pages, with the exception of the fact that they contain the reference to Baikov's mission to China. More than one editorial stage is likely represented here in what may be a draft copy of the material.

no indication that a copy of the report was kept in the Privy Chancery. Possibly Nicolaas Witsen obtained a copy when he was in Moscow with the Dutch embassy in 1665–1666, right at the time when a copy was made as reference material for another Russian envoy who was being dispatched to China.[158] Vinius could have provided Witsen with the text.

We are left with still unanswered questions about the date and purpose for the compilation of these texts concerning possible routes to the East. There is other evidence in the Privy Chancery archive about the tsar's interest in both India and China. A file whose exact contents is not known was inventoried after his death with the description: 'quires in quarto, describing the Indian state, selected from various writers and according to a Russian chronicle of the year 7140 [1631/32]' (*RIB* 21: 850). It would have been relevant during a period when there was active interest in developing the Persian trade and, beyond that, establishing possible direct relations with Mughal India.[159] The Privy Chancery archive also contained a translation from German of what at the time was considered to be one of the most authoritative accounts of the Manchu conquest of China by the Jesuit Martino Martini, who had personally witnessed the events in the 1640s. This work was first published in Latin; the Russian translation was presumably from the German edition published in Amsterdam by Joan Blaeu.[160] It is easy to understand the interest of Martini's book in Moscow in the era of the first Russian diplomatic missions to China and the expansion in the Far East, which would bring the two empires into conflict. Apparently a second, rather free translation from the Latin edition of Martini's book was made by Nikolai Spafarii (Milescu), who appended it to his long end-of-

158. On the fate of Baikov's report and its copies, see Demidova and Miasnikov 1966: 101–112. Witsen provided the materials on Baikov's mission to Melchisédech Thévenot, who published them in his large collection of travel accounts. Demidova and Miasnikov publish the two important variant versions of the end-of-mission report and provide valuable commentary about it. Of some interest is the fact that a number of Indian merchants, based in Astrakhan but involved in the trade between Central Asia and western Siberia, were recruited to accompany Baikov on his mission to China.

159. Information about government and royal politics in the Mughal Empire was being obtained from missions to Persia. In 1665, for example, the Russian envoys sent there reported about civil strife amongst the Mughals, information which presumably was obtained from merchants involved in the Indian trade (*Russko-Indiiskie* 1958: 154–155). Western geographies that were translated in Moscow are another possible source. For example, that compiled by Luca de Linda, *Descriptio orbis et omnium rerum publicarum* (Amsterdam: de Zetter, 1665, and other editions), contains a substantial section on India, with details of geography, administration, customs, etc. However, we know of the Russian translation only from an early eighteenth-century manuscript, which does not tell us when it had been made and by whom (Sobolevskii 1903: 63–64).

160. The Russian translation is titled *O khineiskoi voine ot tatar* (*RIB* 21: 2, 348). The Amsterdam edition is *Histori von dem Tartarischen Kriege* [...] *Durch den Ehrw. P. Martinum Martinium* [...] Amsterdam: Blaeu, 1654 (VD17 23:313535Q). In the same year, Blaeu published Martini's book in Latin – the third edition, dedicated to Polish King Jan Kazimierz, which appears to have been the source for the German translation. The listing for the book in the Privy Chancery inventory includes a date, the year 7164 (=1655/56), either the year when the book was received or when it was translated. As part of his huge multi-volume world atlas, Blaeu published an atlas of China, based above all, apparently, on Martini's materials. On Martini, see Mungello 1989; on early Russian relations with China, see Mancall 1971. It is possible that the tsar's interest in Martini's book also can be explained by its dedication, where clearly Martini was signaling Jesuit support for the Polish king's defense of Catholicism in the Commonwealth.

mission report on his return to Moscow in 1678. The Ambassadorial Chancery may well have provided him a copy of the book to take along for his mission to China (he left Moscow at the beginning of March 1675).[161] There is also a speculative suggestion that, prior to his departure for China, Spafarii had produced our text about the possible routes in order to argue why he should not be sent via the north.[162] Even though there likewise is no proof, another hypothesis is that our compendium, or at least the final section of it, was produced no later than 1675 in preparation for the embassy of Muhammad Kasimov to the Mughals (*Russko-indiiskie* 1958: 218). However, the texts contained in that compendium could well have been produced earlier by Vinius, who was away from Moscow on an embassy to Western Europe from late autumn 1672 until late autumn 1675 and thus could not have been involved in the preparation for the missions in question.

19.7. Did contemporaries fully understand the news? Some afterthoughts on interpretation

Anticipating our next chapter, which will take up a number of translations about what from our modern perspective might seem to be paranormal events, it is worthwhile to consider some methodological questions, which our analysis in the current chapter raises but may not fully answer. One example will illustrate the problems. In particular, we might ask whether at the time an event occurs, contemporaries would necessarily be able to understand fully or agree on its significance. The rapidity with which the deluge of ever-changing political or economic news might unfold left little room for reflection, and even the best-informed observers might not understand what they were seeing or being told. The interpretation of any news item might vary considerably from place to place: did we win the battle, or did they? It is not unusual for the real significance of an event to become evident only to some later generation. News quickly becomes dated, in effect is soon 'history', the subject for interpretation that itself may change over time. This is as true today as it was in the seventeenth century. Thus, could those following the Anglo-Dutch wars in the 1660s and 1670s have appreciated that they marked perhaps the high point in Dutch naval and commercial power – and the beginnings of the developments which would establish English supremacy on the world oceans? While it seems most contemporaries realized that the peace concluding the War of Devolution

161. Obviously more needs to be done to establish which editions of Martini were available in Moscow and when they were translated. The fact that the translation from German was available in the Privy Chancery has been ignored in discussions of Russian knowledge about China in the seventeenth century and Spafarii's significant role in expanding that knowledge. On Spafarii, see Lebedev 1949: 127–158; Andreev 1960: 73–80 (specifically for his having taken a copy of the Martini; p. 80); Belobrova 1993c; and the most recent analysis, correcting earlier mistakes, Afinogenov 2020: 39–42, 281–282. Manuscript copies made from the translation attributed to Spafarii circulated in the late seventeenth century. Tsar Fedor Alekseevich owned a copy of the translation, which he presumably had obtained from the Nachlass of the Privy Chancery. Sobolevskii (1903: 92–93) suggests the original translated in Russia was the Latin version contained in the China volume of Blaeu's *Novus Atlas*, rather than one of the separate editions.

162. See Berg (1949: 19–21), who also suggests that Spafarii cited our text in his report, compiled on his return in 1678.

was likely but a temporary respite, given the ambitions of Louis XIV, it would have taken a Cassandra to foresee the outcome of the War for the Spanish Succession decades later.

Thanks to the careful examination by Stepan Shamin of the *kuranty* from the mid-1680s to the mid-1690s, we have an excellent idea of their coverage of the war between the Venetians and their allies with the Ottomans, which was part of the larger European war against the Turks that opened with the siege of Vienna in 1683 and ended with the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 and the Russian treaty with the Porte signed in 1700.[163] The focus of Shamin's work is on what these reports reveal about the Greeks under Ottoman rule. He quotes in extenso from the *kuranty* translations, much of them dealing with the military actions in the Morea. He also provides useful corrections to the sometimes optimistic and misleading newspaper reports. The depositions of Greeks who came to Moscow often provide a more balanced and detailed picture of events. It is clear that there was a steady stream of translations regarding the war in the Morea, the news about it coming to Moscow from the Dutch and German press more rapidly than the reports brought by the clerics and merchants traveling overland to Moscow from the south. What is less clear is the degree to which any of this news may have influenced Russian foreign policy, although we may reasonably assume that the information reinforced Russian concerns over the fate of the Orthodox Greeks under Ottoman rule. However, it seems that the young Tsar Peter I may have been little interested in projects to help those Greeks. When Vinius provided Peter with summary information on the war in the Morea, he conveniently glossed over some of the details in the original sources. Shamin did not mine the western newspapers to compare with the *kuranty* translations, a task that still lies ahead.

Here we focus on one particular news item from the Morea war in 1687, summarizing an earlier study (Waugh 2008). In 1687, the Venetians and some Habsburg military contingents besieged Turkish-held Athens. On the night of 26 September, as an English translation of a serial Venetian diary of the war laconically reported: "They began to play with their Bombs upon the Fortress; one of which fell among their Ammunition, and fir'd a great part of it, to the great terror of the Besieged, whose Defences began to fail them, their Parapets being ruin'd, and their great Guns dismounted."[164] The German newspapers at the time, equally laconic, added one significant detail: "Denn 26 fiel eine Bombe in den berühmdten Tempel Minerve, welches das Haupt Magazyn war."[165] And so the Parthenon was left in ruins.

One of the commanders at the siege, Count Königsmark, noted how "eine Bomme [*sic*] in den sehr berühmten Tempel Minerva, welcher Seither so vielen hundert Jahren

163. Shamin and Karras 2010; Shamin 2011b.

164. *A Journal of the Venetian Campaigne, A. D. 1687. Under the Conduct of the Capt. General Morosini … Translated from the Italian Original, sent from Venice* […] London: H. C. Taylor, 1688: 38 (Wing/ J1107, available in EEBO).

165. *Die Europäische Relation* (Altona), 1687/91 (report from Athens, 11 Oct.): 732. Cf. *Leipziger Post- und Ordinar-Zeitung*, 1687, no. XLV/4: 718 (Venice, 7. Nov.).

respectiret worden, fiel," the result being: "Das Getümmel, so durch Entzundung aller dieser Munition entstand, war greulich, zumahl dadurch mehr also 200 Weiber und Kinder, zusambt dieser so berühmten Antiquität in die Lufte flohen [*sic*]." His report, printed in the Hamburg *Relations-Courier*, 1687/178, was also a source for news printed in the *Europaeische Zeitung* (Hanau). That text – or one very similar to it – received in Moscow via the Riga post on 12 December, was the source for an account of the event in the *kuranty*.[166] The approach to 'translation' in this case was quite typical of what we find in the *kuranty* once the postal system had been established, the flow of news regularized, and the quantities of news received thereby far exceeded the government's needs. Summaries were the order of the day. The texts had to be quickly processed and then read to the tsar and boyars, in the given instance, on 16 December, four days after the news had been received.

The Western accounts of the event convey the sense that the loss of one of the great monuments of antiquity was deemed incidental to the capture of Athens from the Turks. The responses in Venice were perhaps the most complex, given the singular attention which was lavished there on the reconquest of the Morea and the controversies over the decision to abandon Athens only a few months after it had been taken. One of the earliest short news pamphlets reporting its capture merely told readers that a bomb had hit a powder magazine and that subsequently the Turks surrendered. The Venetian publisher of the serial diary of the campaign lavishly reviewed the glorious history and ancient ruins of Athens, as Mario Infelise has put it, "due not so much to the importance of the military episode as to the suggestiveness of the place."[167] A subsequent number of the campaign diary finally lamented what had happened to the Parthenon: 'The most beautiful antiquity of the world has been destroyed, a memorial that had never yielded to the injuries of time.' A separate account published in Venice later that year included an accurate description of the Parthenon and what was left of the Temple of Minerva, and at least one contemporary poet composed verses about the event.[168]

It should not surprise us that the cultural significance of the site would find echoes in Baroque Venice. Furthermore, among the besieging troops were at least some offi-

166. For the Russian text, see Waugh 2008: 494–495. It is in RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1687, No. 6, pt. 3, fols. 253–254 (copy kindly provided by Stepan Shamin). Another copy, removed from its archival environment in the beginning of the twentieth century, is in BAN, MS 34.14.12, fols. 76, 17, 18. The immediately preceding entry, datelined Vienna, 13 Oct., contained other news on the Turkish and Tatar wars. This particular section of the *kuranty* specifies that the sources were German newspapers. Compare the Russian text with the article under the heading 'Venedig den 17. Novembris st.n.' in *Europaeische Zeitung* (Hanau), 1687/90, 8 Nov. [p. 2]. That issue was probably not the one used by the translators; the report undoubtedly was printed in more than one place.

167. Infelise 2001: 218. As Infelise discusses, the publication of news in Venice differed from that in much of the rest of Europe. There were no regularly published newspapers, and news appeared in non-periodical separates. Nonetheless, Venice was one of the major centers for the transmission of news about the wars in the Mediterranean and the Ottoman Empire, since obviously purveyors of regular manuscript newsletters were based there, whose reports were published with great regularity in all the major news capitals of northern Europe.

168. Infelise 2001: 218–219, 223–224; see also Waugh 2008: 496–497.

cers who had an appreciation of Classical antiquity. An anonymous eyewitness diary by a Swedish officer laments at length the destruction of the temple and describes the building in great detail. The imperial general who shared some of the responsibility for the explosion recognized that the temple was famous. Of course, those who lamented the loss failed to appreciate that the Parthenon in 1687, severely damaged in a fire in late antiquity and defaced first by conversion into a Christian church and later into a mosque, was hardly an unsullied monument to the age of Pericles. Even in Venice, the episode occupied a relatively small place in the outpouring of material on the Turkish Wars. Elsewhere in Europe the explosion of the Parthenon as a news story seems not to have had very long legs. Once reported, it became simply one more of the war stories which followed in rapid succession as campaigns unfolded, battles were won and lost.

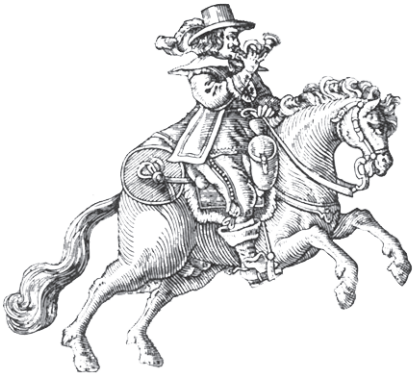
There is as yet no evidence that the event made any impression whatsoever in Muscovy, even though the translation in the *kuranty* as a matter of course was read to the tsars and their close circle a few days after it had been made. The incident would have been passed off as merely another episode in the wars against the Ottomans, where, as with the earlier war for Crete, Moscow certainly did want to know what was happening in the wider military theater that could have a bearing on the front closer to home involving Russian forces. There is nothing in this particular story to highlight the plight of the fellow Orthodox. Arguably, no one who might have listened to the reading of the text or seen its written copy would likely have heard of the Parthenon, and few members of the Muscovite court would have been able to locate Athens on a map.[169]

So the assessments by contemporaries about the destruction of the Parthenon ran a gamut from indifference to a perhaps exaggerated concern over the loss of a monument of antiquity. In either case, the incident was soon overtaken by events and forgotten, only to reappear in European consciousness when the Parthenon was elevated to emblematic status with the emergence of Greek nationalism in the nineteenth century. What happened to the Parthenon in 1687 now may seem to be of less interest than a later episode in its history. We have grown accustomed to seeing the building that is emblematic of Athenian culture as a glorious ruin, even if the computer allows us to see a reconstruction in all its original glory. The news story about the Parthenon which still resonates concerns the removal of its sculptures to England by Thomas Bruce, Seventh Earl of Elgin, an event which provoked an immediate and vitriolic response by Lord Byron. In today's post-imperial world, where claims about repatriating stolen treasures are a cornerstone of assertive national identity, the story of the Elgin marbles has been elevated to the level of scripture. How we read the news and think about history thus is very much a function of our immediate concerns, ones which may in fact obscure the

169. Of course, there were some men in Moscow with enough education in the western Classics so that they would have known about the ancient Greeks. Some of the other translated reports about the war in the Morea mentioned Athens. But Athens, at the time rather a provincial backwater, did not figure in the guide to important cities Vinius had compiled back in 1667.

lasting significance of an event, captured in the media whose *raison d'être* is to focus on the present.

In our next chapter we shall examine a number of translated texts which, arguably, did not on the face of it seem to contribute much knowledge about the European political affairs that so dominated the content of the *kuranty*. To contextualize such items may require that we move away from a primarily geopolitical focus and temper our inclination to treat the history of the *kuranty* through the lens of paradigms about Russia's 'modernization'. To translate such 'news' undoubtedly made sense in a Muscovite context, perhaps in the first instance since the reports connected with longstanding traditions that of themselves had little to do with current events, the 'innovations' brought by the establishment of the international post, and the regular acquisition of Western newspapers.



VI. READERSHIP AND THE NEWS

The focus of our study until now has been primarily on news relating directly to the political and economic affairs of state – the subjects which filled most of the early European newspapers and the Russian translations made from them. However, the new media of the seventeenth century (which included large numbers of separates) were by no means confined to reporting ostensibly objective, factual information of interest to policy makers and an emerging bourgeoisie. The 'reading public', no matter how exactly we might define it, was a ready market for the sensational: reports about natural wonders, the supernatural, the miraculous. Arguably any examination of the changing news landscape of the seventeenth century needs to consider seriously the place occupied by such material.

This final section of our book does just that for Muscovy, where there is substantial evidence about an interest in the sensational. In the situation where most foreign news was deemed by the authorities to be confidential, not to be shared with a broader public, interestingly some of the 'sensations' nonetheless began to circulate outside of the closed confines of the court and chanceries. The next two chapters explore several examples, illustrating both the limitations in the circulation of foreign news in Russia and the ways in which possibilities for reaching a wider readership were emerging by the last decades of the seventeenth century.

As our Chapter 20 shows, an important window into this evidence is material about the 'wonders of nature', known to have interested that most pious of monarchs, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, and originally kept in his Privy Chancery. To establish a wider readership requires a close examination of manuscript miscellanies (florilegia), an exercise that raises challenging methodological questions. Some of the texts which are the focus of Chapter 21 connect in important ways with eschatological expectations and the belief in miracles. A distinct thematic group of the translations relates to the ongoing wars against the Turks, where one of the most widely distributed genres were apocryphal letters. By the end of the century, there is striking evidence about the success of the government in creating the institutional framework for the regular acquisition of foreign news, combined with an increasing willingness to encourage its dissemination. The 'readers of the news' were no longer just the monarch and his closest advisers, even if Russia was still far from having the reading public of the parts of Europe informed by the inexpensive and easily accessible printed newspaper.

CHAPTER 20

Natural Wonders

Historians of the European press in the seventeenth century have tended to emphasize that the newspapers focused primarily on reporting what might loosely be characterized as political or, to a lesser degree, economic news. That is, wars, diplomacy, court politics and ceremony were center stage. The old 'medieval' providentialism was little in evidence, with few reports of preternatural events or the 'wonders of nature', and those generally lacking in some reference to Divine providence. Such generalizations seem to hold up quite well for the newspapers, but also ignore the continuing large-scale production and dissemination of separates, in which there is ample emphasis on the sensational and paranormal, and where the rationalism of the new age might be little in evidence. The increasing attention to such material in recent scholarship helps to balance our understanding of the media world of the period, a time of cultural transition, where at many levels in societies the old belief systems were very much in evidence.

Up to this point in our book, we have focused primarily on the 'news revolution' as a 'modernizing' phenomenon, placing the acquisition and translation of foreign news in a broader context of efforts by the Russian government to keep abreast of the international developments of crucial importance to the state. In the process, it has been possible to show how the rapid improvements in news dissemination in Europe had an impact in Moscow, even if the implementation of the mechanisms to enhance the flow of news lagged behind the developments in the West. Ideally we would continue our detailed analysis of such material beyond the early 1670s and on to the publication of the first Russian newspaper under Peter the Great. However, that task would be very difficult in the absence of full publication of the relevant archival material. Instead, we will look at the interest in reports of the paranormal or sensational material which may seem to have little to do with the affairs of state. We have chosen a number of vivid examples, starting in this chapter with a focus on 'natural wonders' such as celestial and atmospheric phenomena. In some instances, these translations seem never to have been disseminated beyond the circles of the chancery, but in other cases, there are copies which circulated

more widely.[1] To examine the evidence about dissemination will invite reflection on the 'readership' of the news in late Muscovy, a topic which is essential to any understanding of the impact of the premodern news revolution there.

20.1. The tsar's eclectic interests: evidence from the Privy Chancery

Evidence from the files of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery opens a window into the larger world of the translated separates with their curiosities.[2] We have seen how the personal interests of the tsar in being well informed and in control of the mechanisms of his state led to the creation of that institution, to which was delegated a broad range of tasks. Some items have annotations in his own hand; a few are drafts he personally wrote. A great deal of its activity pertained to the management of the royal estates, the arrangement of payments for various services, the Persian trade, and the like. The *Zapisnoi prikaz*, an abortive effort to write official history, was established under the Privy Chancery and headed for a time by Grigorii Kunakov (Belokurov 1905). A number of the books in the collection pertained to Russian princely genealogy and the service appointments of nobility (*RIB* 21: 294, 405–406). There was a copy of the popular 'Kazan History' on the events leading up to and including the conquest of the city under Tsar Ivan IV (ibid.: 866). Given the importance of the church schism and the tsar's break with Patriarch Nikon, which led to the deposition of the prelate, not surprisingly, there are sizeable files pertaining to the upheaval in the church. Some materials attest to the tsar's piety; he certainly was actively involved in church affairs and concerned over the defense of the one true faith. Although he obviously could be hard-headed about secular affairs and appreciated the possibilities offered by Western science and technology, he also monitored reports of the miraculous and presumably believed in Divine dispensation.[3]

1. There is some overlap here with Shamin 2020a; his ambitious survey of a large number of what he terms the pamphlets and curiosities obviates the need for us to do more. One of the distinctive contributions of his book is to bridge the 'Petrine divide' in tracing the history of some of the texts beyond the seventeenth century. His focus is on works that were copied and presumably read outside of the chanceries, even if they originated there.

2. We know a great deal about the Privy Chancery and its activity, thanks to two substantial monographs (Gurliand 1902; Zaozerskii 1937) and to the publication of documents and the extensive inventories of its archive, compiled after the tsar's death, when the papers were distributed to the various departments of state under whose jurisdiction they fell. The inventories have been published in *RIB* 21 and *Opis' PTD* 1713; some of the documents are in *RIB* 22, 23. Many of the *kuranty* files now deposited in RGADA, f. 155, are ones that were housed in the archive of the Privy Chancery, before it was disbanded. See also our discussion in Sec 16.2 and in Ch. 18.

3. For example, there was a report about the miracles attributed to an icon of the Mother of God, which had been sent to Polotsk after the conquest of the city during the war against the Commonwealth (*RIB* 21: 420). The archive contained a report from the Archbishop of Siberia and the military governor in Tobol'sk regarding investigation of a claim locals had made about having seen a vision of an icon of the Virgin Mary (ibid.: 619). An analogous file concerned an icon of the Kazan Mother of God, reported in 1656/57 (ibid.: 523). The typed inventory for RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 32, No. 303, lists a declaration (*ob"iavlenie*) by the tsar about miraculous events connected with people who had joined the Schism (*Raskol*) in 1671 – presumably some kind of warning to those who might do the same. Such reports do not necessarily attest to belief (or skepticism) about the miraculous visions but rather may be evidence of the official efforts to control popular belief in such events. A copy of a tale

20.1.1. Foreign news and history in the collection

Of particular interest is the fact that reports of foreign news sent directly to the monarch might first arrive in the Privy Chancery. Numerous end-of-mission reports (*stateinye spiski*) from Russian embassies were filed there. A substantial body of material pertaining to the negotiations with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and with Sweden in the 1650s and 1660s was in the archive, including a lot of the tsar's communications with A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin. Commissions to his personal agents who were being sent abroad – especially John Hebdon – were managed through that chancery (*RIB* 21: 175–176, 178, 286). And it was the institution directly involved in the creation of the link to the international post in 1665.[4] The collection contained long runs of the *kuranty*, in some cases with specific listings of translations from pamphlets.[5] Returning ambassadors would have reported to the tsar orally. However, for him to have the written copies

about the Dormition of the Mother of God has corrections in Aleksei Mikhailovich's hand. In the same file is an excerpt of a prayer in his hand and musical neumes with his annotations. See ibid., fol. 35, No. 337. There were quires containing texts from Apostolic writings about the Holy Spirit (*RIB* 21: 180).

4. For the documents about Van Sweeden's post, including his contract, see *RIB* 21: 5, 631. A file listed in the typed inventory RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 30, No. 288 contains measures pertaining to the post between Moscow, Novgorod and Pskov in 1669, presumably documents concerning deficiencies in the service that needed to be corrected. Another file (ibid., fol. 33, No. 315) has excerpts of measures regarding the post for 1673–1675.

5. Note, for example, the translation of the pamphlet on the execution of King Charles I in 1649 (RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 7, No. 64), the text presumably that now published in V-K IV: 82–85, No. 10, translated from a yet unidentified Swedish source. What probably are translations from separates include: Polish printed news on the arrival of Polish envoys in Paris for the betrothal of Princess Maria Ludovica Gonzaga with the King of Poland (ibid., fol. 8, No. 71; *Opis' PTD* 1713: 19); a booklet describing the coronation ceremony for kings of Poland (*Opis' PTD* 1713: 21); a description of the election and coronation of Habsburg Emperor Leopold I in 1658; and a separate image of the Imperial Coat of Arms, along with a depiction of the coronation (RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 15, Nos. 129, 131; also *Opis'* PTD 1713: 21). There were various publications on the coronation, including a lavishly illustrated book of engravings (*Eigentliche Abbildung der Käyserlichen Wahl und Crönungs Actus, Anno 1658. in Franckfurt vorgangen*. Frankfurt: Meriam, 1658; VD17 23:232136A). Some of these undoubtedly appeared as broadsides, which the Russians might have obtained. One is a double-page spread of the Imperial Eagle, on whose breast is a portrait of Leopold; others show details from the ceremonies. There was a short account about the coronation, translated from a Dutch newspaper or separate and filed with the other *kuranty* translations (V-K V: 127, No. 37). Another listing for the Privy Chancery archive apparently describes a translation of a separate obtained from Poland regarding the defeat of the Russian army at Chudnov in 1661 and the capture of its commander Vasilii Borisovich Sheremetev (*RIB* 21: 5, 350). The tsar had expressed a particular interest in obtaining such reports. In 1662/63, Ordin-Nashchokin brought from Poland imprints with material about the payment records for the Polish military forces in the aftermath of the war between the Commonwealth and Sweden (ibid.). There was a separate set of excerpts from the Treaty of Oliwa, which had ended that war on 23 April/3 May 1660 (ibid.: 356). The Polish Affairs files include what appears to be a full printed Latin text of the treaty and what may be its Russian translation (see the handwritten archival inventory, available online: RGADA, f. 79, *Opis'* 1, fol. 196, 1660, Nos. 10, 16). It is possible that the original was the one published by Henrich Keyser in Stockholm, which could have been acquired by Ordin-Nashchokin during his negotiations with the Swedes. A booklet 'in which were written questions and answers of Prawdowski about the Polish king, why he is not a Pole' was one of the political pamphlets written to influence the Polish election in 1668, after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz (*RIB* 21: 364, 855). Apparently, it is known in Polish only in manuscript: 'Prawdowski albo Quaestia Rozwiązana czemu [król] Polski nie Polak' (Doucette 2017: 36 n. 75).

of their reports and so much else that was relevant to foreign-policy decisions suggests that this was indeed a working collection, not something just to be filed and forgotten. The collection contained maps of areas in Europe, Russia, and adjoining regions of Asia.

There were also some more substantial books, although what the tsar's role may have been in their acquisition generally is impossible to know with any certainty. We have argued that in effect that archive was the tsar's personal library, a collection not only focused on the practical needs of running the state but also one that reflected his interests, which might only indirectly have a bearing on the making of policy.[6] There may well have been a complex of reasons why a given item was deemed worth having. Any effort to understand the significance of owning a particular book has to confront the difficulty of knowing whether it was actually used or read. Furthermore, the tendency in discussing Muscovite libraries has been to define the content of books according to modern categories of knowledge (e.g., Luppov 1970). Thus, what we might identify with an ill-defined rubric such as 'history' or 'geography' might have been used (not necessarily 'read') not with an interest in learning about the past or how some other society functioned and what its inhabitants believed, but because it was thought to relate to current policy making or reinforced perceptions about one's own cultural superiority. There certainly is plenty of evidence from the attention given to court ceremonial in diplomatic exchange and in the selection of material for the *kuranty* to suggest that the motive was not to satisfy genuine curiosity about others' culture but primarily to have the basis to ensure that the status and honor of the Muscovite state and its ruler never be impugned. In the process of reading such material, of course, there could be some 'secondary' effect of cultural broadening: learning about practices that one might well wish to emulate and which would have ultimately a transformative impact on one's own culture.

The book on China by Martini mentioned in our previous chapter is a good example. Its main value was possibly for what it revealed about that state's political stability and prospects as a supplier of goods the Muscovite court might covet. If a book such as that were available prior to the sending of an embassy, it could help in shaping the goals of a mission. Yet, as we have seen in some of our analysis, prior knowledge did not necessarily translate into policy. Even if Martini's book had been available to the tsar prior to the sending of Spafarii to China, the ambassador's acquaintance with the book and use of it in composing his very perceptive and detailed report may have occurred only after he was on his way home.

The tsar owned some kind of chronicle about the Roman emperors and their activities. Whether this related to ancient Rome or the Holy Roman Empire of the Habsburgs is not clear.[7] Was he interested in Roman history? Possibly. Yet a more likely explanation

6. Waugh (1986) pulls together the evidence regarding the development of the tsar's personal collection. Its appendix lists many of the interesting files in the archive with comments on their sources. Here we are much more selective.

7. *RIB* 21: 2, 348–349. The title in the inventory is 'Letopisets o Rimskikh tsesariakh i ob-ynykh delekh i chto pri nikh deialos". It might be tempting to identify the text as a copy of the *Gesta Roma-*

might be found in the fact that along with that book, he had several works relating to Russian princely genealogy and some copies of the military service registers (*razriadnye knigi*). The interest in Roman history might relate in some way to the longstanding official Russian claims of dynastic descent from Caesar Augustus, claims which frequently came up in diplomatic exchanges.[8] One of the official projects of the early 1670s was to produce a large, lavishly illustrated volume called the *Tituliarnik*. Its primary purpose was to glorify the ruling dynasty and its genealogy, but it also included images and titulature of the various other rulers with whom the Russians interacted (and presumably who showed due respect).[9] Conceivably one of the cryptic listings in the archive inventory refers to one of the small-format copies which we know was delivered to the tsar at the same time that the lavish original apparently was kept in the Ambassadorial Chancery. Presumably those books were used in the education of the royal children.

Another of the books possibly concealed in the cryptic listings of the inventory was a manuscript illustrated genealogy of the Russian rulers, which had been created in Vienna as a gift to the tsar by the Habsburg Master of Heraldry Laurentius Churelich in 1673 (Mylnikov 1977). A decade and a half earlier, Churelich had been a member of an Austrian mission to Moscow, at which time he might have obtained some of his source material. An elaborate translation of Churelich's manuscript, emulating all its visual elegance, was in preparation for Aleksei Mikhailovich at the time of his death. At least one of the titles among the 'genealogical' books in the Privy Chancery may refer to a copy of the semi-hagiographic 'Book of Royal Degrees', whose continuation as official history was the main task that had been assigned to the *Zapisnoi prikaz* during its brief existence in the 1650s. The book collection of the Privy Chancery also contained copies of military service registers (*razriadnye knigi*), whose immediate practical value related to decisions about assigning military commands and the avoidance or resolution of disputes over precedence (*mestnichestvo*) among members of the ruling elite. It was

norum, whose translation from a Polish version became very popular in Russia but is really more a set of morality essays than 'history' (as the listing in the inventory might suggest). On the *Gesta Romanorum* and its translations, see Małek 1988: 117–148; the translations are in *BLDR* 16: 243–370, with commentary on pp. 611–622. Perhaps more likely this text comes from a translation of a chronology of various historic empires, starting with the Roman, titled in one manuscript copy 'The book, a chronicle of Roman emperors (*letopisets rimskikh tsesarei*) and popes and ecumenical patriarchs' (Sobolevskii 1903: 100–101). Sobolevskii notes that the manuscript (BAN 17.8.4) is an elegant one, likely from the royal library. That copy comes up to 1619, whereas a second manuscript has extended the coverage into the early eighteenth century.

8. Muscovite bookmen's interest in their 'roots' extended to investigating etymologies of names and identifying eponymous ancestors. A file in the Privy Chancery (*RIB* 21: 860) contained 'quires in quarto, a translation from a Greek letter about Mosoch, from whom the Muscovites were named.' Presumably this was some kind of attempt at verifying the legendary etymologies that were included in the Primary Chronicle, compiled in Kievan times.

9. Kagan 1971, 2004. We have not consulted a more recent two-volume publication of the *Tituliarnik* with extensive commentaries and notes. One of the two small-format copies of the *Tituliarnik* produced for the royal family (RNB, Hermitage Collection No. 440) may be viewed at: https://nlr.ru/manuscripts/RA1527/elektronnyiy-katalog?ab=E43F34DE-AB4B-4891-9B5F-DDB52238975F.

not uncommon for nobles who in some way felt their honor had been besmirched by their placement in the ranks or at some court function to launch a formal protest; the tsar was the judge of last resort in settling such cases. When some of the various 'genealogy-related' books left in the Privy Chancery were requisitioned for the Military Appointments Chancery on the order of tsar Fedor Alekseevich (*RIB* 21: 294, 405–406), the purpose may have been connected with the decision to abolish *mestnichestvo* at a time when many of the old documents pertaining to it were deliberately destroyed.

20.1.2. Military manuals

The translation of military handbooks in Muscovy has an interesting history, in which the evidence about the involvement of the Privy Chancery merits further investigation. At least significant parts of one volume of a huge German military manual by Leonhardt Fronsberger were translated during the brief reign of Vasilii Shuiskii in 1606–1607.[10] Two translators worked on the project, one the experienced Ivan Fomin (Hans Helmes). A second version with portions of this text was produced in 1620. The translation seems not to have had wide distribution, but at least one copy of it was in the Privy Chancery collection and, after the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich, was requisitioned for Tsar Fedor Alekseevich.[11] It is possible that his copy subsequently was the basis for an eighteenth-century reworking and publication of the text.

Somewhat puzzling is the fact that while the tsar had a copy of the translation from Fronsberger, there is no direct indication that the Privy Chancery archive held a copy of a second Russian translation of a Western military manual (printed in Moscow in 1647), one written by Johann Jacob von Walhausen. Translated as 'The Instruction and Art of Military Organization for Infantry' ('Uchenie i khitrost' ratnogo stroeniia pekhotnykh

10. The best introduction to the complicated history of the translation is the recent article by Oleg Rusakovskii (2018). There have been conflicting views on whether some other sources were incorporated into the translation. He argues that the differing versions of the text in the few surviving manuscripts all derived from the second volume of Fronsberger's book, and that the Russian translators were using its 1573 edition, not the second edition of 1596, as Sobolevskii and others had assumed.

11. One of the listings, for the transfer of the book to Fedor Alekseevich in June 1681, reads: 'The book in folio [entitled] military organization (*ratnogo stroiu*), which by order of the great sovereign, Tsar and Grand Prince Vasilii Ivanovich, autocrat of all Russia, was translated in the year 7114 into Russian from a German military book for the information of all of the military ranks and orders then' (*RIB* 21: 406). An earlier listing, in the inventory compiled in 1676, may be for the same volume but reads: 'A judicial book (*kniga sudebnaia*), and concerning military mustering and about all kinds of ranks, of the year 7114. Translated from German into Russian under Tsar and Grand Prince Vasilii Ivanovich of all Russia' (ibid.: 179). Rusakovskii (2018: 58) makes the case that this second entry definitely refers to a translation from the Fronsberger book. We may wonder whether two other files in the Privy Chancery (*RIB* 21: 174) could have contained other parts of the translation; at very least they testify to the tsar's interest in military matters. They are: 'Quires, in which is a notation regarding standards (*znamenom*) and what is written on them'; 'Quires on which is described the commanders of the artillery corps. Quires about the duties, about the art of firing, how to aim and shoot at city positions, and about the actual preparations needed for such matters.' Babulin et al. (2022: 382) suggest that the second of these texts and possibly others were provided to the tsar by Nicholas Bauman, who served for many years in the Russian army, starting in the late 1650s, and played a significant role in the design and acquisition of firearms.

liudei'), Walhausen's book is of great interest as one of the few 'secular' books which were printed in Moscow in the seventeenth century. Unlike the manuscript copies of the Fronsberger, the printed book included the essential illustrations, for which engravings were commissioned in Europe and brought to Moscow to be pasted into the book. The book apparently did not sell well: a decade after it had appeared, only 134 copies of a print run of 1200 had been sold. The rest were turned over to the Privy Chancery, their subsequent fate not documented.[12] One might assume, as with other undertakings managed by the chancery, it was involved in distribution of the book.[13] Also, one would think that a lavishly illustrated volume such as this would have been of interest for the tsar to keep, and that it would have been used in the education of his children. Of particular importance in the commissions to the agents Aleksei Mikhailovich sent abroad was the acquisition of military stores and expertise. Two of the books John Hebdon was instructed to obtain in 1658 were military manuals, and several more were to be obtained by him when he was sent abroad in 1660 (Gurliand 1903: 11, 46–48).

20.1.3. Medical manuals

There is considerable information attesting to the tsar's interest in disease and medicine. In the first instance, there were practical considerations involving the omnipresent threat of major contagion, which the government assiduously tried to prevent by strict quarantine measures. Some of the most intriguing evidence specifically concerns the foreign physicians, hired both to staff the Apothecary Chancery and minister to the needs of the royal family. Practitioners of traditional medicine risked being arrested for witchcraft and plots to poison the elite (Collis 2013: 408). Yet the tsar was open to traditional remedies for himself and his family, if vouched for by the trained doctors he hired, who might also incorporate both new scientific medical knowledge and astrological determinations of the best times for treatment. The picture is one of the bridging of the 'old' and the 'new', when the latter throughout Europe had not yet supplanted the Classically oriented curricula of medical schools, and where there was a deeply ingrained belief in the influence of the celestial bodies on the wellbeing of men on earth. To appreciate fully the diversity of medical opinions and practice in the seventeenth century requires a complex study of traditions, curricula, and publications that goes beyond what we can attempt here.[14] The evidence about the interests and role of the tsar is episodic.

12. See Myshlaevskii and Pariiskii 1904: i. Some copies have survived, several of them now in the RGADA collection. Luk'ianova (2002: 249–253) describes them and provides the basic publication information for the book, including the evidence about payments for producing it. However, she has nothing specific about the fate of the large inventory of unsold copies.

13. In fact, there is at least one documented case of a promotion in 1661, where, following the ceremony confirming the increase in salary and the bestowal of the new regimental insignia, the new colonel, Matvei Krovkov, was given a 'printed book about military mustering according to which he would understand and organize infantry formations' (Belokurov 1908: 120).

14. For an authoritative, if revisionist, treatment of early modern 'science' in Europe, see Park and Daston 2006. In their introduction they emphasize the complexity of developments, which in the older literature often were simplistically categorized as the 'scientific revolution'. Many of the indi-

Recent studies have highlighted an example from the 1650s which illustrates the intersection between popular belief, enshrined in long learned tradition, and the new emphasis on experimental data. During the serious outbreak of the plague in 1654, when strict quarantine measures were instituted that even postponed the return of the tsar to Moscow from his military campaign, there was a serious effort to obtain what was believed to be unicorn horn (alicorn), reputed to have magical properties that could ward off infection or poison.[15] Belief in the powers of the horn (which in fact seems in most cases to have been that of a narwhal) was widespread from Antiquity. The horns did not come cheap; at one point in 1655, the Danish entrepreneur Peter Marselis offered to sell to the Russians a large one for the enormous sum of 5000 rubles and two smaller ones for 3000 rubles each. A less expensive one, acquired by a certain Artemei Artem'ev in Amsterdam, was then offered to the Apothecary Chancery, and the tsar, who had been kept informed about the purchase, directed that it be tested for its efficacy. Despite his apparent skepticism about traditional views regarding alicorn, the court physician Andreas Engelhardt carried out experiments on it which show that he embraced the 'theory of sympathetic magic' (Collis 2013: 412). He and his Apothecary colleagues confirmed the genuineness of the horn, which was duly purchased and then used by Engelhardt in preparing medications for the royal family. As will be explained below (Sec. 20.3.2), the tsar's trust in his physician subsequently led him to solicit astrological prognostication from Engelhardt at the time of a new outbreak of plague in the West and the appearance of a comet in 1664.

The range of functions performed by the Apothecary Chancery extended to other areas of the tsar's interests. While that chancery was administratively separate from the Privy Chancery, the latter was involved in production, storage, and distribution of medicines and foodstuffs produced in the 'Apothecary Court'. As Gurliand (1902: 182) suggested long ago, the Apothecary Court may have been a kind of 'economic laboratory' of the tsar beyond just its functions of supplying the royal table and preparing medicines. Some of the imported spices and herbs were processed and stored there, but the physical plant also kept a large collection of mirrors which Hebdon had obtained on one of his commissions from the tsar.[16] To a degree, then, the Apothecary Court was a storehouse for valuable items. What exactly the relationship would have been between the specialized library of the Apothecary Chancery and the more modest collection of 'medicine-related'

vidual chapter titles for convenience have been labelled with modern scientific categories (medicine, astronomy, astrology, etc.), but such 'disciplines' were as yet in the process of development with cross-fertilization from other specializations.

15. Griffin 2010; 2022: 133–137; Collis 2013: 409–415.

16. Gurliand 1902: 186; *RIB* 21: 286–288. The subject of the mirrors would merit separate consideration. During the seventeenth century, good mirrors were a desirable commodity at many courts; the ones produced in Venice (along with other fine glassware) were deemed particularly valuable. In Safavid Persia and in many European countries, mirrors or fragments of them artfully worked into elaborate frames were an essential part of architectural decoration. However, it is not clear to what degree that taste had spread to Moscow.

books in the Privy Chancery collection is difficult to know for certain.[17] Nor is it possible to know how a book held in the Privy Chancery may in fact have been used, even if there is evidence it had been requisitioned specifically by the tsar. In two cases, we can but guess what the books might have been. One, 'A translation on anatomy' (*Opis' PTD* 1713: 24), may have been a copy of the translation of Andreas Vesalius' pioneering *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, produced in 1658 by the Kievan monk Epifanii Slavinetskii.[18] A 'Medicine book' ('Kniga […] lekarstvennaia'; *RIB* 21: 406) was in a collection of five books sent to Tsar Fedor Alekseevich in June 1681. The book, in quarto format, had an elegant, expensive binding of red velvet with silver clamps, suggesting that it had been made specifically for the tsar.[19]

In the case of one other 'medical' book, we know quite a bit. It was an impressive large format herbal of 89 quires ('Kniga travnik, a v nei 89 tetratei, pisana na Aleksandriskoi bumage'). Presumably this summary entry refers to the volume which the tsar had requisitioned from the Apothecary Chancery in 1673 but then was returned there in 1679 (ibid.: 147, 383–384). The book is a translation from the 1613 Polish edition of a famous herbal by Simon Syrenius (Szymon Syreński).[20] As Clare Griffin (2012: 194) has suggested, the original might have been obtained for the tsar by John Hebdon when he was sent to Amsterdam in 1658 to hire, inter alia, two doctors: a specialist on medicinal herbs

17. Griffin (2012, esp. Ch. 5; also 2022, passim) discusses key books produced or used in the Apothecary Chancery. We have not been able to consult Savel'eva's published catalogue of that chancery's holdings (recording 124 books). A description of 55 books from its collection is in *Istoricheskii ocherk* 1956: 428–433. The survey of the Muscovite handwritten medical books by Zmeev 1895 incorporates a great deal of still valuable information on their sources and interrelationships.

18. There seem to be few alternatives for identifying this book, even if many Muscovite medical books contained sections that could be characterized as dealing with 'anatomy'. Slavinetskii listed the book among his translations, although details of copies and their distribution apparently are not known (Zmeev 1895: 245). A copy of the 1555 edition of Vesalius' book was in the collection of the Apothecary Chancery; we do not know when it was acquired (*Istoricheskii ocherk* 1956: 433).

19. There is at least one seventeenth-century manuscript with a header 'o lekarstvakh', which seems to be a somewhat unusual descriptive term amongst the manuscripts (Zmeev 1905: 60–61). Zmeev specifically criticizes P. M. Stroev for calling it a 'lechebnik', that is, presumably a manual of medical practice. It is not clear what the sources were or when the translation(s) in the book were made. The other books in this group sent to the tsar in 1681 included one of the genealogical tracts (*Lestvitsa tsarei*, possibly a reference to the 'Book of Degrees', the *Stepennaia kniga*); a *razriadnaia kniga* covering from 7101 to 7113 (1592/93–1604/05); another genealogical tract on whose first page was a statute concerning marriage; and the translation from the Fronsberger military manual. When in 1710 a summary inventory of what had been transferred from the former Privy Chancery collection was drawn up, there may have been some confusion between the transfer of this medical book in 1681 and that involving the Syrenius translation in 1679. See Gurliand (1902: 388), who seems to refer to the Syrenius as one of the five books.

20. The original is *Zielnik Herbarzem z ięzyka Łacinskiego zowią* […] Kraków: Skalski, 1613. The entry regarding the return of the book to the Apothecary Chancery in 1679 is quite detailed, describing the several parts of the book. The book's return was requested by Andrei Vinius, who had become the de facto head of the Apothecary Chancery, in addition to his other duties. It appears that the book was little known beyond chancery circles (Nikolaev 2008: 90–91). Zmeev (1895: 204–208) describes one large-format manuscript, which apparently contains a significant portion of the translation, but otherwise only a few shorter selections in other copies (ibid.: 72, 198–199).

and an 'alchemist', skilled in preparing concoctions from herbs. (Hebdon returned in December 1659.) He was specifically instructed to obtain 'a reliable book entitled 'Herbal' with information on Polish, Russian and German [= foreign] herbs' (Gurliand 1903: 10). That description probably would fit Syrenius' book. However, since so many of the 'medical' texts that were translated in Moscow have a Polish connection, we should not take this as an indicator of prior knowledge specifically regarding the book by Syrenius.[21] In any event, there would have been opportunities earlier to have acquired the Syrenius book in Poland. Hebdon's instructions for his mission abroad in 1660 included hiring the 'most learned alchemists' and specialists on the collection of useful plants (ibid.: 47–48). That the tsar had a direct interest in the collection of medicinal herbs (and apparently accepted folk wisdom as to when that could best be done) can be seen in instructions he issued in 1658 for gathering several medicinal plants on the Feast Day of St. John the Baptist, 24 June (Collis 2013: 407).

We know of one other substantial medical book which had come into the tsar's possession around this time and was passed on to be translated in the Apothecary Chancery in 1662, the *Pharmacopoeia medicochymica* by the German doctor Johann Schröder.[22] While his focus was on the recipes for preparing medicaments, Schröder also included a short section with tables that connected the efficacy of medicines to astrological signs. The order to have his book translated was repeated in 1670, but whether in fact it was translated is uncertain (Griffin 2012: 154 n. 44). We might suppose that such books would have been essential references for the work in the new facility that had been built in Moscow for the Apothecary Court in 1674–1675. Probably more than one western pharmacopoeia were among the sources for a substantial Russian text, compiled at some point in the last quarter of the seventeenth century (Griffin 2022: 87–89). The books also might have been valuable for information about possible imports of herbs from China, the Middle East, and South Asia or referred to during the always diligent investigations of cases of suspected poisoning or black magic.

Representative of current medical knowledge and practice, the books often tended to combine information from Classical texts, folk remedies, alchemy and astrology. As H. Darrel Rutkin (2006: 557) has noted, for example, "Astrology seems to have persisted in medicine longer than in any other branch of learning." Given that fact, the older judgments about the 'backwardness' of Muscovite medicine certainly need to be reconsidered. Having examined many early Russian handwritten medical manuals, Zmeev concluded that medical books judged to be outdated elsewhere in Europe in the seventeenth

21. For example, Belokurov (1898: 45) cites from the inventory of the Ambassadorial Chancery compiled in 1673 a listing for a 'Kniga gerbar', na latinskom iazyke, shliakhte koruny Pol'skoi i velikago kniazhesta Litovskago.'

22. Zmeev 1895: 96. Schröder's book was first published in Ulm in 1641; there were several later editions – 1644, 1649, 1655 (Ulm), 1656 (Leiden), 1662 (Ulm) – which could have been received in Moscow by the time of the order to translate the book (20 July 1662). Full texts of several editions are available online (e.g., Ulm 1655: VD17 23:241913G).

century continued to be widely copied and used in Russia down into modern times.[23] Clare Griffin's current work on the medical texts being translated and adapted for Russian needs in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is a valuable corrective, reflecting the broader consensus that has developed in scholarship on early modern science. She offers a nuanced analysis of the ways in which 'Western' science was integrated into the local, Muscovite medical knowledge and practice (Griffin 2022: 8–9, 151–156).

Thus, the evidence from the little we know about the tsar's books is at best suggestive of an inquisitive eclecticism, governed in the first instance by the practical considerations of managing the state and his personal economy in a situation, where traditional belief co-existed comfortably with premodern 'rationalism'. An examination of some of the translated separates he had, ones which do not fit neatly into some scheme of 'rational' inquiry for policy making, reinforces this conclusion. We begin by examining the contents of a small file from the Privy Chancery, containing three unusual items; they can introduce a wider discussion of other translations about sensations or paranormal phenomena.

20.2. Illustrated 'curiosities' in the Privy Chancery

When the vast archive of the Privy Chancery was inventoried and much of the holdings then distributed to the various government departments to which they pertained, there were still many files for which no home had been found. Initially forgotten and moldering in a damp basement in the new capital, St. Petersburg, they were inventoried in 1713, after which apparently most of the material remained in a separate archival unit (now in RGADA, f. 27). The listing in 1713 included the following item (*Opis' PTD* 1713: 5): 'a depiction of a sign that had appeared in the sky in Hungary in 1672 and representations of bugs which appeared in that same land in a big snowstorm in the year 7181 [1672/73], and an alphabet with pictorial signs.'[24] Whether they had been filed together in the Privy Chancery during the lifetime of Aleksei Mikhailovich or were simply brought together after his death during the sorting of the papers cannot be determined. For an archivist, the obvious common element shared by the items is that they illustrate unusual objects.

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23. Zmeev 1895: 28–30, 166. Zmeev's observation is also shared in the recent work by S. S. Demidov (2007: 215), whose conclusion about the 'backwardness' of Muscovite medical knowledge has been disputed by Griffin (2012: 150). Without careful codicological study of the manuscripts, we can conclude little about the significance of the 'convoy' of works found together in a florilegium. However, it may be of interest that one seventeenth-century manuscript in the Solovki Monastery collection, containing excerpts from Syrenius, grouped them with copies of the polemical apocryphal correspondence of the Ottoman sultan, and another manuscript in the same collection grouped the Syrenius selections with some 'astrological-climatic gossipy prophecies' (Zmeev 1895: 198–199).

24. 'Izobrazhenie znaka, iavl'shagosia na nebesi v Vengerskoi zemle 1672 g. i znaki zh cherviam v toi zhe zemli, kotorye byli s velikim snegom vo [7]181-m godu, da azbuka s znakami lits.' With minor orthographic differences, this replicates the text in the cover sheet of RGADA, f. 27, No. 312, fol. 1, to which a number (in Cyrillic) '64' is added. An unnumbered piece of paper with watermark '1753 godu' over Cyrillic ID has an annotation 'No. 64 63 po 10 opisi.' So the number on the cover slip is a catalog number, not an abbreviation for a date.

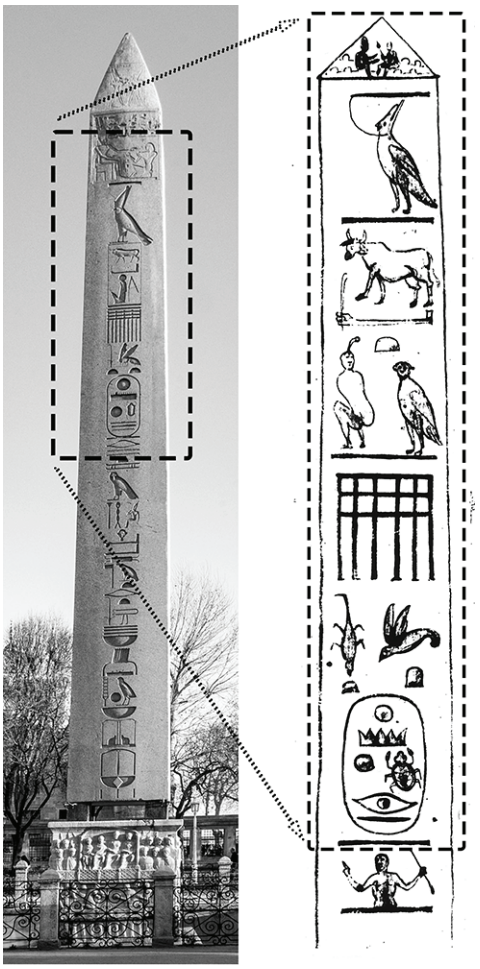

FIG. 20.1. The obelisk in Istanbul and one of the drawings made from it, filed in Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery (RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fol. 9r).

Each of these items has a story to tell which can open the way to a broader inquiry about the curiosities that were increasingly finding their way into late Muscovy.

20.2.1. The Egyptian hieroglyphs

The 'alphabet with pictorial signs' (*azbuka znakami lits*) was drawn on two sheets of paper, one of which preserves part of a watermark of three crescents, a paper commonly used in the Ottoman Empire. The normal way to produce the paper for copying scrolls would be to take a full sheet and cut it along the longest dimension in the middle. For this manuscript, one sheet is half again the width of a normal scroll, the other a full scroll's width. There is no explanatory text, only a partially legible inscription in Greek (...υφιλα). On both sides of each paper strip are hand-drawn illustrations of various 'symbols', enclosed in a rectangular frame with a triangular point at the top (see FIG. 20.1)

As established in Waugh 1977, the drawings show significant portions of the Egyptian hieroglyphs on the so-called 'Theodosian' obelisk, which had been brought from Egypt and erected in the Byzantine Hippodrome in Constantinople in the late fourth century and stands there today. In the seventeenth century, the German Jesuit Athanasius Kircher wrote to the imperial resident in Istanbul, as part of a massive project he undertook to compile a complete explanatory catalogue of all known Egyptian obelisks and their inscriptions. The resident obtained reasonably accurate drawings from his Greek interpreter, the pictures serving as the basis for an engraving in Kircher's large-format publication.[25] The Greek interpreter had already drawn the hieroglyphs out of curiosity; it is possible that copies of what he had drawn were also the basis for the manuscript in Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery. Its archive contained many letters in Greek, at least some of which undoubtedly had been sent to or submitted in Moscow by clerics or merchants. The Phanariote Greeks in the Ottoman capital were commonly the interpret-

25. There is no evidence to suggest that Kircher's book on obelisks and Egyptian hieroglyphs, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (3 vols. in 4; Rome, 1652--1654), was known in Moscow, although other works of his were. The drawings must have been produced in Istanbul.

ers for foreign embassies and formed a community within which such material could have been shared. Very likely the drawings were enclosed with one of the letters.

Even though in Moscow presumably there would have been some acquaintance with ancient Egypt and its monuments, there is little reason to think that the tsar's interest in the drawings means that he wanted to learn more about Egypt or had any knowledge about the Hippodrome obelisk. The more likely explanation for his interest is that the figures in the drawings were perceived as some kind of alphabet, more specifically a diplomatic cipher. The term the Russians used in referring to the pictures was 'azbuka' ('alphabet'), which also was used specifically to refer to cipher. Kircher and his contemporaries thought of the hieroglyphs as mystical symbols. To designate them an alphabet was an insight well ahead of the times, even if it was not based on any kind of academic analysis. However, the filing of the pictures with the other items depicting strange 'signs' (*znaki*) would suggest that the hieroglyphs also might have invited some possible symbolic interpretation.

Other material in the Privy Chancery attests to the tsar's knowledge of diplomatic cipher, and he may even have invented a cipher alphabet of his own. Of particular interest is a file containing documents about a large bell, which the tsar had commissioned for the St. Savva-Storozhevskii Monastery. The monastery was one of the most important ones that were patronized by members of the royal family; the tsar's involvement with it was channeled through the Privy Chancery. The magnificent bell, cast in 1667, had two inscriptions around its rim: one in standard Cyrillic *viaz'* (a stylized script), mentioning the royal family, the bell maker, and the date of the casting; the other in a unique cipher alphabet, indicating specifically that the tsar had commissioned the bell. A scroll kept in the Privy Chancery records that the inscription was written 'in formal printing and with "Italian" words according to the new cipher' (*pisany ustavom i Friaskimi slovami po novoi azbuke*). A second listing of this material, indicating it had been delivered to Tsar Fedor Alekseevich on 6 April 1680, notes that in the bag with it were various examples of alphabets or cipher (*azbuki roznye*).[26] The consensus is that the tsar himself devised the complex cipher used to record his donation.[27] Karskii (1979: 257) even goes so far as to hypothesize that the tsar deliberately concealed this evidence of his piety in order to prevent some misfortune being inflicted on the royal family through sorcery. At least some of the symbols in this cipher bear a resemblance to some of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, though there is no evidence to demonstrate that the pictures of the latter had been obtained prior to the time when the cypher alphabet was being created.

Additional evidence of Aleksei Mikhailovich's personal involvement with ciphers is in a Privy Chancery file, described in the current typed inventory as 'encrypted letters

26. *RIB* 21: 157, 390. The typed inventory for RGADA, f. 27 (Privy Chancery), *Opis'* 1, fol. 8 lists as No. 76 a manuscript project of Aleksei Mikhailovich's for the inscription on the bell, dated 1653 (years before the actual casting), in four copies.

27. See Williams 1985: 111–113 for a discussion of the bell, the inscription, and a table illustrating the cipher equivalents to the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet.

which have remained undeciphered, some sheets written in the hand of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich'. A file dated 1663 included encrypted letters – reporting statements by Johan von Horn – and a probable cipher, the material likely related to the diplomatic activity of A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin.[28] While there is as yet no full study of the degree to which encrypted messages were being used in Muscovite diplomatic correspondence, there is evidence that the first permanent Russian envoy stationed abroad, Vasilii Tiapkin, often coded his messages to keep them from being read if he sent them through the Vilna mail to Moscow.[29] The 'new cipher' referred to in some of the sources probably is one devised some time in Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign specifically for such purposes.[30] It seems that even when off on campaign, in correspondence with his wife, the tsar might use cipher (*RIB* 21: 343).

20.2.2. The insect deluge in a snowstorm in Hungary

In his recent book on the Muscovite 'curiosities', Stepan Shamin (2020a: 227) has identified a possible western source for the single sheet in the Privy Chancery, depicting the bugs that appeared in a heavy snowstorm in Hungary (FIG. 20.2).[31] He cites evidence that the image might have circulated both in separate broadsheets – with a caption analogous to that on the Moscow drawing – and as an illustration to a book, published in

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28. See the inventory, RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fols. 35 (No. 335) and 23 (No. 216). A separate file of reports from Ordin-Nashchokin in 1661 indicates they were in the 'new cipher' (*RIB* 21: 19); another file contained seven reports in the 'new cipher', whose content could not be described when the inventory was compiled (ibid.: 865); in a bag made of red fabric were some written examples in the new cipher (ibid.: 866). Russian interest in (and frustration with) diplomatic cipher can be seen in one case, when they opened and translated a packet of letters forwarded from Courland to the Austrian envoys in Moscow in 1658. Included was a letter in cipher from Archduke Ferdinand, which they were unable to read, not having the key to the cipher (*PDS* 3: 720).

29. For an overview of cryptograms and cipher, see Karskii 1979: 249–258; on diplomatic cipher in the time of Aleksei Mikhailovich, Popov 1854: 267–276.

30. Shamin (2010) publishes a scribbled draft of a previously unknown cipher that was on the reverse of a sheet with *kuranty* translations, dated 12 Nov. 1672. There is nothing to connect this with the contents of those *kuranty* or prove that the cipher dates from the same year, although it is tempting to see some relationship to the files we are discussing. Shamin erroneously indicates Waugh 1977 argued the Privy Chancery hieroglyphs derived from Kircher's publication (in subsequent publications, Shamin has corrected that misreading). However, as Shamin (ibid.: 104) notes, the *kuranty* of 1671 included an item from Rome about how some kind of wondrous characters (i.e., signs) had been sent from Poland to show to Kircher, in the hope that with his expertise he could decipher them, which he was unable to do.

31. RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fol. 2. The Moscow drawing is a watercolor on a cropped sheet of paper, watermarked with a 'Paschal lamb' on a shield under a crown with countermark PL. Such paper seems indeed to have been used in Moscow, for example in a manuscript copy of a Cosmography dated 1670 (Dianova and Kostiukhina 1988, No. 11; see also No. 15, from a manuscript dated 1691). We have not been able to make a direct visual comparison of the watermark with the generally imprecise tracings in the standard watermark albums. Although Shamin seems to think the drawing was made in Muscovy, possibly it was produced elsewhere, like the hieroglyphs, in which case the Russian caption was added in Moscow. The Moscow drawing has been carefully rendered with a fine pen for the details and then colored.

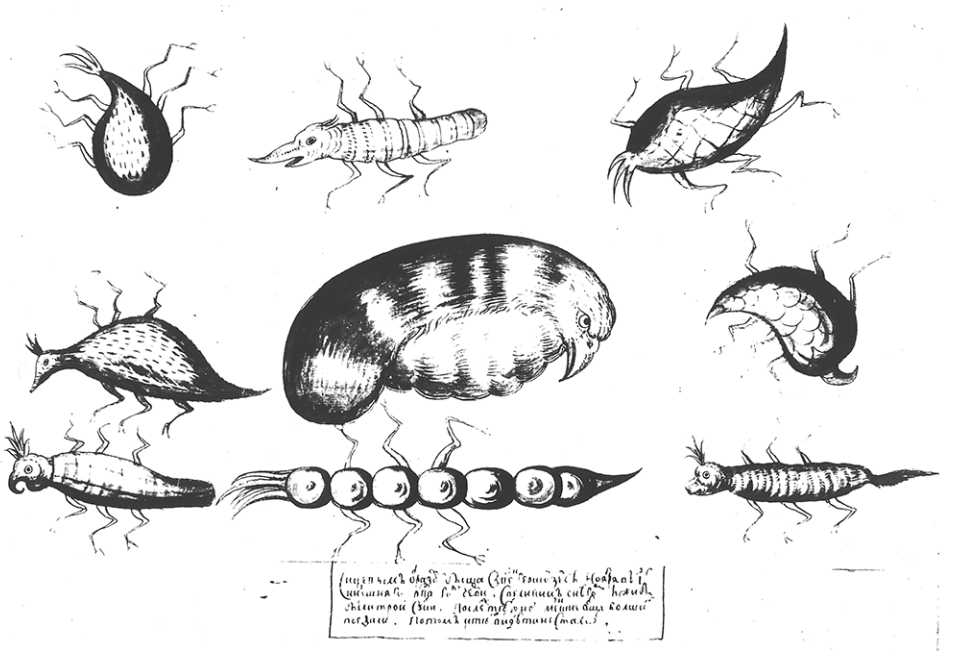

FIG. 20.2. The strange insects which appeared in a snowstorm in Hungary (RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fol. 2).

1673 by Daniel Wilhelm Moller.[32] The inscription on the drawing reads: 'Bugs of this appearance were in Hungary November 10 of the current year [7]181 [1672/73] in a blizzard and lived three days, after which the smaller ones consumed all the big ones and they were no longer visible.' Given what indeed appear to have been multiple publications and images about the strange insects, more can be done to unravel the history of their dissemination and interpretation by contemporaries. The Moscow drawing corresponds closely to only one of the Western depictions, which likewise seems to be a single-sheet manuscript drawing with a handwritten caption.[33] So far there is no reason to assume Moller's book was the direct source for the tsar's drawing. Moller clearly was interested in establishing from records of the actual observations what the insects may

32. The book is *Dan. Guilielmi Molleri Meditatio De Insectis quibusdam Hungaricis prodigiosis* [...] Frankfurt am Main: Fievet, 1673. The copy in the Austrian National Library is accessible online. However, the digital version does not reproduce the foldout, which we have not seen. There are copies in several other collections (listed under VD17 1:091217M), but apparently none of them has yet been digitized.

33. The image available online in Janssens (2008) shows a hand-drawn broadside on a single sheet, not the image in Moller's book. The handwritten caption at the bottom reads in translation: 'Own and true drawing of the worms, which fell with the clean snow near Banská Bystrica facing Slovenská L'upca on 20 November 1672 and covered the whole field, and lived so to the third day, in which time the larger were attacked by the smaller and partly have been eaten.' This depiction and that in Moscow show the insects in identical body positions and outlines laid out in 'landscape' format. While we do not yet know the format and details of the image in Moller's book, all the other printed images we have so far found are in portrait format, with the insects repositioned within a frame. The two manuscript images do, however, have different detailing on the bodies of the insects, although their poses are essentially the same.

have been and proceeded to mine historical (including Classical) references to find analogies. His earliest and most detailed eyewitness evidence was from a letter in German, which he quotes. It contains a colorful description of how the local people were picking up heaps of the insects. Moller then quotes from one German separate.[34] His book must have taken some time to produce and represents a second stage in the response to the phenomenon, not the earliest of the reports, which presumably were already in the pamphlets before the end of 1672.

Apart from Moller's elaborate analysis in a small book, several other publications in 1673 included information about the insect deluge, among other descriptions of preternatural phenomena which were deemed to portend misfortunes. One of them headlined the insect deluge, placing it in a broad canvas of other 'Wunder- und Blut-Zeichen'.[35] Another short separate, whose owner penned the date on the title page 20 March 1673, opened with the insect deluge but then devoted most of the space to other preternatural portents.[36] The appearance in the heavens over Pressburg of an angel, accompanied by the sound of trumpets, was allegedly witnessed by thousands of people, whose various reactions were epitomized. The emphasis here was on the consequences of war against the Ottomans, against whom divine assistance was needed. Probably 1672 was not dis-

34. Three of the German separates with images which we so far have been examined in digital copies are: *Aijgentlicher abriß und wahrhafftige bildnüß, der Ienigen Würmmer, welche bey Neusohl, gegen Windisch Lipsch in Hungern, den 20 Novembris, dieses zum Ende laufenden 1672. Jahrs* [...] N.p., n.d. (VD17 15:747325H); *Eigentliche Abbildung und Vorstellung derer jenigen Würmer/ welche in Ungarn mit jedermanns Entsetzen häuffig von Himmel gefallen* [...] N.p., n.d. (VD17 12:656482B); *Eigendliche Abbildung/ derer erschrecklichen Würmer/ Welche in Ungarn bey Neusoll gegen Windisch Lipsch wie auch umb Eperies/ zu jedermannes Entsetzen häuffig von Himmel gefallen* [...] N.p., n.d. (VD17 7:704849C). Each represents a different state in the copying of the images. The first is the most finely detailed; while catalogued as being a woodblock print, it may be from a copperplate engraving (a possible second version of this broadside, with different captioning, is described as a copperplate engraving in VD17 12:667783H). The second imprint has simplified the details and deleted one of the individual images; the others are in the same positions in the frame. It has also replaced with asterisks the numbers which identify two of the insects – and are referred to in the caption of the first imprint. The third print has rearranged all the insects within the frame, includes as well the one that had been deleted in the second print and retains the numbers. The details of the bodies have been generalized and lack the differentiation visible in the first two prints. The caption to the first print is but a short summary. The captions for the second and third prints are identical until the last lines, each then concluding with a different indication of the possible divinely ordained meaning of the phenomena. The separate quoted by Moller is textually identical with the second of these prints, lacking only the four lines of prophetic verse at the end.

35. *Eigentliche Beschreibung Deren Im nechst verlauffenen Monat November/ deß 1672. Jahrs/ in Ober Ungarn/ mit dem Schnee herabgefallen abscheulichen Würme* [...] N.p., 1673 (VD17 1:091850S; online so far only the title and first page).

36. *Eigentlicher Bericht und traurige Zeitung/ Von unterschiedlichen Wunderzeichen und Warnungen Gottes/ so sich begeben an unterschiedenen Orten und Enden* [...] *Gedruckt/ Im Jahr. 1673* (VD17 1:693651L). The appearance of unusual insects was the kind of 'natural wonder', which at other times seems to have merited at least passing comment in newspaper reports. An example – in the context of reporting about an unusual period of downpours that resulted in a great deal of destructive flooding – is a news item from Hamburg, 16 August [1652], translated in Moscow from a newspaper: 'In the Bremen district unknown bugs (*chervi neznaemye*) came down, about which only God knows (*a tolko tomu bog vest'*)'; V-K V: 72, No. 18.73.

tinctive for having a particularly large number of preternatural or natural events that might have evoked horror. However, there were others as well: an earthquake in Rimini and other Italian towns;[37] a major fire in an Ottoman-held city; extreme weather; and a grisly murder.[38] The incineration of hundreds of Turks and the capture and impending execution of the murderers were clear evidence of Divine judgment on the ungodly.

20.3. Unusual celestial phenomena

Before analyzing the third of the 'curiosities' in this Privy Chancery file, we should look at some of the other evidence about Muscovite interest in unusual celestial phenomena, including one striking case in late 1664 and early 1665, documenting how Aleksei Mikhailovich elicited a judgment about the possible astrological interpretation of a comet. This incident invites us to look more broadly at the history of reports about unusual heavenly or atmospheric phenomena in the seventeenth century. The recording and interpretation of such events illustrate the ways in which the response to natural wonders began to change with the growing emphasis on precise observation and the development of instruments to make that possible. Traditional interpretations about heavenly wonders gradually were being replaced across Europe, at least in educated circles, by new 'scientific' observations that fundamentally changed the understanding of the cosmos. To examine the Russian examples provides insights into the degree to which such developments were occurring there.

Throughout human history there have been efforts to correlate the appearance and movement of heavenly bodies and unusual atmospheric phenomena with life on earth. Unusual celestial events commonly were interpreted as portents of evil. Natural and preternatural events on earth – for example, earthquakes, extreme weather, 'monstrous' births or unusual animal behavior – also were commonly viewed as portents. Even if there was no direct written record of contemporary reactions in some earlier century, reports about a new sensation might include chronologies that correlated data about the appearance of celestial wonders with what could be established about deaths of prominent political figures or calamities, such as military invasion or the outbreak of plague.[39]

37. *Neue und warhafftige Relation Von dem grossen und erschröcklichen Erdbeben/ So sich den 14. Aprill Anno 1672. in der Stadt Rimini, Pesaro, Fano und Sinigaglia* […] *hören lassen*. Venedig, 1672 (VD17 12:646850L).

38. *Warhafftige Newe Zeitung/ von dem Herlichen und erschrecklichen Feuers-Brunst/ In der Türckey/ in einer großmächtigen Stadt/ auff Türcks genant Brutauckuß/ auff Teutsch Liep-Stadt* […] N.p., 1672 (VD17 7:704842Z).

39. For example, the broadside *Kurtze Auffmerckung über den Comet-Stern/ welcher sich deß Morgens in diesen Landen gegen Südt-Osten sehen lassen/ im Jahr 1661*. N.p, 1661 (VD17 1:039490M), on the comet first observed and studied in Danzig by the noted astronomer Johannes Hevelius. His own massive *Cometographia, Totam Naturam Cometarum* […] Danzig: Reiniger, 1668 (VD17 39:125414W) is largely devoted to tabulating scientific observations of the mid-seventeenth-century comets (1654, 1661, 1664 and 1665). Its Chapter XII is a chronological compendium of evidence about comets, starting at the time of the Biblical Flood and noting briefly what events presumably were consequent to the appearance of the comets. On the significance of Hevelius' work, see Yeomans 1991: 82–87. Benjamin Leuber's *Nachdenckliche Sonnen-Wunder/ Oder Historische anführunge der*

This served to document the validity of the prognostication based on the new miraculous sign.

There is ample evidence in the early Russian written records about the attention given to such unusual events.[40] While many reports explicitly interpret such sightings as portents and evidence of Divine intervention in human affairs, the seventeenth-century chronicles might do so at best indirectly, by juxtaposition of the reports to news about some misfortune. An example of the range of responses can be seen in the Vologda Chronicle records for 1679–1682 (*PSRL* 37: 184–185). The chronicler recorded a sequence, starting with an eclipse of the moon in October 1679, then a major thunderstorm with hail, and the persistence of freezing weather into the spring of 1680, resulting in crop failure, followed by torrential rain and flooding. None of this contained providential references, whereas a major storm in March of 1680 was attributed to the will of God on account of human sins. A long passage describing first what was probably a brilliant display of the *Aurora borealis* and then the comet of 1680 – in neither case with any interpretive comment – concluded with a report on the death of Tsaritsa Agafiia Semenovna (the wife of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich) the following July. The chronicler then turned to a description of the political disorders after the death of the tsar in 1682.

There also were many cosmological and astrological texts in premodern Russia which laid out more elaborate schemes of interpretation and went beyond admonitions about Divine punishment for mortal sins.[41] While interpretations of portents might be compatible with scripture and Orthodox teachings on the one hand and popular (pre-Christian) beliefs on the other, in the early modern period the secular and religious authorities increasingly attempted to suppress manifestations of popular piety that might disrupt the cultural and social order. Eschatological beliefs – which became widespread in the mid-seventeenth century and were espoused by the Old Believers – were condemned, at the same time that most members of the Russian elite undoubtedly still believed in the eventual Day of Judgment.

Historians of the early newspaper have emphasized that reports about wondrous events constituted but a small part of the coverage, with most attention devoted to sober articles relating to politics, court elites, and the almost continuous warfare of the

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Wunder-Zeichen […] Dresden: Bergen; Seyffers, 1664 (VD17 15:741588E) chronicles unusual sightings of multiple suns from the beginning of the Common Era, natural atmospheric phenomena which often evoked fear and wonder (see below for further comment on such phenomena).

40. Specifically for evidence in the Russian chronicles, see *Astronomicheskie* n.d., an online tabulation arranged chronologically, with quotations of the relevant texts for each event. Much of it is based on the pioneering work by D. O. Sviatskii more than a century ago, but his material has been updated and expanded. This database is part of a broader compilation that encompasses sightings recorded elsewhere in antiquity (*Astronomiia* n.d.).

41. To discuss these is beyond the scope of the present book. For a good survey of astrological writings in Russia from early times, see Simonov 1998. Valuable recently published annotated collections of the primary sources are *Kosmologicheskie* 2008–2009 and Gerasimova et al. 2015. The latter includes substantial analytical essays about prognostication in medical practice. Of particular relevance in it is Simonov 2015 on astrological prognostication in the seventeenth century.

seventeenth century. The argument of such analysis is that the periodical newspapers embodied the new, modernizing rationality that eschewed invocation of the Deity to explain daily affairs, whereas separates often catered to a popular audience eager for the sensational. It is true that when newspapers recorded information on natural or preternatural wonders, they usually did so without adding meaningful comment. If a news article mentioned widespread terror and prognostications of imminent misfortune, the wording commonly suggested that the reporter or the publisher did not necessarily believe in such interpretations. Pithy statements that God only knew what the significance was or the future might hold were rather used as clichés.[42]

In analyzing reports of signs in the heavens and the responses to them, it is useful to try to establish which ones concerned natural wonders that educated observers might try to analyze in the framework of current scientific thinking and which may partially or entirely reflect overheated popular imagination or deliberate fabrication for purposes of propaganda. Such distinctions can help us to understand the possible provenance of the reports, the pattern of their transmission, and the responses that may have varied considerably from place to place. It is also important to remember that not all 'natural wonders' were visible everywhere and on any given day: eclipses are seen along certain paths; meteors flash by quickly and may be visible only in limited areas; clouds may obscure the heavenly bodies. Comets are numerous, but not many can be seen without a telescope. And when comet orbits take them close to and behind the sun, comets disappear from view.

20.3.1. Comets

Few comets in the seventeenth century were positioned or bright enough to be seen by the naked eye in Europe.[43] Since observation using telescopes, which were still in their

42. For example, the article from Rome, 21 February, in the Hamburg *ODiZ* 1660/1 includes information about the response to a natural wonder which, if a comet, was assumed might portend misfortune. In reporting the sighting of the 'Christmas comet' of 1664, the Vienna *Extra Ordinari Mittwochs Post Zeitungen* 1665/LXXXXII opened an article from Elbstrohm (Hamburg), 9 December, with a somewhat sarcastic statement: "Der in *Sydere corvi* neulich observirte Comet gibt denen Astrologis materiam zu fabulieren" (*Sydere Corvi*, the Constellation Raven, is where the comet had been sighted). The report on the same comet from Nantes, 16 December, in the Hamburg *WZ App*. 1664/ 54 was a single sentence, ending in "dessen Bedeutung Gott bekandt."

43. See the descriptive tabulation in the appendix of Yeomans 1991. Of those he includes, the comets of 1618, 1652, 1664, 1665, 1680 and 1682 (Comet Halley) were the ones most widely seen and reported. Hevelius observed the comet of 1661 using a telescope. A comet in 1668 was not easily seen in northern Europe. One in 1672 was recorded both by Hevelius and Cassini (in Paris; ibid.: 421). In a communication Hevelius sent to the Royal Society in London, published by the society in English translation from the Latin, he characterized it as "but little, having at the present a train [= tail] not above a degree or a degree and a half long." He wrote he was informing other astronomers who did not yet know about the comet, so they could make observations of it. He also noted he had heard from Isaac Newton about the sighting of a new star, which, after being told by Hevelius, Newton judged probably was the same comet (see *Philosophical Transactions* 1672, Vol. 7: 4017–4018). Judging from a translated report from Copenhagen in the *kuranty*, it may have been visible to the naked eye, although the newspaper article could have derived from a communication received from Hevelius rather than local observation. The Russian translator in Moscow (Vinius?) selected only the report on the comet from a longer article in

infancy (though rapidly being improved), tended to be limited to certain elites, the common popular responses to comets were mainly to the few bright ones. Even the developing scientific analysis that began to solve some of the mysteries about comets was based in the first instance on observations of the 'great' ones. The noted astronomer Johannes Hevelius in Danzig contributed a great deal of accurate observation of the heavenly bodies and comets in particular, but he was criticized by his contemporaries for doing his position measurements without the aid of the telescope.[44] All of the astronomers who studied comets relied extensively on reports by often widely spaced observers, many of whom likely lacked the necessary equipment for precise observation.

Observations of comets in Muscovy relied on the naked eye. The comet of 1618 was the subject of a substantial paragraph in the *Novyi letopisets*, a chronicle which covered events well into the reign of Tsar Mikhail Romanov and is known to have drawn on archival documents (*PSRL* 14: 146). The entry describes the comet, the horror of those who saw it and – noting how normally such a sign predicted ill fortune – stated that 'wise people, philosophers' determined it did not foretell disaster for Muscovy but, on the contrary, joy and good fortune. The situation in Poland-Lithuania and in German states was the opposite, with war and bloodshed, devastation of cities, and so on. With the onset of the Thirty Years War, in the West the comet of 1618 often was deemed to have foretold the devastating conflict; it is possible that such interpretations may have been available to the author of this chronicle entry.[45] The Russian sources currently available in print apparently contain no reports describing the comet of 1652, although it is possible *kuranty* translations no longer extant would have included news about it.[46] The *kuranty* of summer in that year (the comet did not appear until December, for which we have no translations) did include reports about natural disasters, for the most part devoid of any interpretation that they were punishment from God. However, as already noted (n. 36),

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the *Amsterdamsche Saturdaeghse Courant* 1672/16 and added commentary about how the comet foretold human misfortune as punishment for sin (V-K VII: 258–259, No. 38.54; 587). The comet was the subject of at least one separate, which included both observational data and prognostication about what it forebode: *Warhafftiger Bericht Von dem Cometen/ Welcher im Mertzen dieses 1672. Jahrs erschienen: Dessen Lauff/ Art und Beschaffenheit/ sambt der Bedeutung/ hiermit fürgestellet wird/ Von M. G. S. D.* Plauen in Voigtland: J. C. Meyßen [ca. 1672] (VD17 7:690665K).

44. Yeomans 1991: 83; Heweliusz 1969.

45. There is still a need for precise analysis of the possible textual relationships, but at least some entries in the *Novyi letopisets* seem to have been based on materials from the diplomatic files of the Ambassadorial Chancery; see Vovina-Lebedeva 2004: 200–210, 377–378 (who, however, does not discuss the chronicle entry of interest to us here). Completed in the early 1630s, the chronicle was used in subsequent historical compilations. The Mazurin Chronicle (*PSRL* 31: 158), compiled in the Patriarchal Chancery in the late seventeenth century, copies the article on the comet of 1618. A remarkable illustrated compendium of celestial signs produced in Siberia in the mid-eighteenth century included the entry from the *Novyi letopisets* (unpublished manuscript in the Tobol'sk Museum, inv. no. 11570, fols. 77–78; copy kindly provided by Robert Collis).

46. The illustrated Tobol'sk *khronograf* referred to in n. 45 contained a brief mention and illustration of the comet of 1652 (fol. 46), but there is so far no evidence whether that entry was based on a seventeenth-century Russian source. The same manuscript (fols. 73–73^{v}) also contains a longer description of another atmospheric event in 1652, probably a parhelion.

one short item reported from Hamburg related how unfamiliar bugs (*chervi neznaemye*) came down during a stretch of unusually rainy weather, only God knowing what they meant. Reports included in the *kuranty* in 1659 and 1660 refer to sightings of what could have been interpreted as comets, but may in fact have been some other celestial phenomena.[47] In 1660 there were several reports from Rome at the beginning of March about some kind of new star, but one about which there was learned disagreement as to whether it was in fact a comet.[48] Nonetheless, its appearance stimulated a lot of speculation about whether it portended misfortune. Reports on this heavenly wonder appear to have originated only in Rome, which is unusual if what was observed was a comet; the description suggests it was a meteor. One of the reports (transmitted via the Dutch *OMC* 1660/13, published on 30 March) was translated on receipt of the paper in Moscow on 30 May.[49] The Dutch paper had printed the notice as one of several short bits of news from Rome, but in Moscow the news of the celestial event was the only one to attract attention. Moreover, the translator used a negative term (*nedobrom*, 'unfortunate') to convey the astrologers' prediction of 'groote saecken' ('important things').

News about the comet of 1661 was widespread. Apparently it was first reported by Johannes Hevelius, an astronomer who was also a councilor and at one time mayor of Danzig.[50] In part due to a spate of bad weather and flooding, the newspapers of the period contain a number of entries on natural and paranormal events, although normally the latter might not make it into the serious press reports. At the end of February, several such reports came out of Danzig. One, dated 26 February, describes the supposed

47. One of these was published in V-K V: 37, No. 8.13–14, but erroneously dated 1652, due to the disarray in the preserved archival file. Shamin (V-K VI/1: 21–22) has suggested, probably correctly, that the report dates to 1659. Apparently it originated in England around the time of the death of Cromwell and the end of the Protectorate, so it could have been a propagandistic invention relating to the political upheaval. The report includes as well description of other paranormal events and predicts famine and other misfortunes.

48. The substantially complete runs of the Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung*, a newspaper that did not hesitate to publish about natural or even preternatural phenomena, mention this sighting only in reports from Rome; see *WZ App*. 1660/11 (24 Feb.), 13 (6 Mar.), 14 (13 Mar.). *WZ App*. 1660/11 had a separate report of a wondrous event (Schwaben, 22 Feb.), but what was involved was a totally different kind of heavenly sign, not at all, it seems, related to what was being reported in Rome.

49. V-K VI/1: 74, No. 1.278; V-K VI/2: 457.

50. On Hevelius, see Yeomans 1991: 82–89. The comet of 1661 apparently is the same as the one now known as 153P/IKEYA-ZHANG, in honor of the astronomers who observed it when it reappeared in 2002. For technical analysis, see Mark R. Kidger, "153P/IKEYA-ZHANG AND THE COMET OF HEVELIUS" (http://www.observadores-cometas.com/cometas/153p/Analysis/MACE_153P_proceeding.htm). For Hevelius' short communication about the comet, see Johannes Placentius, *Physicalischer und Astrologischer Bericht Von Denen erschrecklichen/ ungewöhnlichen* [...] *schädlichen Winden* [...] *Welchen der neulich erschienene Comet/ und neuer Fixstern in Balena oder Walfisch bekräfftiget* [...] Frankfurt: Eichorn, 1661: fol. [Ciii–Civ verso] (VD17 23:277013). For a lengthy treatment in his huge book on comets, see *Johannis Hevelii Cometographia, Totam Naturam Cometarum* [...] Danzig: Reiniger, 1668: 718–754 (VD17 39:125414W). His history of the sightings between 5 February and 28 March 1661 is on pp. 720–724. An article 'Sucköping [*sic*! Norrköping?] in Schweden vom 12 Febr.' in *WDoZ* 1661/10: [3]–[4] apparently describes the same comet, along with details about additional astronomical observations.

appearance in the heavens of "viel Zeichen als Picken/ Griechische und Hebraische Buchstaben gesehen worden," which then prompted prophetic pronouncements about the Day of Judgment. Watchmen reported seeing many Turks in the Rathaus, and in Thorn a woman preached about the coming Day of Judgment (*WDoZ* 1661/10: [1–2]). The next entry – same date from Danzig – reported the sighting of seven or nine suns (presumably a parhelion), about which Hevelius was consulted. The article opined that only God could know the meaning of such wonders. Another article from Danzig, dated 29 [!] February (*ODiZ* 1661/12: [3]), reported the sighting of four moons and three rainbows in the form of a cross (another parhelion?), whose meaning only God could know. In both cases, the articles proceeded to comment on the flooding. An analogous but vague report about some kind of sighting, prophetic pronouncements in the middle of the night, and graves opening to reveal moving skeletons came from Leipzig on 23 February (*WZ App.*1661/9: [4]).

The *kuranty* packet containing that information appears to have been based on German newspapers that were delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery by Ivan Zheliabuzhskii on 27 May 1661.[51] The final section of that packet, starting on new folios in the manuscript, contains a series of short reports, most of which relate to 'wonders of nature' or preternatural events (V-K VI/1: 97–98, No. 9.52–56). A report from Stockholm, 24 February contains but a passing reference to the comet: 'God knows what will come of the comet which has been seen here in the heavens.' The article then reports that Queen Christina was at Nyköping, where she was establishing her residence (true) and wanting to reconvert to Lutheranism – presumably false and wishful thinking on the part of the author – and concludes with probably authentic information about the conscription of sailors for the fleet.

The next entry, also a report from Stockholm (6 March), describes how two birds flew into the Swedish palace, one killing the other. The black one, which was killed, was understood to symbolize Russia, and the white one either Sweden or Poland.[52] A separate publication on this remarkable event was promised. The tale is obviously a little propaganda invention, foretelling the outcome of the Swedish or Polish wars against the evil Russians. Following that tale is a report from Hamburg, 7 March, which apparently pulls together news published, for example, in the Hamburg *WZ*, even if that newspaper

51. V-K VI/1: 94–98, No. 9. For a discussion of the other items in this packet and the circumstances in which Zheliabuzhskii may have acquired it, see above (Sec. 17.4, esp. pp. 584–585). It is possible that not all the folios of this packet as it is now preserved include translations from what Zheliabuzhskii had submitted.

52. We have located a German publication of the account about the birds in Stockholm which textually must be very close to the source for the Russian translation: *Glaubwürdige Beschreibung Der bey Manns-Gedencken/ nie erhörten Wunder-Zeichen: Was Gestalten sich bey einem Jahre/ von 1660. biß 1661* [...] N.p., 1661: fol. [Aiv *verso*] (VD17 1:091848W). This pamphlet contains a collection of 'wondrous' events, most connected with flooding and other bad weather over a period of months. The account about the birds was added in boldface at the end. It is unlikely that this particular edition was the source received in Moscow; none of the other material in this pamphlet is in the Russian translations. So far we have not been able to locate another publication with the same text.

was not the direct source. The first sentence about the arrival of a Turkish envoy in Vienna corresponds to the first sentence in a report datelined Vienna, 26 February (*ODiZ* 1661/10: [3]). The emphasis here is on the Turkish military threat, possibly aimed at Poland or Transylvania. By implication, that threat may have been presaged by 'many miracles [which] have appeared everywhere.' The translation continues with information from Leipzig about prophets wandering through the city, graves opening, etc. This could well have been summarized from the longer report Leipzig 23 February, printed in *WZ App*. 1661/9: [4].[53] A separate paragraph reports from Naples about the appearance of two mendicant prophets, the *startsy* of a widely disseminated 'Tale of the Two Elders'.[54] The final entry in the news packet concerns a major fire in Istanbul, reported on 24 January – presumably another bit of evidence illustrating a misfortune to be visited on the enemies of Christendom, as anticipated by preternatural events.

It seems likely that this collection of short reports in the *kuranty* could have been compiled in Moscow from several separate translations — that is, it probably is not from a single Western pamphlet. Of all the unusual events, the comet received the least attention. We have no evidence it was seen in Moscow, but it is possible that other reports of it were obtained (not preserved, or at least not yet published from the Russian archives). This was, after all, a period when a substantial amount of foreign news was being forwarded to Moscow by A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin and others. Reports from Danzig, where the local newsmongers were obtaining information about the observations by Hevelius, were among regular sources of news in the German press. In contrast to the little evidence we have about any Russian reaction to the comet of 1661, the next widely observed comets definitely attracted a great deal of attention in Moscow.

The great comets of 1664 (the 'Christmas comet') and 1665 (the 'Easter comet'), both visible in Moscow, were widely reported in the Western press. In order to analyze the Russian records about these comets, it is helpful first to see how they were reported and analyzed elsewhere in Europe. Sightings of the first one occurred between 17 November 1664 and 20 March 1665. One of the earliest news reports about it came out of Hamburg, where it had been observed on 3 December. The news was picked up in Vienna and published with information on a separate observation, indicating that the natural wonder 'gave the astrologers material for fantasizing.'[55] Some of the updates over the

53. The tale obviously had wider circulation as it was printed, along with some other accounts of wondrous events, in *Extract Zweyer Schreiben aus Leiptzig den 25. Jenner. Von wunderlichen Erscheinungen und Wunderwercken &c. Gedruckt im Jahr Christi 1661.* N.p. (VD17 1:640189K).

54. We have been unable to locate a direct source for the text about the mendicants, which is known in Russia from manuscript copies over much of the seventeenth and down into the eighteenth century. We shall discuss it in some detail, relying especially on the work by Shamin (2008; 2020a: 90–130), in our Sec. 21.2. New versions of the tale were produced on occasions when there was a particular stimulus in current events; it is the kind of text that easily could have ended up pamphlets and collections of prophecies, as well as in an occasional article in a newspaper.

55. The December 13 report from Hamburg in the *Extra Ordinari Mittwochs Post Zeittungen* 1665/LXXXXII tells of the first sighting of the comet on 3 Dec. by soldiers on the night watch, but that a snowstorm on 5–6 Dec. prevented a further sighting. A second report in the Vienna newspaper regard-

next weeks suggested it was a sign from God for sinners to repent. An unusual item datelined Breslau 14 December (*ODiZ* 1664/52) cited a 'famous astronomer of Halle, Bartholomeus Schimpferus,' who had written about the comet of 1652 and predicted that in December 1664, a particular planetary and zodiacal conjunction would produce a new heavenly sign.[56] Schimpffer also had interpreted the earlier event as a call to repentance in anticipation of the Final Judgment. Subsequent comet news in the Hamburg *WZ* came from Nantes, Vienna, Wittenberg, Paris, Sweden, Rome, Hungary (via Vienna), Raab, and Prague.[57] In Hungary, as reported from Vienna on 31 December, the Ottoman Grand Vizier saw the comet, which he took to portend misfortune only for the Christians, at the same time that the Muslim authorities responded by imposing special fast days and penances (*ODiZ* 1665/1). In Rome, the pope had gone off to the Vatican library to read up on comets (*WZ App*. 1665/3). The Prague report (*WDoZ* 1665/3, 16 January) was a detailed diary of observations carried out there by the learned Jesuits. (The text was possibly a copy of what may also have appeared in a broadside.[58]) A report dated 24 January in the Hamburg newspaper cited a letter from Warsaw, 13 January, with news that yet another comet had appeared, though in fact it must have been the 'Christmas' one, viewed after some days without any sightings.[59] The final records about

ing the comet was from 'Elbstrohm' (Hamburg), 9 Dec. Possibly the Vienna newspaper drew on one of the first pamphlets concerning the comet, which was published in Hamburg apparently on 10/20 Dec.: *Kurtz jedoch eigentliche und Warhafftige Beschreibung/ des in diesem 1664 Jahre am 3/13 Decembris alhier zu Hamburg zum erstenmahl gesehenen/ anitzo aber noch brennenden Grossen und Grewlichen Cometen* [...] Hamburg, 1664 (VD17 23:330829Y). It opened with descriptions of the comet sightings of 1652 and 1661, then the ones from 3/13 through 9/19, along with some short commentary on the possible significance of the new comet. The orientation of its tail and the location of the comet amongst the constellations and zodiacal signs were the key determinants of where and whether it would have some influence on earthly events. Russia was not mentioned among the locations.

56. The Breslau reporter apparently was citing Bartholomaeus Schimpffer, *Kurtze Beschreibung Deß dunckelen Cometen So Anno 1652. den 8. December. erschienen/ darauff gemeiniglich sonderliche Enderungen und Verwirrungen zuerfolgen pflegen*. Halle: Rappoldt, 1652 (VD17 7:658964Q). For Schimpffer's prognostication about the planetary conjunction, accompanied by the appearance of a new heavenly sign ("was newes am Firmament des Himmels sehen werden"), see his fol. [C_{iv}v]. He preceded this prediction with one for the previous December, when he expected a new comet would accompany a planetary conjunction.

57. The reports are in the following issues of the *Wochentliche Zeitung*: *ODiZ* 1664/53, *WDoZ* 1664/53, *WZ App*. 1664/53, *WZ App*. 1664/54, *ODiZ* 1665/1, *ODiZ* 1665/2, *WDoZ* 1665/2, *WZ App*. 1665/2, *WDoZ* 1665/3, *WZ App*. 1665/3.

58. We have not found a copy of such a broadside, but see n. 73 for the Prague broadside about the Easter comet. A report from Breslau 12 Jan. (*ODiZ* 1665/2) referred to a publication with an engraving that showed the path of the comet against the constellations.

59. The report is in the Vienna *Ordinari Reichs Zeittungen* 1665/2317. This followed on a communication from Hamburg, 9 January, in the same newspaper, issue No. 2314, saying that the comet apparently was no longer to be seen, although there was a faint star with no tail to the south near the moon. Bright moonlight could have made viewing of the comet difficult. Other reports raised doubts about whether a new sighting was the same comet (for example *WZ App*. 1665/3, a report from Sweden, 31 December; separate articles in *OMC* 1665/4 suggested there was a second or new comet). Johannes Voigt, the mathematician in Stade, whose publications will be discussed below, noted several occasions when clouds prevented viewing the comet; he wondered whether there were two separate ones. There was a stretch of very bad weather at the beginning of the new year which might have in-

this comet were obtained through telescopes, as it moved farther away from earth and in proximity to the brightness of the sun.

The earliest hard evidence of the translation in Moscow of western newspaper reports about the Christmas comet comes at a time when it either was no longer visible to the naked eye or the newspapers and their reporters had lost interest in it. On 28 February 1665, Andrei Vinius turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery (and presumably himself selected and translated from it) a copy of the *OHC* he had received from the Dutch merchant Volodimer Ivanov.[60] This translation included a brief report on the comet datelined Seville, 23 December.[61] Also on 28 February, the Ambassadorial Chancery received a German newspaper from the Dutchman Werner Müller (Vakhromei Miller) and translated from it a Vienna report dated 22 January with a brief mention of news that had arrived there from various places about many miraculous signs in the heavens.[62] There is no precise information on the receipt and translation date for a portion of another *kuranty* packet, which told of a comet sighting on 31 December – in a news item from Schweinfurt, 5 January – and included a more interesting story from Paris, 17 January.[63] These two reports apparently were from newspapers first received by the Privy Chancery; it is unlikely that the translation could have been made much before the end of February.[64] In the French capital, a conference of the court and academic elite (including astrologers and astronomers – *astrologi*, *zvezdochettsy*) convened on 10 January at the Jesuit College, specifically to discuss the comet, but the diversity of opinions meant no consensus could be reached on its meaning. While the exact source for the Russian translation is uncertain, it is very close to a report published in the *WZ*. An article on

terrupted sightings; the detailed diary compiled in Prague by the Jesuits noted that a snowstorm on 11–12 January had blocked any sighting.

60. Might this Ivanov be Wouter Jansz. Houtewall, Vinius' brother-in-law? See Elias 1893–1895, 1: 273.

61. V-K VI/1: 106, No. 14.15; V-K VI/2: 461. The source for the translation was *OHD* 1665/4.

62. V-K VI/1: 108, No. 15.10. There is no specific indication that this was sightings of the comet. On Werner Müller, see Amburger 1957: 128–129.

63. V-K VI/1: 151–152, No. 33.75–78.

64. As published in V-K VI/1: 149–152, No. 33, the packet header mentions that the sources, Dutch manuscript newsletters, were delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery from the Privy Chancery on 3 January. However, the news items on fols. 75–78 are all of later date and constitute a separate manuscript unit (as Shamin has noted in V-K VI/1: 27), most probably one of the *kuranty* copies that were transferred to the Ambassadorial Chancery after the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich. The Hamburg newspaper with the report that textually could be the source for the Russian translation is *WZ App*. 1665/3. A report about the conference appeared in the Haarlem *OHD* 1665/4, published 27 January; it was received in Moscow and served as the source for the Russian version of the report on the comet that had been seen in Seville. The Dutch report about the Paris conference is a condensed one, possibly based on the news published in Hamburg, but not the source for the Russian translation in No. 33. There is a *kuranty* packet from several years before that includes reports of what would seem to have been a comet sighting in 1660, 'zvezdu s khvostom' (a 'star with a tail'), erroneously dated 1652 in V-K V: 101, No. 26.76-77. However, Maier 2003: 54 n. 6 provides the correct date (1660), established from another report (see also Shamin's comments on the manuscript, V-K VI/1: 20–23). If that news indeed concerns a comet and not some other celestial phenomenon, the comet in question was not one of those that likely could have been observed by the naked eye.

the same conference, published in Vienna, was quite detailed, implying the event was in part to prove that the court of a great king (Louis XIV) was also center of science.[65] The Vienna account mentioned by name several of the learned participants. The conference in Paris likely anticipated the creation of the Académie Royale in December 1666, which became one of the major scientific societies in Europe.

Presumably soon after it had appeared, the Hamburger 'Ivan Plius' turned in to the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1665 a printed German sheet (*list*) 'concerning a fearful comet', a translation of which was registered in that chancery's inventory in 1673 as part of a longer scroll.[66] Ivan Plius provided western news publications to the Privy Chancery on a few other occasions. The scroll with the translation about the comet was in a box kept by the secretary Efim Iur'ev, the contents including materials from negotiations with the Swedes. Unfortunately, the cryptic description of this collection is of little help in determining what the exact source may have been, or whether the broadside related to the Christmas or the Easter comet. So far no text has been found to match the item listed in the 1673 inventory.

A text about the comet, a 'translation of a letter sent from the German land concerning the stars', was among the files of the Privy Chancery when Aleksei Mikhailovich died (FIG. 20.3).[67] While the text speaks of two 'stars', as reported 'from the German land' on 14 January, that date undoubtedly means that the sightings were of the Christmas comet, which some of the Western reports had mistakenly thought might be two separate comets. The document is a compilation that may only in part have been based on dated observations, reported in newspapers or pamphlets which we so far have been unable

65. The Vienna report is in the *Extra Ordinari Mittwochs Post Zeittungen* 1665/MXCIX, which also printed news from Bristol in England (17 Jan.) about a sighting of the comet, allegedly with a blood red tail issuing sparks as from a burning oven. The Bristol report (12 Jan.) also appeared in the Dutch *OMC* 1665/4, published 27 January.

66. *Opis'* 1673: 482: 'Translation in scrolls from a printed German sheet (*nemetskogo lista*) which the Hamburger Ivan Plius delivered to the Ambassadorial Chancery in the year [7]173, concerning a fearful comet; also there a translation from German newspapers and from a letter sent by the Dutch envoy.' The Dutch envoy was Jacob Boreel, who arrived in Moscow in Jan. 1665 and during whose mission Vinius served as a translator. So far we have been unable to learn more about Ivan Plius.

67. The text has been published as an appendix to Waugh 2022a: 413–414. The file is RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666 g., No. 11, fols. 6–9; it (or a copy) was listed separately in the inventories of the Privy Chancery Archive as late as 1683 (*RIB* 21: 362, 629). For the composition of this file and thus the possible dating and provenance of its parts, see Shamin's analysis in V-K VI/1: 25–27. Even though the given folios are not directly connected with those which immediately precede and follow them, they all bear the inscription by the secretary who certified documents in the Privy Chancery. Immediately following the text about the comet is a translation of a Latin letter to the tsar, dated 22 December written by the Metropolitan of Gaza, Paisii. The metropolitan was at that time in Moscow. Following the folios with that translated letter is the *kuranty* packet (published as V-K VI/1, No. 14), based on Dutch newspapers turned in by Andrei Vinius on 28 Feb. 1665. Given the internal dates in our text, it seems likely that the original for the translation could have arrived in Moscow at roughly the same time as those newspapers. However, there is nothing here to connect the source for our text with Vinius or his Dutch merchant contacts. It is possible that our text is the translation of the broadside obtained from Ivan Plius, even if the reference in the header to a letter (*pis'mo*) would suggest a manuscript newsletter, not a *list* ('sheet'), the term used to refer to the imprint provided by Plius.

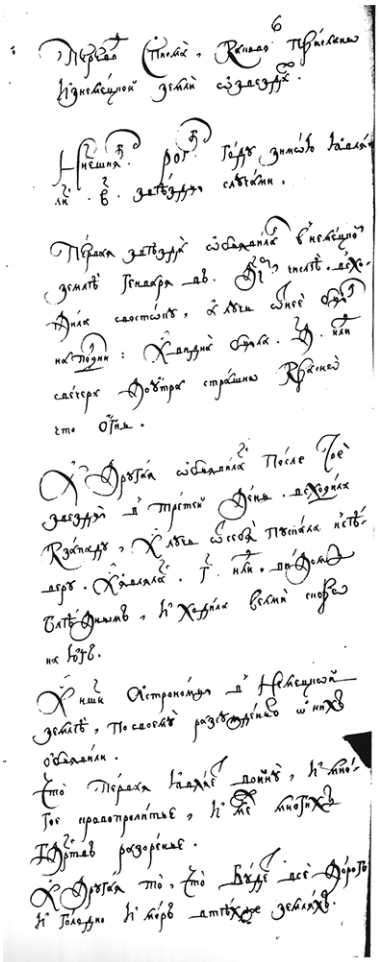


FIG. 20.3. The first page of a short *kuranty* text of the letter 'sent from the German land concerning the stars' (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11, fol. 6).

to identify. The closest such source we have found is the newspaper report from Vienna, 19 December, about the sighting of thousands of lantern-like lights in the hills above Vienna, after which the comet briefly appeared before the clouds moved in.[68] The newspaper report provided no interpretation, but the Russian text includes one: the astronomers indicated that the many small lights foretold how the Turks would ravage many German lands, and the comet predicted that in June 1666 there would be a solar eclipse such as had never before been witnessed, a forecast that the Turks and Tatars then would be defeated and driven out.[69] The Russian translation contained a report from Rome 24 December, the astronomers predicting from that sighting the death of the pope, floods, famine, unrest and plague. Such clichés were common in the literature on wondrous events; one of the staples in Rome was to predict the death of the pope. A report from Riga mentioned the meeting of the Diet, described the appearance of the comet over the royal palace (*i iavlialasia ta zvezda zelo strashno*), and predicted that this foretold great civil strife in Poland – probably a safe prediction at any time, but in the given instance reflecting genuine news that political negotiations had broken down, as it happened, right at the time when the comet was observed.[70] Of particular interest in Moscow would have been the final lines of the translation, another report from Riga mentioning the 'two stars which were also visible in Moscow.' The prognostication was that the first sighting was of no import for Muscovy or Livonia, but the second one promised for Muscovy, Livonia and Lithuania high prices and thus poor commerce and famine amongst the populace. As earlier in the text, the prognostications were standard

68. *ODiZ* 1664/53. What exactly the lantern-like lights might have been is uncertain – perhaps one of the periodic meteor showers that can be seen with the naked eye against a dark sky.

69. One of the best-known publishers of almanacs, Johann Meier, predicted a solar eclipse on 22 June/2 July 1666 that would signify great upheavals, death, and misfortune. See his *Prognosticon Astro-Phaenomeno-Logicum, Das ist: Natürliche Beschreibung des Gewitters und anderer Zufälle dieses jetzt geltenden Calenders* [...] *Auf das Jahr* [...] *MDCLXV*. Braunschweig: C.-F. Zilliger [1664]: C_r (VD17 27:710731R). Modern astronomical tables indicate that it would have been visible as a partial eclipse in Moscow.

70. See the report from Hamburg 24 January in the Vienna *Ordinari Reichs Zeitung* 1665/2317, referring to the Warsaw letter of the 13th about events on 7 January.

fare that any pamphleteer could have appended to specific news reports to give the document some unified astrological focus.

The essentially unbroken collection of the Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung* enables us to track closely the reporting of the 'Easter comet' of 1665, which was visible in Europe from late March to the end of the third week in April, at which point it was too close to the sun to be observed further.[71] The earliest of the Hamburg newspaper items we have found about the comet was from Vienna, 24 March (*WDoZ* 1665/13), indicating that it was somewhat larger than the previous comet, "mit starcken Strahlen", and whose significance only God might know. Another article from Vienna (*ODiZ* 1665/15), dated two days later, reported comet sightings from Rome and Silesia and a huge snowstorm in Sicily that some felt was like a rain of blood. Indeed, as a report from Prague in the same newspaper confirmed, winter weather of greater severity than normal was continuing. Subsequent numbers of the paper reported on the comet from Mecklenburg, Thüringen, Vienna again (more than once), Raab, The Hague, Rome, and Prague.[72] The Prague article (*WDoZ* 1665/17) was very similar to the one about the Christmas comet, a long diary of sightings compiled at the Jesuit Academy. That academy published a broadside, illustrated with an elaborate engraving that traced the path of the comet against fanciful depictions of the constellations (FIG. 20.4).[73] Its diary of the sightings is the same as the one published in the Hamburg newspaper. Most of the comet reports were short, some citing opinions that the comet foretold misfortune, others seeing it as positive. In some cases, the reports included news about other unfortunate or wondrous events possibly connected with the comet.[74]

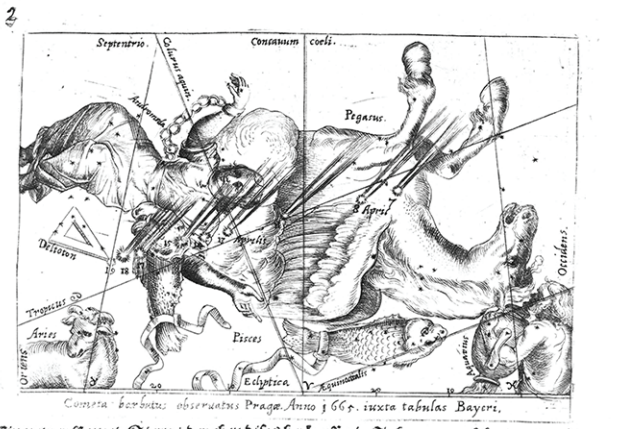
To analyze all the responses both in the newspapers and in separates would require another study. However, some comments are in order about the publications by Johann Heinrich Voigt (1613–1691), a mathematician and astronomer/astrologer based in Stade (on the lower Elbe, near Hamburg). Voigt was on the payroll of the Swedish court. Over the last decades of the seventeenth century, his regularly published almanacs were of considerable interest in Russia. It is at least likely that one or more of his

71. Yeomans 1991: 420–421. Some apparently fabricated tales about celestial events, possibly inspired by the relatively recent Christmas comet, circulated prior to the appearance of the Easter one. A *kuranty* translation records a sighting in Warsaw (the news sent from Kiev, 22 March and received in Moscow on 20 April) of a 'fearful comet resembling a serpent' with an eagle's head and other wondrous features (V-K VI/1: 113, No. 20.74). Conceivably this description could have been based on some depiction of the Christmas comet against a sky chart of the constellations.

72. The issues with these reports were: *WDoZ* 1665/14, *WZ App*. 1665/ 14, *WDoZ* 1665/15, *WZ App*. 1665/15, *WZ App*. 1665/16, *WDoZ* 1665/17, *ODiZ* 1665/18, *WDoZ* 1665/18.

73. The observations covered the period 6–19 April. The report concluded: "Was er bedeutet/ stehet bey Gott dem Allmächtigen. Unter dessen unsere Schuldigkeit ist/ daß wir allezeit in Furcht des Herrens leben/ und uns vor dem Zorn deß Höchstens hütten. Wiewol den Gerechten alles zu gutem gereichet. Dicite Justo quoniam bene. *Isaiae 3*."

74. E.g., *WZ App*. 1665/18, report from Rome, 19 April: "Zu Florentz ist der Marchese del Baffalo gestorben und in dessen Gross Herzogs Gebiete ein Drach von ungewöhnlicher Grösse gesehen worden."



Ein newer Comet-Stern / der eben dises herlauffende Jahr 1665. gesehen / und zu Prag observirt worden.

Nach dem man den 6. Aprilis vernommen hat / daß sich worgumb ein ungewöhnlicher Stern ob dem Himmel sehen lasse / alsdann ist er in obacht genommen / und sein Lauff under dem Firmament observirt worden / wie folget.

Den 7. Aprilis umb 2. Uhr Frühe / ist er von dem Polus-Stern gestanden 67. grad. Von dem liechten Stern am Rucken deß Schwans 34. grad. Von dem Adler 44. grad. Latit: Bor: 26. grad. 30. Longit: Piscium 14. grad. der Schwaff war lang 12. grad. bisweilen grösser.

Den 8. April: ist er umb 2. Uhr Frühe auffgangen, von dem Polus-Stern 66. grad. von dem Adler 50. grad: von dem Schwan 37. grad: Latit: Bor: 25. grad. Longit. Piscium 21. grad. Der Schwaff war in seinem Auffgang wegen der Dämpffe der Erden auff 30. grad. aber umb 3. Uhr 12. grad: lang.

Den 9. und 10. April: wegen Regenwetters / und Gewölck / hat man nichts sehen können.

Den 11. April: ist er ein viertel auff 3. auffgangen von dem Polus-Stern 63. grad. von dem Adler 62. gr. von dem Schwan 43. gr. Latit: Bor: 23. grad. 10. Longit: Arietis 4 grad. der Schwaff 5. grad. lang hat den Pegasum überstralet.

Den 12. April: wegen Gewölcks ist er unsichtbar gewesen.

Den 13. April: ist er umb 3. Uhr Frühe gestanden vom Polus-Stern 62. grad. von dem Schwan 48. grad. von dem Adler 68 grad. 30. Latit: Bor: 21. grad: 30. Longit: Arietis 11. grad. der Schwaff 12. grad: lang hat das Haubt Andromedæ überstralet.

Den 14. umb 3. Uhr Frühe hat er zwar den Schwaff weit über den Horizontem geworffen / aber sein Kopff ist erst ein viertel auff viere auffgangen. Von dem Polus-Stern 61. grad: von dem Haubt Andromedæ 8. grad. von dem Adler 71. grad. von dem Schwan 50. grad. 30. Latit: Bor: 21 grad: Longit: Arietis 13. grad: 30. der Schwaff 12 grad. lang.

Den 15. April: ist er umb halbe vier gestanden von Polus Stern 61. grad. vom Haubt Andromedæ 11. grad. von Pegaso 25. grad. Latit: Bor: 19. grad. Longit. Arietis 16. grad der Schwaff 12. grad. lang.

Den 16. wegen deß Gewölcks ist er unsichtbar gewesen.

Den 17. ist er umb halbe vier gestanden von Polus-Stern 61. grad. vom Haubt Androm. 17. grad. von Pegaso 31. grad. Latit. Bor: 17. grad. 10. Longit: Arietis 23. den Schwaff hat er zwischen dem Haubt und Gürtel Andromedæ geworffen.

Den 18. ist er Frühe umb halbe vier gestanden von Polus-Stern 61. grad. vom Haubt Androm: 19. grad. von Pegaso 34. grad. Latit. Bor. 16. Longit: Arietis 26. grad. der Schwaff war schon schwächer wegen der Morgenröthe.

Den 19. ist er zwar noch erschienen aber gar nider bey dem Horizonte ohne Schwaff / wegen deß anbrechenden Tags.

Was seine Zahn anbelanget / die erste Tage hat er etwas Saturnalisch außgesehen. Den 11. Aprilis aber gantz feürig wie der Mars, die letzte Täge wie Venus, wegen der zunahenden Sonnenstralen. Seine Gröste den Augen nach ist Veneri perigæ gleich gewesen. Er ist noch starck / und lauffet täglich schier auff 3. grad. Weil er aber der Sonnen gegen laufft / wiewol er noch lang währen kan / wird er doch von uns nicht gesehen werden.

Seine Höhe kan man noch nicht schliessen / biß er mit anderen Observationibus conferirt werde; dann er nach seinem Anfang nicht weit über den Horizontem ist sichtbar gewesen. Nichts destoweniger vermeine ich / er wäre nicht so hoch seyn als der vorige in Decembri und Januario.

Was er bedeutet / stehet bey Gott dem Allmächtigen. Unter dessen unsere Schuldigkeit ist / daß wir allezeit in Forcht deß Herrn leben / und uns vor dem Zorn deß Höchsten hütten. Wiewol den Gerechten alles zu gutem gereichet. Dicite Justo quoniam bene. *Isaiæ 3.*

Gedruckt zu Prag / in der Academischen Druckerey / im Collegio der Societet JESV bey St. Clement.

Fig. 20.4. *Ein newer Comet-Stern/ der eben dises herlauffende Jahr 1665. gesehen/ und zu Prag observirt worden*. Prag: Academische Druckerey, 1665.

publications about these comets became known there. Voigt was quick to publish in Hamburg reports about his own observations of the Christmas comet, in pamphlets illustrated with drawings of its path through the constellations.[75] The first of them had apparently included only three sets of observations, the last on 11 December, but then the comet reappeared. So just before the end of December he arranged for the original text to be reprinted with the addition of a new set of observations. Between 28 December and 3 January, he continued to track the comet and published those results in a new pamphlet, dated 3 January 1665. He was uncertain whether he had seen two comets or simply the reappearance of the same one. Apparently he had no telescope or sophisticated instruments but, as he pointed out, observers of comets historically had lacked such equipment. Following the record of his observations, he asked what the comet might mean, indicating at the outset that God only could know for sure, and that astrologers' views varied. One of them whom he cited for opinions based on the positioning of a comet amongst other celestial bodies was Girolamo Cardano (1501–1576), an important Renaissance polymath, whose writings included occult beliefs about the influence of heavenly bodies. As seems to have been the case with the publishers of popular almanacs, Voigt was happy enough to cite others' prognostications of misfortune, including the indications of which countries were most

75. The first of the pamphlets was reprinted in *Stadischer vermehrter Cometen Siegel Von den beyden Cometen Aussgangs 1664. und Anfangs 1665. Jahres*. Hamburg: Naumann [1665] (VD 17 12:195269D), where Voigt recorded his observations of 7, 8 and 11 Dec. (O.S.) and then added further observations of 22, 23, 24, 27 and 28 Dec. At the end of the text is the information he completed it on the 28th. The report on the second appearance is *Observation und Bericht Von dem andern Cometen oder des Cometen Anderer Erscheinung*. Hamburg: Naumann, 1665 (VD17 12:195272G), the date of completion 3 January 1665. His observations covered 28 Dec. to 3 Jan., when bad weather blocked further views.

likely to be affected, but was cautious to avoid any kind of very specific endorsement. He worked into his text references to his own almanacs, for readers who might wish to learn more. Voigt and his publisher obviously saw some benefit in reprinting information about the comets of 1664 and 1665 in later years, since events subsequent to their appearance could be used to document the validity of predictions that had been made.[76] His pamphlet on the great comet of 1682 (which we now know as Comet Halley) focuses on observational data. While he addresses questions about whether certain features might have some value for prognostication, he concludes, 'I am not in God's council chamber. I don't know for certain what good or bad significance this comet may have, or which land and places it may concern or affect.'[77] If, by beginning to purchase Voigt's almanacs in the last decades of the seventeenth century, Russians hoped to obtain a good source for astrological insights, he might well have disappointed them.

76. See, for example, Voigt's *Extract Aus den Prognosticis* [...] *Was und wie derselbe in verlauffenen etlichen Jahren/ in seinem Cometen-Spiegel und jahrlichen Calenderen/ von den itztaußbrechenden Welt-Händeln vorher vermuthet und geschrieben hat* [...] Hamburg: Rebenlein, 1672 (VD17 23:330769U), and his *Kurtzer Extract und Vortrab des Grössern Cometischen Mass-Stabs* [...] Hamburg: Rebenlein, 1676 (VD17 39:122863E). The second of these shows that Voigt actively followed comet reporting from around Europe, since he substantially updated his own observations with data from others. He was aware of the Jesuit observations (presumably those published from Prague); among his sources were Gebhard Himselius (1603–1676) in Reval and Johannes Hevelius in Danzig. Voigt included a tabulation of the recorded positions and mapped the data on a foldout engraving showing much more complete tracks of the two comets than what he had provided at the time he had first observed them (pp. 16–17). The final data point he had for the first of the comets was from the telescope observation of it by the noted astronomer Giovanni Domenico Cassini (1625–1712), who had established and then for many years directed the observatory in Paris during the reign of Louis XIV. Voigt now clearly understood that in December 1664 and early January 1665 he had been observing one comet, not two. He continued to follow new comet sightings and publish accounts and speculation about them; see, for example, *Christmässige Betrachtung Des Cometen Im Aprili Anno 1677.: Auff dem Cometischen Sammel-Platze/ im Tauro oder Stier/ Zu Hamburg observiret/ abgezeichnet/ fürgebildet und beschrieben von Johann Henrich Voigt* (Hamburg: Rebenlein, 1677), which included his observations for a period from 15/25 April through 20 April/10 May and a foldout engraving that showed the comet's path against a background of the constellations. The booklet had his typical discussion of the possible meanings: the locations at the time when the comet's tail was vertical were the ones where it might have an impact. It was always safe to say something about the ongoing Habsburg wars with the Turks; in this case he projected ahead to 1696. He published on the 1682 comet: *Nordisch Cometen-Geschrey/ Anno 1682 im Augusto. Von einem Neuen Stern: Welcher (alten Styli) den 16. 17. 18 und folgende Tage Augusti zu Nachts/ einige Stunden Vor- und Nachmitternacht/ in der Nord-Gegend erschienen ist*. N.p., n.d. (VD17 23:287186W). The Ottoman invasion that culminated in the siege of Vienna in 1683 was a good occasion for him to combine comet-inspired prognostication with other predictions about the impending fall of the Ottoman Empire: in *Deß Weltberühmten Herrn Joh. Heinrich Voigdt/ Königl. Schwed. Mathematici zu Stade/ Orientalische grosse Veränderungen* [...] N.p., 1683 (VD17 14:695357Y). In the same year, Voigt published in his almanac for 1684 a fantastic tale about Mohammed and his grave, which had been popular in Europe. At least that part of Voigt's almanac was translated in Moscow; see Sobolevskii 1903: 89–90; Waugh 1972: 249–251, 427, 645–649 (the critical text from MSS RGB Rumiantsev no. 457 and 413, in Appendix VIb). For translations of at least nine other almanacs published by Voigt, see Sobolevskii 1903: 135–136. There was an unbroken sequence of such translations between 1690 and 1696.

77. *Nordisch Cometen-Geschrey/ Anno 1682 im Augusto* [...] *Beyläufftig entworffen Von Johan-Henrich Voigt* [...] N.p., [1682], p. 16 (VD17 23:287186W).

20.3.2. Andreas Engelhardt's letters to the tsar

Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery archive contained the translated newspaper reports on the December comet of 1664 and a copy of the translated 'letter… about the stars' (*RIB* 21: 362, 629). The translations and their sources could not have been available in Moscow at the time when the comet first became visible in December. It was in fact observed there, as the meticulous diarist, the Scottish mercenary Patrick Gordon, noted after his final dated entry for December 1664: "In this moneth a comet was seen many nights in the south east with the rayes upward" (Gordon 2009–2016, 2: 209). The Privy Chancery archive also contained a file, which is listed in the posthumous inventory as 'Two quires in quarto, in which it is written about the comet' (*RIB* 21: 860). What text was on those quires may be impossible to learn, but it is conceivable they contained a Russian translation of two Latin letters written to the tsar at his behest by one of his physicians, Andreas Engelhardt. Those letters are important documentation about the tsar's knowledge of the comet, his possible interest in astrology, and more generally on the degree to which astrological prognostication may have been known in Moscow.

Engelhardt's letters to the tsar have been published both in their original Latin and in modern Russian translation and have been analyzed by several scholars.[78] However, there still are some unresolved questions about why the doctor wrote what he did, what he had read, and what he himself may have known about the comet and the prognostications based on its appearance. Engelhardt wrote the first of his letters to the tsar on 23 December 1664. Its primary purpose apparently was to respond to the monarch's question about whether there was danger of the plague coming to Moscow in the foreseeable future. The threat of contagion was always monitored closely by the Kremlin, and the government would impose a quarantine at the slightest suggestion it might cross the borders into Muscovy. One of the *kuranty* translations, from a newspaper received in the Ambassadorial Chancery from the translator Lazar' Zimmermann on 29 August 1664, reported via Hamburg on 12 July that there was a great plague in Amsterdam, with more than 100 people dying every week (V-K VI/1: 105, No. 13.2). On 1 December, Adolph Ebers (Eberschildt), the Swedish resident in Moscow, wrote to Stockholm that on account of the outbreak of infectious disease in Holland, Dutch merchants were not

78. For Engelhardt's biography, see Dumschat 2006: 601–603. The Latin originals of Engelhardt's letters are in Richter 1813–1817, 2, Appendices, No. xxxv: 98–121; a modern Russian translation is in Bogdanov and Simonov 1988: 187–204. As D. M. Bulanin (2004a: 298) has emphasized, there undoubtedly would have been a contemporary Russian translation of the letters for the tsar. Sil'vestr Medvedev, who could have read the Latin, was acquainted with the letters, possibly having seen them early in his career when he was working in the Privy Chancery. R. A. Simonov (2015) has published an extended and updated summary of his analysis of the Engelhardt letters. However, his comments on the *kuranty* evidence about the tsar's interest in comets garble what a careful examination of information about the manuscripts reveals concerning the dates of the reports (ibid.: 349). The valuable article by Robert Collis (2013) provides an extensive summary of the letters in English and identifies some of Engelhardt's sources. We thank Prof. Collis for sending us a copy of Richter. Shamin (2011a: 215–216, 221–222) cites the translation of the 'letter about the stars' and summarizes Bogdanov and Simonov 1988 for the Engelhardt letters.

being allowed to come closer than Vologda on their way down from Archangel and that their wares were being fumigated.[79] For the tsar, the appearance of a comet which was widely considered to portend misfortune may well have been the catalyst to consult with Engelhardt, whom he seems to have trusted.[80]

Always careful to cite authority rather than simply venture his own undocumented opinions, the doctor opened by pointing out he had consulted almanacs published by Johann Meier, Kaspar Melchior Haaß, and Eberhard Becker. There is no reason to think the tsar had suggested specifically these sources to him, even if he already had some idea that Engelhardt, a practitioner of iatromedicine (the application of astrological prediction in medical practice), would consult such almanacs. Very likely the books, all by prolific almanac publishers, were ones the doctor already had at hand in his own library.[81] Not surprisingly, Engelhardt reported that the almanacs were not much help.[82] Even though they predicted in general ways for Europe some incidence of disease in autumn that might be related to the conjunction of the planets Saturn and Mars, they had

79. Forsten 1898–1899, pt. 317, 2nd pag.: 102.

80. Although there is no evidence to suggest it was known in Moscow, one Dutch broadside prognostication of misfortune highlighted both the comet, the outbreak of pestilence, and a windstorm which uprooted trees, all signs presumed to mean that sinful men needed to repent to avoid the worst that might come. See *Afbeeldinge en Beschrijvinge van de drie aenmerckens-waerdige Wonderen in den Jare 1664. t'Amsterdam en daer ontrent voogevallen* [Amsterdam, 1665]. It copies a decree for a day of prayer on 21 Jan., giving the probable *terminus post quem* for the print.

81. Cf. Collis (2013: 420), who suggests Engelhardt had been commissioned specifically to examine those almanacs. There is evidence at least one German almanac had recently been translated in Moscow at the tsar's behest, but the regular acquisition and production or translation of such books apparently had not yet occurred. On the authors and their works, see the bio-bibliographic essays in Herbst 2019: Meier (https://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=meier_johann); Haaß (https://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=haass_haase_caspar_melchior); Becker (https://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=becker_eberhard).

82. For an analytical description of typical almanacs of the seventeenth century, see Smith 2018. In the first instance they provided calendrical tables with symbols that would indicate the favorable or unfavorable times to engage in some ordinary functions of daily life. Many had diagrams showing the locations on the human body, where the Zodiacal signs were considered to have some influence. Almanacs usually included some kind of short historical essay, not necessarily predictive of anything. The publishers of the almanacs might append a section of prognostications under several main headings: political, medical, agricultural, but often would publish a separate set of prognostications for the coming year to address larger developments beyond the immediate concerns of daily life. For an example which likely was one Engelhardt saw and whose author he seems particularly to have recommended, see *Alter und Neuer Schreib-Calender/ Auf das Jahr nach unsers Herrn und Seligmachers Jesu Christi Geburt. MDCLXV* [...] *Mit Fleiß gestellet durch Johannem Meyerum, Quedl. Saxon.* Braunschweig: C.-F. Zilliger, [1664] (VD17 27:710726X). For Meier's separate *Prognosticon*, see n. 69 above. In it is a substantial discussion of the position of the planets and sun, followed by predictions for the four main seasons of the year. A separate chapter covered eclipses, where he predicted there would be three solar and two lunar in the coming year (none of the solar ones to be visible in Europe). Depending on their conjunction with other celestial signs, the lunar eclipses could be harbingers of the usual list of disasters: pestilence, war, death and despoliation, unrest, etc. After more details on celestial conjunctions, there were specific chapters on war, agricultural productivity, disease, buttressed primarily by scriptural citations and religious admonitions. The final section of the book listed alphabetically and in detail annual commercial fairs to be held around Europe.

nothing specific to Russia. To the degree that there might be some divinely orchestrated punishment for sinners everywhere, Russia might, of course, be vulnerable. Indeed, the conjunction of heavenly bodies could have dire consequences, but it was much more likely weather or atmospheric conditions could stimulate outbreaks of disease. Records of outbreaks of plague historically showed that it recurred cyclically every ten or eleven years and perhaps was again due.

In soliciting the doctor's opinion, the tsar apparently did raise the question of whether the comet might portend something about an evil such as the plague. Engelhardt prefaced his short comments by saying:

> The extremely frightening comet suggests the same [thoughts] to me, as a kind of sign to us in the heavens which is easily seen in the sky if it is not entirely covered by clouds or dimmed by the rays of the moon. So one should take heed, whether this comet may not in fact produce in this or the next year something evil or unpleasant not only for the foreign parts where it is seen, but also in our region, in keeping with the verse: 'Comets predict funerals and wars, wind and starvation'.[83]

The only authority he then cited was the neo-Platonist Porphyrios (ca. 234–ca. 304 CE), who wrote an 'Introduction' to Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblios*, one of the fundamental texts in astrology. Porphyrios corrected what he considered to be some of Ptolemy's errors and in the process produced in effect a guide to the way in which the positioning of heavenly bodies might determine specific effects on humans. Whether he in fact wrote about the influence of comets in provoking outbreaks of disease (as Engelhardt alludes) and whether Engelhardt had accessed the work attributed to Porphyrios directly is not clear.[84] Even though such Classical opinions were still widely taught, this hardly suggests Engelhardt was familiar with all the current literature on comets. He concluded that perhaps God would spare Russia, where Russians frequently dosed themselves with onions and horseradish (following the prescriptions of folk medicine). In short, it seems Engelhardt had but limited interest in the comet. In any event, at the time he wrote his letter he could not yet have seen the massive outpouring of publications about it. However, he told the tsar that if he wanted to learn about possible prognostications à propos political events affecting various empires, it would be possible for the doctor to consult with some noted astrologer, such as Stephan Fuhrmann or Meier.[85] All the tsar had to do was ask.

83. Richter 1813–1817, 2: Appendix, p. 100; Bogdanov and Simonov 2008: 189.

84. In trying to determine exactly what books Engelhardt may have consulted, it is important to remember that where he mentions an authority, he may simply have been citing him from some other author's work. Many who wrote on comets cited Porphyrios and Aristotle, not necessarily to agree with them. For a translation of Porphyrios' work on the *Tetrabiblios*, see Porphyry 2007; for his citation by Engelhardt, Collis 2013: 421.

85. On Fuhrmann, see Herbst 2019 (https://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=fuhrmann_stephan). His almanacs, generally published in two parts, contained in the first volume the basic calendar with its symbolic tables. At the end he generally had a full page showing the season-by-season tables of which lands or cities came under which sign of the Zodiac (Moscow appeared in Aquarius). Fuhrmann's detailed prognostications, as much as anything sermons larded with scriptural quotations (he was a minister), were in the second volume. If there had been a serious desire

And it seems Aleksei Mikhailovich did just that, although there is no evidence Engelhardt took the time to write off to the experts before composing his response. The questions the tsar asked have not been preserved and can be inferred only from the doctor's response in a substantially longer letter than what he first wrote. While the common opinion is that Engelhardt's answers responded to a specific list of questions from the tsar, it may well be that the specificity of his answers derives in the first instance from what he understood would be appropriate as responses to rather more general questions. The letter is undated but apparently was written not long after the first one.[86] The doctor opens with what might be a bit of false modesty – were he really knowledgeable on the matter at hand, he might have been able to reply quickly and with greater authority. As it was, he would have to beg off on supplying full answers and to a considerable degree had to fall back on simply citing the opinions of others. That in fact seems to have been the case in his treatment of whether or not astrological prognostication based on interpretation of comets could really be accurate. When later in the letter he addressed specific questions about contemporary politics, clearly he drew on what he happened to know on the basis of current news.

His first specific topic was to explain what a comet is and how one might establish what it predicted about human affairs. Such a general introductory section to a discussion of comets was common fare, and in this case might have been summarized from some publication about comets. We have yet to identify his source. It is possible that he simply composed on his own a rather clear and concise summary of learned opinion about comets and the way in which astrologers might look in particular at the direction of the comet's tail to determine where and how it might have an effect. Almanacs commonly identified various contemporary political entities with particular astrological signs; the perception was that as the direction of movement of the comet and the angle of its tail changed, this could indicate which specific states might experience untoward events.

At one point in the introductory section of his letter, Engelhardt raised the issue of whether the comet that was now visible was the same as the previous one. This would suggest that he was writing when the comet had reappeared in late December and into January, and that in fact it was still the 'Christmas comet'. He begs off on any kind of more specific prognostication, citing the need to have much more precise data on the comet. He still had not seen works that were going to be published by those who had

to know his interpretation of the comets of 1664 and 1665, they would have had to wait for the publication of his almanac for 1666 (presumably late 1665). The book that contained his commentary on the two comets was his *Eikōn Tōn mellontōn Endechomenōn! Oder Astrosophisches Bedencken/ von Beschaffenheit deß Gewitters/ Gesund- und Kranckheiten* [...] Frankfurt am Main: Balthasar Christoph Wust [1665], pp. [C_{iv}r]–D_{ii}v (VD17 27:710808E). Even if Fuhrmann was an active contributor to the discussion of comets, it seems that he was not always cognizant of the latest scientific evidence regarding them.

86. On the possible date for the letter, see Bogdanov and Simonov 1988: 174–175; Bulanin 2004a: 297 (beginning of 1665); Dumschat 2006: 601 (end of January 1665).

recorded such data, and he lacked the necessary instruments to generate his own. This emphasis on the need for specific observational data if one were to prognosticate on the basis of a comet is something Engelhardt may have taken from Cornelius Gemma, whom he quotes in support of the idea that comets do have some real predictive significance.[87] Engelhardt then lists a number of specific events a comet might predict: the generalized war, plague, famine; death of a ruler; dramatic changes in religious orientation; decline or destruction of major states; unusual natural wonders such as earthquakes, auspicious births (of a prince, for example). All of these possible predictive associations could easily have been found in any number of prognostications at the time; it is possible he just copied the list from one of the books he owned. Following that short list are several paragraphs suggesting how specific features of the comet (and their changes) might be related to misfortunes. For this he quotes from the huge astrological text, compiled by David Origanus (1558–ca.1629) and published posthumously in 1645. In these passages the German writer cites as his source the famous polymath Gerolamo Cardanus (1501–1576), who wrote long lists of aphorisms regarding celestial events.[88] It would have been very easy for Engelhardt to select the relevant pages from Origanus, whose book has a detailed table of contents.

There is a section of his letter in which, specifically with reference to current events, Engelhardt writes about possible developments that might be influenced by the comet. So, he wonders whether King Jan Kazimierz of Poland, already in advanced years, might not be approaching his end and speculates on the possible succession and unrest in Poland and on the prospects for a Russian peace agreement with the Poles. As Bogdanov and Simonov (1988: 178–185) have emphasized, none of the specific predictions came true for the coming year, a fact which may have influenced the tsar to be skeptical of the value of prognostication based on the readings of the celestial bodies. Of course Engelhardt's credentials as a prophet here are hardly an issue, since he may simply have been trying to respond to a specific instruction that he comment on the possible developments in areas of particular concern to the tsar. At very best, he could muse on the basis of what he knew from the news (he was well enough informed), and in

87. The son of the noted cartographer Gemma Frisius, Gemma (1535–1578) became a physician and as well was noted for his writings on astronomy and astrology. His emphasis on the importance of accurate observation for discussing the meaning of comets is in his tract about the comet of 1577, *De prodigiosa specie, naturaq. cometae, qui nobis effulsit altior lunae sedibus, insolita prorsus figura, ac magnitudine, anno 1577. plus septimanis 10* [...] Antwerp: Plantin, 1578: 18–19. See the discussion of Gemma's writing about the comet of 1577 in Nouhuys 1998: 169–189. Engelhardt's citation of Gemma may, however, be little more than an epigram, quoted in another author's work.

88. See Collis (2013: 424), though his note regarding Origanus' citations is somewhat imprecise. Origanus' book is *Astrologia Naturalis Sive Tractatus De Effectibus Astroroum Absolutissimus* [...] Massilia: Io. Baptista Senius Genuensis, 1645. Four of the five numbered paragraphs in Engelhardt's letter summarize and partially quote from Origanus, pp. 132–133, whose sources were several of Cardanus' aphorisms (Latin text in Richter 1813–1817, 2: Appendix, pp. 106–107; Russian translation in Bogdanov and Simonov 1998: 193–194). Cardanus' collected works can be consulted from their republication in an elegant multi-volume edition: *Hieronymi Cardani* [...] *Operum Tomus Quintus; Quo Continentur Astronomica, Astrologica, Onirocritica* [...] Lugduni: Huguetan and Rauaud, 1663.

any event, he seems to have harbored serious doubts about the ability of astrologers to forecast very specific events. Speculating about cosmic changes under the inspiration of religious convictions was another matter entirely.

In some ways, for its possible bearing on our material, the most interesting publication cited by Engelhardt is a tract that previously had not been identified as one of his sources. He tells the tsar he had received from an acquaintance in Holland a 'dissertation' analyzing not the comets but the meaning of a striking planetary conjunction that had occurred in 1662.[89] Planetary conjunctions were an important astronomical phenomenon, used by astrologers to make their predictions.[90] The book in question, by Petrus Serrarius, a noted Dutch millenarian, was published simultaneously in Dutch and in English; the English edition seems to be the one the author had given to Engelhardt.[91] Engelhardt copied from Serrarius a condensed chronology of several historical incidents, where major events followed upon the appearance of the conjunction. Most related to Old Testament history of the Jews. However, the seventh concerned the division of the Roman Empire into East and West, and the Reformation, "whereby the Kingdom of the Apocalyptical Beast began to be obscured." In his summary drawn from Serrarius, Englehardt forecast the second coming of Christ, which would be marked by the reunification of the dispersed Jews, the downfall of the sinful in secular and church affairs, and the erection of Christ's Glorious Kingdom on Earth.

While the evidence here is circumstantial, it is worth considering why this connection with Serrarius in Amsterdam may have broader implications for our study. Serrarius, who had first studied at Oxford, became the most prominent Dutch millenarian in Amsterdam by the middle of the 1660s. His associates included a nonconformist group

89. For the Latin, Richter 1813–1817, 2: Appendix, pp. 111–114; the Russian, Bogdanov and Simonov 1988: 196–198.

90. Planetary conjunctions were fairly common, but the ones involving the brightest planets, Jupiter and Saturn when their orbits would have brought them visually into close proximity to the other planets, were much rarer. The conjunction in 1662 included as well the three other easily visible planets, which is one reason it attracted widespread comment; see De Meis and Meeus 1994. Undoubtedly at least some of the celestial phenomena that evoked awe in Muscovy were such conjunctions. A probable example is the report in the Vologda Chronicle, 22 Dec. 1676 (*PSRL* 37: 183), which provides in fact a quite precise description of the changes in the position of the planets over a period of a week or more, but with no speculation on what the phenomenon may have meant.

91. The editions of Serrarius are: *Naerder Bericht, Wegens Die groote Conjunctie ofte t'samenkomste van allen Planeten, in het Teecken des Hemels, ghenaemt de Schutter, te geschieden den 1/11 December Anno 1662* [...] Amsterdam: Broer and Ian Appelaar, 1662, here pp. 7–8 (Tiele No. 5027); *An Awakening Warning to the Wofull World, By a Voyce in Three Nations; Uttered in a brief Dissertation Concerning that Fatal, and to be admired Conjunction of all the Planets, in one, and the same Sign Sagitarius, the last of the Fiery Triplicity, to come to pass the 1/11 day of December, Anno 1662* [...] Amsterdam: [s. n.], MDCLXII, here pp. 11–13 and title page (Wing / S2645A). A close comparison of the texts remains to be done. Engelhardt's reference to the book in his letter uses the word 'dissertation', found in the English but not in the Dutch, and the phrase 'igneae triplicitatis ultimo' ('the last of the Fiery Triplicity') is in the English title but not in the Dutch. And in his letter, Engelhardt lists three events which will follow upon Christ's second coming, his list taken from the title page of the English edition. It is absent in the Dutch edition.

known as the Collegiants, who espoused religious tolerance. Serrarius also was close to the Jewish community, studied the Kabbalah, and would be active in propagandizing the movement of the 'mystical messiah' Shabbetai Zvi. Among Serrarius' Collegiant associates was Adam Boreel, a nephew of the Dutch diplomat Jacob Boreel, who arrived in Moscow in early 1665, just when the Christmas comet had reappeared.

In his diary of the Boreel embassy, Nicolaas Witsen wrote in several places about how they had seen both the Christmas and Easter comets and discussed them with people in Moscow.[92] The Dutch had seen it at Vyshnii Volochok, on the way to Tver on 6 January (NS; OS 27 December). On 5/15 January 1665, Witsen noted the comet was about to disappear and that the Metropolitan of Novgorod had declared this signified an impending peace between Russia and Poland. On 5/15 February, he mentioned that the tsar and his doctors had consulted about the comet, and the tsar had been given an equivocal interpretation, presumably so that it could not end up being wrong.[93] Very likely this report pertains to the Dutch having learned about Engelhardt's letters. Witsen, who comes across as a scientifically minded rationalist, implied that the Russian beliefs about the comet were somehow misguided. When the 'Easter comet' appeared, Witsen recorded seeing it on 29 March/8 April and that the Russians were interpreting it to be a favorable sign. By his account, the tsar had instructed two men who had knowledge of natural and heavenly signs to provide prognostications, but the answers they gave were ridiculous. On 4/14 April, Witsen had a conversation with Paisius, the Metropolitan of Gaza, who was in Moscow. The cleric had responded to the birth of Tsarevich Simeon Alekseevich by writing verses in Greek, referring to the comet as a sign of good fortune. Witsen's final entry about the comet was on 10/20 April, in which he reported a nice reception for the diplomats at the home of a wealthy merchant Averkii Stepanovich Kirilov.[94] The guests had talked about the comet with their hosts, who spouted all kinds of nonsense about it and showed the ambassador or Witsen a translation of a prophecy. They asked Witsen his opinion about the matter. Unfortunately, we have no information about what this translation might have been, though undoubtedly it derived from one of the Western pamphlets that were published in response to the Christmas comet.

Thus we may hypothesize that Andrei Vinius, who was centrally involved in translating for the Dutch embassy while it was in Moscow and developed a close acquaintance with Witsen, would have been present in discussions about the comet and might have taken part in the selection or acquisition of news and prognostications about it. Vinius

92. For the passages in the diary, see Witsen 1966–1967, 1: 85, 93; 2: 140, 198, 203, 207–208.

93. This may be the evidence suggesting that Engelhardt's second letter should be dated to late January.

94. According to Veselovskii 1975: 233–234, in the mid-1660s Kirilov was a member of the elite group of Muscovite merchants, the *gosti*, and – as was expected of them – served as a customs collector in Archangel. His career continued as an important government official, rising to the rank of council secretary in the 1670s (see also Demidova 2011: 257). When the Van Klenck embassy was in Moscow in the 1670s, Kirilov was involved in the negotiations regarding the Persian trade; he fell victim to the rebellious *strel'tsy* in the bloodbath of 1682.

undoubtedly would have been acquainted with Engelhardt and, judging from the evidence cited by Collis (2012), may well have shared with him non-conformist religious views. Vinius surely would have been aware of and perhaps directly responsible for the translation of an unusual amount of material about Shabbetai Zevi as part of his work on the *kuranty,* and he owned one book (published in 1669) about the mystical messiah.[95] Maybe the flurry of Shabbetai translations in Moscow reflects less any particular interest on the part of the tsar and more the personal interest on the part of Vinius.

Following his citation of Serrarius' book, Engelhardt turned to other sources, not all of which so far can be identified. He refers vaguely to a tract written some seventy years earlier by a famous theologian from Hamburg. In an appendix, to reinforce what he had already said about the coming Day of Judgment, Engelhardt seems to be citing a well-known key to interpreting the Apocalypse (*Clavis Apocalyptica*) written by a Cambridge theologian, Joseph Mede (1586-1638). However, so far it has been impossible to locate the exact passages which he apparently borrowed from Mede.[96] A significant section of Engelhardt's appendix, following his citation of Mede, is his Latin translation from a tract published in German by Johann Philipp Hahn (b. ca. 1638) on another of the planetary conjunctions which had provoked an output of astrological speculation (in 1663).[97] A prolific publisher of almanacs, Hahn issued as well many prognostications, based on astrological readings of the celestial events. In addition to his long commentary about the conjunction of 1663, he published tracts on an atmospheric 'wonder' of three suns and rainbows in 1663 and on the comets of 1664 and 1665.[98]

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95. The book on Shabbetai that Vinius owned is Thomas Coenen, *Ydele verwachtinge der Joden Getoont in den Persoon van Sabethai Zevi, Haren laetsten vermeynden Messias* [...] Amsterdam: Joannes van den Bergh, 1669 (Savel'eva 2008: 72). Unfortunately, we do not know when he acquired it. On the translations about Shabbetai Zvi, see our Sec. 21.1.2.

96. Collis (2013: 426) noted Engelhardt's mention of Mede's book. We have looked at several editions, the apparent earliest and short one published in 1627 (STC, 2nd ed. / 17766), a much expanded posthumous version in 1649 (Wing /M1594), and the reprints in the voluminous collected works of Mede published in 1664 (Wing /M1586), which includes a great deal of the correspondence evoked by Mede's interpretations. These rather hasty searches using the online EEBO certainly do not exhaust the possibilities for still locating the edition Engelhardt used.

97. For Hahn's biography and publications, see Herbst 2019 (https://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=hahn_johann_philipp). Hahn's book is *Astrologisches Bedencken/ über die in Schützen am 12. Octobris dieses denckwürdigen Jahres 1663. Nächstkünfftige Große Coniunction Saturni & Iovis* [...] Dresden: Bergen and Seyffert, 1663 (VD17 14:083726T). Engelhardt provides a specific reference to Hahn's book, followed by translation of several summary passages in it (pp. 72–75) which Hahn apparently had included for possible quotation in sermons. See Richter 1813–1817, 2: Appendix, pp. 117–120; Bogdanov and Simonov 1988: 201–203.

98. The tract on the three suns is *Unvergreiffliche Muthmasung und Historische Erzehlung/ Uber die Am 30. Novembris erschienenen Drey Sonnen und drey verkehrten Regenbogen* [...] Dresden: Christian Bergens, 1663 (VD17 3:018309E). See our further discussion in Sec. 20.4. His first publication on the comets is *Kurtz eilfärtiger Bericht Von Dem im Decembr. Anno 1664 Neulichst erschienenen Cometen, Benantlich Was dessen Betrachtung/ Natur/ Gestalt/ Zeit/ Farbe/ Grösse/ Lauff/ und muthmaßliche Bedeutung betrifft* [...] Dresden: Christian Kirchner, [1665] (VD17 39:107642P).

20.3.3. The comets of 1680 and 1682

Astrological interpretation of celestial events continued in Europe well beyond the seventeenth century. Even some of the most famous names in the annals of early modern science did not abandon traditional beliefs about cosmic influences on human life. However, serious scientific observation and high-level mathematical analysis produced dramatic breakthroughs in the understanding of comets. There were two 'great comets' in the early 1680s which attracted widespread attention in Europe, the first visible between November 1680 and March 1681, and the second in August and September 1682 (Yeomans 1991, Chs. 5, 6). The first of these inspired a vigorous discussion in England between John Flamsteed and Isaac Newton, leading to the latter's producing mathematical techniques to track accurately comet orbits.[99] As Donald Yeomans has noted, Newton – famous for his contributions to the development of modern science – also "dabbled with astrology" and had a "strong interest in biblical chronology and alchemy" (ibid.: 100). The second of these comets is the one now dubbed 'Comet Halley' for Edmond Halley, who was able to apply Newton's methods to demonstrate the periodicity of its appearance, identify earlier records of it, and predict its next appearance. At the same time, these comets inspired for many who saw them astrological speculation and terror in the belief that they portended disaster.

At least the first of these two comets sparked considerable interest in Russia, although to some degree the evidence suggests a kind of retrospective interpretation of its possible significance, following the political unrest of the *strel'tsy* revolt in May 1682.[100] A clear indication of this is in the Mazurin Chronicle, which had copied the entry about the comet of 1618 from the *Novyi Letopisets* but then inverted its prognostication in describing the comet of 1680 (*PSRL* 31: 158, 173). The earlier text had predicted good fortune in Muscovy, since the head of the comet pointed there, but the tail, forecasting misfortune, pointed west. For 1680, citing the same wisdom of learned doctors about what the direction of the comet's tail portended, the Mazurin chronicler predicted misfortune for Russia, as indeed occurred with the *strel'tsy* uprising. At least two other chronicles described the comet, but without any interpretation of what it might portend.[101]

99. In some circles of the educated elites, the lure of being able to contribute to the serious scientific work of the newly created royal societies encouraged careful observation of the comets. An example is the English resident in Hamburg, Sir Peter Wyche, who had some years earlier headed an English embassy to Moscow. In his reports (written between 23 Nov. 1680 and 21 Jan. 1681) he included data on his observations of the comet, dismissed the popular prognostications he was hearing or reading about it, and asked his superior in London, Secretary of State Sir Lionell Jenkins, to forward his material to the Royal Society (Waugh and Maier 2017: 103–104).

100. Sviatskii 1929; Shamin and Beliankin 2015: 126; Shamin 2020a: 72. That there apparently was a flurry of speculation about a possible connection between unusual astronomical and atmospheric phenomena and the political unrest in 1682 is suggested by a long set of entries in the Tobol'sk *khronograf* referred to earlier (see fols. 41^{v}–43, 51^{v}–52^{v}, 55^{v}–56, 58, 59^{v}–66, 69–71, 82^{v}–83, 84^{v}–85). Unfortunately, we do not yet know the sources for these reports and how they made their way to Tobol'sk, presumably in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

101. Tikhomirov 1979: 259; *PSRL* 37: 184.

In the *kuranty*, there were 30 reports about the comet of 1680–1681, many lacking any judgment as to its significance (Shamin 2020a: 72). However, many of them also described the comet as fearsome or commented on how it predicted some kind of misfortune. The presence or absence of such interpretations do not inform us about the Russian response to the news or actually seeing the comet, though there is other evidence in reports of natural wonders and paranormal phenomena to suggest that such events were not simply considered to be astronomical phenomena (ibid.; Shamin and Bogdanov 2003). The events of 1682 led government officials to be very concerned whether there might be astrological prognostications that, if widespread, could be politically dangerous. Presumably the appearance of Comet Halley in late summer would have reinforced such concerns. Moreover, the continuing threat of war against the Turks was fertile ground for all kinds of prognostications.[102]

Apart from the newspaper reports in the *kuranty*, there were translations of separates. The *kuranty* files included a translated tract which may have been based on a German pamphlet, or possibly represents a condensation that was produced in Moscow from a German broadside and a pamphlet published in Danzig by an academic based there.[103] The translation probably could not have been made before mid-winter 1681. What appear to be the ultimate (if not the direct) sources for the translation contained a substantial amount of material about the nature of comets, their study and the recent observations. The Russian text lacks most of that material and is confined largely to providential comment about misfortunes that might be visited on sinful mankind. In contrast, much of what was published in the West about the comet included the analytical material. The authors of such tracts usually devoted considerable attention to details

102. For a comprehensive survey of much of the other evidence about Russian texts concerning celestial signs, see Shamin 2011a: 216–231; Shamin 2020a: 55–79.

103. Bogdanov and Shamin (2003: 245–246) quote part of the translation (manuscript copy: RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1680, No. 4, fols. 199–204). However, they did not identify the source. We are grateful to Stepan Shamin for providing us with a complete transcription of the file. The opening header and paragraph of the translation correspond closely to the title and opening of a broadside, whose first edition apparently was *Abriß und Beschreibung/ Des in diesem noch lauffenden Jahre 1680. in Novemb. und Decemb. erschienenen sehr langen und erschrecklichen Cometen*. Hamburg: güldenes A/ B/ C, 1680 (VD17 23:647333X); a later printing with a somewhat different layout and some textual variants is *Abriß und Beschreibung/ Deß in dem abgelau[fenen] 1680. Jahre/ im Monat Novemb. und [Dece]mb. erschienen sehr langen und [erschre]cklichen Cometen*. N.p., 1681 (VD17 14:073224X). Following that opening paragraph is another title and a longer section which seems to be a condensation from *Friderici Büthneri Mathematici Natürliche und Astrologische Betrachtung Des Cometen/ Welcher zu ende des Novembers und anfang des Decembers jetzt Lauffenden Jahres. Folgends auch Des Licht-Sterns oder Kugel/ Welche den 17. December Abends* [...] *allhie gesehen worden*. Danzig: David Friedrich Rhete, 1680 (VD17 14:072899K). Following the translation about the comet is a short report from Berlin, 31 December 1680. Assuming that report was part of the actual source used by the translator for the whole file, we might posit a pamphlet in which the comet material had already been condensed from the original publications. Such a condensation and publication could well have been done in Danzig, where Büthner and his publisher were located. The Rhete printing office for decades had been a major publisher, whose output included newspapers and separates, but whose work, unfortunately, has not been well preserved to the present. A close comparison of the Russian text with this putative source remains to be done.

about the most recent sightings, sometimes provided long chronologies of historical instances where an event seemed to have been presaged by the appearance of a comet, and tended to provide details about the positioning of the comet against the map of celestial constellations. Of course such evidence was also grist for astrological speculation.[104]

Shamin and Beliankin (2015) have published a Russian translation of a tract about the comet of 1680–1681 written by a Doctor Jacob Röser in Dresden.[105] The translation so far is known from only one late seventeenth-century florilegium containing numerous religious and didactic texts. Interestingly, the text immediately following the translation of Röser is a selection from Andrei Vinius' translation in 1674 of Aesop's fables, although that fact may have no bearing on the question of how the Röser original came to Moscow. Röser's description and interpretation of the comet is typical astrological fare, overlaid with Christian providentialism.

However, at least some pamphlets, apparently ones more typical of the attention given the comet by those interested in scientific observation, were translated into Russian and are known from a few copies outside of the chanceries. A Polish work published in 1620, commenting on the prominent comet of 1618, is preserved in Russian translation in a copy from the 1680s. A tract by the academic mathematician Stanisław Niewieski, published in Zamość on the comet of 1680–1681, was translated presumably soon after its publication in 1681. It has survived in two seventeenth- and one eighteenth-century manuscript. Apart from whatever specific observational data they contained, both works emphasized providential meanings of the comets and included astrological prediction.[106]

All this evidence is as yet insufficient to suggest that by the final decades of the seventeenth century there was a distinct trend in Muscovy for the educated elite to lean away from traditional, religiously inspired views of natural wonders, even though some of the publications about comets reflected a growing secular rationalism. To select only summary astrological prognostication overlaid with scripture about the inevitability of the Second Coming and the Day of Judgment was certainly not exceptional in early modern

104. An example is *Underricht Von dem Wundergrossen Comet-Stern/ so in diesem lauffenden 1681isten Jahr mit Schröcken der gantzen Welt am Himmel erscheinet* [...] Lintz: Joh. Jacob Mayr, 1681 (VD17 12:641570L).

105. It seems likely that the source for the Russian translation was a separate. What must be a shorter version of Röser's text, but one where passages correspond closely to the Russian translation, was published in Hamburg as part of a compendium of views by various experts about the comet: *Prognosticon, Oder Unmaßgebliches Bedencken/ Uber Den letzten im Außgang des verschienenen/ und im Anfang dieses 1681sten Jahrs/ erschienenen greülichen und unerhörten langen Cometen* [...] Hamburg: von Wiering, 1681: fols. [C_8–C_8v] (VD17 1:058011X). This compendium was issued in two volumes, the Röser text in the first one. Termed an 'Extract', it is appended to an excerpt from a tract by Johann Voigt about the comet, though there is no evidence the Röser text in fact was part of Voigt's publication.

106. Nikolaev 1996b. We have not been able to consult an unpublished Polish licentiate thesis from Kraków by Kamil Zubek, "Interpretacja komety Kircha (1680/1681) w polskich prognostykach astrologicznych" (2013), which analyses three of the Polish responses to the comet of 1680–1681, one of them Niewieski's book, in the context of Polish astrological prognostication of the period. See the resumé at: https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/189807?show=full.

Europe. In this regard, late Muscovite translators and readers may not have differed substantially from what we know about some of the most prominent exponents of the new sciences, who still believed in astrology and Divine intervention in human affairs. The transition to the emergence of the 'modern mind' was slow and drawn out.

20.4. The signs in the heavens over Košice in 1672[107]

Comets were but one kind of unusual celestial phenomena which alarmed viewers and inspired prognostication about possibly dire consequences to those on earth. Eclipses of the sun and moon frequently figured in historic texts, one of the most famous early Russian examples the medieval epic about Prince Igor's disastrous campaign against the nomadic Polovtsy in the twelfth century. In his remarkable autobiography, the Archpriest Avvakum cited an eclipse of the sun in 1654 as a sign of Divine displeasure over Patriarch Nikon's church reforms that followed soon after (*BLDR* 17: 66). On account of the Church Schism, such prognostications became popular among the Old Believers. However, by the seventeenth century, records in the Russian chronicles about eclipses often eschew interpretive comment and may be remarkably precise in describing when the eclipse began and ended and, for lunar eclipses, changes in the color of the moon.[108] A unique illuminated chronicle including heavenly signs, compiled in Kazan in the early seventeenth century and recently made available in a facsimile edition, represents a kind of illustrated catalog of chronicle records, the miniatures apparently inspired in part by acquaintance with engravings in Western histories.[109] As the editors write, this is an important early example illustrating the process of 'westernization' of Muscovite culture.

Among the 'wonder-signs' depicted in the Kazan chronicle are various kinds of atmospheric phenomena, involving the illusion of multiple suns or moons and/or haloes, bright columns or rainbow-like arcs of light.[110] Such vivid displays, known as parhelia, are well documented historically and in modern scientific literature.[111] Descriptions and

107. This section is a somewhat shortened and revised version of Waugh 2022a, which includes images of the parhelia from the works cited here. Waugh 1985 provides details about the manuscripts and textual relationships of the several copies but has been supplemented here with the material about the widespread interest in parhelia. See also Rykov and Shamin 2008 for some additional material and different interpretations (to be discussed below). Košice was also known in earlier times as Kaschau (German) and Kassa (Hungarian).

108. Some examples of lunar eclipses: 2 Jan. 1675 (*PSRL* 37: 181 [Vologda Chronicle]); 18 Oct. 1678 (ibid.: 184), in a paragraph including reports of terrible storms, extended winter weather, crop failure, etc.; 12 Feb. 1682, recorded just prior to a report about Tsar Fedor Alekseevich's second marriage (*PSRL* 33: 185–186 [Dvina Chronicle]).

109. See Markelov and Sirenov 2017 (a summary article) and 2018 (the facsimile edition with extensive commentary).

110. Markelov and Sirenov (2017) provide several examples of schematic illustrations of halo phenomena, with rainbow-like arcs, crosses and multiple suns on which the artist has drawn human faces, found both in this chronicle and in the famous *Litsevoi svod* of the sixteenth century (ill. 2–11). There also is at least one illustration (ill. 12) of a parhelion in a manuscript produced in the sixteenth century by the well-known archimandrite and bookman Vassian Koshka.

111. There are several websites with explanations and striking images of such atmospheric phe-

illustrations in early modern times can be difficult to interpret. In some cases, the observers likely were seeing the aurora borealis. The most vivid parhelia, caused by the reflection or refraction of solar rays by ice crystals in the atmosphere, often occurred in winter months.[112] Folk wisdom in Russia attributed to rings around the sun or moon a range of consequences, good and bad (Ryan 1999: 133–134). It seems to have been a short step from describing in objective terms features of often complex atmospheric displays to imagining emblematic crosses, sabers, or human visages. Such phenomena might occur to the accompaniment of a roll of thunder, which would inspire thoughts of armies clashing in the heavens and be the subject of at least brief mentions in the newspapers translated in Moscow.[113]

Several sightings of parhelia in the 1660s drew ample attention, at least in part because of the belief that they somehow predicted the outcome of the war between the Austrian Habsburgs and the Ottoman Empire. The appearance of seven suns over Danzig on 20 February 1661 was observed and drawn by the well-known astronomer Johannes Hevelius.[114] Johann Philipp Hahn published a tract in 1663 devoted to rainbow and three suns phenomena. He connected them historically with examples that illustrated their prognostication of political or other misfortunes (see n. 98). An extraordinary engraved

nomena. Of particular importance is the Arbeitskreis Meteore e.V. (https://www.meteoros.de/), some of whose material may be viewed on "Halo Phenomena" (http://www.haloblog.net/). "Atmospheric Optics" (http://www.atoptics.co.uk/) also has some simple explanations, useful links and a downloadable software that allows one to experiment in creating various kinds of atmospheric halo displays. The 'suns' which flank the actual sun are commonly called 'sun dogs'. Particularly brilliant displays might include above the real sun another very bright point of light which could also be viewed as a sun.

112. In Sec. 19.6.3 we discussed the Russian text about the search for the Northeast Passage, which drew on the account of Willem Barentz' attempt that ended with his having to winter on Novaia Zemlia. The Russian text referred to a 'wonder sign' (*chiudnoe videnie*), which the Dutch expedition observed. The woodcut illustrating the published text clearly shows that this was a parhelion. The Dutch also carefully recorded another atmospheric wonder, which gave the illusion that the sun was above the horizon before it was actually visible. On 14 January 1665 (NS), Nicolaas Witsen (1966–1967: 89) recorded in his diary of the Dutch embassy seeing in Moscow a rainbow and a dark sun that somehow seemed to be of a piece with the rainbow. This probably was a parhelion.

113. An early example in the *kuranty*, translated from a Dutch news publication by Broer Jansz., sent to Moscow from Stockholm by Melchior Beckmann in 1631, is a report from Braunschweig about the sighting of a rainbow with a cross and sword, and a fiery ball with a tail, believed to have some connection with the battles between the Swedes and the imperial forces (V-K I: 138, No. 27.22–23; 225, App. No. 4.44). A report from Pomerania dated 20 June 1658, received in Moscow 30 Sept. (V-K V: 122, No. 33.4), related how in Brandenburg territories two armed men fought beneath the clouds ('and what that will bring, God knows'). A single sentence in a *kuranty* translation from German newspapers received in Moscow on 30 Sept. 1662 from an envoy from Courland reads: 'Here [Stockholm] they observed a new star and two miles from here saw two armies of powerful men battling under the heavens' (V-K VI/1: 101, No. 11.93). A report in a German newspaper delivered by Jan van Sweeden in Moscow on 3 Apr. 1668 (V-K VI/1: 263, No. 84.100) tells about a sighting on 9 Feb. in Zagerbot (Zagreb) in Hungary of four armies which stood for several hours in the heavens before coming down to earth. With them was a gray-haired old man who organized the armies and marched with them in the direction of Turkey. See also examples from the early 1670s and 1680s, in Shamin 2020a: 73–74.

114. See the short essay at https://www.meteoros.de/themen/halos/halophaenomene/danzig-1661/. Hevelius' book is: *Mercurius In Sole visus Gedani, Anno Christiano MDCLXI, d. III Maii, St.n.* [...] Danzig: Reiniger, 1662 (VD17 39:125101A).

broadside, published in Augsburg at the end of that year, showed on one half three suns, each under a rainbow, and on the other side a cross above an arm holding a sword, separated by a standard from another sword-wielding arm below a crescent moon under a rainbow. This is what was allegedly seen above Freiburg on 10 December, the symbols obviously relating to the conflict with the Ottomans.[115] Inspired by the same event, in 1664 Benjamin Leuber published a substantial book on such 'Sonnen-Wunder', with a frontispiece engraving showing several variants, including one in which he had inserted a cross and another in which he had inserted three crescents (emblematic of the Muslim Turks; FIG. 20.5).[116] He had a long catalog of historical examples. Tobias Beutel benefited from the appearance of the comets in 1664 and 1665 to publish a tract that also included interpretation of parhelia.[117] Parhelia were sometimes mentioned in the German newspapers.[118] As had become common in such reports, interpretive comment was confined to the observation that only God might know what the phenomenon meant.

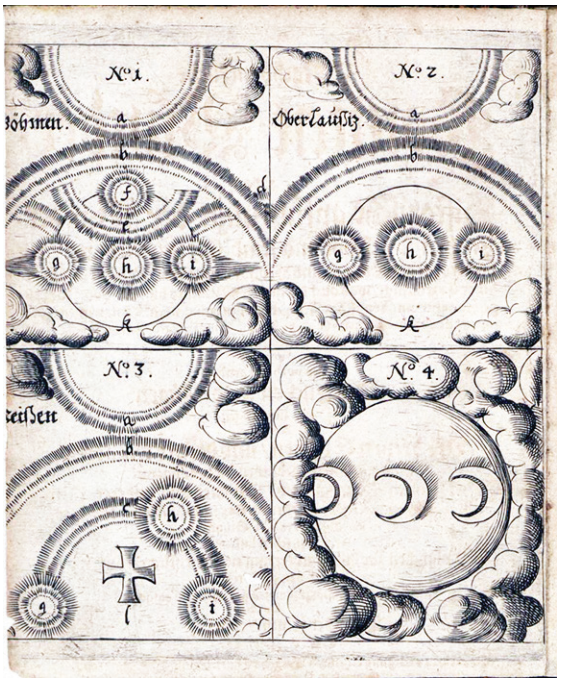

FIG. 20.5. Frontispiece to Benjamin Leuber's *Nachdenckliche Sonnen-Wunder*.

Of considerable interest for its description of what undoubtedly was a parhelion among several wonder-signs is the text of a short chronicle, compiled by a 'metropoli-

115. *Abüldung underschüdlicher wunder Zeichen: 1663, den 10. December am Montag Neyen Callender, in der Chur Säschischen[!] Bergstatt FreyBurg in meyssen* [...] *am Himlischen Fürmament ist von Meniglichen gesechen worden*. Augsburg: Hannas, 1663 (copy in Universitätsbibliothek J. C. Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main).

116. *Nachdenckliche Sonnen-Wunder/ Oder Historische anführunge der Wunder-Zeichen* [...] *Auf anlaß Der dreyen Sonnen/ und dreyer Monden/ auch unterschiedlicher Regenbogenn* [...] Dresden: Bergen; Seyffert, 1664 (VD17 1:076846W).

117. *Dreyfache Zugabe Der Admirabilium In Aere Et Aethere Oder Wunderbaren Wercke Gottes/ In der Lufft und am Gestirnten Himmel/ So auff vorher erschienenen großen Cometen, sich noch ferner begeben/ An Dreyen Son[n]en und Regenbogen*. [...] *Welche anderweit vor- in- und nach denen Heiligen Oster-Feyertagen dieses 1665. Jahres observiret worden* [...] Leipzig: Schneider; Sporel, 1665 (VD17 14:072842Y).

118. For example, a report from Hamburg, 29 March 1665, describing three suns and two rainbows, whose meaning, according to the paper, was known only to God (*ODiZ* 1665/15). Another article in the Hamburg paper (*WDoZ* 1665/18), from Vienna, 29 April, reported news from Graz about the sighting of a beautiful scimitar in broad daylight in a clear sky, a phenomenon that could also simply have been due to particular atmospheric conditions. On 6/16 May in Stralsund (*ODiZ* 1665/20) were first observed three suns and rainbows, and then five suns. Such sightings continued to make the news in later years; see the illustration and an accompanying text in *NM* 1686, No. 96 (22 June): [8]

tan's junior boyar' (*mitropolichii syn boiarskii*), Petr Alekseevich Zolotarev, about the events he experienced in Astrakhan when it had come under siege by the rebel army of Stenka Razin in 1670.[119] The text in some ways is a kind of hagiographic panegyric to the local Metropolitan Iosif, who was killed by the rebels when they took the city. Zolotarev elaborated on several visions or signs (*videniia*), most identifiable today as natural events, but which to him obviously were portents of the evil to come: two earthquakes, mysterious sounds like the ringing of bells, emanating from local churches around midnight, and a meteor shower. In the case of one of the earthquakes, the local military commander sought out the metropolitan to learn from him what it might portend.[120] The report of the meteor shower moved the metropolitan to tears, for he saw it as a sign of Divine wrath. The final sign, which the metropolitan himself witnessed, was a parhelion, a vision of three suns of different colors in midday, along with a rainbow and colored haloes (*ventsy*). Though it was still summer, this was in a period of unusually cold weather and frequent hailstorms.

Another of the short, late chronicles, compiled probably by a functionary in one of the Moscow Kremlin churches, contains a likely eyewitness account of a parhelion, which appeared above the Kremlin on 17 January 1683. There was a large white halo or arc with four 'suns' distributed along it and another such sun visible above the actual sun in the upper center. It all gradually faded after about three hours, leaving a single sun. As the chronicler noted, 'people who witnessed this were in awe at this Divine miracle.'[121] The next entry in this chronicle, obviously informed by a news report from abroad, tells how the Christian forces of the Habsburg emperor and Polish king defeated the Turks and Tatars at Vienna. Thus, at least by implication, the heavenly signs over the Kremlin might have been understood to have some bearing on the dramatic end to the Turkish siege of the imperial capital. Others saw the atmospheric display and described it separately. The most detailed description, with no attempt to give it prophetic significance, was by the learned Sil'vestr Medvedev, who in his early career had served in the Privy Chancery and on diplomatic missions. Influenced by Simeon Polotskii, he had taken monastic orders and was involved in editing for the Moscow printing house. After the death of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich, he became in effect the court poet and was an advocate for the creation of a 'Latin' school in Moscow. His description of the parhelion was in his detailed historical account of the dramatic events at the end of Fedor Alekseevich's reign. Caught up in the political upheaval that ended the regime of Tsarevna Sofiia and

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119. For the text, see *PSRL* 31: 208–212. On Zolotarev, see Bobrov et al. 1992: 404–406.

120. Reports about earthquakes and other kinds of natural disasters frequently made the Western newspapers and were translated for the *kuranty*; see, for example, V-K V: 55, No. 13.45; V-K VI/1: 275, No. 91.157; 282, No. 93.144; 305, No. 109.39; V-K VII: 104–105, No. 13.81^{v}–82^{v}. Newspaper commentary on the events commonly would mention merely that they inspired fear.

121. *PSRL* 31: 203. For a description of key evidence in the chronicle that localizes the provenance and possible author, see ibid.: 4–5.

brought Petr Alekseevich (Peter I) to power, Medvedev was executed in 1691.[122] Another of those who also saw the atmospheric display in Moscow drew a picture of it and added captioning for the various parts, including a suggestion that the arc or halo was similar to a rainbow, with colors ranging from yellow to red. That captioned drawing is known from a late seventeenth-century manuscript, which contains as well copies of two other texts about wondrous events. Those texts are of great interest for what their histories suggest concerning spread of archival files beyond the walls of the chanceries.[123]

So there is ample evidence to suggest how a real atmospheric phenomenon could have inspired the drawing of the remarkable signs in the heavens over Košice (today's Slovakia) in 1672, whose image and explanatory text were preserved in Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery. Whoever created this picture as a piece of anti-Ottoman propaganda added a variety of symbols to a framework of ones that had a long history already in the depiction of natural wonders.[124] The history of this wondrous sign that made its way into the tsar's hands is of considerable interest for the evidence about how the illustrated report was first acquired and for the fact that copies circulated more widely in

122. For the text, see *Rossiia* 1990: 185–186; for Medvedev's biography and writings, Panchenko et. al. 1998: 354–361.

123. The manuscript is BAN 16.9.2, with the drawing and its captioning on a sheet that has been pasted on to fol. 8. For a description of the manuscript, see Bubnov et al. 1971: 60–62. The main text caption for the drawing reads: '[7]191. This *skoba* is like a rainbow which occurs in summer. One edge is yellow, and the other red, and the ends point up. And this sign appeared on 17 Jan. at the third hour of the day and stood above the Kremlin for upwards of an hour, and then disappeared, and appeared again in the sixth hour outside Moscow, and in the eighth hour vanished.' A *skoba* is an elongated strip of metal with points at its tips, which can be used to attach something or serve as a handle for lifting an object (see *SRIa XI–XVII v.* 24: 213–214).

124. Shamin (2020a: 60) suggests that the vision of the heavenly signs might have been a response to seeing an actual comet or meteor. There had been a report from Copenhagen translated in the *kuranty* on 9 May 1672 about the sighting of a strange comet that was the subject of much speculation (see above, n. 44). However, it is not clear how widely that comet had been seen, and in any event it preceded the Košice sighting by half a year. There was a comet, detected apparently only with telescopes, in 1672. Specialists who wrote on comets at that time obviously knew about it but noted that it was very faint. For example, in his tract on the very bright comet of 1681–1682, where he writes about the comparative size and brightness of others, Gottfried Güttner observed "Bißweilen aber werden sie wegen ihrer geringen Grösse kaum gesehen/ massen dann der Comet A. 1672. sehr klein und nicht wohl zu erkennen gewesen" (*Naturmässiger Bericht von Cometen ins gemein/ Worunter vor andern absonderlich Der Grosse Wunder-Comet/ So im Wintermonat des 1680. Jahrs erschienen/ und biß zum Ende des Jenners im 1681. Jahr am Himmel gestanden* [...] Altenburg: Gottfried Richter, n.d., p. 32 (VD17 39:121874Q). An event as dramatic as a solar eclipse theoretically could have been the catalyst for inventing some other vision of heavenly portents, but eclipses do not extend over several days or weeks, and in any event there was but one solar eclipse (partial) which might have been visible in Hungary in 1672 (22 August); see the NASA eclipse website: https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/JSEX/JSEX-EU.html. There seems to have been a flurry of reports about heavenly wonder-signs in late 1672 or early 1673. A small pamphlet whose publication was stimulated by the appearance of the mysterious bugs in the snowstorm in Hungary described the sighting over England of a fiery arm holding a sword and staff or rod (*Ruthe*); a comet seen over Strassburg had a tail pointed toward Holland, this probably an invention connected with the wars in which the Dutch were engaged; an angel appeared in the skies over Pressburg. See *Eigentlicher Bericht und traurige Zeitung/ Von unterschiedlichen Wunderzeichen und Warnungen Gottes/ so sich begeben an unterschiedenen Orten und Enden* [...] N.p., 1673 (VD17 1:693651L).

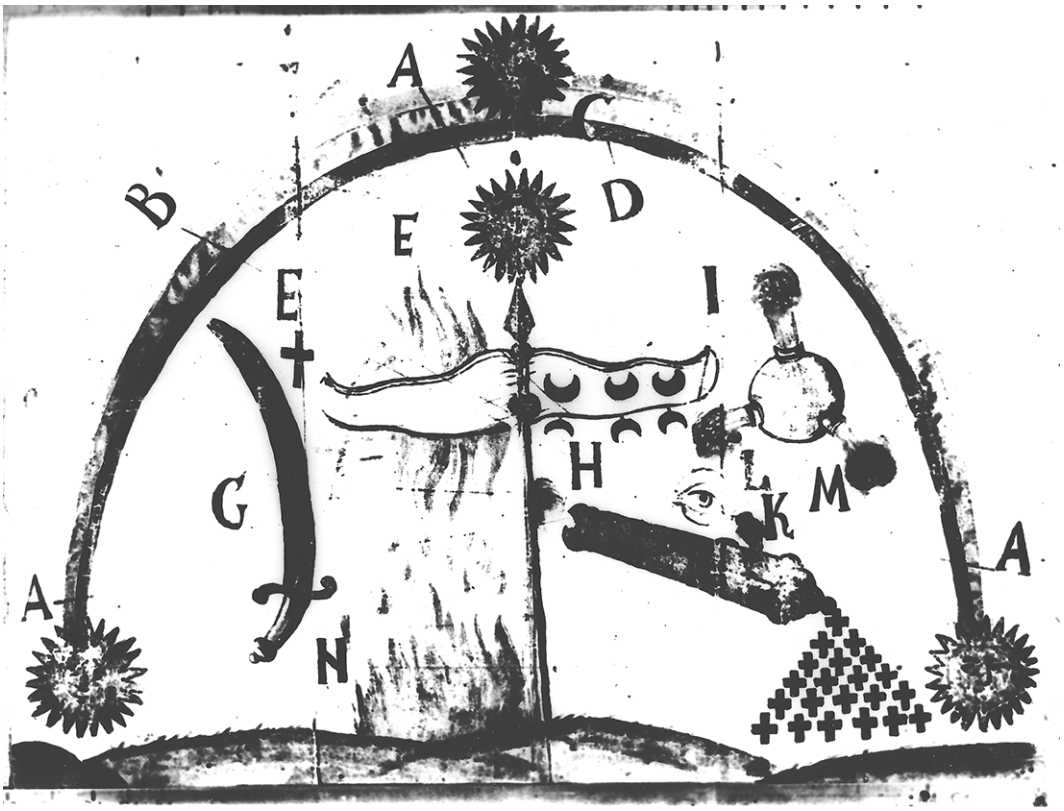

FIG. 20.6. The signs in the heavens over Košice in 1672 (RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fol. 3).

subsequent years outside the chancery environment. The manuscript was filed in the archive along with the other curiosities we have discussed: the drawing of the Egyptian hieroglyphs and the depiction of the odd bugs that appeared in the snowstorm over Hungary. The report consists of a picture of the wondrous signs and four sheets in scroll format which had been attached to the bottom of it (FIGS. 20.6, 20.7).[125] Even if the ultimate source for the material may have been a foreign separate, as with the image of the bugs in the snow, what we have is a copy of the picture, and the accompanying text is a copy made in a Russian chancery.

The drawing shows three silvery suns, connected by a rainbow (painted with red, green, blue and yellow), a fourth sun, a cannon shooting at a scimitar, next to the scimitar a cross, a cannon ball ejecting fire in three directions, a pike with a military pennant on which are six crescents (three turned upward, three hanging down), an all-seeing eye, a triangular grouping of 21 crosses, and a fiery pillar. The fourth sun apparently contains a crescent and two crosses. The various elements in the picture are designated by Latin letters. The text has a header: 'This sign appeared in the air in the Hungarian land above the city called Kasha on 15 October 1672 and [was seen] by all until 15 November, day and night for four weeks.' Below the header is the indication (using Cyrillic phonetic

125. The archival file is RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fols. 3–7. For details about the manuscript and citation of earlier studies, see Waugh 2022a: 395–396 n. 22.

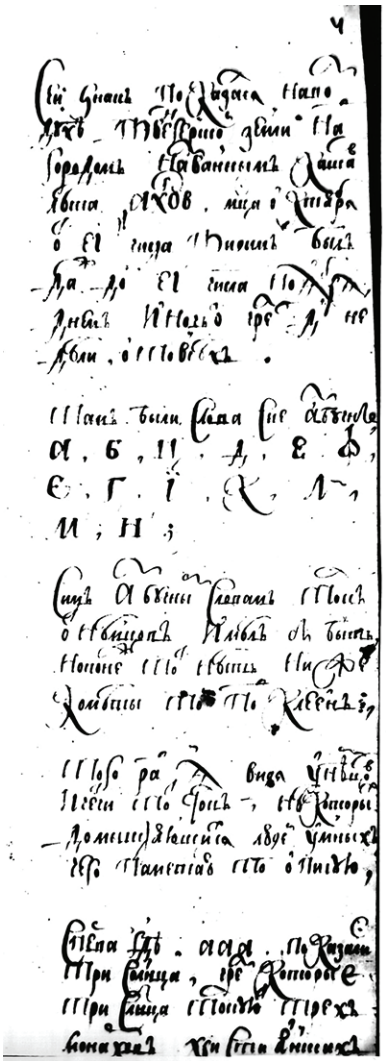

FIG. 20.7. The first page of the explanatory text attached to the picture of the signs in 1672 (RGADA, f. 27, op. 1, No. 312, fol. 4).

transliteration for the Latin letters): 'There were these alphabet letters (*slova azbuchnye*): А, Б, Ц, Д, Е, Ф, З (G?), Г, І, К, Л, М, Н.' Following this is a note: 'There should have been an interpretation by the foreigners (*ot nemtsev*) of these alphabet letters, but since there is none, below the comet was pasted this.' The rest of the text seems to be in the words of the person who wrote it down, starting with an explanation: 'Therefore seeing [the broadside] which the foreigners had, and reading its interpretation, I cite and describe what is wise from several thoughtful individuals.' At the end, we learn who recorded it: 'I have read and heard this, which in my opinion is good, but do not recall anything more. Varlaam Iasynsky, Rector of the Kievan brotherhood [school].'

A document preserved in the Ukrainian Affairs files tells us exactly how this image and its explanation came to be in the tsar's archive. In the crisis of the Turkish invasion of Ukraine, which had resulted in the capitulation of Kamianets Podilskyi in September 1672, the *voevoda* Prince Iurii Petrovich Trubetskoi had been sent to reinforce the Russian forces in Kiev and presumably to reassure the Cossack Hetman Ivan Samoilovich of Russian support in return for his pledge of loyalty to Moscow. On his way to Kiev, Trubetskoi met with Samoilovich at Sosnitsa on 29 January 1673 and some days later continued on to Kiev. In his report to Moscow on 12 February, Trubetskoi described the meeting (*AIuZR* 11: 129–130):

> The hetman told us [...] that in the Hungarian land there was a sign in the sky. And he gave us [... a drawing] on a sheet of paper, depicting what that sign was. And on that same sheet was an explanatory writing. And there were three sheets about news. And a Kievan officer had sent that explanatory sheet about the signs to him, the hetman [...] And we have sent to you, the great sovereign, with this report, the sheets which the hetman gave us, your servant, sealed in a packet to which is affixed the seal of your servant Iushka, and we have ordered that this be delivered in the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery to the *okol'nichii* Artamon Sergeevich Matveev, and the council secretaries Grigorii Bogdanov, Iakov Pozdyshev and Ivan Evstaf'ev.

A note at the end of the document says it was sent on 12 February with a horseman Miskha Osipov. Typically such reports from Ukraine would be dispatched with Cossack couriers. There is no indication when the dispatches would have reached Moscow, but

presumably no earlier than late February.[126] The specific mention of Matveev here is significant, as he was also head of the Ambassadorial Chancery and, in the last four years of Aleksei Mikhailovich's reign (1672–1676), the most powerful court official in Moscow. He had his finger on all of the news reports coming into the Kremlin from various sources. His interest in the West and its culture has been well documented; he was the impresario behind the organization of the first court theater.[127]

This evidence thus allows us to reconstruct the path of the file. In Kiev, the prominent cleric Varlaam Iasynsky, the head of the important Kievan Academy who later would become the Orthodox Metropolitan for Russian Ukraine, was shown what we assume was a broadside with an engraving of the heavenly signs identified by letters, which were keyed to an explanatory caption.[128] Since Iasynsky was not given the original, he had a copy made of the picture and then wrote an explanation, based on what he could read on the original and learn from those who had shown it to him.[129] Very likely his explanatory text was copied (possibly translated, as Iasynsky might have written in Polish or Latin) in the office of the Russian military commandant in Kiev and attached to the drawing.[130] This manuscript is what a Kievan officer (*polkovnik*) delivered to Samoilovich. Sending the prophetic signs to Samoilovich would have made sense in the context of the Turkish threat, as a way to encourage the hetman in his support for the Orthodox cause. Samoilovich in his turn was happy to give the material to Trubetskoi in order to encourage the Russians to seek effective alliances and send more aid. Of course, one of his goals was to solidify his position as the loyal leader of the Cossacks.

The interpretive text explains what each element of the image means: the three suns are the three Christian monarchs – the rulers of Muscovy, the Holy Roman Empire, and the King of Poland-Lithuania – allied, as symbolized by the connecting rainbow, against the threatening Muslim Ottomans, represented by the fourth sun containing a crescent

126. We have found no evidence for the speculation by Philip Longworth (1984: 211, 276 n. 23; this written prior to the publication of Waugh 1985) that the tsar and his counsellors might have received and discussed the prognostication, "which had been brought post-haste to Moscow at this time" in a meeting on 13 Dec. 1672. While another copy of the depiction of the signs *might* have arrived through the more direct channels to the West, this is not the one which the tsar kept with Iasynsky's interpretation attached.

127. For an extended treatment of Matveev's career, see Chistiakova and Rogozhin 1989: 146–179. His involvement in the establishment of the theater is treated most authoritatively in Jensen et al. 2021.

128. For Iasynsky's biography and writings, see Ponyrko 1992.

129. Rykov and Shamin (2008) plausibly emphasize that the explanatory text may not be Iasynsky's translation of a written original but rather his summary of what he was told about the meaning of the image by his informants.

130. The long series of documents published from the Ukrainian Affairs files for this period includes copies made in the chancery of the *voevoda* in Kiev, Grigorii Afanas'evich Kozlovskii, from letters and other documents given to him by some of the prominent Orthodox clerics (see, for example, *AIuZR* 11: 60–65, No. 25). In other words, he kept the originals he had been given for his own records, rather than send them on to Moscow. Conceivably the original broadside had been obtained by the *voevoda*'s chancery – that is, it had not first come into the hands of Iasynsky – and the cleric, who was broadly educated and knew languages, was called on to write an explanation.

moon aligned against crosses. The remaining images symbolize aspects of the military confrontation which will lead to Christian victory over the Turk.

Whether there had in fact been some kind of atmospheric wonder over Košice in autumn 1672 seems impossible to document and, of course, a parhelion was not the kind of 'natural wonder' that would have been continuously visible over many days. The city was important as the capital of 'Upper Hungary', historically in the region contested between the Habsburgs and Ottomans. At the time of the alleged sighting, it was ostensibly under Habsburg control. Rebellious local magnates had been encouraging Turkish military incursions in support of their battle for independence.[131] It is difficult to pinpoint any specific event in the politically fraught situation there which would have inspired invention of such a portentous celestial apparition. We have no copy of whatever the original captioning for the image might have been, but it is reasonable to hypothesize that Iasynsky and his informants devised an interpretation that made the picture directly relevant to their area of Eastern Europe. From the viewpoint of Poland, Ukraine, and Muscovy, this was a timely bit of propaganda which appeared at the moment when the Turks had launched a major offensive in Eastern Europe, were enjoying substantial military success, and efforts were being made to create an alliance to defeat them. There is no evidence to tell us what the tsar's reaction (if any) may have been to seeing the depiction of the signs and the interpretation, emphasizing how such an alliance would defeat the Turks. Well prior to receiving that prognostication, he had dispatched embassies to Europe to try to build just such a coalition. However, nothing would come of his initiative.

Iurii Rykov and Stepan Shamin (2008) plausibly suggest that some version of the account about the signs may have come from abroad to Novgorod – where there was obvious interest in celestial phenomena. Of considerable interest is their discovery of a previously unknown image and text from the *kuranty* files, which certainly has to be based on a report about the same celestial wonder (ibid.: 300–302, 306–307). The image has elements that *could* have been borrowed from the source for the depiction we have in the Privy Chancery but is much simpler: the rainbow has been transformed into a crescent moon with a human face that looks down at a heraldic shield on which are two crosses under a crown.[132] Otherwise, only a scimitar and a pyramidal array of 20 crosses

131. Várkonyi 2002: 338–342 (http://mek.oszk.hu/03400/03407/html/242.html).

132. Some years earlier, the newspapers had reported a sighting of a crown and rainbow-like arc in mid-day in the Netherlands in May 1665. It was recorded in a Dutch separate and in an issue of the Königsberg newspaper which was translated in Moscow. See V-K VI/1: 127, No. 23.67; V-K VI/2: 272–274. Analogous to the heraldic shield in the drawing which Rykov and Shamin published is the coat of arms of Danzig – a crown over two crosses, arranged vertically. Conceivably the source for the Russian drawing in the *kuranty* files of 1672 was a print from Danzig, although the added symbolism suggesting a threat from the Turks (the saber) and the balancing Christian response (the crosses) would make little sense for that northern city. We have not located any such publication. Stepan Shamin has proposed (e-mail of 1 August 2021) the possibility that an artist in Moscow who had in hand the presumed Western source mistook a perhaps poorly preserved depiction of the Hungarian coat of arms (it has a double-barred cross, not two separate ones) for the arms of Danzig. It is also possible that the Moscow drawing was created *de novo*, to illustrate a text that had no such image. The Russian artist could have

are all that recalls the image in the Privy Chancery file. The text is unlike that attributed to Iasynsky, which might best be characterized as an extended caption keyed to the picture. This newly discovered *kuranty* text starts by citing Aristotle, whose views about heavenly phenomena and the atmosphere began to be displaced only with the invention of the telescope and the emergence of the new scientific observations of the skies in early modern Europe. What we have in this text from the *kuranty* is a rather turgid learned discourse about the cosmic significance of a natural wonder. This is analogous to the way in which the initial objective description of the insect deluge seems to have quickly given way to astrological and religious prognostication in the popular tracts.

Although there is no direct evidence about the tsar's interest in the vivid image of the wonder-signs which he preserved in his Privy Chancery, there is other material to document his interest in prophetic interpretations, in some cases relating to reports about miracles and heavenly phenomena.[133] We have already discussed his attention to the Christmas comet of late 1664. Among the many materials described in the current inventory of the Privy Chancery is a short manuscript: 'A Prophecy of Leo the Wise and Patriarch Methodius about Tsargrad', dated 1641.[134] The prophecy attributed to Byzantine Emperor Leo VI (the Wise) and allegedly inscribed on the grave of Constantine the Great became popular in seventeenth-century Muscovy, in a version interpreted to mean that the liberators of the Byzantine capital from the Ottomans would be the Russians. One version of this prophecy came from a translation made in 1641 from the Greek chronicle of Pseudo-Dorotheos. Another prophecy, attributed to Bishop Methodius of Patara and later popular for its prediction of the Russian liberation of the Orthodox from Turkish rule, had been known much earlier in Russia.[135] Both of these prophetic texts were quoted in a booklet written in Venice by Gerasimos Vlachos and given to the Russian ambassador Ivan Chemodanov in 1656 to bring back to Moscow and present to the tsar

seen a copy of the image sent from Kiev and incorporated some elements from it.

133. See note 3 above for files about reported miracles, which may have concerned the tsar primarily as evidence of popular beliefs, not necessarily shared by him but needing to be suppressed by the state and the Orthodox Church.

134. RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 52, No. 523.

135. Sobolevskii 1903: 361–364; for a discussion of these prophecies, contextualizing them with reference to the larger body of Muscovite *turcica*, see Waugh 1972: 284–295, 438–440 (the text of the prophecy of Leo the Wise on pp. 706–710). Many publications which we need not list here contain material about these texts (see the citations in *SKKDR*, accessible via the indexes in Vyp. 4). For a discussion and publication of the booklet by Vlachos, see Waugh 1979a. The inscription on the grave of Constantine was published in European pamphlets, e.g.: *Neue Relation, Eines Prognostici, Aus einigen verkürtzten Ziffern und Wörtern/ so auf dem Grabstein Constantini deß Käysers in der Stadt Constantinopoli gefunden/ gezogen/ und mit aller Treue aus dem Griechischen in das Italianische/ und folglich in das Teutsche Idioma, männiglich zu Lieb und Dienste übersetzt worden. In welchem Sonderlich dess Mahometischen Reichs Untergang prognosticiret ist*. N.p. [ca. 1685] (VD17 23:686640F). Another edition (VD17 3:304396B) says "Vormals in Venedig gedruckt" ('previously printed in Venice'), which means that the anonymous German pamphlet was a pirated version of one from Venice. Vlachos might well have seen such a pamphlet when he was composing his own text to send to Moscow.

and patriarch in the hope of eliciting Russian support for the Venetian war against the Ottomans over Crete.[136] The Prophecy of Leo the Wise was translated several times in late Muscovy. Arsenii Sukhanov, sent on an important mission to the Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire, translated the text from Pseudo-Dorotheos in 1649; a visiting Orthodox cleric, the Metropolitan of Nazareth Gavriil, translated the prophecy when visiting Moscow in 1651. The prophecies of Methodius and Leo the Wise were among the texts cited in one of the more interesting works of what we can term Muscovite *turcica*, the 'Tale about the Astrologer Mustaeddin', translated from Polish in the 1670s.[137] Under Peter the Great, there were at least two more translations of the Prophecy of Leo the Wise, probably a response to his taking of Azov from the Turks, with the anticipation that the Ottomans would be defeated completely. Among the dozens of manuscript copies of the several translations are some which group the prophecy with other items of Muscovite *turcica*. The illustrated account about the wondrous signs over Košice has a manuscript history that demonstrates how materials intended in the first instance for the tsar and a limited circle of his close advisers in fact reached a wider audience. Analysis of this evidence is instructive for what it reveals about the methodological interpretive challenges which must be addressed if we are to be able to learn about readership of the 'news' in late Muscovy.

There are several manuscript versions of the account about the wondrous signs of 1672 which can be traced back to the text attested in the manuscript kept in the tsar's Privy Chancery (Waugh 1985). Presumably someone with access to the archival manuscript copied it, and that copy in turn probably was the source for additional copies. The likely circumstance in which this would have happened was when the Privy Chancery files were being inventoried and redistributed in the first years after the death of Aleksei Mikhailovich (1676). The most common way in which copies of short texts such as this one would have been preserved outside of the chancery environment was to collect them into larger miscellanies which require careful codicological analysis to determine their provenance, ownership, and date. The proximity of a text to other works (the 'convoy') in a florilegium may suggest what the particular thematic interests of the compiler or copyist were.[138] Unfortunately, in too many cases this kind of evidence is ambiguous, and we must fall back on hypothesis.

Most of the dozen manuscripts containing variants of our text apparently date to the late seventeenth or very early eighteenth century, that is, primarily in the period when

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136. Patriarch Nikon does seem to have been interested in astrological prognostication. One of the files in the Privy Chancery has been described in the inventory as a 'Prognostication according to the planets with prophecies and beliefs for each day of the month (from the papers about Patriarch Nikon's removal from the Patriarchal Throne)'; RGADA, f. 27, *Opis'* 1, fol. 55, No. 550.

137. The text of the tale has now been published several times; see Nikolaev 2008: 58–60; Malek 1970 (the still basic study); and Kagan 1998.

138. For additional comments on the methodological issues involved here, see our Sec. 21.1.

Russia was at war against the Ottomans.[139] The handwriting and the selection of works in some of the manuscripts suggest that they were produced in the chancery milieu or at least by a scribe who was employed in the chanceries. The most vivid example is MS RNB, Collection of the Russian Archaeological Society No. 43, in which the convoy for our text about the celestial signs includes a number of other translations either from newspaper sources or from pamphlets.[140] There are several of the apocryphal exchanges between the sultan and various addressees;[141] an account of the coronation of Polish King Michał Wiśniowiecki in 1669;[142] accounts about the Polish royal funerals in 1676 and the coronation of King Jan Sobieski; a short tale about a count who turned into a dog; a version of the 'two *startsy*' prophetic text that was translated more than once in Muscovy;[143] translations, apparently from the *kuranty*, about a miraculous occurrence in Germany and events in the war in Ukraine against the Turks; a separate translation from a German pamphlet with a prophecy of Polish misfortunes in part at the hands of the Turks. The latest date in any of this material is 1680; it seems very likely the copies

139. What follows here is based on the summary treatment in Waugh 1985: 202–206, supplemented by Rykov and Shamin 2008. The challenges of learning about readership from examples in which a text has been copied into a larger florilegium can be seen in several of the manuscripts containing versions of the 1672 text. For example, the large compendium that contains, inter alia, historical texts such as the Book of Royal Degrees (*Stepennaia kniga*) and excerpts from the seventeenth-century *Novyi letopisets* (RGB, f. 256, Rumiantsev Collection No. 413) has inscriptions stating that in 1689 an icon painter bought it from a sacristan of the Chudov Monastery in Moscow, then in 1696 sold it to one Vasilii Iakovlev of the Tagan Quarter in Moscow, who a year later sold it to another sacristan, Andrei Ivanov. But we cannot be certain whether these inscriptions pertain only to the part of the manuscript with the *Stepennaia kniga* or encompass as well the other parts with the text of interest here. Among them is an excerpt from one of the very popular Western almanacs published by Johann Voigt, the text containing a tale about Mohammed. For the contents of this manuscript, see Vostokov 1842: 637–643, which has been supplemented by a *de visu* examination (Waugh 1972: 801–802). RGB, f. 256, Rumiantsev No. 364 (described by Vostokov 1842: 524–527; Waugh 1972: 799–800) contains inscriptions in several places, indicating that parts were copied in 1699 and 1700. The manuscript most closely related to this one (RGADA, f. 181, No. 20/25) apparently was copied in the second half of the 1690s. It is of interest because it includes translations from Latin of presumably genuine letters the Ottoman sultan and the grand vizir sent to Tsar Fedor Alekseevich in 1681, albeit not in the same gathering as the account about the heavenly signs in 1672. For its description, see Shakhmatov 1904: 1–7; Waugh 1972: 815–816.

140. The fullest description of this manuscript is in Waugh's appendix to Keenan 1972: 132–135, with references to possible sources and to citations in Sobolevskii 1903. This copy's text of the celestial signs of 1672 is transcribed in Waugh 1972: 730–731, Appendix VIIj, followed on pp. 731–739 by the adjoining texts of the other translations. For more on this manuscript, see below, pp. 814–817.

141. The publication of these texts by M. D. Kagan (1957, 1958a, 1958b) in some cases is based in the first instance on the copies in this manuscript. For their analysis, see Waugh 1978 and a summary discussion in our Sec. 21.3.

142. Publication of the archival original of this translation is in V-K VI/1: 396–399, No. 68.322–331, with the German source for the translation and commentary in V-K VI/2: 391–397. Shamin (2020a: 344–345) publishes the copy from MS 43.

143. The most comprehensive study of these texts is Shamin 2008; 2020a, Ch. 4. See also our discussion in Sec. 21.2. Shamin (2021) brings to bear new evidence from the *kuranty* files regarding the account about the count who turned into a dog and discusses both MS 43 and other manuscript copies of that curious text.

and their compilation date soon afterwards. The context to explain the interest could be the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, the ongoing negotiations with Poland-Lithuania that resulted in the 'Permanent Peace' of 1686, or the preparation for the campaigns against the Crimea led by Prince Vasilii Golitsyn in 1687 and 1689. Other manuscripts with our wonder-tale likewise contain accounts about miraculous events or prophetic texts. The 'Turkish theme' is common to many of the works.

Two manuscripts with the text about the wondrous sign contain as well depictions of it and other significant evidence regarding dissemination of the material outside of the chanceries. One – MS No. 707, a collection of largely 'secular' texts – apparently came together in its present form at the very end of the seventeenth century and possibly was owned by members of the princely Troekurov family.[144] The text and depiction of the 1672 signs follows a copy of the prognostication by Leo the Wise which specifies that it was connected with the belief that Moscow was the 'Third Rome', i.e., the successor to Byzantium. Copies of the sultan's apocryphal correspondence follow the text about the celestial signs in 1672. The artist who depicted the signs surely must have seen either the archival original from the Privy Chancery or a copy made from it. There are no identifying Latin letters on the picture; however, a caption refering to them now opens the explanatory text.

Another depiction of the celestial signs has only recently become known, in a remarkable illustrated collection of short texts about awe-inspiring heavenly signs, compiled in Tobol'sk toward the middle of the eighteenth century.[145] The compiler and artist of this work pulled together and illustrated what is probably the most comprehensive collection of such material to be found in the Russian manuscript tradition. The entries comprise eclipses, comets, meteors, and parhelia, with texts drawn from a range of sources, most of which still need to be identified. Many of the illustrations undoubtedly were produced by the artist in Siberia on the basis of the often brief descriptions of the texts – that is, they are not copies from other illustrations of the same texts. However, in the case of the celestial signs of 1672, the illustration surely must have been based on one very like that in the Privy Chancery files, or possibly a copy of it which had been used by the artist of MS No. 707.[146]

144. MS RGB, Muzeinoe sobranie No. 707. For a full description of its contents, see Kudriavtsev 1961: 24–28, which should be supplemented by the *de visu* observations in Waugh 1978: 258–259.

145. Collis 2017: esp. 255–258; see above, notes 45, 46, 100. The manuscript, Tobol'sk Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve (TIAMZ), No. 11570, first came to the attention of V. I. Malyshev in the 1940s and subsequently was described with some quotation of its texts by Zhavoronkov (1961: 495–499), who argues that its compilation might be associated with the circle of the accomplished cartographer and historian of Siberia, Semen Remezov. Collection of some of the materials might have begun when A. F. Naryshkin was the military governor in Tobol'sk in the late 1690s.

146. Among the differences between the Tobol'sk image and that in the Privy Chancery files are the depiction in the former of a cannon-ball shooting in four, not in three directions, the drawing of crosses as specifically Orthodox ones with two horizontal and one angled cross piece, the addition of what probably is to be understood as a Russian military banner (with the Cross of St. Andrew), and in the lower right quadrant, a fortress with people peering out of windows at the wonder-sign. Instead of

The text which accompanies the Tobol'sk drawing is a distinct, shortened version of the one attributed to Iasynsky and is known in other copies.[147] Rykov and Shamin have hypothesized that the short text may well be one obtained independently of the Iasynsky version (the Kievan hierarch in fact is not mentioned in it) and possibly via the acquisition of foreign news in Novgorod. A Novgorod connection certainly is possible, judging from the manuscript history of this short version of the text. However, given the fact that this text accompanies an illustration most likely based on the picture in the Privy Chancery, for want of other evidence, arguably what we have is merely a condensation from the Privy Chancery original.[148] This short version of the original then could have spread thanks to the interest of late Novgorod chroniclers.

The history of this short text about the wonder-signs of 1672 is of interest in part because of another miracle-tale which moves in convoy with it and likewise has a 'Turkish' theme. The work describes what must have been a violent series of thunderstorms in Istanbul in 1652, during which lightning struck and burned the sultan's palace. In the telling, the lightning becomes a fiery dragon that stuck its head in a window of the place and breathed fire, which then destroyed the metal objects in the sultan's treasury.[149]

showing a pillar of fire, the Tobol'sk manuscript has a bonfire, above which either are sparks or birds in flight. These additions would be in keeping with the artistic conventions which are evident in the other miniatures of the Tobol'sk manuscript. The saber in the Tobol'sk image is a curved cutlass (as in the Privy Chancery image), whereas in MS No. 707, it is a straight sword. Both the Tobol'sk image and that in MS No. 707 show holes in the saber created by cannon fire. The Privy Chancery picture appears to lack such holes, though Iasynsky mentioned as a kind of afterthought that cannon-shot had pierced the saber. The MS No. 707 and Tobol'sk pictures are illustrated in Waugh 2022a: 406–407.

147. Among the manuscripts containing this redaction of the text are BAN 16.9.2, RNB F.IV.672, and IRLI, f. 265, op. 3, No. 249, which were the basis for the critical text published by Rykov and Shamin 2008: 302–306. MS BAN 16.9.2 clearly has a Novgorod connection, since it contains some excerpts from Novgorod chronicles. There is evidence that an owner of the so-called Novgorod *khronograf* (GIM, Zabelin No. 261) knew of the text about the celestial signs of 1672. See the publication of its text in Tikhomirov 1979: 319, where the note that mentions the 1672 signs is an addition in an eighteenth-century hand. Whoever added the note indicated that there was a translation from German which explained the meaning of the celestial wonder. This note presumably tells us little about the seventeenth-century history of the text and its transmission. The Novgorod *khronograf* does contain the account about the dragon-like fire that burned the Sultan's palace in 1652. The compiler of that *khronograf*, possibly a functionary of the archbishop's court, obviously had an interest in the miraculous, as he included a description of several healings that were attributed to a miracle-working icon in 1634 (ibid.: 278–280).

148. It is possible that the Tobol'sk illustration could have derived from a copy of the Privy Chancery image that was made when the files remaining from it were inventoried in 1713, rather than during the redistribution of materials soon after Aleksei Mikhailovich's death. However, the short version of the explanatory text, which is the one found in the Tobol'sk *khronograf*, undoubtedly had been created earlier.

149. The text was published somewhat imperfectly by Sobolevskii (1903: 387–388) from MS RNB Q.XVII.213; for a more precise version, see Waugh 1972: 673–674, Appendix VIIc, with variants from MS RNB Pogodin No. 1405 (appended to the Kholmogory Chronicle), a copy published separately in *PSRL* 33: 147. Tikhomirov (1979: 293) published the copy in GIM, Zabelin No. 261, the so-called Novgorod *khronograf*. Other copies of the text are in BAN 16.9.2 (fols. 5v–6), RNB Pogodin 1411 (fols. 279v–280; the so-called Novgorod Pogodin Chronicle, the full version of the first redaction), and the Tobol'sk *khronograf* (Tobol'sk Museum, No. 11570). The Tobol'sk copy is accompanied by two pic-

The text included a report from Tabriz about a thunderstorm and a miraculous vision of Christ enthroned that appeared in the clouds over the city. One other very short text seems to have been part of the original document, an account about how Russian captives, ransomed in Istanbul, were returning home but were attacked by ravens.[150] The core of the text, about the destruction of the sultan's palace, would seem to be based on a possible western source. A version is known in a pamphlet printed in 1542, but so far no publication from around 1652 has been found.[151] The text mentions explicitly that the account about the events in Istanbul was sent to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in a letter, presumably from an Orthodox cleric or other informant.[152]

The account could have originated as one of the oral Christian tales about miraculous events involving the sultan that had a polemical anti-Turkish thrust.[153] Several short tales in another late Muscovite manuscript, with dates ranging from 1665 to 1675/76, are in a similar vein, concluding with the prediction that the Ottoman Empire would be conquered by the Russians in 1682/83.[154] As with the account from 1652, these texts could have been sent to Moscow in a letter from Istanbul, at a time when the Russians or their allies were actively engaged in war against the Turks and Tatars in Ukraine. An inscription on the manuscript says it was owned by a certain Kiril Iarasimov syn Lukin in Bystrokursk *volost'* in the region of Archangel in February 1680. The same Kiril seems to have been a copyist of at least part of the manuscript, in which are various historical literary texts, among them – drawn from the *Khronograf* of 1617 – the tale (attributed to Ivan Peresvetov) about the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople.

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tures, which we have not seen. Since no other illustrated versions of the tale are known, very likely they were created by the Tobol'sk artist on the basis of what he read in the text.

150. Even though not all the copies include the final sentence about the ransomed captives, one copy does indicate specifically that it was part of a single text, based on a letter sent to the tsar.

151. *Newe zeytung von Constantinopoli. Von einem Comet der biß in die 40. tag am hymel ober des Türcken pallast gestanden ist. Von einem fewren Tracken/ der dem grossen Türcken seinen schatz verprent vnd verderbt/ vnd das new schloß verprent hat. Von donnern/ winden/ hagel/ vnd schaur/ vn[d] was schaden sie gethon habē* [...] *Von der grossen Summa hewschrecken die alles das in weitten biß in die 20. Welschmeyl verderbt haben.* N.p., n.d. (VD16 ZV 26041, specifying this is a publication by Hans Kohl in Regensburg, 1542), fols. [1ᵛ]–[2].

152. The text ostensibly was in a letter to the tsar from the Orthodox ruler of a land (Askaia or Azkaia), located in the Balkans between the Serbs and Constantinople. Whether we are to imagine the author was a local Greek notable or might hypothesize that the work emanated from the Greek community in the Ottoman capital is uncertain. The indication of its provenance may have been a literary device.

153. See, for example, the discussion in Waugh 1972: 263–275. A possible catalyst for exhuming the 1652 tale could have been sensational reports on a thunderstorm and lightning strike, which caused fire that destroyed a Turkish-held city – its identity is a puzzle – in January 1672: *Warhafftige Newe Zeitung/ von dem Herlichen und erschrecklichen Feüers-Brunst/ In der Türckey/ in einer großmächtigen Stadt/ auff Türcks genant Brutauckusz/ auff Teütsch Liep-Stadt: da der liebe Gott mit grosser Sturm-Wind/ Donner und Blitzen hat geschlagen* [...] *geschehen in diesem 1672. Jahr/ im Januarii* [...] N.p., 1672 (VD17 7:704842Z). For examples from the period of the Turkish wars of the 1680s and 1690s, see Shamin 2020a: 75–77.

154. For a discussion and transcription of the texts in MS BAN 1.4.1, see Waugh 1972: 277–280, 675–677. A description of the manuscript is in Kopanev et al. 1965: 205–208.

Manuscript BAN 16.9.2, which has Novgorod connections, contains both the short version of the account about celestial signs in 1672, a copy of the description of the events in Istanbul in 1652, and the depiction of the Moscow parhelion of 1683.[155] Immediately after the text about the 1672 signs is another composition of interest, containing chronicle-like entries that associate the appearance of celestial signs with events from 139/138 BCE and through to practically the beginning of the Common Era.[156] While the sentence which prefaces this list refers to Chapter 59 of the *Gesta Romanorum* (in its Russian translation, the *Rimskie deianiia*), in fact the entries which follow seem not to have been derived from that popular translated text but rather resemble what one would expect in a prognostication tract about the relationship between heavenly phenomena and affairs on earth. The entries include a reference to the eruption of Mt. Etna, a severe hailstorm, and earthquakes, but also several fantastic descriptions of monstrous births: a three-legged child, a two-headed child, a five-legged cock, sheep with hooves of a horse and heads like monkeys', a woman giving birth to an elephant, and another to a serpent. In the popular prints in Europe, depictions and descriptions of monstrous births were common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Reports of such events were infrequent in the newspapers but occasionally appeared in *kuranty* translations, the more likely sources being pamphlets (Shamin 2011a: 229–230).

These entries in the manuscript read rather like a humorous parody of similar chronologies that were common to the prognostications and are found in some of the almanacs of the period which were beginning to circulate amongst the elite in late Muscovy. The manuscript dates from a period when increasingly in Russia there are such parodies of familiar genres (there is even one example of blatantly absurd humorous *kuranty*).[157] Thus the text in MS 16.9.2 may be a rare example of such a parody, based on its author's familiarity with the astrological interpretation of celestial signs. For the author, clearly such predictions were at best taken with a grain of salt. Inscriptions suggest that the

155. For a description of the manuscript, see Bubnov et al. 1971: 60–62. The watermark evidence does not allow for precise dating, but the section of interest, fols. 1–11, is on paper with various foolscaps, most likely paper of the seventeenth century. Since fol. 12, where a new paper and handwriting begin, is very dirty, we may assume the text from a translated Cosmography which begins there was preserved separately from the initial sheets. However, Cyrillic foliation begins on fol. 5 and continues through fol. 210, suggesting that the parts were probably brought together by the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The chronicle-like entries discussed here are on fols. 7–8, with the captioned image of the parhelion seen over Moscow on a sheet attached to fol. 8. On fol. 3 is a note indicating that an undersecretary Semen Den'zhakov listened to a decree in November 1727, and later in the manuscript is an ownership note by Iakov Borisovich Den'zhakov.

156. The text is published as an appendix in Waugh 2022a: 414.

157. See Shamin 2020a: 216–219. There is at least one manuscript of the humorous 'kuranty' which seems to date from the seventeenth century, although the few other copies of this text are eighteenth-century ones. See Malek 2004, who publishes the text of that copy. For an analysis of its poetics in the context of other satirical texts of the period, see Trakhtenberg 2008: 259–261. Here are a couple of examples of the text (Malek 2004: 429): 'From Copenhagen. The Copenhagen round tower at this time will marry […]'; 'From London. In London the stall tenders (*markitanty*) have killed a cow and found in it two galiots and two boats, on which sit people, all of them alive, and their wares all rotted.'

manuscript belonged to a family of petty bureaucrats in the early eighteenth century, though there is no indication when they might have obtained it.

20.5. Conclusion: between the old and the new

These examples, which illustrate the Russian interest in natural and paranormal wonders in the broader context of the European response to such phenomena, underscore that 'traditional' providential views in the seventeenth century had not yet been supplanted by 'modern rationality'. As the recent work by historians of science has emphasized, there is good reason to hesitate before characterizing the advances in science in early modern Europe as a 'revolution'. Those advances, important as they were, were only beginning to trickle into Russia, where there were neither the intellectual traditions nor the institutional structures to absorb and promote them. Yet, despite those limitations, there is evidence that – alarming as some cosmic events might have been – observations recorded about them might be confined to objective description, without any overlay of providential interpretation. Given how limited the information is about who produced, copied, and read or listened to reports about the wondrous events, any generalization about what this evidence may tell us about possibly changing world views is fraught. This was still an age of faith or superstition, in which most people at some level were concerned about salvation and possible Divine judgment. Natural disasters involving crop failure, famine, and pandemics, compounded by the destruction of almost continuous warfare, were endemic. So it is no surprise that even a man as practical and rational as Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, who also was deeply religious, would be interested in what a natural wonder might portend. Functionaries in church administration, presumably devoutly Orthodox, even if not clerics, might record natural wonders without comment at the same time that they believed in the efficacy of wonder-working icons. Our next chapter will explore further what we can learn about 'readers of the news', their possible interests, and the degree to which there was significant cultural change in Russia by the end of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER 21

News Sensations and Their Muscovite Readers

Studies of the dramatic changes in the communication of news in early modern Europe – in particular, the emergence of regularly published newspapers – understandably have given much attention to readership. In his book on the *kuranty*, Stepan Shamin devotes considerable space to the 'readers' of the foreign news, even though, wisely, he usually encloses the word in quotation marks, implying that 'readers' and 'readership' may be problematic terms in dealing with this material.[1] His concrete examples are distressingly few. Indeed, in the absence of published newspapers in Muscovy, and given the government's belief that foreign news (or for that matter, other kinds of 'news') should be restricted in its dissemination, the situation in early modern Russia is quite different from that in the West prior to the eighteenth century. Questions about readership have been addressed in earlier chapters, especially the previous one (Ch. 20). In order to extend and deepen that discussion, we will now examine other important examples. What in fact can be learned about readership in a society where formal literacy was limited and the dissemination of the written word in printed form was confined largely to religious texts, with other genres and content to be found only in manuscripts? It will be apparent that only some partial answers can be obtained, given the nature of our sources.

21.1. Opaque evidence: texts related especially to contemporary religious concerns

The previous chapter discussed at some length the evidence from Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery, the argument being that texts kept there may or may not tell us about reader *numero uno*, the tsar himself. In some cases, the best evidence for readership comes from the infrequent instances where some text known once to have been

1. Shamin 2011a (esp. Ch. 5), which incorporates most of his earlier article, Shamin 2007; Shamin 2020a, Ch. 16.

in the Privy Chancery 'escaped' into wider, if limited circulation after the tsar died.[2] We make certain assumptions about readership of the *kuranty* on the basis of the fact that so many manuscripts were initially kept in the Privy Chancery, ostensibly attesting to the personal interest of the tsar. There is ample evidence that such news was regularly read to him and his close advisers, though how they responded to that reading is difficult to establish. Much of the news translated for the *kuranty* had an explicitly political focus; it is easy to see how such information at least *could* have had a bearing on current government policy. Thus it is possible to identify as 'readers' at least a small circle of the governing elite, who had the 'need to know' and access to the material. It is striking that some news translations included either the entire texts of some very long treaties or extensive summaries from them. When more than one copy of a given foreign source made it to Moscow, we have the occasional notations by the translators that they had compared the texts and determined that there was no need to produce a second translation.

What to make of texts that arguably had no explicit bearing on political decisions and diplomacy is more challenging. Some of them might have been of particular interest because of their potential connection with contemporary religious concerns. Because of the extent and content of their translations, let us first look at two extraordinary examples in order to test our assumptions about readership. The tempting and easy hypothesis is that they were translated for the tsar by those who knew of his particular interests. Yet the matter may not be so simple. Although in neither case is there a shred of evidence that the texts circulated outside the walls of the chanceries, arguably these works occupy an important place in the catalogue of Muscovite translated literature.

21.1.1. The healing waters of the 'Lutheran Lourdes'

In early March 1646, so the story went, a schoolboy in the village of Hornhausen (not far from Magdeburg) discovered a spring with greenish water that was determined to have healing properties.[3] The news quickly spread, more springs were discovered, and the village, which had experienced the devastation of the Thirty Years War, quickly grew into a large city as a popular pilgrimage site. Somewhat over a year after their first discovery, the springs dried up, and this 'Lutheran Lourdes' (as Hartmut Kühne has called it) faded into oblivion. At the peak of its fame, it drew thousands, including members of the European political elite; numerous publications, some of them illustrated broadsides, appeared. The more detailed ones listed more than 400 instances of healings that were experienced by those who took the waters. This was truly a news sensation at the time.

2. For methodological considerations involved in analyzing readership from the evidence of manuscript florilegia, see our Sec. 1.6 and the examples in Sec. 20.4.

3. The source for most of what follows is the seminal article Maier 2017b on the Russian translated texts about Hornhausen, although some additional interpretive hypotheses are offered. The author has examined all the western sources, compared them with the *kuranty* translations, and analyzed the linguistic evidence. The text of the German pamphlet listing more than 200 cures is appended and interlined with the Russian translation for easy comparison. For the German side of the story, see Kühne 2023.

What was presumably a single packet containing some of the publications about Hornhausen (and possibly a handwritten account) arrived in Moscow and was translated largely in its entirety, probably in November 1646.[4] The evidence pointing to the most likely provenance of the material is indirect but very suggestive to show that the acquisition and translation of the material was somewhat of a chance occurrence. There is no evidence to suggest that knowledge of the wonders reported from Hornhausen stimulated an effort in Moscow to learn more about them for the benefit of the tsar and his inner circle of policy makers. On 30 August 1646 (presumably O.S., the calendar then used in Sweden), Christian Shimmeliar wrote three letters to Moscow from Stockholm.[5] The addressees were Peter Marselis, Vul'f Iakovlev, and Peter Krusebjörn. Shimmeliar had previously been employed as a secretary for Peter Marselis, the Danish entrepreneur, who, as we have discussed in Ch. 11, played an active role in the events that brought Prince Waldemar to Moscow for the negotiations regarding his possible marriage to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich's daughter. Marselis became one of the most important foreign merchants in Moscow, with a broad network of agents, and was employed by the tsar for special missions, even though in the early 1640s he was also working for the Danish crown. We know that Shimmeliar had been in Moscow with Marselis and had accompanied him on a special commission by the tsar to Denmark in 1642 to explore the possibilities about the royal marriage.

Since Marselis was back and forth to Moscow and was part of Waldemar's entourage, Shimmeliar would have had ample occasion to interact with Muscovite officials, among whom undoubtedly was one of the long-term translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery, Wolf Jacob Wyborch (in Russian, Vul'f Iakovlev Viberkh/Viberg).[6] Wyborch, captured from the Swedes during the battles in the closing years of the Time of Troubles, had refused to return to Sweden. He was then employed by the Russians as a translator for Swedish, Danish, German and Latin, participated in several embassies abroad, and was involved in receptions and negotiations when foreign missions were in Moscow. Apparently on one of those missions abroad he first made the acquaintance of Shimmeliar.

Shimmeliar's purpose in writing from Stockholm seems to have been to solicit favor and possible employment. The letters to Marselis and Wyborch concern mainly personal matters. The letter to Wyborch suggests that the two had in fact developed a close friend-

4. The texts are in V-K III, Nos. 48, 49, another copy in App. Nos. 8 and 9. The division of the texts into two separate packets by the editors is artificial, since they follow consecutively without a break in the manuscript copies (Maier 2017b: 10).

5. The letters have been published as V-K III, Nos. 50–52 and App. Nos. 10–12. Two of them specify they were written on 30 August; the third (addressed to the Swedish agent Peter Krusebjörn) lacks that date. However, all three letters are found on consecutive manuscript pages, which suggests they should be treated as having been in a single packet. The header to one of the letters says it was received and translated in November, but with no indication of the day.

6. The most comprehensive summary of his career with references to the archival sources is in Beliakov et al.: 79–81.

ship; even if not specifically asking for favors, Shimmeliar must have hoped Wyborch could do something for him in Moscow.[7] Very likely all three letters were sent in a single packet addressed to Wyborch: at one point in his letter to the Swedish resident, Peter Krusebjörn, Shimmeliar mentions that additional information can be obtained from the letter sent to Wyborch.

Shimmeliar had obviously had some kind of falling out with Marselis, was no longer in his employ, and had a grievance with him about not having received payment for services. Yet he still seemed willing to provide commercial intelligence. The fiscal situation for Shimmeliar in Stockholm was precarious, where he was finding it difficult to obtain any employment, since he was seriously ill with some malady that made it difficult for him to move around.[8] Like Laurentius Grelle (the pseudonymous Justus Filimonatus whom we have discussed in Ch. 11), what he could offer, so he emphasized, was good contacts with officials in the Swedish government, the implication being that he was in a position to act as an intelligencer. Although apparently he had not been hired as a news agent for Krusebjörn, his letter to the Swedish resident was a perfect sample of what he could offer, since much of it was devoted to a broad overview of reports relating Sweden and other areas of Europe. His news summary mentioned the fact that members of prominent families were visiting Hornhausen for the cures there. One individual who had gone to the health spa was Melchior Beckmann, the same Melchior Beckmann who had offered his services to the Muscovite government earlier as an agent. Shimmeliar's reference to Hornhausen may well have been to provide some context for his personal lament about his own health. As he told Krusebjörn, he was hoping for some largess from the Chancellor (Axel Oxenstierna), since otherwise at the minute he was unemployed ('ia eshche zhivu bez ukazu'). Furthermore, he was dealing with some kind of denunciation that had been made against him. While Shimmeliar did not say as much, perhaps he hoped the Swedish resident would put in a good word for him. None of these letters mention enclosing any publications or other information about Hornhausen. So it is only by inference, since he mentioned the spa to Krusebjörn, that we conclude he sent such copies in his letter packet. Given the problems Shimmeliar was having with his legs, he well could have had a particular interest in the reports out of Hornhausen.

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7. Shimmeliar mentions that their acquaintance had been made during an embassy. One possibility, which still would need to be confirmed from the unpublished diplomatic files, is the Russian mission headed by Prince Grigorii Gavrilovich Pushkin to Sweden in 1646, which arrived in Stockholm on 15 May and returned to Moscow on 10 August (see Bantysh-Kamenskii, 4: 164). However, there is as yet no information on who accompanied it as a translator. Had Shimmeliar and Wyborch met then, of course there might have been no need to write the letters relatively soon after the embassy had departed. Conversely, such a meeting could have been the inspiration to write at the end of August. We assume that Shimmeliar may have corresponded on other occasions with his Moscow acquaintances.

8. His description of the malady for Krusebjörn, which affected his ability to walk, is: 'a skorb' moia na goleni kotoruiu ia eshche tiazhko strazhu i to mne mnogo pomeshalo chto ia sebe sam posobit' i za delom khodit' ne mogu potomu chto zdes' nadobe dolgo i ezheden' khoditi' (V-K III: 145, No. 51.168). In writing to Marselis, he says simply 'nogi khudy' ('my legs are bad'; ibid.: 147, No. 52.175).

Among those who obtained cures there were individuals who had lost the use of or had other problems with their legs.

There is good reason to suspect that Shimmeliar's letters and any enclosures he sent were not deliberately submitted to the Ambassadorial Chancery but rather had been intercepted and opened, even if they did eventually make it to their addressees. The Muscovite translators generally were careful to specify if a letter or newspaper had been voluntarily handed over and by whom. In June and again at the end of August, Krusebjörn sent to the chancery newspapers he had received (V-K III, Nos. 22, 45). But the headers for all three of the translations of Shimmeliar's letters merely name the writer and the recipients. The letters written on 30 August arrived in the chancery some time in November. As we have documented in some detail, this was precisely the period when there seems to have been a substantial effort on the part of the Muscovite government to intercept and open foreigners' mail, possibly in part as a response to the events surrounding the failed marriage negotiation with the Danes.[9] Peter Marselis' correspondence certainly was being intercepted and read; presumably any of his current or former associates would have drawn official scrutiny. Of course it is also possible that Wyborch would voluntarily have turned over to the government material sent to him personally or would simply have treated it as another batch of incoming intelligence that he would translate as part of his job. Unfortunately, we do not know whether he was the one who translated the Hornhausen material. However, we might suppose that he produced the translation simply out of personal interest, not because of any expectation that the material would have been deemed of relevance for the tsar. We do, after all, have evidence that at least one of his colleagues in Moscow in the same period was translating books that may or may not have been officially assigned to him (see Jansson and Waugh 2023).

Apart from the presumed personal interest in the Hornhausen material on the part of Wyborch, what was there about the wonderworking waters of the German spa that could attracted the attention of others in Moscow, among them the young Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich? Any news reports invoking the names and correspondence written by prominent Swedish officers would be deemed relevant to Muscovite foreign policy. Indeed, the translated texts included correspondence of Field Marshal Lennart Torstensson about Hornhausen, which he had visited, presumably to seek a cure for his debilitating gout. The officials in Moscow were always interested in tracking the movements of European elites, especially those involved in military or diplomatic affairs. How and where such individuals conducted themselves in public spaces was important to know in a culture which was concerned about prestige and honor. Yet to emphasize this begs the question of why there would have been an interest in the long lists (more than two hundred examples) of the sick people, most of them from the lower echelons of society, who went to Hornhausen and were cured of their various ailments. As we have noted in our Sec.

9. Waugh 2023a; see also Sec. 12.3 above.

20.1.3, there was definitely a concern at the tsar's court about illness and medical treatments, where presumably any information about possible cures might have attracted attention.

Another explanation may lie in the religious and miraculous aspects of the Hornhausen tales. The contentious and drawn-out affair of the Danish Prince Waldemar's visit and the negotiation about the possible royal marriage involved an important segment of the Moscow elite (Golubtsov 1891). There were extended debates (conducted in private quarters) about his Lutheranism and whether he should have to convert to Orthodoxy. Opinions on the matter were sharply divided, and when the Church won the argument, one of the most prominent defenders of the idea that conversion was not necessary, Prince Simeon Shakhovskoi, was sentenced to exile in Siberia. Marselis and Wyborch certainly would have been well aware of this history, since in one way or another they were directly involved in the negotiations.

Apart from the Waldemar affair, in the Russian context, as already has been noted (Maier 2017b), there are many parallels to the catalog of the cures at Hornhausen to be found in the lists of miracles that were appended to saints' vitae and in accounts about miracle-working icons. Indeed, precisely in the middle of the seventeenth century, we find examples of how new redactions of earlier such tales were adding long tabulations of the miraculous cures, experienced by those who prayed to the saint or the icon. Such was the case with the new redaction of the vita of St. Sergius of Radonezh, composed by Simon Azar'in in the 1640s (Belobrova and Klitina 1998: 380). Another example is the account about the miracle-working icon of St. Nicholas 'Velikoretskii', which had been co-opted into the national pantheon and whose extended redaction apparently dates to the late 1640s (Waugh 2004: 263–265). Several new saints' cults emerged, reflections of popular piety and the efforts by local churchmen to promote them. The proliferation of such cults and the expanded versions of the miracles attributed to them became a matter of concern on the part of the central church authorities in the 1640s, who undertook to verify their authenticity or else prevent them from further dissemination. Such undertakings reflected the increasing effort on the part of the Orthodox Church to consolidate and control expressions of popular piety, a concern that would be intensified after the church Schism. It is such concerns which help us to understand why the news about the appearance of the 'false messiah', Shabbatai Zvi, in the middle of the 1660s was never disseminated beyond the walls of the chanceries.

21.1.2. 'The Blowing of the Messiah's Trumpet': the news about Shabbatai Zvi

On 31 May 1665, a rabbi Shabbatai Zvi, who had already acquired a reputation for unorthodox conduct, proclaimed himself the new messiah in Gaza.[10] The spread of mes-

10. Much of what follows here is drawn from Maier and Waugh 2010, an overview of the Shabbatean movement and the way it was reported. The interpretation of why the news about Shabbatai was of interest in Moscow has been revised. Important among the earlier scholarly publications are: the substantial, if in some ways controversial treatment of the movement by Gershom Scholem 1973; the

sianic fever was due largely to his self-appointed prophet, a charismatic young rabbi Nathan Ashkenazi, who reinterpreted kabbalistic sources to proclaim the need for repentance in anticipation of the imminent coming of the new Kingdom on Earth. The earliest reports about a movement among the Jews paid less attention to Shabbatai and Nathan than to fantastic rumors about the movement of the Lost Tribes of Israel and their capture of the Muslim Holy Cities.[11] Only during late autumn 1665 did the focus shift to Shabbatai. He left Palestine and traveled via Aleppo to Smyrna, where in December prophetic frenzy developed. He then left for Constantinople; there, it was believed, he would confront the sultan and bring an end to Ottoman rule. When he arrived in the Dardanelles in January, the Turkish authorities promptly arrested him. Nonetheless, the Shabbatean movement grew and peaked during winter 1666. By late summer, the Turkish authorities had had enough. They summoned Shabbatai to Adrianople, where the sultan was in residence, and presented him with an ultimatum: apostatize (i.e., convert to Islam) or die. Shabbatai chose life.

During the height of interest in Shabbatai, news about real or imagined events spread remarkably widely and rapidly in the Mediterranean world, the Middle East and Europe. Newspaper coverage of the Jewish unrest and the false messiah was considerable. The sizeable Jewish population and the importance of Jewish merchants in Holland and in Hamburg helps to explain why those centers were key nodes for the distribution of the reports out of the Ottoman Empire. Particularly impressive is the fact that between late 1665 and early 1667 the sober and highly regarded *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* published some 39 articles with information on the events. The Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung* had at least nine such articles. The sensation of Shabbatai's claim and the widespread public interest were the catalyst for publication of many separates, including broadsides with often fanciful and lurid texts and illustrations. News about Shabbatai naturally was of interest not only to Jews but also to Christians, since there was widespread belief that 1666 would see the Second Coming of Christ and the apocalyptic Final Judgment. One of the most prominent Dutch chiliasts, Petrus Serrarius, maintained close relations with the Jewish community in Amsterdam and engaged actively in disseminating news about Shabbatai.

The establishment of the new international postal connection via Riga – which was up and running by the time the Shabbatai story was attracting so much attention – explains how it was possible for the translators to have followed the news that closely, although, of itself, tells nothing about why the news would have attracted attention in Moscow. Between mid-January and mid-July 1666, some two dozen translations of

first publication of the Russian texts, Waugh 1979b; the identification of the pamphlet originals for the Russian translations, in Maier and Pilger 2003b, Maier 2008a, Maier and Schumacher 2009; and the now authoritative publication of the Russian translations in V-K VI/1, with commentaries and analysis in V-K VI/2 (summarized in Secs. 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 of the introductory essay written by Maier). Wijk (1999) surveys the reporting about Shabbatai in the Dutch press.

11. For broadsides illustrated with images of massed armies marching behind Shabbatai's prophet Nathan, see VD17 23:675049K and VD17 1:620634K.

the news (many short communications, but also longer pamphlets) were made for the *kuranty*. Key sources were the Haarlem paper, which was already being received on a regular basis, and publications from the printshop of David Friedrich Rhete in Danzig. That Daniel Brandes in Danzig apparently was on the Russian payroll as an intelligencer may explain how Danzig pamphlets made their way to Moscow. Rhete published at least eight concerning the Shabbetean movement (Maier 2008a); three of them, including a bilingual one in German and Polish, were obtained in Moscow. Unlike the newspapers, the separates would not have been part of any regular subscription. They could have been sent simply as curiosities relating to the latest news sensation or might have been selected, based on some prior knowledge of possible interest in their content in Moscow. None of this news would have been really current by the time it reached Moscow, given the circuitous route it took from Istanbul or Smyrna, via Livorno or Venice, Amsterdam, Hamburg or Danzig, and Riga, before being forwarded to Moscow. As a minimum transit time would have been close to three months.

One of the broadsides – devoted to the supposed capture of Mecca by rebels (an event not connected directly with Shabbatai) and including prophecies about the fall of the Ottoman Empire – had been turned in at the Ambassadorial Chancery by the Hamburg merchant Ivan Plius, who on some other occasions also submitted news reports. That this account was largely fiction could not likely have been known; simply for its prognostication it would have attracted interest, opening as it did with a reference to the most recent comet, whose direction pointed ominously toward the Ottoman Empire. Another of the translations included a specific list of the wondrous relics the new 'messiah' was displaying: Adam's fig leaf, a piece of Adam and Eve's apple, Moses' cradle, Goliath's spear, a fragment of the Babylonian idol of Bel, Joseph's coat, etc. A vividly illustrated broadside translated in Moscow depicted the various tortures supposedly inflicted on Shabbatai by the Turks (FIG. 21.1). In other words, apart from some apparently sober reportage about Shabbatai's progress with his prophet Nathan Levi that brought him from Gaza to Istanbul, there was a huge amount of fantasy which might have made for entertaining *divertessment,* even if a reader did not believe in the claims that this was the new messiah and that the Day of Judgment was at hand.

The accounts about Jewish unrest and Shabbetai could have been of interest in Moscow for several reasons. Any news involving the Ottoman Empire and its stability was important for the making of Muscovite foreign policy. Whatever the degree of fantasy in the reports, they made it clear enough that the Shabbataen movement had produced social unrest, and that the Ottoman government thus had taken it seriously enough to put an end to the nonsense. Once Shabbatai decided to save his neck by converting, news coverage quickly faded, even though something of a Shabbataen movement continued. One of the practical concerns that might explain the interest in the news was the impact of Jewish unrest on Dutch commerce, since reports suggested many of the wealthy Jews were closing up shop and packing to go meet their new messiah. As we have already

FIG. 21.1. *Verwunderlicher Anfang und schmählicher Außgang. Des unlängst Neuentstandenen Juden Propheten Nathan Levi/ und des von Ihme creirten Neuerwehlten Königs/ oder Jüdischen Messiae/ Sabezae* [...] N.p., 1666.

seen, international trade was one of the significant concerns of the Russian government in the 1660s.

Perhaps more important for the Muscovite government was the fact that this news of the imminent Apocalypse had appeared at precisely the time when in Moscow many were expecting the Day of Judgment, an expectation heightened in the context of the Schism within the Orthodox Church (on the 'apocalyptic year' 1666, see Oparina 2003). Even if inclined to find such eschatological prognostication suspect, the tsar and the Church had an interest in monitoring reports that might stimulate belief in the Second Coming and trying to tamp down such manifestations of popular piety. This would be a

good reason to make sure the reports about Shabbatai never left the walls of the chanceries. That the tsar had an interest in such matters is evident from his interrogation of Dr. Engelhardt regarding the comet less than a year before the first accounts about the Jewish unrest had begun to reach Moscow. Significantly, Engelhardt's responses included Dutch chiliastic views, which emphasized that a reunification of the Jews would usher in the new era.

Plausible as such explanations are, they are all hypotheses. So also is another one, which merits some consideration. We have already suggested that the personal interests of the Muscovite translators may have played a role in the decisions about what to translate, irrespective of whether the resulting texts might have been deemed important to keep the tsar informed. Certainly there is reason to suspect that Andrei Vinius had a significant role in the acquisition of the Shabbatai material and in the decisions which resulted in so much of it being translated. Vinius, after all, was most likely the translator of all the selections from the Haarlem newspaper, and he was in a position where he could have influenced the decisions about translating items from the German papers, even if he was not the translator who processed them. The impact of the Shabbataen movement on the Netherlands clearly was substantial and like the Anglo-Dutch war was a subject that would have been of interest for Vinius to follow. Apart from possible 'secular' concerns over the impact on the Dutch economy (a topic of importance for his Moscow contacts in the foreign community), Vinius may have been particularly attracted to the news about Shabbatai because of his personal religious convictions. If Collis (2012) is right, he shared some of the beliefs of the chiliasts. In this regard, it may be significant that Vinius would acquire one of the most important histories of Shabbatai, written by Thomas Coenen, the Protestant minister to the Dutch community in Smyrna and based at least in part on interviews with the followers of the self-proclaimed messiah. Coenen's book in Dutch was printed in Amsterdam in 1669.[12]

In the same year Coenen's appeared, another book on Shabbatai and his movement was published in Kiev and sent to Moscow. This was a virulent anti-Jewish polemic, *Messiia pravdivyi* ('The True Messiah'), by the Ukrainian Orthodox cleric Ioannikii Galiatovs'kyi, written in Ukrainian when he was resident in Lviv.[13] When there he must have had an opportunity to obtain three of Rhete's Danzig publications about Shabbatai, which he then partially quoted. Galiatovs'kyi, who returned to East-Bank Ukraine to head an important monastery in Chernihiv, became known for his polemics against the non-Orthodox, including Muslims, Roman Catholics, and Uniates (Waugh 1979–1980). There is good reason to assume that he had witnessed first-hand the agitation amongst Polish Jews and the Shabbataen movement as a real threat to Orthodoxy. The focus of his text, written as a dialog between a Christian and a Jew, was a defense of Trinitarian

12. *Ydele verwachtinge der Joden Getoont in den Persoon van Sabethai Levi* [...] Amsterdam: van den Bergh, 1669, listed in Savel'eva 2008: 72.

13. On Galiatovs'kyi's book, see Waugh 1979–1980: 301–305, and – correcting his discussion of possible pamphlet sources – Maier and Pilger 2003 and Maier 2008a.

doctrine and belief in the divinity of the one true Messiah, Jesus Christ. Hoping to obtain financial support from Moscow, he sent several copies of the book to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1669, having inserted in them a dedication to the tsar which was not in the copies circulated in Ukraine. When he visited Moscow in the following year, Galiatovs'kyi took along additional copies and presented them to the tsar and his sons. Aleksei Mikhailovich then agreed to subsidize publication of Polish and Latin editions. A Polish one was printed in Kiev; Galiatovs'kyi sent copies to Moscow in 1672 with a plea for funds to support his monastery in Chernihiv (*AIuZR* 11: 5–9, No. 3). The planned Latin edition apparently never was published. Galiatovs'kyi obviously had good reason to think the tsar would welcome such an anti-Jewish polemic, given the support Moscow had provided for the Khmelnytsky uprising and largely successful efforts to drive the Jews out of Eastern Ukraine. However, by the time the tsar first received the Ukrainian cleric's book, the Shabbataen movement was already history. So it is risky to extrapolate from the story of this book anything about the tsar's interest in news about Shabbatai in 1666. It would be necessary to inventory copies of the book scattered in various collections to determine to what extent knowledge of the Shabbataen movement may have spread in Russia. At very least, Galiatovs'kyi's book reminds us about the importance of the 'Ukrainian connection' in the transmission of news and polemical pamphlets which were published in northern Europe. By no means all such material which made it to Moscow arrived there via the Riga or Vilna post.

In short, as with the Hornhausen translations, there are several plausible explanations for who would have been particularly interested in the material about Shabbatai Zvi. To the degree that it became more widely known in Russia, Galiatovs'kyi's book, not the *kuranty* translations, would have been responsible.

21.2. Prophets and their prophecies

The interest in the paranormal and prognostication, which we have already examined with reference to reports about celestial phenomena and events such as the dramatic appearance of an individual claiming to be the new messiah, is evident as well in a number of reports about mendicants who appeared in out-of-the-way places in Europe, accounts which often were accompanied by specific chronologies of untoward events that could be expected over the next years. In many cases the texts were translations which undoubtedly had been made in the Ambassadorial Chancery. However, some of them may have been obtained through other channels. Manuscript copies attesting to their dissemination beyond the walls of the chanceries reveal quite a bit about who owned them and offer some evidence about what the owners might have made of these ephemera. These are among the 'readers of the news', about whom Stepan Shamin has written.[14]

Shamin has published extensively on these texts about the appearance of 'holy men' (*startsy*, probably the equivalent of Russian *iurodivye*), mendicants who prophesized

14. Shamin 2001, 2002b; Shamin and Bogdanov 2003; Shamin 2011a: 210–234.

apocalyptic events. Like the apocryphal letters (to be discussed in Sec. 21.3), such accounts appeared repeatedly in European news reports over a long period, the iterations varying in length and in detail, even if the core narratives were similar. The locations varied, as did some of their prophecies; an effort seems to have been made in each case to redate the expected calamities ahead of time the men appeared, to make the story 'relevant'. At least six different versions of this 'Tale of the two elders' became known in Muscovy.[15] The earliest of them arrived in 1620 in a German newspaper, a report from Marburg which apparently is a truncated summary of a longer text which prophesied impending war and disaster at the onset of the Thirty Years War. The translation seems never to have been copied and disseminated, which is not surprising, given the limited numbers of the early *kuranty* translations and the fact that few of them seem to have escaped the chanceries.

The next information about a version of the text having become known in Muscovy comes not from the *kuranty* and diplomatic files but rather from a long and complicated legal investigation in the early 1640s. The Russian government in the seventeenth century was diligent in apprehending individuals whom it deemed threatened the established order. Some of them harbored wrong religious ideas; others were possibly engaged in black magic or the like. The persecution of 'witches' in Europe in the same period is analogous, where often those being condemned had been denounced to the authorities by others, who had some unrelated grievance against them. The suppression of uncontrolled manifestations of 'popular' religious belief became especially severe with the advent of the church schism in the 1650s. Investigations sometimes turned up information on what books or texts the offenders owned.

In the course of such an investigation in 1642–1643, initiated by a denunciation that pointed to a possible plot to bewitch and kill the tsar's wife, a musketeer (*strelets*) Grishka Kazanets was apprehended and interrogated.[16] It turned out he had in his home a fragment of a translation from some foreign newssheet containing two reports of paranormal events. One was a somewhat garbled account about a procession of the Habsburg emperor, during which an emblematic eagle atop his crown fell off, causing the viewers to see it as a portent. The second report contained a variant of the *startsy* text, in which a prophet in Calabria predicted the coming of the Messiah. The family also owned another short text, a version of 'The Dream of the Virgin', recounting a dream that had

15. See Shamin 2008 for textual comparisons of the various versions, which he also publishes as an appendix. See also Shamin 2011a, Ch. 5; 2020a, Ch. 4, for some additional material and a discussion of 'readership' of these texts. Our discussion here offers some different interpretations of the evidence.

16. For a summary, see Shamin 2011a: 283–285, relying on the full publication of the complex and drawn-out investigation in Kotkov et al. 1968: 254–277. The interrogation report, filed in the Military Appointments Chancery archive, quotes in its entirety the translated text (ibid.: 271); no other copies are known. The account about the interrogation had been published previously by Zertsalov 1895, the text of the prognostication on p. 30. Mariia Pliukhanova (2022) has recently examined this incident, focusing on the key text as an example of millenarian literature that made it to Russia. She connects the account of the Calabrian prophet with activity of Tommaso Campanella in 1599.

come to Jesus' mother Mary. This was perhaps the most popular of many apocryphal texts used in Russia as amulets that were believed to have apotropaic power (Ryan 1999: 298–300). The investigators confiscated not only the papers but also a rather extensive collection of odds and ends including seashells, a range of medicinal herbs and some artifacts deemed to have magical or healing properties, among them what was termed a *gromovaia strela* (lit. 'thunder arrow'), likely a piece of a meteorite.[17] Kazanets and his wife were interrogated separately. She testified he had brought home most of the objects in the collection, the various herbs acquired in Astrakhan, Kazan and other locations. She claimed not to know why he had kept them. As far as she knew, the translated text had been given him by a stranger when Kazanets was on a pilgrimage to the Solovki Monastery, with the instruction that the musketeer give it to someone in Moscow. However, he had simply tossed it in the chest containing the other items. She was the one who had kept the text about Mary's dream, the copy made by one of their sons who was connected with the Musketeer Chancery, since she believed it was effective against seizures. In his own deposition, at some length Kazanets explained that he had acquired the medicinal remedies when he had fallen ill (probably dysentery) during service in Putivl along the southern defense lines of Muscovy. During his service there he had made the acquaintance of the main defendant in the case, another musketeer. Kazanets' pilgrimage to Solovki ('k solovetskim chiudotvortsom molittsa') was to seek a cure for his illness; while in the north, he obtained other remedies. The text about Mary's dream had been given him by a Cossack in Russian service, and Kazanets carried it on his person believing it could protect him from being killed. He insisted he had not read it but simply kept it, and then, when home and his wife took ill, had laid it on her and it helped effect a cure.

Kazanets claimed that the paper about paranormal events in Europe had been given him by an undersecretary (*pod'iachii*) of the Military Appointments Chancery (*Razriadnyi prikaz*) to use for wadding in loading his gun, but, on reading the text, he had been amazed by it. The investigators then deposed the undersecretary in question, Fedor Semenov, who confirmed the story – it was basically torn waste paper that had been on the floor under his desk, and he had received it in a report from Pskov that was still in the chancery archive. Even though in the eyes of the authorities there might have been reason to suspect Kazanets of having evil inclinations, he seems to have escaped punishment, as the main defendant's accusations against him were determined (after several torture sessions) to have been false.

The interest of the case lies, first of all, in what we learn about the ways written texts might spread and the functions they served. The local authorities in Pskov, on the route to the West, were involved in keeping track of foreign news and, as appropriate, sending it on to Moscow. The text Kazanets acquired, or at least that one copy of it, had been discarded. So when he obtained the paper, the text was incidental to his real purpose, which was to be able to load his musket properly. It seems neither he nor the undersecretary

17. On the stone, which might be used as an amulet, see Ryan 1999: 223–224.

had an inkling that what was written on it might be of any interest. Yet Kazanets was curious and seems to have been literate enough to read it, after which he added it to his collection of items whose primary purpose was medicinal or apotropaic. His possession of the handwritten texts thus was less for any interest in their content as such but rather the materiality of the manuscripts – texts as amulets – which, like a magical stone, by their very contact could prevent evil or effect a cure.[18] There is nothing here to inform us whether Kazanets had eschatological beliefs that might have been reinforced by the text, although his willingness to undertake an arduous pilgrimage to the White Sea speaks of his religious devotion. The incident introduces the world of the musketeers, who later would be amongst the adherents of the Old Belief and, as such, became a threat to the established order. They were openly hostile to those whom they considered to be infected with wrong beliefs.

There is additional evidence about the 'news' interests of the *strel'tsy* and a Pskov connection in a manuscript that dates from about the same time as the Kazanets investigation. While this manuscript does not contain the *startsy* text, it is relevant to our consideration of the readers of news about paranormal events. The book, now in Copenhagen, is a large miscellany, comprising a group of earlier historical texts: the 'Tale of Two Embassies', in which is a letter of Ivan IV to the Turkish sultan; a short text about rather complex miraculous heavenly signs reported from Lüneburg; and a newsletter dated 20 April 1645, translated from German, that had been handed over to the military commander of Pskov, Aleksei Fedorovich Lykov, and his secretary, Grigorii Uglev, by the translator Matvei Veiger.[19] As we have seen in Ch. 11, Veiger was a key intermediary in the correspondence between the Swedish secretary in Riga, Laurentius Grelle, and the imposter count, Lev Shlakov, in Moscow. Veiger had received from a Dutch agent who worked in the local foreign factory in Pskov the brief newsletter, containing primarily information about impending Turkish attacks in the Mediterranean and a short description of an astronomical event that might have been a meteor and whose meaning God only knew. The text of the newsletter, originally written in German, is presumably Veiger's translation. In describing the Copenhagen manuscript, Aleksandr Bobrov emphasizes the importance of Pskov as a collecting point for foreign news that eventually appeared in the translated *kuranty* in the 1640s.

An inscription in the Copenhagen manuscript specifies that it had belonged to and probably was copied by one Demidka Voinov, who wrote a number of marginalia, suggesting he had a particular interest in information about the government's collection of taxes. In 1650, shortly after the presumed date of the manuscript, Voinov, a musketeer, was among the leaders of a major rebellion in Pskov, where one of the key concerns of the rebels was the government's fiscal policies. Voinov's manuscript then came into

18. Ryan (1999) devotes his Ch. 10 to such texts, including the 'Dream of the Virgin'.

19. The information here derives from Bobrov (1999), who provides a somewhat cryptic description of the manuscript and discusses the context and individuals associated with its creation. See also the brief summary (based on Bobrov's article) in Shamin 2011a: 285–286.

the hands of the Dokhturovs, probably having been confiscated when the rebellion was crushed. Its owner, Fedor Vasil'evich Dokhturov, may have been a nephew of the prominent official Gerasim Semenovich Dokhturov, who was involved in various diplomatic missions starting in the 1640s, headed the investigation into the 1650 uprising, and eventually rose to the rank of State Secretary (*dumnyi d'iak*) in the 1660s.

What Voinov and the young Dokhturov made of the short texts about paranormal events is impossible to know. To the degree that there are manuscript notations by its owners, they seem to suggest that the historical material in it about Russia was the primary concern. Dokhturov's inscription describes it as a *letopisets* ('chronicle'). The account about the heavenly signs reported from Lüneburg clearly was added in a blank space after the rest of the manuscript had been copied. Unlike the cryptic entry in the translated newsletter, it contains a rather elaborate, fanciful description of some strange human-like figures (one with a lion's head) that appeared on the moon, probably conjured up by eyewitnesses at the time of an eclipse. There is no indication of the source for this text, and the copyist left blank the date of the year when the event occurred. Whatever we are to make of these texts, the manuscript does offer a good example to illustrate one of the important channels by which translations of foreign news found their way into copies that circulated outside the immediate chancery environment.

Unfortunately, too often it is impossible to determine how a manuscript with a text of interest to us came into the hands of its owner. Such is the case with the manuscripts with copies of the next iteration of the *startsy* tale which circulated outside the archives. While Shamin has done much to explore the history of these texts, there is more to be learned, since he did not have in hand full copies of all of them. He is quite certain, though, that one copy of the translation is the fair version that was made in the Ambassadorial Chancery. It is written on a scroll in a typical chancery hand and filed among other documents from the chancery, even if no longer in their original institutional context.[20] Unfortunately, it is not dated. Textual variants make it difficult to be certain whether the other copies were made from that translation or whether they might be separate translations made from a foreign original (Shamin 2008: 225). There is some consistency amongst the copies in their prognostication of events to be expected from 1661 through 1670, which means that the text was deemed by those who translated or copied it to have some immediate relevance (Shamin 2020a: 100–102). A shortened version of the tale also is found in an original archival context, translated in 1661 among other news items from German sources.[21] It is part of a compendium of short notes about prophetic or miraculous events. Ivan Zheliabuzhskii, whom we have met previously, submitted that news text for translation; possibly he obtained it during his interactions with the Mayerberg embassy. The version translated for the *kuranty* differs from the fuller version, produced presumably from a pamphlet, even if a common source may underlie both.

20. GIM, f. 450 (sobr. E. V. Barsova), No. 83, fol. 91a-b. As Shamin (2008: 238 n. 8; 2020a: 92–93) notes, Barsov's publication of this text is not entirely accurate.

21. V-K VI/1: 98, No. 9.55–56. For details about this news packet, see above, pp. 654–655.

There is too little information yet to say much about one of the two non-archival copies of the longer translation made in the 1660s. The other copy is in fact the best known and contains important information about who owned the text.[22] The owner of the text (if not necessarily this exact copy of it) was one Isidor Kriuchkov, who was denounced as a possible schismatic and arrested in Kolomna, an important commercial center on the Volga, where some other residents seem also to have indulged in what was considered erroneous belief and conduct. Kriuchkov had come to the attention of the authorities for having 'dropped a handwritten quire (*tetrad'*) in the Kolomna vegetable market (*ovoshchnoi riad*), in which he predicted the end of the world in the year 1670.'[23] The text is the *startsy* tale, specific parts of which coincided with some of the Old Believer writings. On investigation, Kriuchkov further was accused of inscribing on church walls apocalyptic threats. The local priest who turned him in also wrote a denunciation of his views that accompanies the prophecy text in the manuscript. Unfortunately, there is nothing here to tell us how the *startsy* tale may have come into Kriuchkov's possession. He could easily have obtained it from a contact in Moscow. Conceivably the copy we have of the writings connected with the Kriuchkov incident was made only well after it took place. We might suppose that the original files of the investigation would have been kept in an appropriate chancery archive.

Around 1680, there was another occasion on which the *startsy* text appeared, one which seems to have prompted a search of the archives. The head of the Musketeer Chancery (starting in 1669), Larion Ivanov, was responsible for broad police functions, some of them relating to the persecution of the Old Believers. As Shamin (2011a: 291; 2020a: 104–108) writes, his name crops up in some of their works, and at the time of the musketeer uprising in 1682, in which Old Believer religious sentiments played a part, Ivanov was one of those who were summarily executed by the rebels. We know that he had access to the Ambassadorial Chancery files, including the translations of foreign news. Between 1676 and 1679, he was in charge of that chancery, where his responsibilities included reading aloud the *kuranty* to the tsar and boyars. A new packet of newspapers arrived in Moscow via the Vilna post in September 1680. In them was an article contain-

22. The first is RGB, Undol'skii Collection No. 611, dated loosely by Viktorov (1870: 45) to the middle of the seventeenth century but presumably more accurately by Shamin to the end of the century. The second is GPB, Pogodin Collection No. 1560; a detailed description of contents is in Bychkov 1882: 188–211, most of which is irrelevant for our understanding of the context for the text under discussion here, as codicological analysis of the manuscript reveals. Its current composition is the result of Pavel Stroev's having brought together into one binding in 1835 several separate manuscripts. Only one part can with any certainty be deemed relevant for the discussion of our text in its seventeenth-century context. Waugh (2003: 294) published the text from this copy but did not provide a full description of its manuscript, although he did examine it with attention to such data as the watermarks. The portion of the manuscript with the text once was part of a much larger manuscript, judging from preserved numbering of the folios. Its watermark, an Arms of Amsterdam with countermark GD, may be similar to ones so far documented from Muscovite books only for the 1680s.

23. Michels 1999: 193 provides a good summary of the incident and a partial translation of the text. Although he correctly suggests that it is based on a foreign source, his scenario for how Kriuchkov might have obtained it needs to be corrected, given the evidence adduced now by Shamin.

ing a version of the *startsy* text, with a prophecy about a sequence of events from the end of that year through the next decade that would culminate in the Second Coming and Final Judgment. On the arrival of this and its translation, Ivanov requisitioned its fair copy and had the chancery clerks search out related texts, including one with a prophecy supposed to have been found in Paris, in the royal burial chapel of St. Denis. This text too was handed over to Ivanov. At least one further text with an analogous prophecy turned up among the earlier *kuranty* files. A copy from it is now in MS 43, the miscellany discussed earlier, which also contains copies of the sultan's apocryphal letters and a translated text about the coronation of the Polish king. Ivanov's demonstrated interest in the apocalyptic prophecies and the access he had to the archives have led Shamin to conclude that the chancery head might have been responsible for the compendium in MS 43, its texts copied the archival originals.[24] We might take with a grain of salt the accusations by the rebellious musketeers that Ivanov and his son dabbled in sorcery. When they sacked Ivanov's house, the musketeers claimed to have found various repulsive things, among them possibly the remains of an octopus. Whether this tells us Ivanov had a particular interest in assembling a kind of *Wunderkammer* is uncertain, nor does that evidence (*pace* Shamin) necessarily support an argument that Ivanov's interest in the *startsy* text was a personal one, beyond what his official duties may have required of him in his investigations of Old Believers. However, he surely does have to be counted amongst the readers of the translated reports.

Manuscript copies of the *startsy* tale seem to have multiplied in the 1690s and early eighteenth century, altered to make it relevant for prophecy of what was imminent in the years ahead and in certain cases to transform the original into a polemic directed against Petrine reforms. A miscellany which was assembled in Khlynov by a well-educated local official Semen Popov contains one version of the text (dated 1693), with the earliest of the promised calamities to take place in 1707.[25] It is impossible to specify precisely the date of Popov's copy, though he places it in the chronological sequence of his texts somewhere around 1700. There is no reason to think he was an Old Believer or necessarily had a particular empathy for them; in fact another work he had copied was a polemic directed against them.

But the Old Believer interest in the text is evident in another of the most interesting manuscripts, one which came together in its current form no earlier than the end of the eighteenth century.[26] It contains three different versions of the report about the *startsy*. One of them, arguably in the youngest part of the manuscript, dates the report to 1695;

24. Shamin 2011a: 294 questions Waugh's suggestion that MS 43 is to be connected with Luk'ian Golosov.

25. Popov's copy has been published in Waugh 2003: 294–295; see his discussion on pp. 48–50, written prior to the appearance of Shamin's study which incorporates material from a range of additional manuscripts.

26. MS GIM, Uvarov No. 1949(627)(474), discussed and quoted by Shamin 2008, although with no attempt to provide a detailed codicological examination of the book. For its content description, see Leonid 1894, 4: 334–335. We have not examined that manuscript.

in that same gathering is a second version that dates its text to 1794 (!). Along with those two copies are short Orthodox texts that comment on comets and a copy of the prophecy reported from St. Denis in Paris, where the last of the projected events is 1764. A third, undated version of the *startsy* text in this manuscript is in the previous gathering, copied along with Old Believer texts, among them writings of Archpriest Avvakum. A separate manuscript from a monastic collection, possibly to be associated with the Old Believers, dates the *startsy* text 1694.[27] At very least, possibly because of the ongoing Turkish wars, the 1690s were a period when there was some interest in the tale. Shamin would seem to be correct that the basic account was done edited and rewritten within Russia. Its readers (whoever they were) constructively engaged with it.

21.3. *The Great Turkes Defiance*

As any survey of European newspapers and pamphlets reveals, throughout the seventeenth century there was an almost continuous barrage of reports relating to the Ottoman Empire. Military conflict along borders, major invasions and long-term sieges, and continual efforts to bring together coalitions of Christian states were always in the news. Interpretations of celestial phenomena and prognostications by wandering holy men invariably would reflect concerns about the Ottoman threat. Histories and descriptions of Ottoman institutions abounded, as did the publication of anti-Ottoman propaganda with fabricated tales of wonder or fictive documents. We have already seen this kind of evidence in our examination of foreign 'news' in Muscovy, and it is precisely in the realm of such *turcica* that we find one of the best examples about how the 'news' translations were disseminated to audiences beyond the closed circle of the court and the chancery officials. The texts in question contain what purports to be correspondence between the Ottoman sultan and various Christian rulers or groups. While there certainly are examples of published translations of genuine correspondence with the Turks and their Tatar allies, the letters which will be discussed here are fictive – apocrypha created as anti-Turkish propaganda.[28] The methodological issues raised by this material shed light

27. RGB, Collection of the Florishchev Hermitage No. 111, whose contents are described in Georgievskii 1896: 237–238. There is more eighteenth-century evidence about the interest in the text among the Old Believers; for citations see Shamin 2008.

28. The most thorough study of the sultan's apocryphal correspondence (with a focus on Muscovy) is Waugh 1978, who elaborated on the view by A. I. Sobolevskii that the texts which circulated in Muscovy were translations. The Soviet-era editor and analyst of what became the standard editions, Marianna Davidovna Kagan-Tarkovskaia, argued they probably were original Russian compositions, a position adopted by others who expressed scepticism about Waugh's views. However, she came to accept most of his conclusions; see her entries in *SKKDR*, vyp. 3, ch. 2: 221–231, for an overview with references. For a more recent summary, see Waugh 2016a. Discoveries in the archives and amongst early European imprints have turned up additional manuscripts, including the first copies of the translations, and identified precisely some of the European sources (confirming Waugh's hypotheses with some correctives, including more precise dates). See Waugh 2003: 100–101, 298–300; Maier 2006b; Maier and Shamin 2007; Shamin 2015; Poliakov 2018; Bazarova 2019a; Waugh 2019. Shamin's review of the literature and discussion of this new evidence is the best Russian summary contextualizing the interest in Moscow in such *turcica* (2020a, Ch. 6). Apart from his specific analysis of the apocry-

on important questions about what was actually 'news' in Muscovy and the degree to which it is possible to learn about the readers of news.

In modern parlance, the texts in question probably would be termed 'fake news'. Diplomatic analysis with reference to genuine exchanges between the sultan and various rulers demonstrates that texts of the correspondence under consideration here indeed are not genuine documents. While the Muscovite officials who were familiar with genuine diplomatic letters would have known the apocrypha for what they were, it certainly is possible that the translators charged with rapid Russianizing of incoming texts would not necessarily have recognized them as fakes. In any event, on practically every occasion when there was a revival of the letters in the context of war or threatened war against the Ottomans in the seventeenth century, the new editions of them were translated. Clearly these were propaganda pieces, intended to stir up anti-Ottoman or anti-Muslim sentiment. However, we might imagine that most consumers of the news in Christian Europe would have believed them to be genuine. Demanding submission, the sultan flaunts his titular claims to vast dominion, derides the ability of the Christian rulers and armies to defeat him, threatens to destroy their cities, desecrate their places of worship, rape their women and carry populations off into captivity. Not all of these letters are accompanied by a reply, but where such a response was included, it is the mirror image of the sultan's threats and is directed against the Ottomans and Islam.

An examination of the origins of these letters and their spread from the late fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries in Europe demonstrates that they were among the most common texts with a polemical (propagandistic) edge amid the hundreds and thousands of European publications with Turkish themes. The most frequent addressee of the letters is the Habsburg emperor, whose armies were on the front line of the defense of Christian Europe against the Turks. By the seventeenth century, confrontations in Eastern Europe were the stimulus for the sultan to threaten the king of Poland. The involvement of the Ukrainian Cossacks in the wars against the Turks and their Tatar allies eventually would produce further variants of the correspondence, which would be immortalized in the late nineteenth century by the artist Ilya Repin in his depiction of the raucous Cossacks as they penned their insulting reply to the Turks. Whether they actually wrote any such text in the seventeenth century is dubious.[29] Even those in Europe with no direct involvement in the Turkish wars found the letters to be of interest as a reflection of wide-spread hostility toward Islam or the real danger that the warfare might interdict profitable trade in the Mediterranean. Thus the letters appeared in vari-

phal letters, he offers an excellent overview of the range of other reports and translations relating to the long war against the Turks in the last decades of the seventeenth century (ibid.: 158–172). They included both real and fictive documents. The new book by Gus'kov et al. 2022 (Shamin is a co-author) on the Turkish war contains an important chapter about the acquisition and dissemination of news and propaganda.

29. On the Cossack correspondence, the most substantial study beyond Kagan's initial analysis and publication of the Russian texts is Waugh 1971, which has not always been taken into account in subsequent writing about the texts, given the relative obscurity of the publication.

ous translations – Latin, Italian, French, English, Polish, Czech, Ukrainian, German and Dutch – where each iteration might update the text to correspond to current political realities by changing the names in the correspondence, perhaps adding a dateline and including sometimes different information about the territories targeted by the threats or the destruction to be inflicted on them.

Before commenting in some detail, it is useful to tabulate the versions of the apocryphal correspondence known to us from manuscripts in Russia:[30]

TABLE 21.1. The Russian versions of the fictive correspondence of the sultan in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

content	date of letter or its translation	number of copies in Muscovy	remarks
Sultan to Polish king	1621	1 (early 20th-c. copy from now lost 'original' 17th-c. *kuranty* MS	Translated from Dutch newspaper; also known in a separate Dutch brochure.
Sultan to Polish king	1637	11 (ca. 1640s to 2nd half 18th c.)	Translation from German; direct source not yet identified.
Sultan to Polish king	1642	1	Translation of original brought from Poland on 20 Dec.[31]
Sultan to Polish King Jan Kazimierz	1653	1	Tr. from a Dutch newspaper.[32]
Sultan to Polish king	ca. 1660s?	1 (late 17th c.)	Mixed language (Polish, Ukrainian, Russian); presumably derived from a Polish version of the 1637 letter.
Sultan to Polish king and Habsburg emperor	probably from mid-17th c.	1 (late 17th c.)	A compilation from various sources, put in final form by ca. 1715.
Sultan to German rulers and all Christians	1663; tr. early 1664	4 (including archival 'original' of the translation)	Tr. from Dutch brochure; the oldest Russian MS copy is located among the *kuranty* files, along with other news translations from Jan. 1664.
Sultan to Habsburg Emperor Leopold and the emperor's reply	1663	19 (the earliest antedating 1687)	Presumed German original not yet identified.

30. The data are based on that in Waugh 1978, esp. 140–153, supplemented by Waugh 2003; Maier 2006a; Maier and Shamin 2007; Shamin 2020a; Poliakov 2018. Kagan (1958a, 1958b), whose work is still fundamental for her text editions and analysis, was unaware of copies in repositories outside of Russia. Her work antedated the publication of new information about some manuscripts found in Russian collections. Table 21.1 includes some versions of the letters published from manuscripts that either are no longer extant or have not been examined *de visu*.

31. See Shamin 2020a: 145–146. He published the text, preserved in the Polish Affairs files, on pp. 339–340. Its exact relationship in the genealogies for the transmission of the apocryphal letters remains to be established; however, some preliminary observations are in Waugh 2019: 165–166 n. 5.

32. The somewhat damaged text is published in V-K V: 79–80, No. 19.159–160; its source appears to have been the Amsterdam paper *ODC* 1652/52, published 24 Dec. Obviously the translation and its copy could not antedate the end of Jan. or beginning of Feb. 1653. As Waugh (2019: 170) notes, the text, which still needs close analysis, does not seem to be directly connected with other known Russian versions.

Sultan to Polish king	1673	5 (the earliest copied by August 1678)	From an unidentified Polish original. Headings in other copies date letter 1678.
Sultan to Polish king	1673	1 (late 17th c.)	A compilation from various sources, put in final form by ca. 1715.
Sultan to Chyhyryn Cossacks and their reply	1678	ca. 21 (one dated 1678)	Direct source not yet known. Not to be confused with the later correspondence of the sultan with the Zaporozhians, although that probably was inspired by the Chyhyryn texts.
Sultan to Habsburg emperor and his reply	1683	archival original	Sultan's letter translated twice from German newspaper, 7 and 30 May 1683; reply translated 7 May. A third copy of text received 8 June but not translated.
Sultan to Habsburg emperor and his reply	1683	1 (late 17th c.)	Probably reworking an adaptation of previous, but possibly a new translation.
Sultan to all Christians	1716	2 copies of each	2 different translations

There is a notable correlation between specific moments in the Ottoman wars on the one hand and, on the other, dates within the texts or the presumed dates of their translations in Russia or the dates of some of the manuscript copies: 1621 – Turco-Tatar war vs. Poles and Ukrainians; 1637 – seizure of Azov from Turks by the Cossacks; 1650s–1660s – Ottoman war against Venice leading to taking of Crete; 1663/64 – Habsburg-Ottoman war in Southeastern Europe; 1673 – Ottoman campaigns in Ukraine against Poles and Cossacks; 1678 – Ottoman siege and taking of Chyhyryn; 1683 – Ottoman siege of Vienna, after whose failure war continued in Southeastern Europe and Ukraine until the treaties of 1699 and 1700; 1695–1696 – Russian siege and taking of Azov. Since most of these military events were part of conflicts that lasted over several years, there was thus practically no time in the seventeenth century, when the correspondence with the sultan might not have seemed to be real news or in any event deemed relevant to buttress anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic sentiment.[33] Presumably additional copies of the letters may yet be found (both within and outside Russia); more work lies ahead to be sure whether in the Russian case we are dealing with new translations from different originals or in some cases merely editing of versions previously translated. Such qualifications notwithstanding, it is impressive how much of the known evidence points to the connections of the texts with the Ambassadorial Chancery and its translators.

The earliest of the translations dates from a period for which relatively few of the *kuranty* have been preserved; it is noteworthy for the fact that the source is one of the earliest Dutch newspapers, from the time when the periodical press was rapidly developing

33. Waugh (1978: 96) provides a graphic representation of the frequency of the letters in the European copies outside of Russia which he was able to identify. There are peaks in 1613, 1621, 1637–1638, 1663–1664 and 1683.

in the Netherlands.[34] The Amsterdam paper that printed the letter was to become one of the stalwarts of the early Dutch press. It may be that the letter was translated simply because a copy of that issue had arrived. This was when foreign newspapers, still relatively rare in Muscovy, might be translated more fully than would be the case later, when they were received regularly. There is no evidence that the translation of 1621 became known outside of chancery circles – the modern preservation of the text is a consequence of nineteenth- or early twentieth-century work in the archival files.

However, even at what we assume was an early stage in acquaintance with the apocryphal letters in Muscovy, someone may have been inspired to compose an answer, thus creating an original pseudo-epigraphic Muscovite 'exchange' between the sultan and Tsar Ivan IV (d. 1584). The earliest known copy of that exchange dates to the 1620s, but there is evidence suggesting that the 'correspondence' existed already around the end of the sixteenth century. As Marianna D. Kagan argued in extenso, it is likely that the correspondence with Ivan drew in the first instance on the exchanges between Russia and the Crimean Tatars, which often had a polemical edge, and on other genres of Russian texts.[35] She emphasized though that the author undoubtedly would have been connected with the Ambassadorial Chancery, where other compositions of pseudo-documentary texts were beginning to appear in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Another Polish-Turkish War ensued in 1633–1634. Presumably the letter to the Polish King dated 1637 appeared at a time when there was an expectation of renewed conflict, though it is difficult to tie the letter to any specific event. For Muscovy, the 'relevance' of the letter would have been clear. In 1637 the Don Cossacks seized the Turkish-held fort of Azov at the mouth of the Don.[36] Over the next several years, they received a certain amount of Russian support and managed to hold on to Azov in the fact of substantial Turkish attacks. The threat of an open Russo-Turkish war in this period was thus very real and is reflected in several contemporary literary texts.[37] Finally in 1642, after the Muscovite government – not wanting to engage in war against the Ottomans – rejected the desperate appeals of the Cossacks, they abandoned Azov. While most Russian decisions about foreign policy were made in camera by the tsar and his close advisers, in this

34. See Maier 2006a, correcting Waugh's identification of a Dutch separate as the source. The text of the translation was first published by Kagan 1958b: 249–250.

35. Her publication of the texts and penetrating analysis of the possible sources that underlay them is Kagan 1957. See also the summary discussion in Waugh (1978: 175–185), where he introduces as well a previously unstudied version of an original fictive 'correspondence' between the sultan and Ivan and analyses its text in relationship to the letters in the pseudo-documentary 'Tale of Two Embassies', which Kagan had published and studied in detail. B. N. Morozov (2012) recently has analyzed another example, where early in the seventeenth century a fictive text was created into which an apocryphal letter of the sultan addressed to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich was inserted, one that he argues is not simply a translation of one of the texts analyzed by Waugh.

36. A summary of the Azov events is in Davies 2007: 88–90.

37. At least one of these, the so-called 'poetic tale', arguably was created by someone connected with the Ambassadorial Chancery; see Boeck [Bouk] 2010, who revises earlier opinions that it had originated among the Cossacks.

case the government convened a somewhat representative assembly (*zemskii sobor*) and invited those attending to respond to the question of whether war against the 'infidel' Muslims in support of the Orthodox Cossacks should be undertaken. Sentiments about Christian obligation to go to war, while abundant, failed to carry the day, as none of the social groupings who were represented expressed a willingness to pay for the war, in a time when the economy of the state had still not fully recovered from events of the early decades of the seventeenth century.

The sultan's threatening letter to the Polish king had been translated (as the header specifies, from German), probably soon after it had been received ca. 1637, and in the circumstances of the Azov crisis copies began to circulate outside the chanceries, possibly deliberately being spread by those who supported direct Muscovite involvement against the Turks. What appears to be the earliest known copy likely was made in the 1640s; adjoining the apocryphal letter is a thematically related text about how the sultan wished to burn Greek books.[38] It seems likely the manuscript originated in a monastery near Vologda, on the river routes leading from Moscow up to the White Sea. That the early 1640s (especially in connection with the conclusion of the Azov crisis) was a time when there was some interest in the apocryphal letters is attested as well in the translation of another version of the sultan's letter to the Polish king, received in Moscow in December 1642. What is apparently the next oldest manuscript containing the letter of 1637 may date to around the end of the 1640s and is of interest because it is placed next to a copy of the 'Tale of Two Embassies', a fictive account presented as though it is real diplomatic reports of embassies involving, inter alia, relations with the Turks.[39] The manuscript also contains historical compilations with material on the actual embassies that served as the basis for the fictive texts. While there is no clear indication of the manuscript's provenance, it certainly suggests some connection with the chancery circles.

The subsequent manuscript history of the 1637 letter reinforces such evidence about chancery connections. Of particular importance is MS 43, a compilation of texts that apparently came together in its present form in the 1680s (FIG. 21.2). It is noteworthy for its copies of several 'news' translations, some of them straightforward reporting, some regarding paranormal or prophetic events and, remarkably, four different versions of the sultan's fictive correspondence.[40] The copies in this manuscript (even if not the earliest known for certain texts) often seem to provide the best readings, and the hand-

38. BAN 32.2.31, described in Waugh 1978: 226–227. With a few exceptions, only Waugh's *de visu* descriptions will be cited here, since they often provide the best codicological analysis of the manuscripts in question and a specific focus on what is relevant to a discussion of the apocryphal letters. His descriptions include citations to other published descriptions of the same manuscripts.

39. Arkhiv SPbII RAN, koll. 115, No. 236, described in Waugh 1978: 253–256. Kagan 1955 is the still basic study of the 'Tale of Two Embassies'; she later expanded the work for her *kandidat* dissertation.

40. RNB, Collection of the Russian Archaeological Society No. 43, described in Waugh's appendix to Keenan 1972: 132–135 and Waugh 1978: 228–229. Kagan used this copy as the basis for her publication of the 1637 letter. See also the discussion in Sec. 20.4 (esp. pp. 786–787) regarding the copy of the account about the celestial signs over Košice in 1672 in this manuscript.

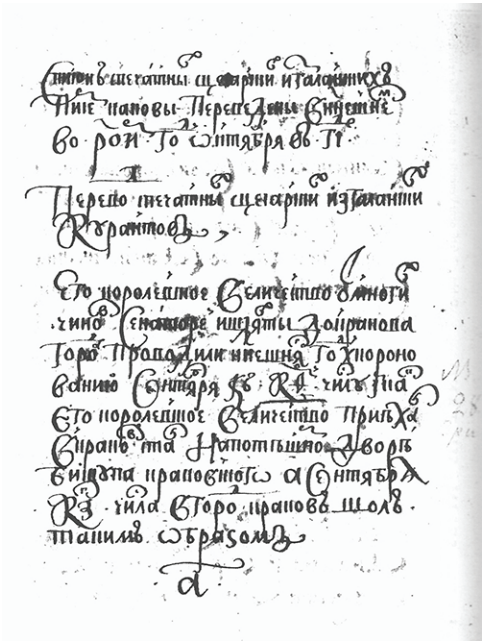

FIG. 21.2. One of the *kuranty* translations copied into MS 43, the text describing the coronation of King Michał Wiśniowiecki in 1669 (MS RNB, Collection of the Russian Archaeological Society No. 43, fol. 1ᵛ).

writing at least in part is very similar to typical chancery hands of the period. In other words, there is reason to think the copyists or compilers had direct connections to the chanceries and their archives. We will return to this manuscript, with additional suggestions about the circumstances in which it appeared and those who may have been directly connected with it.

The grouping of the apocryphal letter of 1637 with other items of Muscovite *turcica* can be seen in several more manuscripts. One of them, containing that letter and a different version of the sultan's threatening missive to the king of Poland, also includes a translated account of the Turkish taking of Chyhyryn in 1678, one of the most consequential events in the wars of the 1670s in Ukraine (FIG. 21.3).[41] It is possible that the quire containing these texts was compiled immediately after the fall of the fortress. With similar reasoning, one might connect MS 43 with the interest sparked by the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683 or the subsequent war, which included two unsuccessful campaigns of the Russian army to the Crimea in 1687 and 1689. The Turkish wars continued through the next decade, during which in Muscovy there was new interest in copying the fictive letters that had been translated earlier.

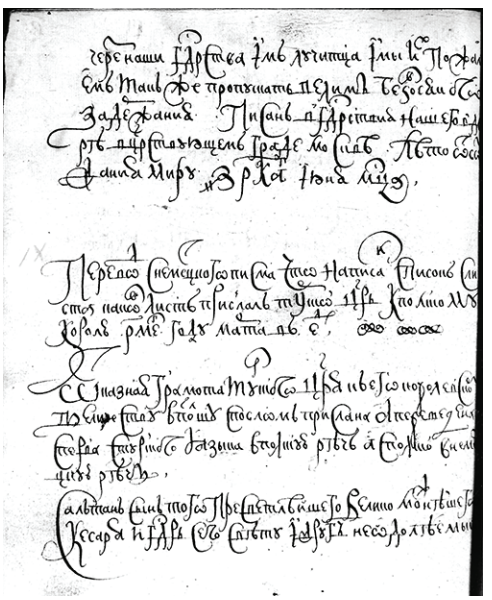

FIG. 21.3. A late seventeenth-century manuscript copy of the sultan's letter of 1637 to the Polish king, in a typical 'chancery hand' (MS RGB, Coll. of I.D. Beliaev No. 12 (1518), fol. 297ᵛ).

Two versions of these apocryphal letters from the 1660s are of considerable importance for the evidence about their origins and dissemination. One is addressed to the German rulers and all Christians. Maier and Shamin have located the Dutch broadside, from which it was translated in early 1664, as well as the 'original' archival copy of the translation in the diplomatic files pertaining to relations with the Nether-

41. MS RGB, Collection of I. D. Beliaev No. 12 (1518), described by Waugh 1978: 257–258.

lands.[42] The Dutch original was among the news sources obtained via Dutch merchants who were involved in the White Sea trade through Archangel. It is likely that someone with access to the archive copied out both this letter and another version of the sultan's threatening missive, as the two are found both in MS 43 and in another copy, which is textually close to the archival original.[43] While parts of the latter manuscript (Pogodin No. 1531) can be associated with officials who held ranks at court (a groom and a *stol'nik*, who at one time was employed compiling cadastres in Vologda), it is uncertain whether they had anything to do with the quire containing the letters. Another copy was produced in 1696.

The Habsburg wars against the Turks on the southeastern Europe frontier in the 1660s spawned a flood of publications; the Dutch broadside is but one example. One of the most popular Russian versions of the threatening letters – an exchange between the sultan and the Habsburg Emperor Leopold I (r. 1658–1705) – almost certainly was translated at about the same time (its exact source has yet to be found). Until the likely source has been located, there remains some uncertainty about the degree to which the texts as we have them (especially the emperor's reply) are faithful renderings of the original – they might also reflect some literary intervention on the part of the translators. It is almost certain that the listing of such a correspondence in the inventory of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery archive (compiled in 1671/72) refers to these letters.[44] The correspondence is listed there among items dating between 1665/66 and 1668/69, bracketed by texts pertaining to the election of Polish King Michał Wiśniowecki. MS 43, which happens also to contain one of the earliest and best copies of the correspondence with the emperor, includes as well a translated account about the Polish king's coronation in 1669 (FIG. 21.2).

The Privy Chancery, which had administrative responsibility for the foreign post when it was first established in the mid-1660s, housed copies of the first several years of the *kuranty* translations. To find there a copy of the translated fictive correspondence between the sultan and Leopold is not surprising. It is possible that another of the inventory listings refers to a copy of the letter to the Polish king of 1637, and almost certainly there was a copy of the sultan's apocryphal letter addressed to both the emperor and the king of Poland. The earliest known copies of the correspondence with Emperor Leopold would appear to date no earlier than the last quarter of the seventeenth century and might have been produced at the time the Privy Chancery papers were being inventoried again following the Tsar's death in 1676, when a significant portion of them was returned to the Ambassadorial Chancery.

42. Maier and Shamin (2007) publish the original text, its translation and a facsimile of the broadside.

43. MS RNB, Pogodin Collection No. 1531, fols. 335–337; described in Waugh 1978: 229–235. See also below in the discussion of the 1673 letter to the king of Poland.

44. For the evidence about the apocryphal letters and the Privy Chancery archive, see Waugh 1978: 155–159.

One official who might have been involved in this process was the state secretary (*dumnyi d'iak*) Luk'ian Timofeevich Golosov, who had been appointed to the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1667.[45] A note in the *kuranty* files of 1669 says that the copy there of a translated account about the coronation of the Polish king had been removed and taken to Golosov.[46] We do not know when that happened, but probably it was done at the time of Golosov's involvement in diplomacy with Poland in the 1670s. One of his missions to Poland was in connection with the death and funeral of Michał Wiśniowiecki, and a translated account about the funeral is also among the texts copied into MS 43. While the manuscript date is uncertain, another of the earliest copies of the correspondence with Leopold may come from around the time of (or conceivably even antedate) the copy in MS 43.[47] The manuscript in question most likely is to be associated with a rather remote northern monastery in the vicinity of Kargopol, which would suggest that once the first copies had been made, they spread widely with little delay.

Another thread possibly leading back to the collection of the Privy Chancery is in MS 707, where a gathering that appears to have been copied at one time contains a group of works with Turkish themes: the well-known text of an inscription on Emperor Constantine's grave, predicting the fall of the Ottomans; a version of the prophetic interpretation of the signs purportedly seen in the heavens over Hungary in 1672 (discussed in our Sec. 20.4); the correspondence with Leopold and another redaction of the sultan's threatening letter, addressed to Polish King Jan Kazimierz – probably derived from a Polish version of the sultan's 1637 letter.[48] While it is uncertain whether this letter to the Polish king is the one listed in the Privy Chancery, both the correspondence with Leopold and the text and image of the signs in the heavens were definitely there. So it is at least possible that a cluster of copies made from manuscripts in that archive served as the source for what we now have in MS 707, even if it likely is to be dated toward the end of the seventeenth century.

Further evidence for the accessibility to copies of the apocryphal letters in the 1680s is the very interesting case of a manuscript (Codex Ad 10) which had been acquired by the Swedish diplomat Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld, who was in Moscow between 1684 and 1687.[49] He interacted with officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery and seems to have had especially close relations with the translator Stakhei Ivanovich Gadzelovskii.

45. Waugh 1978: 160; however, cf. Shamin (2011a: 294; our discussion above, pp. 807–808) who argues that another of the state secretaries, Larion Ivanov, was responsible for the collection in MS 43.

46. Shamin 2020a: 344–345 publishes a translated account about of the coronation from the copy in MS 43, but it is a different text from the one explicitly copied from the *kuranty* that we depict in FIG. 21.2. The text Shamin publishes reads as though it is a summary which could have been produced from the original, fuller translation published in V-K VI/1: 396–399, No. 168. Conceivably we are dealing here with a copy of the archival file which had been taken to Golosov.

47. About the manuscript RNB, Q.IV.172 see Waugh 1978: 239–240.

48. MS RGB, Museum Collection No. 707, described in Waugh 1978: 258–259 and more fully in the library's description of the collection which he cites.

49. Sparwenfeld's manuscripts, now in Västerås stadsbibliotek (Sweden), include Codices AD 10, 11, 12. For AD 10, see the book-length description, Dahl 1949, and, in summary, Waugh 1978: 272–274.

When Sparwenfeld returned to Sweden in 1687, he brought with him many Russian manuscripts, among them three large volumes containing a remarkable collection of late Muscovite court and chancery literature. They include some authentic diplomatic documents, several Russian translations of foreign texts, two of the plays for the first court theater in Russia, a description of Siberia and much else. In Codex AD 10 are also copies of the sultan's fictive exchange with Leopold and the fictive correspondence of the sultan with the Chyhyryn Cossacks dated 1678. That florilegium also contains copies made from another Russian miscellany (not yet identified, if in fact it is still extant) which in its turn served as the source for a third collection, copied for Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Golitsyn, probably between 1712 and 1715.[50] Golitsyn, for a time governor in Kiev and subsequently a key figure in the political drama of 1730 that led to his downfall, was famous for his extensive library that included many foreign books and translations he had commissioned. His copyist added next to the two sets of apocryphal letters copies of some genuine exchanges between the tsar and the sultan in 1710. The letters, real and apocryphal, were certainly deemed relevant at the time of Peter's war against the Turks that ended in the disastrous Prut campaign of 1711 (by a treaty the following year the Russians had to give up Azov).

New versions of the apocryphal letters began to appear in Muscovy with the outbreak of war in Ukraine in the 1670s. The Turks and their Tatar allies launched a major invasion, which the combined forces of Poles, Russians and Cossacks proved unable to prevent.[51] The anti-Turkish forces were hindered in part by lack of coordination and by political infighting, with the Poles eventually signing a separate truce that left the Muscovite armies alone in the field until they too reached an agreement with the Tatars in 1681. Given the seriousness of the situation in the south, the frequency with which news reports about it published in the west were selected for the *kuranty* is understandable, even if the most current reports that would have been of use to the policy makers in the Kremlin undoubtedly were those coming from commanders on the ground who maintained intelligence networks.

Ivan Poliakov has recently discovered what appears to be the earliest copy of two versions of the apocryphal letters from the 1670s, previously known only from other manuscripts.[52] The manuscript is one presented to the young Prince Stepan Vasil'evich Romodanovskii (1661–1680) in August 1678 by his tutor S. F. Kiriakov, soon after the young man's promotion to the rank of *stol'nik* in court service. The book contained a calligraphic and formulaic guide for composing documents and a brief listing of some

50. MS RNB F.XVII.19, described in Waugh 1978: 236–237. Another of the early eighteenth-century manuscripts that contain the correspondence with Leopold likewise probably derives from a copy made in the 1680s (RNB, F.XVII.21; Waugh 1978: 237–239).

51. On the wars of this period, see Davies 2007, Ch. 5.

52. See Poliakov 2017b and, in detail with copies of the texts, 2018. In sketching family history of Romodanovskii, Poliakov (2017a) writes he was the youngest son of Prince Vasilii Grigor'evich Menshoi ('jr.'), the fifth son of Grigorii Petrovich, whereas Boguslavskii 2004: 269 suggests that Stepan was the son of Vasilii Grigor'evich Bol'shoi ('sr.'), the second oldest of the sons.

other books that were in the family library (evidence of this kind is rare for libraries of the secular elite). It was used by Romodanovskii as a notebook for his explorations in his family's history. He surely knew the prominent role his uncle Grigorii Grigor'evich (the youngest brother of Stepan's father) had played in the wars in Ukraine over more than two decades, and that his having commanded the Russian army in the campaigns aimed at lifting the siege of Chyhyryn ended disastrously with the loss of the town in 1678. Stepan's cousins, Grigorii Grigor'evich's sons, had also been active on those campaigns, one of them for a time having languished in Tatar captivity.

Poliakov argues that the sultan's correspondence surely would have been recognized for what it was, a parody, and not mistaken by Kiriakov or Romodanovskii for real diplomatic letters, given the other materials in the manuscript. The particular interest of this copy of the letter addressed to the Polish King Jan Kazimierz is the fact that its header dates it 1673, not 1678 as noted in another manuscript copy that circulated outside of the chancery environment later in the century. Romodanovskii's copy, however, does not seem to be as close textually to the presumed original translation from Polish as does yet a third copy that lacks the date.[53] That third copy may date from as early as the 1680s. It is inserted along with a copy of the sultan's letter of 1663 to the German rulers in a manuscript, at least some of whose parts once belonged to the *stol'nik* Petr Mikhailovich Golokhvastov. The evidence is ambiguous as to whether he should be associated with the copies of the apocryphal letters. A Polish version of the sultan's letter (addressed to the chief primate of Poland, the Archbishop of Gniezno) was brought to Kiev on 29 March 1674, sent on to Moscow by the military governor, Prince Iurii Petrovich Trubetskoi, and preserved in the Ukrainian Affairs Chancery.[54] Clearly the versions and copies of the sultan's apocryphal letter could readily be recycled and redated to suit any particular context that could make them 'newsworthy'.

The copy of the sultan's fictive correspondence with the Chyhyryn Cossacks preserved in Romodanovskii's manuscript is important as the earliest more or less precisely dated one.[55] The heading for these letters, which each consist of a long *intitulatio* followed by

53. The manuscripts in question are RGB, Beliaev Collection 12 (1518), with the date, and RNB, Pogodin Collection No. 1531. Waugh (1978: 208–210) published a critical text of the letter, using the Pogodin Manuscript as the main copy. Note that Waugh's sketchy stemma of the copies (p. 150) has an error: the protograph for manuscripts 1531 and 1696 derives from the 'Muscovite translation with many Polonisms', not directly from the Polish original. Poliakov's more detailed stemma (2018: 93) should be preferred; it is based in the first instance on Waugh's but corrects that and adds his newly discovered copy. The copies of the letters in MS 1531 were inserted after a table of contents for the book had been drawn up in the late seventeenth century. A note on it specifies that the letters had replaced a different text, which had been removed (Waugh 1978: 229–235).

54. The letter is published in *Sinbirskii sbornik* 1844: 124 (final pagination).

55. There is confusion in the literature about the various versions of the correspondence with the Cossacks. The designation here of the 'Chyhyryn' Cossacks refers specifically to the ones defending Chyhyryn in 1678. They were in fact members of the Zaporozhian Cossack community that occupied an area of the lower Dnepr River and for whom at the time Chyhyryn was the capital. In writing about the Chyhyryn correspondence, Kagan (1958b) refers to it as correspondence with the Zaporozhians. There is a later version of the correspondence that identifies the Cossacks as the Zaporozhians; that

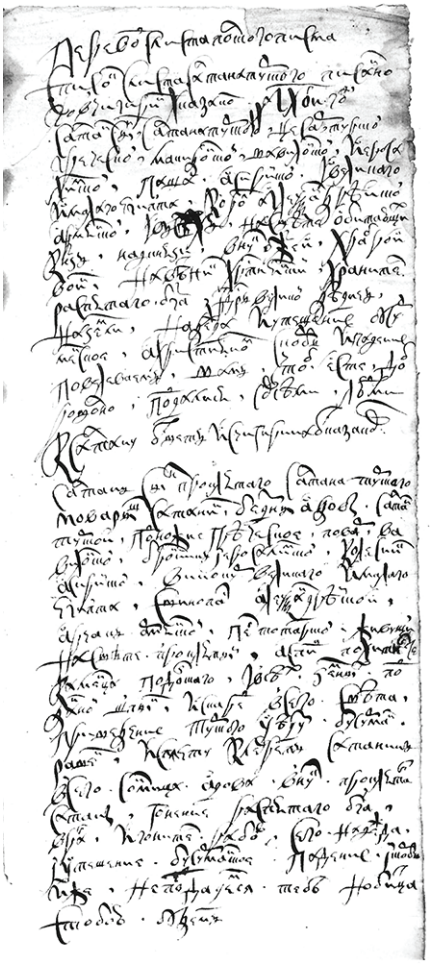

FIG. 21.4. A copy of the translated fictive correspondence of the sultan with the Chyhyryn Cossacks, in scroll format. (MS Arkhiv SPbII RAN, koll. 13, op. 1, No. 204).

a single insulting sentence (unlike the other versions of the apocrypha, which write out the insults in some detail), mentions that the sultan sent his letter to the Cossacks in Chyhyryn on 7 July 1678, within a month of when the Turks mounted their final siege. If this can be taken as the *terminus a quo* for the presumed translation of this correspondence from a not yet discovered foreign original, then it is striking that Kiriakov obtained a copy for Romodanovskii before the end of August, that is, within days after Chyhyryn had been abandoned by its defenders. Poliakov argues that the few textual variants between Romodanovskii's copy and the other known ones suggest it is a different 'redaction', possibly a different translation – a questionable assertion, since he also admits that on the whole, the text is otherwise identical with the previously known copies. In any event, he supports Waugh's earlier conclusion that the letters are indeed translations and presumably ones produced in the Ambassadorial Chancery.

The correspondence with the Cossacks was widely copied in late Muscovy. Apart from the Romodanovskii manuscript, another very early copy is, unusually, in the form of a typical chancery scroll, not written on paper folded to form a quire in a manuscript book (FIG. 21.4).[56] Its heading, stating that the text is a translation from Polish, was added in a different ink from that used for the main copyist, a fact which may suggest this copy is not the original archival one. That heading groups the manuscript with the copy in MS 43, used for the authoritative publication of the text and containing other evidence of its close connection to the chancery milieu in the 1680s. Another copy presumably made by someone with Moscow chancery connections is in one of the miscellanies Sparwenfeld took to Sweden in 1687. And, as with other examples of the apocryphal letters, the Cossack correspondence turns up in a collection assembled in remote Khlynov (probably at the very end of the 1690s) by Semen Popov, who had a particular interest in creating a kind of chronologically-ordered documentary history of important events, beginning in the late seventeenth century and carrying

version has shaped the nineteenth-century romantic vision of the Cossacks having defied the sultan (see Waugh 1971 for a detailed analysis of the texts).

56. Arkhiv SPbII RAN, koll. 13, op. 1, No. 204, described in Waugh 1978: 253.

FIG. 21.5. The siege of Vienna in 1683. Contemporary engraving.

down well into Peter's Northern War (Waugh 2003). The Cossack correspondence also is found in the library of Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Golitsyn – perhaps the greatest Russian bibliophile of his day – who commissioned numerous copies of Muscovite secular literature, in part while he was serving as governor in Kiev.

In European eyes, the event in the Turkish wars that created the greatest sensation was the Ottoman siege of Vienna (FIG. 21.5). It began in July 1683 and ended on 12 September in a dramatic, last-minute salvation when the cavalry of Polish King Jan Sobieski routed the besiegers. Alliances against the Turks then were created or strengthened, and the ensuing war, which concluded only at the very end of the century, resulted in Turkish withdrawal from significant territory in Central and Southeastern Europe that the Ottomans had long occupied. In the east, Muscovy and Poland finally concluded a 'permanent peace' in 1686, in order to coordinate efforts against the Turks. The Russian campaigns in 1687 and 1689 against the Ottoman allies, the Crimean Tatars, failed to achieve their objectives.[57] When Tsar Peter I finally gained control of the government, he concentrated on attacking Azov, first in 1695 unsuccessfully, but then taking the fortress the following year. This context of the events in the 1680s and 1690s was the setting for

57. Most of the older historiography has painted a negative picture of these campaigns as poorly planned under the leadership of Prince Vasilii Golitsyn, the current court favorite. However, the recent study by Gus'kov et al. (2022, Chs. 2–4), which explores in detail the military preparations and results of the campaigns, argues that such a negative assessment is unjustified.

the appearance of yet new variants of the apocryphal letters and, as already noted, the multiplication of copies of the the ones already known.

Among the hundreds of European publications published during and soon after the siege of Vienna are copies of the sultan's apocryphal correspondence, addressed naturally to the Habsburg emperor with or without his reply. Waugh (1978) identified German, English, and Italian versions and at least one in a Polish manuscript. Kagan (1958b) had noted a Russian rendering of the sultan's letter and the emperor's response as a different redaction of the widely disseminated 1663 variant of the correspondence, but it is certain now that the 1683 text is new and from a different source. While Waugh hypothesized that source to be a separate brochure, presumably in German, which also contained the text of an oath of the sultan and his pashas to exterminate Christians, Shamin (2015) recently discovered among the archival files striking new evidence about the translations. The *kuranty* files include translations of 7 May and 30 May from German newspapers, where the earliest contains the sultan's letter and the later one the response. Yet another German newspaper with the sultan's letter was forwarded to Moscow on 8 June from Kiev, at which time the letter was translated a second time. A third copy, in a manuscript, arrived soon after in a packet from a Muscovite agent in Lithuania, Nazarii Kraevskii. At that point, the translators noted there was no need to translate the letter yet again, as it was already known from the other versions which had been received. The *kuranty* of 6 July contain a translation of the sultan's oath. While it would seem obvious that the lone manuscript containing both the correspondence and the oath (MS 44) must have been assembled by drawing on the archival files of several *kuranty* texts, as Shamin points out, textually the archival versions are quite different from those found in the manuscript, leaving open the question of whether it represents a literary adaptation of the original translations, or possibly a retranslation based on direct acquaintance with the archival originals.[58] The quire in MS 44 with the letters also has a copy of the treaty between Polish King Jan Sobieski and the Habsburg emperor, placed following the letters and prior to the oath. That quire (which may well have been copied in the late seventeenth century) is a separate entity, bound in with many other pieces, including ones with texts from later in the eighteenth century. So it is impossible to say anything about the copyist or owner of the texts relating to 1683 within any seventeenth-century context. A careful textual comparison of the archival files with the version in MS 44 is still a desideratum.

The evidence from the 1680s thus shows a continuing interest in the apocryphal letters as news, at the same time that the reshuffling of archival files after the dissolution of the Privy Chancery seems to have opened the doors to the wider dissemination of earlier versions of the letters. There were new situations in which the older letters had

58. Waugh (1978: 213–215) published the texts from MS Arkhiv SPbII RAN, koll. 11, Collection of the Archaeographic Commission, op. 1, No. 44, described on pp. 245–246. In his recent book, Shamin (2020a: 148–153) reviews the evidence about the *kuranty* translations of 1683 and provides extensive textual comparisons of them with the copy in MS 44.

some currency. The important manuscript No. 43 suggests someone with direct archival access was interested in obtaining copies of several of the letters, and Sparwenfeld's volumes are yet another example of archival access by someone connected with the Ambassadorial Chancery. Since there had long been a practice of referring to much earlier diplomatic documentation in the context of some new diplomatic exchange, it is possible that the older versions of the apocryphal letters were being checked against the more recent arrivals to be sure they were not genuine. There also was an established, if unofficial, practice of using the model of genuine documents to create literary works with a different purpose. In the last quarter or so of the seventeenth century, the mining of the official archives by members of the elite seems to have become increasingly common.

Events in the 1690s accelerated such processes. For the apocryphal letters, a key moment was Tsar Peter's Azov campaigns in 1695–1696. His taking of Azov in 1696 was his first great military triumph, one that was celebrated with Baroque pomp when the army returned to Moscow.[59] It can be no coincidence that 1696 is a landmark in the collection and dissemination of the apocryphal letters.

The most extensive collection of them in one volume is in the so-called 'Chronograph of 1696', a large historical compilation to which the letters and other historical texts (including translations) were appended. The manuscript contains the sultan's correspondence with Ivan IV, the 1637 letter to the king of Poland, the correspondence with Emperor Leopold in 1663, the 1678 (1673) letter to the king of Poland, and the correspondence with the Chyhyryn Cossacks of 1678. Unfortunately, the current location of the 1696 manuscript, which was studied and used for publication in the nineteenth century, is unknown. There are extant manuscripts containing some of the apocryphal letters in versions which seem to be related to those in the collection drawn on by Afanasii Ivanov, the man responsible for that compilation of 1696.[60]

Two other manuscripts from the end of the seventeenth century contain the correspondence with Leopold (but not the 1637 text), along with documents on the Azov cam-

59. A good summary of some of the ways the campaign was celebrated is in Gus'kov et al. 2022: 451–461. A well-known, near-contemporary engraving by Adriaan Schoonebeek showing Peter and his generals overlooking the siege is in the collection of the Hermitage Museum (https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/04.+engraving/1516057). Schoonebeek's engraving of the fireworks celebrating the victory (reproduced by Gus'kov et al. as Fig. 16) may be viewed in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/search/objects?q=Schoonebeek&p=5&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=7#/RP-P-1925-46,55). A much later engraving of the siege by Joseph de Montalegre is in the collection of the State Historical Museum (https://catalog.shm.ru/entity/OBJECT/2224422). It is interesting for its fanciful perspective suggesting that Azov, in the foreground, was the key to reaching Istanbul in the distance,

60. For a brief description of the manuscript, see Waugh 1978: 276–277; for the other manuscripts whose content may be related (Kiev, DPB UAN No. 533 and Vienna, Cod. slav. 88), ibid.: 223–224, 274–275. There are several Afanasii Ivanovs in the late Muscovite bureaucracy, including at least one in the Ambassadorial Chancery, but active there in the 1670s. By the 1690s, it would have been possible to pull together a collection of the apocryphal letters without access to the chancery archives, relying instead on other manuscript sources. As a recent study by Shamin and Watson (2014) discusses, the apocryphal letters were not the only fictive *turcica* produced in this period as anti-Ottoman propaganda.

paign.[61] In one case (BAN 17.8.9), the collection even mentions printed German and Polish reports about the events received from Vienna and Warsaw. The text of the fictive correspondence is very close to that which the courtier and diplomat Ivan Zheliabuzhskii copied into his diary about the events of the 1690s; portions of the Azov reports are also found in his diary. Both manuscripts give the impression of having been prepared as special presentation copies to commemorate the taking of Azov. Redating the apocryphal correspondence of 1663 to 1696 (or at least mentioning that it had arrived in the post in the latter year) seems to have been common; one such copy is not in the normal chancery environment but found its way to the Monastery of St. Cyril on the White Lake some time before 1718.[62]

When the Khlynov bookman Semen Popov assembled his collection of texts, beginning before the end of the seventeenth century, he included several versions of the apocryphal letters: the correspondence with Leopold (assigned the date 1673), the Cossack correspondence, and a distinctive version of a letter to the Polish king. The packet of the texts is placed chronologically among (if not right next to) reports from the Azov campaigns, thus contextualizing the fictive letters in the period of the Turkish wars of the 1690s. Unfortunately, there is no way to know whether Popov obtained the letters from a single source, nor can we establish any definite connection with other manuscript copies whose provenance is known.

The case of Popov is interesting, given the remoteness of Khlynov (later Viatka, now Kirov), a town north of Kazan and on one of the routes leading into the Urals. Traditionally it has been deemed a provincial backwater, an opinion that surely needs to be reexamined. Popov was one of the town's most literate, prosperous and best informed residents. He served as one of the new provincial officials (*burmistry*), the position established by Peter the Great to supervise fiscal matters.[63] Popov owned books, arguably wrote some important texts pertaining to local history, and clearly had a great interest in current news as well as news reports that may have been somewhat dated by the time he acquired them. Not only did he have accounts about the Azov campaigns, copies of the sultan's apocryphal correspondence, and a version of a well-known prophetic text about the two *startsy*, but he also had a long run of copies made from Peter's *Vedomosti*, the first published Russian newspapers that began to appear in 1702. Popov's annotations often tell us from whom amongst his local contacts he had received a particular text; it is very likely that one channel for his obtaining the *Vedomosti* was a nephew who worked in the local government office. As near as can be determined from the large manuscript

61. BAN, 17.8.9; GPB, Collection of the Novgorod Cathedral of St. Sophia No. 1482 (described in Waugh 1978: 224–226, 235–236).

62. Arkhiv SPbII RAN, Collection of the Archaeographic Commission No. 249; described in Waugh 1978: 247–249.

63. See the recent study of the Popov family by Aleksei Musikhin (2023), who provides evidence that Popov was not simply a sacristan in one of the local cathedrals (*pace* Waugh 2003 and others) but a prosperous local entrepreneur. Waugh 1995 (in English) previews the information about Popov and his book which is the subject of Waugh 2003 (a detailed monograph in Russian).

miscellany owned by Popov, the copies he acquired of the news texts from the seventeenth century all are ones that might have been made by the end of that century.

Evidence documenting the transmission of Azov news to the Russian North introduces another interesting example of a 'reader' of foreign news: Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory and Vaga.[64] Afanasii clearly took very seriously his duties as a defender of the official church. He was diligent in pursuing religious dissenters and polemicized against 'latinizing' tendencies within the Church. He hosted Peter the Great when the tsar visited the White Sea in the 1690s and was viewed by the tsar as an important agent for collecting intelligence and supporting efforts to ensure security in the Russian North at the start of the Northern War against Sweden. Afanasii assembled one of the most impressive libraries of the time and was a serious bibliophile, collecting books, borrowing copies to copy, and admonishing the owners of the ones he borrowed to take better care to preserve them. One of Afanasii's books is a manuscript, copied for him in May 1689 by Andrei Artamonovich Matveev, who in his youth had been exiled with his father to the Russian North, survived his father's execution by the *strel'tsy* in 1682, and would go on to have a career in service that would eventually take him to the Netherlands as Russia's first ambassador there under Peter the Great. Among other things, Matveev has been credited with a number of translations, one being from the Polish edition of Cesare Baronio's papal history. The manuscript Matveev provided Afanasii includes: excerpts from a Polish almanac (probably published in 1688 and translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery by Simeon Lavretskii); a description of an eclipse of the moon seen in Moscow on 25 March 1689; a copy of the translated 'Tale about the Astrologer Mustaeddin' (a Polish work with Turkish themes); and a translation, made decades earlier for the *kuranty,* of a Swedish pamphlet (in its turn derived via a German version from an English original) about the execution of King Charles I of England.[65]

While Afanasii's library contained, as one might expect, large numbers of religious books essential to his profession, he also owned historical works, among them translations from Polish of Marcin Bielski's *Kronika* and Baronio's papal history.[66] Listed in his library inventory next to several cosmographies (or at least excerpts from them) are 'four quires on the Azov campaign'. As Afanasii's biographer Vasilii Veriuzhskii noted over a century ago, Afanasii was diligent in following the news about Azov and was being kept informed by Peter of the events around the start of the war against Sweden.[67]

64. The standard biography of Afanasii is still Veriuzhskii (1908), a huge study that is a mine of valuable information. For a good summary, incorporating more recent scholarship, see Panich (1992), who has also published a monograph on Afanasii's 'scientific' writings.

65. The manuscript is BAN, Archangel Collection No. S.228, described by Alekseev 1948: 93–94 and supplemented here by Waugh's *de visu* observations (1972: 748–749). See also Shamin 2011a: 296–297.

66. Afanasii's library and writings is the subject of Veriuzhskii (1908, Ch. 6), where he lists all the books from inventories and from evidence about surviving copies.

67. For Afanasii's interest in current events, see ibid.: 534–537 (about Azov), 542–543, 553–557, 566–567.

Tat'iana Bazarova (2019a), citing new archival discoveries, reinforces our knowledge of how news about Azov was being sent regularly to the Northern Dvina region. Afanasii was one of the recipients. Among the documents collected by N. A. Protasov (SPbII RAN, koll. 111) is a scroll with several of the Azov newsletters and a previously unknown copy of the fictive correspondence with Emperor Leopold.

There are many uncertainties about the manuscript history of the sultan's threatening letters, given the difficulty of analyzing the miscellanies whose provenance and history of compilation may be obscure. Nonetheless we can suggest some tentative conclusions about the dissemination of the letters. At almost any point during the seventeenth century (and even beyond into the eighteenth), they had a currency as 'news', irrespective of whether they contained anachronistic dates at the moment they were copied. The many instances where we can contextualize them with reference to ongoing wars with or concerns about the Turks are ample proof of this, as is the fact that many of the letters are not found in isolation but rather grouped with other versions or with other *turcica*. There is persuasive evidence about the connection of most of the letters with the Muscovite chanceries, in particular the Ambassadorial Chancery where the translations were produced, and Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's Privy Chancery, during its brief existence (1655–1676). The once-debated question whether the apocryphal letters are translations is now definitively settled (the only clear exception is the sultan's correspondence with Ivan IV). While there are isolated examples of the dissemination of the letters beyond the chanceries prior to the 1670s, it was only in approximately the last quarter of the century that access to the chancery archives by the Moscow elite made possible the production of numerous unofficial copies. Initially it would seem most of them were written by or for members of the elite, who would have had access to the court and chanceries, but there also are copies which spread far afield and are found in church collections. Tracing how they got there so far has been impossible. It seems reasonable to suggest that by the 1690s there were enough copies of the apocryphal letters in circulation so that they could be obtained (often far from Moscow) without a direct connection to anyone who had access to the central archives.

To the degree that this manuscript evidence identifies owners or copyists or people who, arguably, were in a position to obtain copies from the archives, we have 'readers of the news'. Apart from their possible relevance to current foreign-policy concerns, the apocryphal letters may have attracted readers for other reasons, reinforcing prejudices against the Muslim 'other', amusing readers by their rhetoric, evoking parallels with other Russian texts, offering – if in a rather odd way – a window into a wider world beyond Muscovy's borders. That they were read and seen by more than just a few members of the court elite seems likely, once the copies were out and about, but who most of those other readers were can only be guessed.

21.4. A hero in his time: Eugene of Savoy and the Battle of Zenta in 1697[68]

The final decades of the seventeenth century offer abundant evidence suggesting that the acquisition and treatment of foreign news in Russia was now quite different from the situation that prevailed in earlier decades. The institutional framework that made this possible was now firmly in place. The establishment of the foreign post was a crucial innovation. Russian diplomats and intelligencers working for the government could now communicate with Moscow relatively easily, which meant that the tsar and his advisers enjoyed essentially the same advantages as their foreign counterparts in acquiring and exchanging information, even if with some delay, due to the longer time it took for the mails to reach the Russian capital. The mechanisms for communication within the country were largely the traditional ones, which in times of crisis could be as effective as any foreign post. The Turkish war in a sense was the catalyst for the changes in the treatment of the news.[69] What had earlier been only episodic efforts to disseminate favorable propaganda about Russia abroad now became a regular policy in the 1680s and 1690s, with efforts to cast a positive light on the Crimean campaigns and with a very successful campaign to spread word about the seizure of Azov. As the most recent study has emphasized: 'Practically for the entire course of the military actions the European press was informed about the victories by the Russian army, and moreover, the Russian government made purposeful and not unsuccessful efforts to shape a positive opinion of its army's actions, independently of what were the actual accomplishments' (Gus'kov et al. 2022: 461–462).

It seems that there was now a concerted effort to disseminate news relating to the war within the country, although the degree to which such efforts differed from analogous ones earlier in the century is a subject inviting further investigation. Decrees concerning military or fiscal measures traditionally could include explanatory justifications with reference to foreign-policy concerns. The Church also traditionally was enlisted in providing public support for government policy. Processions of particularly venerated icons might lead the army as it marched out; victories were celebrated liturgically. Victories by allies might also be celebrated: government officials, not just the clergy, might report to the congregation news from the front. However, in the wake of the conquest of Azov, if not earlier, the government no longer was the sole arbiter of whether news might be disseminated within the country (ibid.: 462). What really had changed compared to earlier in the century was the awareness among the governing elite about the virtues of sharing the news, rather than treat it as privileged information. This did not yet mean there was a reading public to whom a tract such as the famous one published by Kaspar Stieler in

68. An early version of this material is in Waugh 2008: 497–502, 505–506, here substantially revised and expanded. This expanded treatment recently was the basis for a Russian translation by Kirill Stankov (Waugh 2021a). See also Shamin 2020a: 188–195.

69. For the development of this argument with some excellent examples see Gus'kov et al. 2022, Ch. 10. Shamin (2020a: 353–359) publishes a few reports about successes and celebration of the Azov campaign. Some of those reports were sent abroad and some were translated in the *kuranty*.

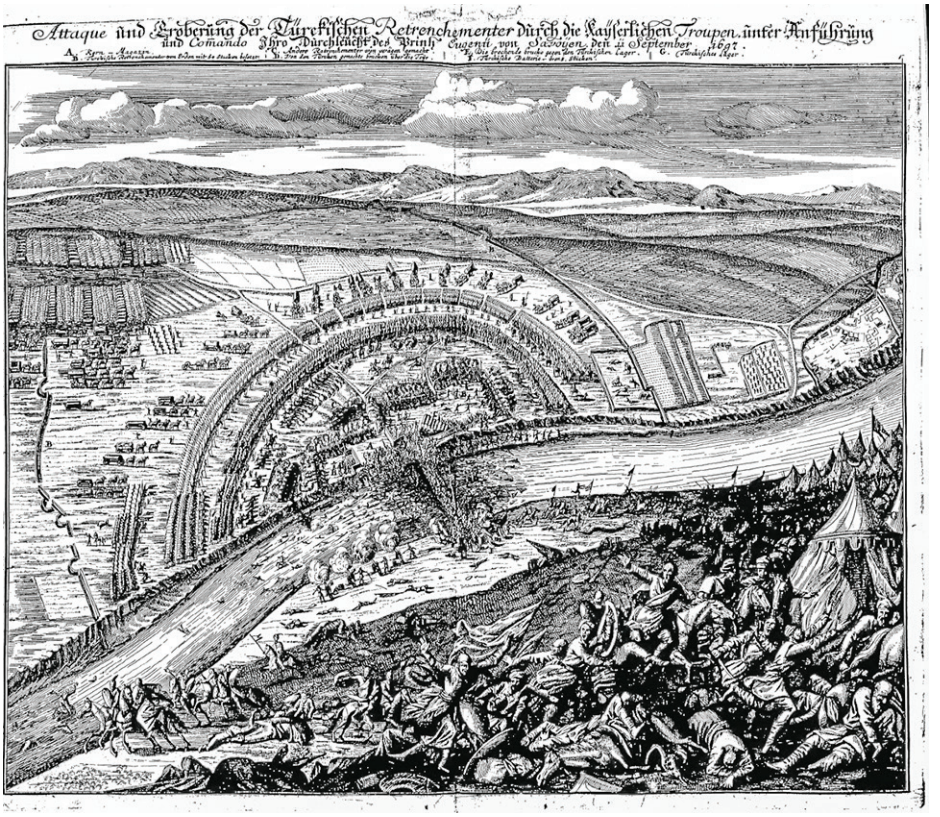

FIG. 21.6. Engraving depicting the battle of Zenta, with the Turkish survivors fleeing in the foreground, from *Theatrum Europaeum*, Vol. 15 (1707).

1695 could be addressed to extol the virtues of reading the newspapers. However, the seeds for change were sprouting.

To illustrate what was now possible, let us look at one final example: the circulation of news about what was perhaps the most famous single battle in the long war against the Turks that finally ended with treaties in 1699 and 1700. On 11 September 1697, the Habsburg army led by Prince Eugene of Savoy totally destroyed the Ottoman army at Zenta (Senta) on the Tisza River in what is now northern Serbia (FIG. 21.6). The sultan himself barely escaped; his grand vizier and the commander of his janissaries both perished. The pile of corpses on the river was so deep that the victors could lay planks across them for a bridge. There was a tremendous amount of booty from the Turkish camp; not the least of the trophies were some ten of the sultan's concubines and the gold signet ring that the vizier kept on a cord around his neck. It can still be seen in Vienna today, even if the fate of the concubines has not been documented (FIG. 21.7).

News of the battle and the subsequent triumphal celebrations was widespread, reported in various newspapers and pamphlets. The earliest of the pamphlets appear to have been quite cryptic, but soon much more substantial diaries of the military actions leading up to the battle and describing it appeared.[70] Over several days, as additional in-

70. What appears to be a very early report is: *Erfreuliche Zeitung/ Von dem den 11. Sept. 1697.*

FIG. 21.7. Seal of Sultan Mustafa II and the signet ring retrieved from the body of the Turkish grand vizier.

formation arrived in Vienna, the tallying of the losses on both sides and the inventory of booty became quite detailed. The most significant reports generally appeared in more than one edition in various cities, and a range of contemporary newspapers contained condensed accounts. Naturally in the process of copying and excerpting, not all the data were transmitted accurately, a fact which may eventually make it possible to identify the exact sources for the Russian translations of several of the accounts. That several of the accounts were translated or excerpted for the Russian government is impressive, the more so because some of the texts quickly were copied and spread outside of the chanceries. While we will not attempt detailed textual comparisons here, we can provide an interim report about what can currently be established regarding the Zenta reports in Russia.

Peter the Great learned about the event in the Netherlands, one of the most important nodes of the European news networks, connected by the regular post in all directions, where he was able to obtain news quickly from agents and from the printed newspapers. Annotations on copies of the Western newspapers now in the Russian archives show that translations from them were being made by Peter's staff in the Netherlands and then, with the originals, sent back to Moscow. While the acquisition of Western news sources by the Ambassadorial Chancery for compilation of the *kuranty* continued in Peter's absence, presumably material he was forwarding from the Netherlands contained information that might not otherwise have been received back home, and some of it may have been more accurate or more timely. Since the Russians were still part of the alliance of European powers in the ongoing war against the Turks, naturally news such as the reports about the Battle at Zenta had to be of great interest.

Among the sources supplying Peter with news was a Habsburg translator in Vienna, Adam Styla Sweykowski, whose earlier history of dealings with Russian diplomats merits comment. The Russian documentation on relations with the Habsburg empire first mentions Styla in connection with the mission headed by Boris Petrovich Sheremetev to Vienna in 1686–1687. The translator apparently was the principal Slavic-language specialist at the imperial court and as such was in regular contact with the Russian mission.[71] During negotiating sessions, he would translate into Russian the speeches of the

wider die Türcken bey Zenta in Hungarn erhaltenen Sieg. N.p., n.d. (VD17 12:622197C), which has an internal dateline "Auss Wien/ vom 14. Septembr. 1697."

71. Styla's involvement in several Russian exchanges with the Habsburg court can be traced in

Habsburg officials, while Stepan Chizhinskii, the translator on the Russian staff, would translate the Russian responses into Latin – a kind of delicate diplomatic balance the two sides agreed on, rather than have only one side's translator be involved (*PDS* 7: 117). Subsequently, Styla wrote to Vasilii Golitsyn (in Polish) regarding arrangements whereby the Russian government was hiring medical doctors.[72] Among the translator's other correspondents was Ioanniki Likhud on the question of whether a son of the Habsburg envoy, Johann Kurts, who had been in Moscow, could take up residence in the Russian capital in order to learn Russian and thus qualify to become a translator for the imperial government (ibid.: 951). The letters were sent via the Russian resident in Warsaw, who forwarded them through the Vilna post.

Styla was one of those seventeenth-century government officials who, like Laurentius Grelle, hoped to use their position and connections to earn money or other benefits as intelligencers for highly placed magnates. A second of Styla's letters to Golitsyn, written on 31 January 1689, was in effect a 'job application', requesting some kind of emolument (exactly what it might have been was left vague), in return for the supplying of news (ibid.: 392–396). Under the cover of this request, he attached newsletters, containing what the officials in the Ambassadorial Chancery characterized as 'old news' (*vesti starye*) written in December and January and sent through the post. The news reports, summarized in the Russian files, covered a date range from 19 December (London) through 27 January (Vienna; four days before Styla wrote his cover letter). Styla's letter and its enclosed news arrived through the post in Moscow on 28 February. Within months of receiving this letter, Golitsyn was out of power, so apparently nothing came of Styla's proposal.

Three years later, 1 January 1692 (N.S.), he tried again to sell his services as an intelligencer, this time using his connection with Ioanniki Likhud, to whom he sent his offer and a long newsletter.[73] The state secretary Emel'ian Ukraintsev, who had succeeded Golitsyn as head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, annotated the translation of Styla's letter with the indication that it had been read to the sovereigns (Peter and Ivan) and boyars, and the sovereigns had instructed the chancery to compile information on previous employment and compensation for those who had offered such services, one of them a Greek in Lviv, Iurii Papara. There is no evidence that this second effort by Styla met with success. However, when Koz'ma Nikitich Nefimonov was in Vienna for several months starting in late 1696 to negotiate a treaty with the imperial government, he was

PDS 7, *passim*, the specific references accessed from the index where he is listed under the name Shtel'. We render his name as he signed it in writing to the tsar. See Skvairs 2006 for summary information about Styla and an analysis of what can be learned from the Russian translations of some letters in German attributed to him, but probably themselves translations made in Mittau from his originals.

72. For his letter to Golitsyn written on 17 May 1688, see *PDS* 7: 324–326. Ioannikii Likhud had been involved in identifying and certifying the credentials of the doctors – Gregorius Carbonarius and Jacobus Pylarinos. For their biographies, see Dumschat 2006: 582–584, 661–662.

73. *PDS* 7: 951–955. Styla and Likhud could have met in Vienna when the Greek brothers were there in early 1691 (Bantysh-Kamenskii, 1: 35).

in frequent contact with Styla, who was providing him with confidential intelligence.[74] Presumably this was when an agreement was reached for the Habsburg translator to supply the tsar and his staff with news from the imperial capital.

During the Great Embassy, Styla was sending regular newsletters in Latin to the Russians (addressed to The Hague).[75] In addition, he forwarded published news – pamphlets and a Vienna newspaper that focused on events in East-Central Europe. Peter's staff normally translated Styla's letters and presumably the most interesting of the attachments he sent. While not all of Styla's letters have been preserved in the current archival file, it seems very likely that one of them, which would have been sent within a few days of the battle, contained the first report Peter had received about Zenta.[76] The archival files preserve a partial copy of one of the important separates printed after the battle: a letter sent by the hero of the day, Eugene of Savoy, which provided a detailed account of how the campaign and victory unfolded.[77] We may assume that brochure is one Styla had provided, but so far there is no evidence it was translated, possibly because alternative, detailed accounts were available. One of them was translated in full from a copy Peter received from Styla on 23 September.[78] The text chronicles the military events

74. See, for example, *PDS* 7: 1153, 1171–1172, 1242, 1257. The last of these specifies Nefimonov had sent printed newspapers – the term used is *vestovye pechatnye kuranty* – which were translated in Moscow on receipt.

75. We have examined copies of these files (RGADA, f. 32 [Austria and the German Empire], op. 1, 1697, No. 13), covering only the period starting right at the time of the battle and for the next several weeks. The current archival arrangement does not replicate the preservation of the material back at the time of the events: it is clear that some documents are not filed in order, and others that presumably should be in the sequence are missing. Possibly some of the news sources and their translations were removed by the translators in Moscow for work on the *kuranty,* or by those who were copying from the archive texts for wider dissemination. In the process, manuscripts may have been lost or filed elsewhere, rather than kept with the Habsburg affairs material.

76. The heading in a copy of one of the news reports that circulated outside of the chanceries specifies it is a translation from Latin (possibly, we might assume, from one of Styla's letters). Waugh (2003: 300–301) published that text from Semen Popov's Khlynov manuscript (the one which also contains some of the sultan's apocryphal letters). A second, essentially identical copy is in another manuscript miscellany, RGB, f. 310 (V. M. Undol'skii Collection), No. 635, fols. 40–42^{v}, published by Shamin 2020a: 335–336. Following that text in the Undol'skii manuscript, which leaves about two thirds of fol. 42^{v} blank, are two blank pages, suggesting that the additional news about Zenta which begins on fol. 44^{v} ('Avgusta z 22-go chisla'), with the list of killed, wounded, and trophies is from another source. Shamin (ibid.: 336 n. 1) notes the change of hand and beginning of a new quire but in his transcription treats the two parts as an integral text.

77. RGADA, f. 32, op. 1, 1687, No. 13, fols. 6^{r}–7^{v}. The archival copy is clearly a different imprint, but the text seems to be identical with that in *Copia Der An Ihro Käyserlichen Mayestät Von Ihro Hochfürstl. Durchl. Eugenio Printzen von Savoyen Entlassenen allerunterthänigsten Relation De Dato Käyserl. Feld-Lager zwischen Senta und Klein-Canischa/ den 12. Septembr. 1697.* N.p., 1697 (VD 17 12:622182H).

78. RGADA, f. 32, op. 1, 1687, No. 13, fols. 12–20. The heading to the translation reads: 'Translation from a printed diary about the imperial battle with the Turks on 11 Sept., undertaken under the leadership of the imperial general Prince Eugene of Savoy […] The imperial translator Adam Styla sent this diary from Vienna to The Hague to the great and plenipotentiary ambassadors in the present year [7]206 on 23 Sept. through the post.' Clearly the source is a *Relations-Diarium* that appeared in several editions, some of which are distinguished by variants not in the Russian text. The translation seems

for several days leading up to the battle, provides a rather formal description of it, and describes some of the booty. The end of the brochure tabulates the killed and wounded on the Habsburg side, a tabulation that is precisely rendered in the Russian translation. There is yet another translation of a Zenta pamphlet in the Habsburg files which contain the documents from the time of Peter's stay in the Netherlands.[79] The narrative in this one, presumably by an eyewitness, is more vivid in some of its detail than are the other accounts, possibly because it was not in the first instance written as a formal report for the Habsburg court.

Although it is possible that the first news about Zenta had arrived in Moscow previously, the earliest concrete textual evidence seems to be that in a set of the *kuranty* dated 12 October 1697, whose discovery and first analysis are to be credited to Stepan Shamin.[80] The manuscript heading indicates that the translation is based on German newspapers sent through the Riga post; it opens with four reports relating to Zenta and more broadly the Turkish wars. To bring together reports from several separate sources for one 'issue' of the *kuranty* was, of course, common practice. It is likely that much of this Zenta 'compendium' derives from published newspaper reports. However, there also is good reason to think that at least one of its sources was a separate.

The set opens with a complete (occasionally slightly condensed) translation of such a brochure (for further reference we will abbreviate the Russian text as Z-K-1).[81] Even though some small variant readings suggest we have not identified the *exact* source, clearly the translation is a close if somewhat free rendering of the text of a 'complete

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to have derived from *Relations-Diarium, Der grossen/ Zwischen denen Kayserl. und Türckischen Kriegs-Waffen den 11. dieses Monaths Septemb. unter dem Com[m]ando Ihrer Durchl. Printzen Eugenio von Savoyen/ unweit Senta und klein Canischa vorbey gangenen blutigen Feld-Schlacht* [...] N.p., 1697 (VD17: 14:079334L).

79. RGADA, f. 32, op. 1, 1687, No. 13, fols. 21–25. It lacks what might have been a real title page and begins with the dateline: 'From the imperial camp located between Senta and Malaia Konishaia September the 15th day.' While it probably derives from a different imprint, the text seems very close to that in *Außführliche Relation, Von dem den 11. Sept. 1697. wider die Türcken bey Zenta in Hungarn erhaltenen Herrlichen Sieg*. N.p., 1697 (VD 17: 12:622182H). The reference to 'Malaia Konishaia' (that is, Kleinkanischa, Hung. Kiskanizsa) in the header is not in the German pamphlet, nor is the final short paragraph of the German copy in the Russian translation.

80. RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1697, No. 13, pt. 3, fols. 516–558. Stepan Shamin generously provided a transcription from fols. 516, 536–554, and 558v; we have been able to check the texts in photos made from the archival microfilm. We also have examined a copy of a separate news report about Zenta, datelined Vienna 18 Sept. and focusing mainly on statistics about booty and casualties (RGADA f. 155, op. 1, 1697, No. 12, fol. 61). It does not seem to be related textually to the other texts discussed here; internal references suggest its source was apparently a newspaper published in Brandenburg-Prussia. As Shamin has suggested, very likely more reports about the battle at Zenta may yet be found scattered in other archival files.

81. The pamphlet used for our textual comparison is: *Ausführliche Relation, Dessen Was sich seit den 22. Augusti bis den 13. September in Ungarn/ zwischen der Christlichen und Türckischen Armee zugetragen: Aus dem Feld-Lager bey Zenta/ den 13. September/ Ao. 1697.* N.p., 1697 (VD 17: 1:651275L). The heading for the Russian translation reads (RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1697, No. 13, pt. 3, fol. 536): 'A true account of what took place between the Christian and Turkish armies from 22 August through 13 Sept. Written from the camp at Zenta on 13 Sept. 1697.'

account' of the battle published in 1697. This source is different from those discussed above that are now found in the Habsburg relations files. The anonymous narrative begins several days prior to the battle, sketching the troop movements and responses to intelligence which culminated in the events of September 11. While it could be an 'official' report, it is not the one sent by Eugene of Savoy to the emperor (cited in n. 77 above). There appear to have been several such narrative eyewitness accounts written by participants in the battle.[82]

The second part of the *kuranty* compilation is a much shorter text (designated here as Z-K-2), datelined 'From Vienna September 21', suggesting that it has been taken from a newspaper article.[83] Under the header is a title, which seems to have been drawn from the source; that source arguably was the *Relations-Diarium* which Tsar Peter's staff in the Netherlands had received and translated (cited above in n. 78). What we find in the *kuranty* text is but a few fragments from the original diary, possibly selected not in Moscow but rather by the editor of the German newspaper the Moscow translators were using.[84] That is, the *kuranty* text is not a copy excerpted from the translation made for Peter but rather is a new translation of an already excerpted selection, though one deriving ultimately from the same source. The German newspaper report included only some brief sentences describing the final result of the battle, the sultan's escape, some of the booty (including the recovery of the gold signet ring), and the summary casualty statistics at the very end of the original pamphlet – not the more detailed statistics broken down by military regiment.

Following this in the *kuranty* compilation is another entry with the header, 'The same date from Vienna', its text presumably from a short newspaper report (designated here Z-K-3). Most of this is yet another iteration of the casualties of the battle and the key items of booty, as reported, it seems, when Prince Diedrichstein arrived in Vienna posthaste with news of the battle. The listing is found in almost identical form in more than one contemporary newspaper, although given the incompleteness of the newspaper files for the period, we cannot be certain exactly which one was the source for the translation.[85]

The final section of this *kuranty* compilation relating to Zenta and the Turkish wars is primarily about battles against the Tatars as reported from the Wallachian border, although at the end are a couple of sentences that seem to have been drawn from a different report about the retreat of the Turkish army following the battle of Zenta. The

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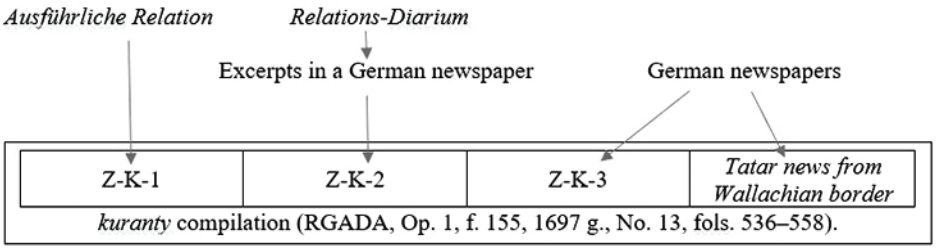
82. An example is a letter written by a Saxon Lieutenant the day after the battle which was appended to a news report from Vienna, 22 Sept., published in the *Stralsundischer Relations Courier*, 1697/79, [iii]–[iii]^{v}.

83. RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1697, No. 13, pt. 3, fols. 546–551.

84. See *Relations-Diarium* (VD17: 14:079334L), fols. [iii]–[iii]^{v}, [iv]^{v}.

85. E.g., *Leipziger Post- und Ordinar-Zeitung* 1697: 601 (the opening article is from Vienna, 21 Sept.); *Die Europäische Relation* [Altona], 1697/75: 603–604; *Stralsundischer Relations Courier*, 1697/78: [iii]^{v}–[iv].

kuranty compilation then goes on to other news. We can schematize the structure of the Zenta compendium in this *kuranty* file as follows:



The interest of this *kuranty* compilation about Zenta lies in the fact that it was copied nearly in its entirety in at least one manuscript outside the chanceries and, as Shamin has shown, also was epitomized for other copies. The full copy is in a florilegium that was brought together in its current form by Pavel M. Stroev in the nineteenth century.[86] One gathering probably was copied in one place at one time in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. It includes: a truncated copy of the fictive 'Tale of Two Embassies'; a well-known older prophecy about the end of the Ottoman Empire; and, followed by the Zenta narrative, a listing of the crimes for which the musketeers were executed in 1698, an astrological forecast and an excerpt from a work by Aristotle. Unfortunately, there is no indication of who might have been responsible for this collection of texts.

Another of the manuscripts Shamin has brought to this discussion belonged to the Shangin family of peasant entrepreneurs in the Iarensk region in the southern part of Archangel province. The family owned a copy of a portion of the texts in the 'Zenta compendium' of the *kuranty* of 1697, in a copy that included some of the other reports translated for that particular packet of *kuranty*. In other words, there must have been a copy made from the archival original of the *kuranty,* which somehow made it to a northern Russian village (Shamin 2020a: 189–190). How interested these peasants were in the *kuranty* reports is a good question, since they recycled the paper by turning over the sheets and using what had been the blank reverse sides for a totally different purpose.[87]

86. RNB, Pogodin Collection No. 1561, described by Bychkov 1882: 116–118; Waugh 1972: 760. Natalia Pak kindly provided a transcription of the Zenta texts (fols. 122–129^{v}), which we had not copied at the time we examined the manuscript. The Zenta texts in the manuscript have only minor variants from the copy in the *kuranty* files, the one significant exception being that the Pogodin manuscript breaks off shortly before the end of the final news item relating to the Turkish and Tatar campaigns in Poland. Even though in its current binding the volume includes a copy of one of the translations made by Andrei Vinius, there is no reason to think Vinius had anything to do with the texts we are discussing here. Another of the texts in the book is a compilation from various apothecary books, done by the apothecary Daniil Gurchin in Moscow in 1708, but again it would be risky to associate him with the gathering that contains the Zenta text.

87. Stepan Shamin cites Morozov 1980 for the initial communication about that family's archive. The manuscript is RGADA, f. 188, op. 1, pt. 1, No. 369, fols. 52^{v}–56. Shamin generously provided us with a transcription of the text and his comparison of it with the one in MS RGB, Undol'skii Collection No. 635, in advance of his publishing the textual comparisons for these manuscripts in Shamin 2020a: 189–193, and 337–338 (the complete copy of the *kuranty* texts owned by the Iarensk peas-

To say this is not to doubt the curiosity and knowledge amongst many of these northern Russian families, who as entrepreneurs and possibly Old Believers prized literacy. However, it is conceivable that what we have here is analogous to the situation, in which the tale of the two prophets discussed earlier came into the possession of a musketeer somewhat by accident, since he needed scrap paper for a different purpose. This particular copy of the Zenta-related material is severely contracted, retaining only the title from Z-K-1, the summary statistics on casualties from Z-K-2, the statistics from Z-K-3, and the final report on the defeat of the Tatars. Details about military matters as such seem not to have attracted attention.

The Iarensk manuscript is of interest for its textual connections with other Zenta manuscripts that circulated outside of the chancery milieu. Three copies of a condensed version of Z-K-3 exist as separate texts (that is, not accompanied by the other Zenta *kuranty* files), one of them in a quire of RGB, Undol'skii Collection No. 635, probably dating to the early eighteenth century. As already noted, that manuscript contains as well the translation of a short Latin text about Zenta. The book also contains a petition by a former captive, describing his experience in the hands of the Ottomans, a work known also in other copies, and excerpts from decrees issued in 1700.[88] It is impossible to know when the various parts of this volume came together in the book we now have. A second copy of Z-K-3, apparently of about the same date, is in a manuscript that was in the library of the Solovki Monastery on the White Sea.[89] That book contains later additions, including an account about the Astrakhan rebellion of 1706 and a printed copy of the Petrine *Vedomosti,* dated 17 September 1723.

The schematic relationship of the Zenta texts in the Russian manuscript tradition thus can be diagrammed as shown on the next page.[90]

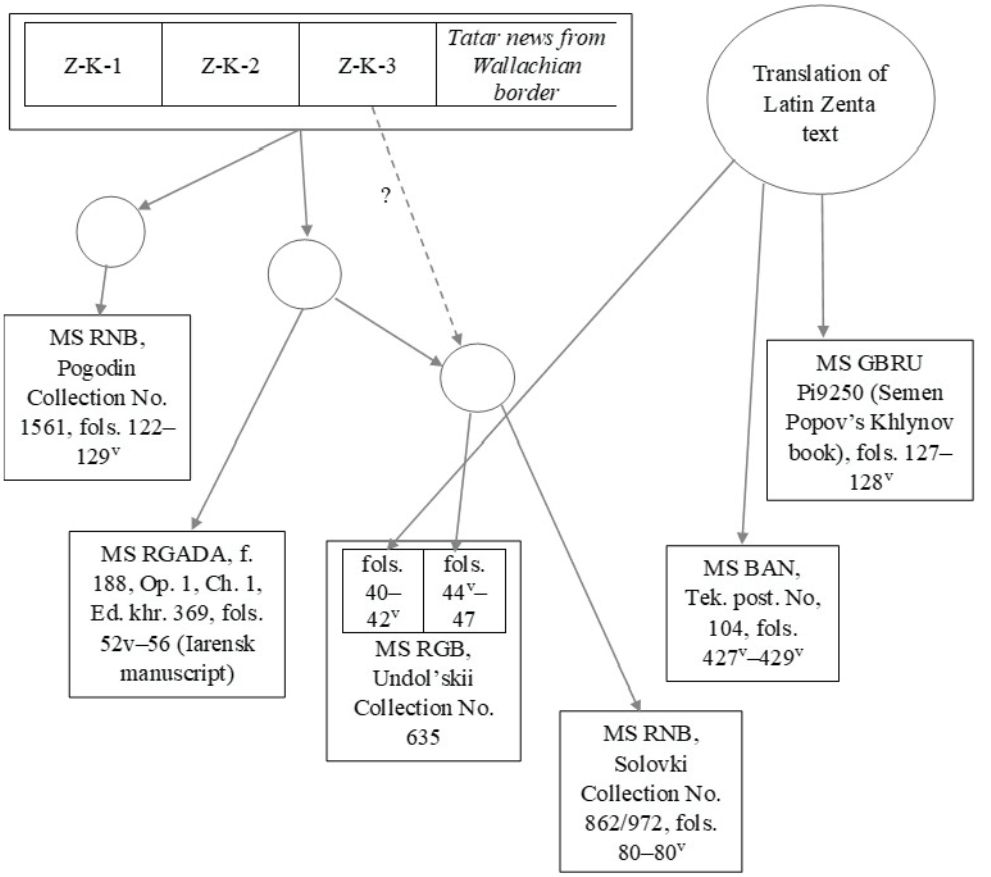
This somewhat complicated evidence about the reports on Zenta reinforces what we learned about the circulation of the sultan's apocryphal letters in the late seventeenth century. This example illustrates the rapidity with which news could spread: news of the battle reaching Vienna within two to three days of the battle, arriving in the Netherlands probably within a week, and translated from already printed accounts in Moscow approximately a month after the event. We might posit a growing awareness across Muscovite society regarding the ongoing Turkish wars, which at very least would have had an impact on the economy, drawn large numbers of men into military service of one kind or another, and could be related to traditional Orthodox concerns about 'true religion' and

ants). Shamin does not share our skepticism about the possible degree of interest of the Shangins in the foreign news.

88. For its description, see Viktorov 1870: 47; the typescript "Opisanie" 1936–37: 77–78; Waugh 1972: 804.

89. RNB, Solovki Collection No. 862/972. For publication of this copy, see Waugh 2003: 301–302. We have not examined a third copy, appended to an eighteenth-century copy of the Muscovite 'Novyi letopisets', MS BAN, Tek. post. No. 104, described in Pokrovskaia et al. 1959: 366–367.

90. The diagram simplifies the possibility of intermediary copies and does not reflect any exact chronology for the extant manuscripts.



its enemies. In this context, while the evidence from manuscript copies may seem rather slight (we are not talking about the circulation of printed copies), there was at least some increase in the spread of texts with 'Turkish themes', a phenomenon which may have enjoyed the blessing of government officials in an era when there were initiatives to propagandize military victories with Baroque pageantry. Peter the Great's conquest of Azov in 1696 was something of a landmark in this regard.

Even if it was to serve educational and cultural goals in the first instance, Peter's first foreign trip in 1697–1698 was also the occasion for cementing the alliances in place against the Turks. It is no accident that even while in the Netherlands when he was learning how to build ships, Peter was maintaining close connections with the court in Vienna. The battle of Zenta was a news sensation and seemed to promise final victory over the Ottomans. The hero of the day, Prince Eugene, would later be commemorated not just for this one battle but for his other military successes against the Turks (FIG 21.8). Thanks to his informant in Vienna, Peter was deluged with news about the battle; his staff translated at least two of the many pamphlets and newspapers which also contained shorter reports. While it seems this material was then sent back to Moscow, independently the translators

FIG. 21.8. The 'Bronze Horseman' of Vienna: the statue of Prince Eugene of Savoy erected in 1863 in front of the Hofburg, the imperial winter palace.

in the Ambassadorial Chancery had their own sources for the ongoing process of producing the *kuranty*, among which was yet another of the pamphlets about the battle and various shorter newspaper reports. Once they had translated the news about Zenta, it appears that they sent copies on to Peter, perhaps not realizing he may have been better informed already.[91] Copying from the chancery files also resulted in the spread of the news even to remote areas of the Russian North, facilitated perhaps by the steps which had been taken to improve postal communications with Archangel in the early 1690s.

Unfortunately, as with so many other examples where we would wish to identify 'readers' of the news in Muscovy, we are left with unanswered questions. One copy of a very short Zenta text can be connected with the Solovki Monastery on the White Sea, another with our bookman in Khlynov, whose curiosity about many subjects is quite well documented from what we know about his library, and a third with the Iarensk peasant family. All of these cases are far distant from Moscow. There is little information to connect the few other non-chancery copies of the texts with specific owners or readers. Moreover, with the uncertainties about dating, we cannot be sure when those texts arrived at their destinations or whether the reports were still deemed 'newsworthy', if received long after the actual event. They might have been deemed 'relevant' in the context of the Northern War and Peter's brief but disastrous war against the Ottomans that ended with his surrender on the River Prut in 1711.

21.5. Conclusion

So here we have a sampling of the 'readers' and 'readership' of the news in late Muscovy. In some cases, we can identify the individuals by name and somehow connect them with copies of the texts translated in the Ambassadorial Chancery or other news sources

91. The annotation on RGADA, f. 155, 1697, No. 13, pt. 3, fol. 558v, seems to indicate as much.

which were obtained through official instances. What are we to make of such limited evidence? There is the occasional report of military events, a description of an impressive ceremony, a polemical text that might have been perceived relevant to a current or imminent war, prophetic tracts reflecting the apocalyptic anxieties of many across European society. One significant point to emphasize is that, despite the circulation of the last-named texts, often we know about them precisely because the government did *not* want them disseminated. There is little here to suggest that the few texts copied and 'disseminated' reached many potential readers: the number of copies seems disappointingly small.

While the reasons for the interest in such texts may be analogous to what we might observe for the readers of the news in the West, the situations were also fundamentally different. Depending on where they lived, Muscovites arguably had no need to know the foreign news, nor would they have been particularly interested in it. The circumstances in which news might have been exchanged were more limited than what was possible in the West, where newspapers were ubiquitous, frequently published and readily available, if only through their being read aloud in the local coffee house. We might assume that news pertaining to military events along the western or southern frontiers of Muscovy would have been of considerable interest to the people living in the areas most likely to be directly affected. Much of that news was communicated orally, and all too often it seems to have been misleading rumor.

When the news did spread in written form, it was for the most part thanks to a few members of the elite who had access to the chancery files. The texts which were copied and disseminated more widely tended to be ones confined to 'news sensations', subjects that could be deemed relevant in any number of situations but did not necessarily represent ongoing reporting of actual events. This picture of limited dissemination of news and limited interest in it carried over beyond the Petrine divide, even if increasingly some members of the Muscovite elite had developed an expanding awareness of the wider world and had a 'need to know' what was going on in it.

CHAPTER 22

The *Kuranty* in Retrospect, an Interim Report and an Agenda for Future Studies

In order to discuss what we believe we have accomplished in this book, it is useful to begin with a very selective review of the study and publication of the Russian newspaper translations that came to be known as the *kuranty*. The Russian acquisition of foreign newspapers and their translations first began to attract scholarly attention in the nineteenth century. The early scholarship on the foreign news devoted a certain amount of attention to identifying the foreign sources for the Russian translations, and a project, never completed, was undertaken to prepare an edition of the translated texts. Scholars of the *kuranty* tended to see them as the 'first Russian newspapers', anticipating the actual first publication of a Russian newspaper under Peter the Great. The revival of interest in the *kuranty* with the publication of their texts and related documents in the series entitled *Vesti-Kuranty* starting in 1972 transformed our ability to understand the importance of these documents in the history of Russian culture and in the broader context of the emergence of modern communications in Europe. One of the current co-authors, Daniel Waugh, had very selectively examined some of the translations and tracked down some of their sources, a project which inspired him to think that he might produce a monographic overview and summary of what could be said about the *kuranty* and their importance. However, he abandoned the effort as premature: not enough of the Russian texts had been published, and he found too daunting the task of trying to identify the sources and contextualize what the Russians had done with them. With a focus on linguistic analysis, Roland Schibli (1988) tackled that challenge, for a limited range of the *kuranty* and their sources. Subsequently, it is the work of Ingrid Maier which has identified so many of the foreign sources and deepened the analysis of the way the Muscovite translators used them. In deciding more than a decade and a half ago to undertake this volume, we had good reason to think that the time had come for a summary synthesis of what we can learn from the *kuranty*.

As often happens with academic research, assumptions made at the beginning of a project need to be modified and the scope of the enterprise reshaped in light of ongoing research and writing. As the book project unfolded, the authors have been confronted with both a plethora of valuable new publications and limited by the uneven and often quite fragmentary primary source base. The huge and important Vol. VI of the *Vesti-Kuranty* series, for which Maier was one of the editors, appeared, followed by Vol. VII, which brings the series down to the beginning of the 1670s. Stepan Shamin, who knows the Russian archival sources better than anyone else, was beginning to publish his studies of the *kuranty,* which now include two major monographs and a long series of articles. And there is significant new scholarship on Muscovite foreign policy (by, e.g., Boris Floria, Elena Kobzareva, and Kirill Kochegarov), in which careful attention is being paid to the relationship between the acquisition of news and decision making, So our original plan to cover fully the story of the *kuranty* down through the end of the seventeenth century was modified to concentrate on the first three quarters of the century, with some exceptions for later material. For now, Shamin's work with the Russian sources provides an introduction and overview for most of the century's last quarter. However, we still lack a full publication of the Russian texts, and, with some exceptions, the important work of identifying the foreign sources in that period remains a desidertum. Analysis of the possible impact of the *kuranty* on the making of Russian foreign policy still requires close analysis of diplomatic files, many of which are yet unpublished and contain much foreign news that is not to be found in the *Vesti-Kuranty* series. The uneven and fragmentary preservation of European newspapers has been a major obstacle to the kind of analysis we should wish to undertake, although the preservation and accessibility of the news publications improves for the last decades of the seventeenth century. To identify the most likely sources for the Russian texts will acquire additional years of painstaking work in various collections. Significant lacunae will remain. Even with our focus on the earlier decades of the century, it has been necessary to be very selective with examples.

While the original plan had been to concentrate primarily on the *kuranty*, increasingly it became apparent that such a focus would be too narrow. Many other sources of foreign news were available in seventeenth-century Moscow, so the impact of the *kuranty* could not be appreciated unless contextualized in that larger body of material. Moreover, it has been important to examine how the international news of the day was reported and disseminated outside of Muscovy, as that had a significant bearing on what news the Russians might be able to obtain. Since one of the goals of the study has always been to assess the degree to which foreign news might have become known outside of the chancery milieu, it also has been important to consider more generally what was news in Russia and how it was communicated. The complexity of these topics will require much additional study. What we may originally have envisaged as a compact summary for the general reader has instead grown to include a great deal of material on

methodological issues, which we hope may provide guidance for further research. Only then may it be possible to reach firm conclusions about how and why (or even whether) the *kuranty* were really important. This book thus might best be termed an 'interim report', informed as far as it goes by the substantial amount of research and writing on the material which both authors have done over the years, but leaving many gaps to be filled.

22.1. Russia and the communications revolution in Europe

One premise of this project has been that study of the *kuranty* should offer some new perspectives on the long-established theme of so much historiography concerning early modern Russia – what has generally been termed Russia's 'westernization'. There is an abiding interest in determining the ways in which 'traditional' Muscovy, allegedly insular and concerned above all with defense of its religious Orthodoxy, began to change as a result of increasing contacts with the outside world via diplomatic, commercial, military and other exchanges. To explore the ways in which the Russian government (and possibly broader segments of Russian society) learned about the wider world during a period when a communications revolution was underway in Europe should shed some new light on the gradual reorientation of Russian politics and culture. And indeed, to a considerable degree, our study reinforces the analyses which have contributed to our understanding of Russia's 'westernization'.

However, the material also serves as a reminder of the need for caution in trying to write such comparative history. For our subject, the important aspects of the communications revolution in the West involved the creation of a European-wide postal network, starting in the late fifteenth century, the use of print technology for the rapid production of information across a range of concerns, and then in the seventeenth century, the rapid development of newspapers for the regular reporting of current events. Thanks to the post, the news that was printed could be obtained relatively quickly and disseminated with little delay to an increasingly broad readership.

This communications revolution reached Russia with some delay and for a long time in a rather limited form. In the West, commercial interests and private enterprise created the demand for the improvement in communications. The extension of the postal network to Eastern Europe by the middle of the seventeenth century made possible the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post in the 1660s. Even though initially its organization was contracted out to a foreign entrepreneur, it quickly came under government control. Its primary purpose was to keep the government informed on a regular basis about foreign news, not to facilitate long-distance communication by private individuals. Prior to the establishment of the post, there was no such mechanism for the regular acquisition foreign news. However, the decision to establish the international post was a logical extension of the institutionalization of foreign-policy administration in Muscovy. As was the case for governments elsewhere, the Kremlin was intensely interested in having its diplomats collect intelligence about foreign affairs. The absence of permanent diplomatic representation in foreign capitals limited the effectiveness of

such intelligence gathering. In this regard, Russia lagged behind other major powers, which had developed a diplomatic service much earlier and more fully.

There was a steady growth of expertise in foreign affairs in seventeenth-century Russia, which can be documented from examining the careers of individuals sent on diplomatic missions and the personnel who manned the Ambassadorial Chancery. Those who headed the chancery tended to be officials who had had ample opportunity to learn about the foreign political alignments most relevant to Russian foreign policy. Staffing missions abroad and the chancery at home with competent translators was particularly challenging and not always successful. However, there also is impressive evidence in the *kuranty* files that many of the translators were quite skilled, even if their work often contained mistakes that might be attributed to the haste with which they had to work. On the whole, it seems that the absence of any permanent Russian mission abroad until the last third of the seventeenth century was no obstacle to the making of an effective foreign policy. Where there were miscalculations resulting in failure, the explanation was not necessarily for want of accurate or timely information but rather due to misguided preconceptions and wishful thinking about desired results.

The significant spread of newspaper publication in Europe dates to the second decade of the seventeenth century; it is impressive that the first copies of some of those papers began to be received in Russian not long afterwards. Clearly there was sufficient interest in obtaining such news that the Russian authorities encouraged the foreigners who had had them to turn over copies for translation; for the foreign merchants, hoping to curry favor, there was some incentive to do so. Diplomatic exchange made it possible to obtain printed and manuscript news. While gaps in archival preservation may explain why such acquisition of foreign news sources seems to have been irregular, there is good reason to think that it was indeed opportunistic. The Russian officials might recognize the value of the foreign news but for a long time seem not to have prioritized arrangements for agents abroad to acquire it on a regular basis. The foreign newspapers and newsletters that were obtained generally were substantially dated by the time of their receipt and translation. This fact undoubtedly helps to explain why there is relatively little evidence that they had much of an impact on the making of Russian foreign policy. In this regard, it is important to remember that all governments in the early modern era confronted challenges in obtaining news rapidly and devising policies that would not be overtaken by new developments. Traditional, slow and infrequent diplomacy, and regular reports from border commandants who were tasked with intelligence gathering seem to have been much more important in Russia than anything the *kuranty* contributed during the first decades for which we have them.

22.2. Russia's first newspapers?

The *kuranty* translations were *not* Russia's first 'newspapers', if we understand by that term regularly produced and widely disseminated publications of the latest news. With some exceptions, foreign news was for internal government use only. It surely contributed to the growing awareness of the wider world and the professionalization of those directly involved in Muscovite diplomacy (who had a need to know and had access to the material). To the degree that at least Russian elite merchants might interact with their foreign counterparts and thus be in a position to learn of the foreign news, or even obtain copies of newspapers, we can assume a wider 'readership'. But there is very little evidence that translated news spread beyond the walls of the chanceries before the last decades of the seventeenth century. For ordinary Russians who were going about their daily routines, little of it could have been of any relevance. Even with the establishment of the regular foreign post, few Russians used it unless they were employed on some government mission. It is uncertain whether the *kuranty*, now produced on a regular basis with the establishment of the international post, had any greater impact on government decision making than had been the case earlier in the century. There is good reason to think that intelligence collected by border commanders, diplomats, or individuals who made their way to Russia was still the most valued source of foreign news.

Much more needs to be done with the unpublished archival materials to provide a full picture of the place of the *kuranty* in decision making beyond just positing that they helped to educate members of the ruling elite in European ways. Do we in fact see here the development of a sense of 'contemporaneity' that Brendan Dooley (2010) has emphasized was a result of the communications revolution elsewhere with the dissemination of newspapers? There is considerable evidence (much of which chronologically falls beyond the limits of our study) to suggest that there came to be a substantial amount of regular intercourse between the key government officials and the members of the foreign community in Moscow who were likely to have been following the news from abroad and often were the ones who had supplied it to the Ambassadorial Chancery in the era prior to the post. The post was used by the foreign residents, who included medical specialists, merchants and military officers. A classic example is Patrick Gordon, the Scottish mercenary who became an influential adviser to the young Tsar Peter I and whose correspondence was truly impressive. He clearly was diligent in obtaining news by whatever means possible. Starting back earlier in the seventeenth century, there were some foreign resident agents in Moscow who received newspapers and often turned them over to the Russians. By the 1670s and 1680s, a number of them had very close relations with Russian officials and were in a position to supply news in exchange for poltical intelligence they would then send to their governments (and some of which would end up in the Western press).

As was also the case elsewhere in Europe, often personal interactions and communication with trusted agents were more valued by government officials than the publicly

accessible press. The extensive network which Joseph Williamson maintained to keep the English government informed about foreign affairs depended heavily on the ability of his correspondents to obtain news through individual connections. News was a commodity, often traded privately. There are well-documented cases of how government officials everywhere in Europe were part of patronage networks and might cultivate relationships that enabled them to become purveyors of news. Good examples are Laurentius Grelle, the secretary in the Swedish administration based in Riga, who actively sought employment as an intelligencer for the tsar in the mid-1640s, and Adam Styla Sweykowski, a translator at the Habsburg Imperial court in Vienna in the 1680s and 1690s, whom the Russians eventually hired as a news agent. A great deal is yet to be learned from the collections of unpublished newsletters in various archives.

When Tsar Peter, well aware of the news media in the West and the possibilities for manipulating the news in support of government policy, decided at the end of 1702 to start printing the first Russian newspaper, the *Vedomosti*, the enterprise in many ways was made possible by the long experience with the *kuranty*. That is, foreign news continued to be obtained, excerpted and translated through the now well-established postal arrangements. The difference, of course, was that multiple printed copies were now to be available for the first time. The *Vedomosti* were not intended to be merely a vehicle for educating the servants of the state about foreign affairs, but were conceived as having a broader goal of propagandizing government 'reforms'. A significant part of what was published in the first Russian newspaper focused on the military achievements in the ongoing Northern War and on other state projects. As an instrument for spreading government propaganda, the *Vedomosti* seem not to have been a striking success. They never appeared with the same frequency as did the leading foreign newspapers, and most of the print runs of the *Vedomosti* never sold, an indication of limited interest and demand. While in the West official sponsorship (and controls) were important elements in the development of the press, to a considerable degree its history was that of entrepreneurship and commercial success to meet an increasing demand from various levels of society to be informed. This is not the history of the *kuranty* or, for that matter, of the first Russian newspaper.

22.3. The dissemination of news to a wider audience in early modern Russia

Stepan Shamin (2011a: 307) provides a judicious summary of what might best be said about the readership of the *kuranty*:

> …At the very end of the seventeenth century in Russia a specific audience of 'readers of the press' had yet to come into being. The dissemination of separate reports from the *kuranty* beyond their application in professional diplomacy was but random, even though it can be situated within the general framework of reading, on the one hand, and 'newsletter' writing (in some cases anonymous) on the other.

He goes on to cite Aleksandr M. Panchenko's observation that 'what would attract the interest of Russian readers was the "fabulous", exotica,' a theme which Shamin (2020a)

has now documented in extenso in his latest book that focuses on the translated 'curiosities' of pamphlet ephemera, a number of which did circulate beyond the chanceries. Yet the numbers of copies of such material are disappointingly small.

In order to appreciate that there were indeed mechanisms for the dissemination of news in Muscovy, it is necessary to broaden our inquiry to encompass more than just that news which can be traced to the translations made from foreign newspapers in the Ambassadorial Chancery. In fact, on various levels traditional means of communication, not foreign innovations such as the post or publications, made it possible for news to spread quite rapidly in early modern Russia. This occurred both on the official (government and church) level and on the unofficial level, primarily through oral communication amongst ordinary Russians. Granted, much of the latter can be dismissed as ill-informed 'rumor', where the focus generally was on domestic concerns, in many cases responses to information or at least beliefs regarding the ruling elite. However, to look more closely at this kind of evidence should shed light on how rapidly news might spread through unofficial channels and how in the process its accuracy and substance might be transformed.[1]

Government could not function without the dissemination of information, which, granted, was carefully selected to suit some immediate purpose. Directives sent from the Kremlin typically would have a preamble that carefully laid out the reason for the order. Thus, for example, military commanders had to know why they were to be on alert for some anticipated danger or were to mount additional intelligence-gathering missions across the borders. Urgent instructions were sent post-haste, using mounted couriers, and the reports came back via similar means. Where foreign news was obtained by interrogating merchants, clergy, or escaped captives once they crossed into Russian-held territory, the depositions generally would be sent on immediately to Moscow. Those who brought the news in this fashion surely did not talk only to their interrogators but must have shared it more widely. Many residents of a border town might well have heard quite a lot about what was supposedly going on in a neighboring country, even if a good deal of what they heard might be unverified rumor or wishful thinking that would prove to have been false. As the documentation on the history of the Razin rebellion shows, it is possible to track the flow of such news and intelligence as it passed through multiple instances and see what the potential was for important news to spread.[2] Historians of the European press now emphasize that even in the world of print, oral communication of news continued to be important. This certainly is in evidence in Russia, where the highly bureaucratized Muscovite government relied heavily on information commonly obtained in the first instance from oral reports, even if then they were written down and ended up in the Moscow chanceries.

1. Sergei Bakhrushin's very interesting discussion (1987) of popular responses to events during the reign of the first Romanov, Mikhail Fedorovich, points to the potential value of such analysis.

2. See Waugh 2017: 236–251, drawing on the extensive documentation in *Krest'ianskaia voina* 1954–1976.

Aware of the need to verify reports, government officials expended considerable effort to cross-check what they had been told or read. The Habsburg envoy Baron von Mayerberg's condescending remark about how the Russians naively believed everything they read in Dutch and German newspapers is primarily a testimony to his personal pique at the failure of his mission and to his ignorance. The tsar and his advisers were assiduous in trying to obtain as much news as possible and to verify its accuracy, even though they could end up being misled. The *kuranty* were but one source of information, and in their production the translators and their superiors clearly had to keep track of reports coming from different directions, collate or select from them, and check if a new report contained information related to a previous one or could be corroborated from some independent source. Of course the system was not immune to being skewed by personal biases, as has been suggested in the case of the influential 'chancellor' Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin. The translators too – for example Andrei Vinius – could filter news in ways that might reflect personal interests. Moreover, individuals like Vinius not only were positioned to obtain a great deal of news but might share it privately, even if that sharing would not have been officially approved. What we know about his exchanges with Patrick Gordon is a good indication of how incoming news and the newspapers themselves could find readers outside the walls of the chancery.

The circumstances where the government would deliberately circulate foreign news involved in the first instance state security and not just the almost omnipresent threat of foreign invasion. News that the English had pursued the pirate Jean Bart northwards in 1696 caused the government to warn the officials on the Northern Dvina to beware of pirates (Kozlovskii 1913, 2: 384–386). Another threat to state security which was taken very seriously was the spread of infectious disease. It is no accident that reports of the plague in London translated from newspapers for the *kuranty* were marked on the manuscript copy for special attention.[3] In such circumstances appropriate measures would be taken to prevent the disease from spreading into Muscovite territory. In 1683, citing news received from Riga in the *kuranty* about the plague, the government instructed its military commanders on the western borders to interdict all travel from the West (ibid.: 111–114). Of course such citation of news did not necessarily mean quoting a detailed report; more likely what was communicated (in a written instruction or in oral form) would be but a summary.

There is evidence of how the government might deliberately circulate news for propaganda purposes. Among the most common examples are announcements of a royal wedding or birth, which would be read in churches and celebrated liturgically. Of course, apart from the provincial officials or clergy deputed to publicize such news, this generally did not mean it was 'read' in a formal sense by a broader segment of the population, but at least we have here some indication of audiences and 'consumption' of news reports. Local chroniclers might mention such reports in their recording of the events deemed

3. RGADA, f. 155, op. 1, 1666, No. 11, fol. 59, published in V-K VI/1: 231.

newsworthy in the region. The chronicles which incorporated such news, although never printed, in some ways might be seen as analogous to the 'newsbooks' published in the West, which would contain annual summaries and excerpts from reports that had been published during the year. The reading of decrees in public certainly was common where the government might be needing to foster support for some policy. Most such instances probably did not involve the communication of foreign news but rather focused on domestic priorities. Yet we can readily appreciate how conscription or taxation to support a campaign against the Muslim archenemy of Orthodoxy might well invoke at least a passing reference to the sultan's threats or the latest alert concerning an invasion.

There are actually many examples of public celebrations and deliberate dissemination of news about a foreign military victory or the signing of a peace treaty. A dramatic case is that mounted on receipt of the news about Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus' victory over the Habsburg army commanded by General Tilly at Breitenfeld on 7 September 1631. A Swedish envoy reported the victory on his arrival in Moscow on 27 October. Within a week the Muscovite government had ordered that it be celebrated in church, and a parade and military salute had taken place, witnessed by thousands (Forsten 1893–1894, 2: 129–131). The unexpectedly favorable Truce of Valiesar/Vallisaare that paused the war against Sweden in December 1658 – allowed the Russians to retain for three years all the territory they had conquered in Livonia. The Kremlin informed the commandant in Smolensk about the treaty and instructed him to fire a cannon salute 'in order that the people be informed' (*chtob pro to vsem liudem bylo vedomo*) after a celebratory prayer service in the cathedral (*PSZ* 1: 479, No. 241). On 6 July 1661, prayers were offered in the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Moscow Kremlin to celebrate the signing of the Peace of Kardis on 21 June ending the war with Sweden (ibid.: 554–555, No. 305). At the end of the prayers, apparently still in the church, the State Secretary and head of the Ambassadorial Chancery Almaz Ivanov gave a speech in which he explained the terms of the treaty and its importance. We cannot know who was in attendance, but surely many people heard the news and would have spread it widely on leaving church. In 1676 Moscow celebrated another foreign military success, the naval victory by the combined Dutch-Danish fleet under Admiral Cornelis Tromp over the Swedes (Battle of Öland, June 1676). In this case, the postmaster Andrei Vinius was instructed to translate and send the news to all of the military governors in Muscovite towns, presumably because it was believed the Swedish defeat would reduce the likelihood of a Swedish military threat in the Russian North at the time Muscovy was occupied in Ukraine against the Turks and Tatars.[4]

By 1695, when the dissemination of foreign news in the interests of the state was becoming increasingly common, it was not a huge step for the latest reports about the battle against the Turks at Azov to be read aloud in the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow. When the fortress was taken in 1696, the victory was marked in the cathedral,

4. Fabritsius 1864: 64; Shamin 2011: 117.

with prayers and the reading by the State Secretary Emel'ian Ukraintsev of Peter's letter to the patriarch about the success (*Rossiia* 1990: 227–230, 241–242). The return of the victorious army was celebrated with great pomp, during which none other than Andrei Vinius read aloud verses he had composed for the occasion.

22.4. News for the masses?

Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen offer a cautionary assessment about the impact of newspapers (2019: 88–89):

> Much of the news they contained, the battles and sieges, princely weddings and riots in far-away cities, had no likely impact on the lives of their readers. Conversely much of the news that citizens had to know, such as changes in tax rates, the decisions of the States of Holland or the municipality, did not appear in the newspapers at all. What then are newspapers? Part recreation, part contemporary history, part an essential manual of instruction for those who would be well equipped for the conversation of polite society; but certainly insufficient in themselves as a news service for those involved at almost any level in public affairs [...].

We might well ask whether there is any way to measure the interest of ordinary 'readers' in the news. The genres for the publication of 'news' varied. Certainly much of what was intended for popular consumption and appeared in broadsides and other separates included illustrations and frequently text in verse. For example, in England there was a lively and presumably profitable business of printing illustrated broadsides on which news items, presumably originally printed in prose, were rendered in ballad form and might even include a suggeston about what popular tune could accompany them (see, e.g., McShane 2005). Surely this was news for entertainment, which for many recipients would likely come only from hearing an oral performance. The English example is not unique, as an examination of illustrated broadsides produced elsewhere in Europe demonstrates.

The choice of verse for the dissemination of information that otherwise would appear in prose in fact was not unusual in early modern Europe. An extension of the legacy of medieval epics, even substantial works of history might be presented in verse. The late Renaissance and Baroque literature of Poland was alive with verse, at least some of it composed as an immediate response to significant news: 'part recreation, part contemporary history' and part political propaganda. For example,Krzysztof Warszewicki (1543–1603), a diplomat and secretary to the king, produced a long verse epic about the Ottomans in the aftermath of the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 and other anti-Turkish compositions (see Wierzbowski 1887). His work was frequently cited by others writing in response to the Turkish threat. A chronicle attributed to Alessandro Guagnini included a section on the Turks that quoted Warszewicki and was translated and copied more than once in late Muscovy, each time, it seems in conjunction with the interest occasioned by war (or the expectation of its renewal) against the Ottomans.[5] A number

5. See the discussion in Waugh 1972: 172–188. The translator of the earliest of these passages from Guagnini incorporated them into a larger composition about the Turks, in the process preserving in

of Polish verse separates, published in connection with current political events in the Commonwealth, were acquired through diplomatic channels and translated in Moscow (see Nikolaev 1989a).

Even though interpretation of the evidence for Russia is challenging, the so-called 'historical songs', whose appearance seems to have developed especially starting in the late sixteenth century, may have something to add to our perceptions about what was news in Russia and how it was transmitted.[6] Many of these texts are known to us only from transcriptions made no earlier than the eighteenth century. However, there are older transcriptions (notably made by the Englishman Richard James in 1619–1620), which suggest that at least some texts were direct responses to current news.[7] Soviet-era commentary on the historical songs may have imposed a kind of anachronistic Marxist interpretation about their reflecting the ideas of the working masses in opposition to their 'feudal' masters. Nonetheless, there does seem to be a consensus that the songs derive from some knowledge of real events and may have been composed soon after they had occurred.[8]

Granted, most of the content of the songs concerns what can be termed 'domestic' news, including a focus on rulers or other members of the elite, military exploits, etc. However, the content of at least some of the songs can be contextualized with reference to the concerns of a government that was mining all possible sources of news in order to devise an effective foreign policy, however narrowly it may have focused on the security of border regions or the desire to extend Russian power beyond those borders. In that sense, the songs and the government's focus on and use of foreign news are analogous, more distant events generally being of secondary concern and importance. Some of these 'ballads' recount the struggle with pretenders and the Commonwealth during the Time of Troubles. The unsuccessful attempt to take Smolensk in 1633–1634 is another theme. A number of songs involve the Cossack seizure of Azov from the Turks in 1637 and its defense. The unsuccessful siege of Riga by the Russians in 1656, at which Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich was present, was commemorated in one of the texts. Songs lament the fate of Prince Semen Romanovich Pozharskii, taken by the Tatars at Konotop in 1659 and

verse form some of the quotations from Warszewicki. The identity of the translator is uncertain (possibly a certain Bogdan or Boris Sekiotov). The date of the translation is 1682, although its subsequent copying and spread follows at the time of the successful defense of Vienna from the Ottomans in 1683. Later copies 'updated' the work by changing the colophon to refer to the then current Russian ruler.

6. For the historical song texts and commentary, see *Istoricheskie pesni* 1960, 1966, the second devoted to ones about events in the seventeenth century.

7. For a recent scholarly publication and commentary on the Richard James texts by G. M. Prokhorov, see *BLDR* 15: 458–463, 525–526.

8. The eminent specialist on early Russian literature Varvara Pavlovna Adrianova-Peretts (1974: 63) cautioned that far from all of the songs reflected oppositional views of the working masses. Her analysis of the seventeenth-century songs makes it clear that they embody details which correspond to documentable historical reality but are overlaid with literary accretions from sources such as medieval epics.

executed.[9] And there are many songs relating to Stenka Razin's rebellion, about which the government was so diligent in seeking intelligence, much of it transmitted in 'relay' fashion orally and obviously widespread amongst the local population in the south.

We do not know who composed the songs. They may in fact not all be expressions of 'popular' imaginings about the news, and there is no certainty that they were composed as immediate responses to current news or represent an effort to disseminate it. They may, of course, tell us primarily about the way in which news of one era quickly became history, subject to all the vagaries of embellishment and invoked in some later era either as pure entertainment or as commentary about the events at the time of the composition. The way in which the pseudo-epigraphic correspondence of the Ottoman sultan evolved and reemerged, made relevant to the next international crisis, is instructive in this regard. The letters in some cases were printed in verse form. In Russia they seem to have inspired some original compositions. The vulgar adaptation of the correspondence with the Cossacks, texts ostensibly reflecting the cultural level of the lower classes, is a late phenomenon, one which in fact may well have been produced in the circles of the educated elite. Another example, a so-called 'poetic tale' about the Cossack taking of Azov in 1637, most likely is the work of Russian chancery clerks, not evidence of the literary talent of Cossack society.[10] It should hardly surprise us, were the authors of historical songs to be found amongst the educated elites in government circles, given what we do know from the other examples of how genuine documents inspired the creation of fictional ones, ostensibly in the same genres. While but a rare example, the late seventeenth-century parody of the *kuranty* surely was a product of educated circles, not popular folklore. It is important to remember that the boundaries, if such there were, between the culture of educated Muscovites and that of the largely illiterate masses, were certainly permeable. There is little reason to assume that 'readers of the *kuranty*' were incipient Enlightenment secular rationalists who had abandoned belief in Divine intervention in human affairs. So at best we might hypothesize that the historical songs may illustrate a response to the 'news', but whose response is not clear. This is a subject for future study if we would look beyond the *kuranty* and hope to understand 'what was news in Muscovy' and how it was disseminated, often by oral transmission.

22.5. The two worlds of Ivan Zheliabuzhskii and Semen Popov

In conclusion, to move back from such speculative exercises, we might consider the examples of two men, Ivan Afanas'evich Zheliabuzhskii and Semen Popov. Metaphorically they can be seen as a kind of planetary conjunction, apparently in close proximity for a brief time but in fact separated in space. What they shared was an interest in collecting

9. The earliest record of the songs about the siege of Riga and about Pozharskii is in the so-called 'Miscellany of Kirsha Danilov', a large collection of epics and songs compiled, it seems, in Siberia some time in the eighteenth century. See the authoritative text edition with commentary, Danilov 1977.

10. See Boeck [Bouk] 2010, keeping in mind that his interpretation casts doubt on the accepted scholarly opinion about the tale. This tale is a text distinctly different from the accounts about the Azov event in the historical songs.

and copying *kuranty* and *kuranty*-like news. As with the seventeenth-century commentaries on planetary conjunctions, what exactly to make of the observed evidence is an open-ended question.

Of the two individuals we have selected, the one most likely to fit the standard paradigm about Russia's westernization is Zheliabuzhskii, whom we first met at the beginning of his career in diplomatic service. He exemplifies how government officials could become knowledgeable about foreign affairs through involvement in negotiations and, thanks to such connections, as agents in the acquisition of foreign news. His diplomatic service took him on more than one occasion to Poland and Ukraine; he was sent to Courland; he was a member of an important mission to England and went on to Italy; he headed a mission to Vienna. En route to these assignments, he traveled through other European countries; while in Moscow, he frequently was involved in the reception of foreign ambassadors. As was the case with other capable government officials, he also served in other functions, as a military governor and in the drafting of the decree that abolished the system of rank ordering (*mestnichestvo*) under Tsar Fedor Alekseevich. Apparently Zheliabuzhskii's career dimmed once Peter took power, possibly because he had been too closely associated with the regime of Tsarevna Sofiia and Vasilii Golitsyn. However, the experienced functionary retained the connections which enabled him to obtain official documents that he copied into his diary, among them materials on the Azov campaign, *kuranty* translations, and at least one of the apocryphal letters of the Ottoman sultan. That he kept such a diary (assuming much of the text indeed is his) is evidence of how times had changed. As his biographers have noted, in many ways his diary can be compared structurally and stylistically to the *kuranty*, with which Zheliabuzhskii obviously was very familiar (Bogdanov and Kagan[-Tarkovskaia] 1992: 325). His account, detailing military successes, celebrations, court ceremonial and more, covers some two decades down to the Battle of Poltava in 1709.

The other bright pole of our planetary conjunction at the end of the seventeenth century is Semen Popov (Popovykh).[11] Unlike Zhelabuzhskii, who moved in the elite circles of the court in Moscow, Popov spent most of his life in provincial Khlynov (Viatka), a not insignificant town on one of the routes to Siberia, one that had but infrequent postal connections with Moscow. From a family of clerics, he acquired an impressive degree of formal literacy. He had a career in local fiscal administration, married into another of the local elite families, and, when Peter the Great decreed the establishment of new fiscal institutions, he was drafted into service as a *burmistr* for tax collection. He prospered financially and was able to invest his resources in revenue-producing realestate. When and whether he served as a sacristan in one of the important local churches is uncertain: perhaps that was his occupation only late in life. In any event, Popov assembled a small library which contained notes about the religious books he had read and a great deal

11. See Waugh 2003, but cf. now Musikhin 2023, who has established quite convincingly that Semen Popov was not just a minor cleric (sacristan) but a 'highly placed official in the local Viatka administration' (p. 21).

else, including a text about the taking of Azov, copies of several of the apocryphal letters of the sultan, and a long string of manuscript copies made from the published *Vedomosti* and from some of the broadsides that were printed in connection with the celebration of victories during the Northern War. One of the manuscript copies is the only extant evidence we have for what is assumed to have been the first printed issue of Peter's newspaper, not known in a print copy (Kharlampovich 1918). Popov undoubtedly obtained much of the material locally – we assume that copies of the *Vedomosti* were being sent to the local administrative office where his nephew worked. But he seems also to have had correspondents in the capitals.

We cannot say for certain why Popov was so interested in the news. Given Peter's policies that imposed burdens on the Church and the clergy and resulted in the forced transport of many Viatchane to Astrakhan after they had refused to report for other government service, Popov cannot have sympathized with such policies of the 'modernizing regime'. It seems quite certain that he had a particular interest in the locally venerated icon of St. Nicholas – which had been co-opted by the Church into the national pantheon. He would have been familiar with the versions of the tale about it that listed some 200 miraculous cures, experienced by those who prayed to it. Popov was involved in writing local history, emphasizing that Khlynov was a holy city, founded by miraculous intervention of the saints. Popov's collection of news items may have been of interest to him less for their immediate topicality – they would have been substantially dated by the time he received them – and more for the fact that he could use them to compose a kind of 'history of his time' as part of the larger history of Russia. This was a kind of 'newsbook' approach to the recording of current events and parallels what Zheliabuzhskii did in his diary.

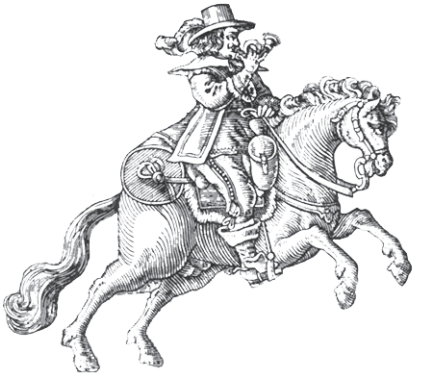
So Zheliabuzhskii and Popov were contemporaries, readers of the news who had the opportunity to obtain a great deal of it over a long period. What they made of it can at best be divined from their writings and the copies of texts they accumulated. Zheliabuzhskii can readily be characterized as a 'new man' of the Petrine era. Popov still was anchored firmly in the traditional Orthodox Russia of the provinces. How typical were they? Hard to know. But they provide some food for thought as we continue to grapple with the question of the impact of the *kuranty*. We should not forget that even many of the good Dutch or German burghers who read the largely secular news reports on a regular basis in the local press were devout Christians and undoubtedly consumers of the sensational pamphlets that invoked the Deity in explaining the paranormal. There is no clear dividing line between adherence to a 'medieval' world view and the secular rationalism alleged to mark the 'modern' world.

It is something of a cliché, but the Petrine era in Russia was one of transition. As is true of so much else that can be said about the evolution of Russian institutions and culture in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the evidence about the changes in the acquisition and reception of foreign news is but one piece in a complex puzzle,

where it is impossible to generalize across all of Russian society. Some individuals, including those with careers in the church, might well have acquired an interest in foreign news, at the same time that they and arguably most of the mass of Russians still were anchored in their belief in Divine Providence. If they had any interest in translated foreign reports, the attraction may well have been primarily for the sensational and exotic. It is reasonable to assume that what was newsworthy for most Russians was primarily that which had direct bearing on their lives, be it a fire in town, a severe hailstorm just at the time the grain was ready to harvest, the appointment of a bishop, a murder, or the miracles alleged to have occurred during prayer to an icon or at the grave of a saint. Even today, this is largely the extent to which many people in the world take an interest in news. Early modern Russia was still a society in which an Ivan Pososhkov, known for his entrepreneurial spirit that was aligned in many ways with the programs of the reforming tsar, could be a defender of the world embodied in the Muscovite *Domostroi*, a world that preserved the patriarchal and religious order.[12] Pososhkov clearly understood that the foreign post was an agent of change in Russia, but rather than welcome it, he denounced it as a threat to the Russian economy and at least by implication a threat to traditional cultural values.

Many historians and political pundits have been tempted to suggest that Russia stood apart from the rest of Europe and not necessarily in good ways. Only some kind of wishful thinking and imaginative revision of the historical evidence could force us to discard entirely that idea. However, our evidence does underscore both the adaptability of Muscovite institutions and the ability of those in the government to learn from European experience in matters that were important for the welfare of the state. Arguably a more rapid importation of the institutions at the core of the 'communications revolution' could not have worked for want of prerequisites. After all, even Sweden, which Peter the Great would look to as a model for his administrative reforms, experienced difficulties in staffing a modern postal system with capable officials. The institutions and practices that had long been in place in Russia had some flexibility and seem to have been quite adequate to their tasks well beyond their 'expiration date'. In examining this evidence, it is important to keep in mind that the 'modernizing' and 'secularizing' trends exemplified in the creation of the post and spread of newspapers took a long time to bring about any meaningful kind of change in the lives and worldview of ordinary people throughout Europe. 'Progress' in the direction of the modern world was fitful and slow almost anywhere we might look. The *kuranty* certainly played some role in bringing Russia more closely into the orbit of the European world, but how significant they really were in that regard defies easy determination.

12. See the comments by L. R. Lewitter in his lengthy analytical introduction to Pososhkov's famous treatise, *The Book of Poverty and Wealth* (Pososhkov 1987: 135–137).



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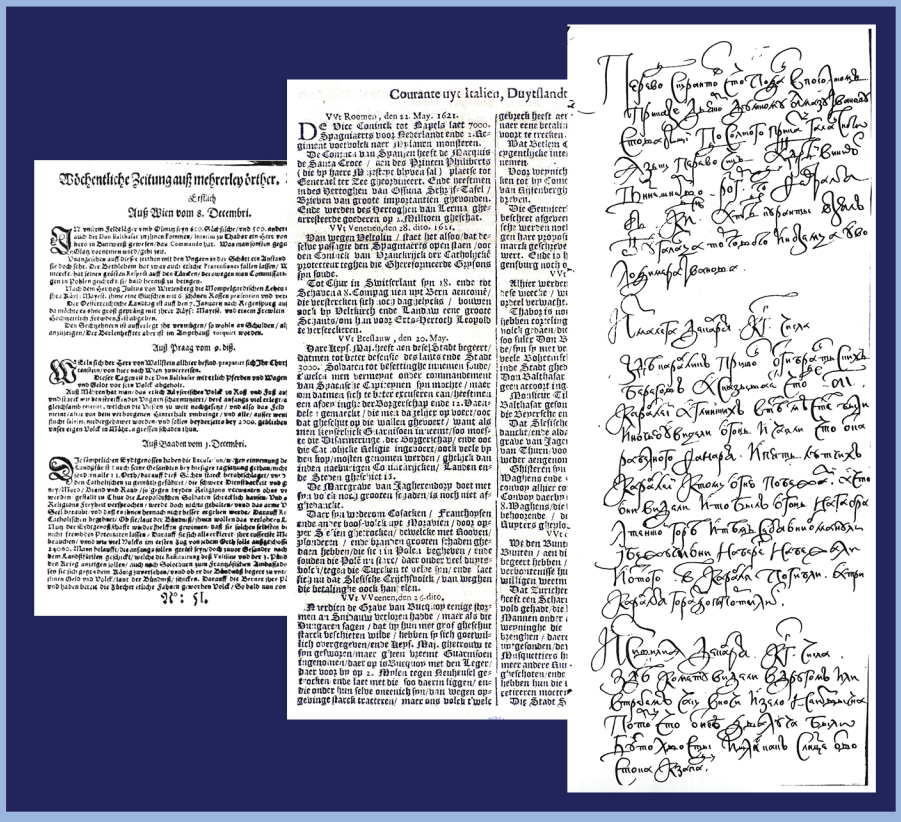

Wöchentliche Zeitung auß mehrerley örther.

Erstlich

Auß Wien vom 8. Decembri.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt

VVt Roomen, den 22. May. 1621.

VVt Praag vom 9. dito.

VVt Breßlauw, den 20. May.

VVt Venecien den 28. dito. 1621.

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