

ОТЕЧЕСТВЕННАЯ ИСТОРИЯ

Embassy of Prince Kozlovsky and Clerk Ivan Zinoviev

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On the basis of the materials of *stateinyi spisok*/list of files written by ambassadors Prince S. I. Kozlovsky and by clerk (*diak*) I. Zinoviev, the article details the history of their diplomatic trip to the Safavid state, in the context of both the realities of Russian-Iranian relations of the time and contemporary internal and foreign political processes in Iran. The source contains unique information: about the cities and towns of Iran, about the capital of the state — Isfahan, about the court of Shah ‘Abbas II, about his nearest circle, about the peculiarities of his life and his dignities, about the difficulties of controlling the frontier (the North Caucasus). Since the list of files itself is a kind of report, it duplicates the provisions of the tsar’s order issued to the ambassadors for their mission. A comparison of the data enables to determine the relative success of the embassy. Most of the points of the order were hypothetical in nature. Their implementation was supposed to be due to the initiative of the Iranian side, which did not happen in reality. Among the significant aspects addressed during the negotiations, which involved several rounds, were: the purchase of saltpeter for the sovereign’s treasury, the fate of

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Russian prisoners, and so on. The materials of the list also reveal secret agents' activities of the ambassadors, who managed to acquire copies of the actual foreign diplomatic correspondence of Shah 'Abbas II, previously not known in the Russian historiography.

Keywords: Russian-Iranian relations of the 19th century, Alexey Mikhailovich, Shah 'Abbas II, Prince S. I. Kozlovsky, I. Zinoviev, Shamakhi, Isfahan, embassies, missions.

История посольства князя Козловского и дьяка Ивана Зиновьева

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В статье, на материалах статейного списка послов князя С. И. Козловского и дьяка И. Зиновьева, максимально подробно освещается история их дипломатической поездки в державу Сефевидов в контексте как реалий российско-иранских отношений, так и внутренних и внешнеполитических процессов в Иране того периода. Миссия в Иран длилась с 1647 по 1648 г., весь этот двухлетний период представлен в объемном (589 листов) статейном списке. Список содержит в себе уникальные сведения: о городах и населенных пунктах Ирана, о столице державы Исфахане, о дворе шаха Аббаса II и его ближайшем окружении, об особенностях быта властителя и его сановников, о сложностях контроля над фронтиром (Северный Кавказ). Поскольку сам список являет собой своеобразную форму отчета, то в нем дублируются положения государева наказа, выданного послам для миссии. Это позволяет определить цели и мотивы делегации, равно как и успешность их реализации. Сравнение данных позволило определить относительный успех посольства. Большая часть пунктов наказа носила условно гипотетический характер, предполагала реализацию за счет инициативы иранской стороны, чего не случилось на практике. Среди значимых пунктов, которые были затронуты на переговорах, длившихся несколько раундов, были вопросы покупки селитры для государевой казны, судьба русских пленных и ряд других. На материалах списка рассматривается и агентурная деятельность послов, сумевших приобрести копии актуальной внешнеполитической переписки шаха Аббаса II, о чем ранее не было известно в российской историографии. Особую роль при посольстве играл переводчик Билял Байцын. В частности, при его активном участии решались спорные пункты во время переговоров, были получены копии шахских писем и отчасти спасено положение посольства при проходе через земли кайтагского уцмия и шамхала Тарковского.

Ключевые слова: русско-иранские отношения XVII в., Алексей Михайлович, шах Аббас II, князь С. И. Козловский, И. Зиновьев, Шемаха, Исфахан, посольства, миссии.

The background, or Clío being somewhat of an “opportunist”

During the period of several years' work on “A documentary history of the Safavid diplomacy towards Russia”, the researchers would constantly notice an absence of published documents on the 17th-century Russia — Iran relations (from 1630 to the 1690s). On the one hand, a large number of sources to be discovered is an inspiration. On the other, it is difficult to ignore a pattern. In the second half of the 19th century, the Second Section of H. I. M. Own Chancellery published “the records of diplomatic relations between Old Russia and foreign powers”, nine volumes of which were devoted to the relations with the

Holy Roman Empire, and the tenth volume — to those with the Italian city-states. Relations with Austria and the Risorgimento were then on the agenda.

In the late 19th century, N. I. Veselovskii published the three volumes of “Records of the diplomatic and commercial relations between Muscovite Russia and Persia”¹, which were later to become widely known. It happened when Russia was active in its policy towards Iran and not long before the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

In the Soviet era, the efforts of various academic institutions resulted in the release of seminal collections of documents on the diplomatic ties between Russian tsars and khans of Central Asian polities², the peoples of the North Caucasus³, China⁴, and the Mughal Empire⁵.

Later published collections on Russia’s relations with the Holy Roman Empire, the Dutch Republic, and France were less extensive⁶. The Soviet-time collection of documents on Russia-Sweden economic ties was exceptional in many respects⁷.

The archaeological work preceding the publication of documents from various holdings is extremely time-consuming and costly. As a result, the choice of countries whose diplomatic legacy was seen as worthy of particular attention was largely motivated by the contemporary situation in either domestic or foreign policy. In the former case, the purpose was to highlight the historical continuity of Russia’s relations with the Caucasus (North and South) and Central Asia, with the long-running intensive contacts between Moscow and these regions having become part of their common history. In historiography, the complex interaction with its negative sides was attributed to the problems of feudalism and the colonial period (although it was the positive side that was emphasized).

Of no less interest was the role of the foreign policy. So far, there has not been a foundational collection on either “Russian-Ottoman relations of the 16th–17th centuries” or “Russian-Iranian relations in 1620–1690s”, even though such contacts were quite intense. At the same time, there are uniquely vast collections of “Russia-China relations” and “Russia-India relations” published in the 1960s. It is most likely that the preparation of the first volume of “Russia-China relations” began before the deterioration of Soviet-Chinese relations in the late 1950s. The work on the “Russia — India relations”, too, must have been motivated by the trends in Soviet-Indian contacts.

On historiography and sources

The diplomatic report (*stateinyi spisok*) of the embassy of S. I. Kozlovsky and *diak* I. Zinoviev can be found in the “Russia — Persia relations” (fund 77) inventory lists 1 of

¹ Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii Moskovskoi Rusi s Persiei: in 3 vols. Vol. 3. St. Petersburg, 1898.

² Materialy po istorii Uzbekskoi, Tadzhikskoi i Turkmenskoi SSR. Issue 3, part 1. Leningrad, 1932.

³ Kabardino-russkie otnosheniia v XVI–XVIII vv.: Dokumenty i materialy: in 2 vols. Vol. I. Moscow, 1957.

⁴ Russko-kitaiskie otnosheniia v XVII veke: Materialy i dokumenty: in 2 vols. Vol. 1. Moscow, 1969.

⁵ Russko-indiiskie otnosheniia v XVII v. Sbornik dokumentov. Moscow, 1958.

⁶ Russkie gramoty kontsa XVII v. (Dokumenty Avstriiskogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva) // Voprosy istorii. 1972. No. 6. P. 98–115; Demkin A. V. Dokumenty torgovoi missii T. Kellermana i V. Voronina v Niderlandy i Gamburg v 1670/71 gg. // Issledovaniia po istochnikovedeniiu istorii SSSR dooktiabr’skogo perioda. Moscow, 1991. P. 122–130; Pervoe posol’stvo Rossii vo Frantsii: Stateinyi spisok I. G. Kondyreva i M. Neverova. 1615–1616 gg. / publikatsiia i predislovie T. A. Laptevoi // Istoricheskii arkhiv. 1996. No. 1. P. 172–202.

⁷ Russko-shvedskie ekonomicheskie otnosheniia v XVII veke: sbornik dokumentov. Leningrad, 1960.

the Russian State Archive of Ancient Document⁸. A short excerpt was published in the “Russia — India relations” collection (April 2–23, 1647 — from the *stateinyi spisok* of emissaries to Persia S. I. Kozlovsky and I. Zinoviev, on their negotiations with the Persian government to allow transit through Persia by N. Syroezhin and V. Tushkanov on their way to India)⁹. The collection also included the following documents of the same embassy: “From the order of the Ambassadorial Chancellery to the Russian emissaries to Persia S. I. Kozlovsky and I. Zinoviev, on their negotiations with the Persian government to allow transit through Persia by N. Syroezhin and V. Tushkanov on their way to India”; “A letter from the Ambassadorial Chancellery to the Russian emissaries to Persia S. I. Kozlovsky and I. Zinoviev about sending N. Syroezhin and V. Tushkanov to India and a catalogue of letters sent to the emissaries”¹⁰.

Diplomatic report (*stateinyi spisok*), contains 589 numbered leaves; the numbers are written in ink, leaf by leaf. The beginning of the report is absent. The front page of the record informs the reader that “the beginning is missing”, but either the end of the report repeats the information of the passage of the embassy from Tarki to Shamakhi or its final 25–30 pages are in fact its beginning. The report is well-preserved; most documents are fully legible, although some leaves (e. g., leaf 580) have lacunae. The text is written in cursive, in various clear handwritings with hardly any corrections. Some documents are written in Turkic (leaves 101, 104, 122, 177, etc.). Most documents have no titles. The report itself contains 507 leaves, followed by the texts of letters.

The report itself and the history of the embassy have not been subject of research so far, which is why there is little information about Prince S. I. Kozlovsky and *diak* I. Zinoviev. The former is known to have been voivode in 1633 in Mtsensk, in 1635–1636 — in Voronezh, in 1644 — in Sviyazhsk, in 1660–1663 — in Tarki, and in 1668–1670 — in Vaga¹¹. The overall impression is that despite his long life, little is known about his diplomatic career. Even less is known about I. Zinoviev.

To work with the data in the report, it is necessary to be familiar with the records of previous embassies and various other issues of the Russia — Iran relations of the day, most of which date back to the reign of Shah Safi I or his predecessor. It would also be more sensible to guide oneself not by the chronology of the ambassadorial delegations, but by the negotiating points passed down from one delegation to the next. For instance, when Russian merchants were robbed in Gilan in 1629, the issue of paying a compensation was not solved during the term of the corresponding embassy, but was discussed by later delegations.

Papers devoted specifically to the history of the embassy or the diplomatic work of Prince S. I. Kozlovsky do not exist. What historiography does help with is understanding the context of the events. The reign of Shah ‘Abbas II, his domestic and foreign policies, have been studied relatively well and, what is more important, have been thoroughly ad-

⁸ Stateinyi spisok byvshikh v Persii Rossiiskikh Poslov Kniazia Saveliia Ivanovicha Kozlovskogo i d'iaka Ivana Zinov'eva. Tut zhe priobshcheny im 7 kopii na farsovskom iazyke s Shakhovykh Gramot k raznym Evropeiskim i Aziatskim Gosudariam. Nachala ne dostaet // Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Drevnikh Aktov (hereafter RGADA). F. 77. Op. 1. Stolbtsy. D. 1.

⁹ Russko-indiiskie otnosheniia v XVII v. P. 71–73.

¹⁰ Ibid. P. 63–64, 66.

¹¹ Spiski gorodovykh voevod i drugikh lits voevodskogo upravleniia moskovskogo gosudarstva XVII stoletii. Po napechatannym pravitel'stvennym aktam / sostavil A. Barsukov. St. Petersburg, 1902. P. 496.

dressed by Western scholars in the past several decades¹², but for one exception — the history of Russia — Iran relations (of a later period), which is not given particular attention in non-Russian historiography¹³. This can in part be explained by an orientation to European sources (records of the Dutch East India Company, accounts by diplomats, travellers, and missionaries)¹⁴. The latter is also typical of the Iranian historiography¹⁵. Quite distinct are publications on Shirvan and its role in Russia-Iran relations, where the authors primarily used sources from the Russian State Archive of Ancient Document, but in this case, too, no attention is given to the embassy of S. I. Kozlovsky¹⁶.

The Russian historiography is characterized by retrospective research of the bilateral relations, with regards to both politics and economics¹⁷. Foundational studies, such as P. P. Bushev's second volume on the history of Russia — Iran relations, cover the period before the 1620s¹⁸.

Of considerable help in understanding the paperwork, document management, and document typology in the Tsardom of Russia have been seminal studies by Russia's leading experts in the field¹⁹.

Prince S. I. Kozlovsky and *diak* I. Zinoviev and their travel to the court of Shah 'Abbas II

Because of the problem mentioned above, the report begins at the stage when the embassy leaves Shirvan for Ardabil, the city out of which the Safavid dynasty arose. The description of the reception organized by the governor of Ardabil is similar to other such descriptions. Of interest is the perspective of the authors (who are unknown to us). They appear to be surprised by the fact that they are first served “apples, pears, pomegranates” and other “vegetables”, with main dishes being served after that (this is a traditional order

¹² Babayan S.: 1) The Waning of the Qizilbash: The Spritual and the Temporal in Seventeenth Century Iran: unpublished dissertation. Princetown, 1993; 2) Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavid Iran. London, 2003; Floor W. The Rise and Fall of Mirza Taqī, the Eunuch Grand Vizier (1043-55/1633-45) Makhdum Al-Omara Va Khadem Al-Foqara // *Studia Iranica*. 1997. No. 26. P. 258–260; Matthee R. Abbas II // *Encyclopedia Iranica*. Available at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abbas-ii-2013> (accessed: 24.01.2023).

¹³ Matthee R. Russians in Iran: Diplomacy and Power in the Qajar Era and Beyond. London, 2019.

¹⁴ Floor W., Faghfoory M. H. The First Dutch-Persian Commercial Conflict. The Attack on Qeshm Island, 1645. [S.l.], 2004; Matthee R. Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan. London, 2011.

¹⁵ Djamāl Zāda S. M. A. Tāriḫ-i ravābiṭ-i Rūs va Īrān. Ba kušīš-i 'Alī Dihbāšī. Tihrān, 1384; Barāziš A. Ḥ. Ravābiṭ-i siyāsī-diplumātik-i Īrān va djahān dar 'ahd-i Šafaviya. Tihrān, 1392; Mu'izzī N. Ḥ. Tāriḫ-i ravābiṭ-i siyāsī-yi Īrān bā dunyā, az Hakhāmanišī tā taḥavvulāt-i akhīr. Djild-i avval Tihrān, 1324.

¹⁶ Seidova G. M. Azerbaidzhan v torgovykh i politicheskikh vzaimootnosheniakh Sefevidskoi imperii i Russkogo gosudarstva v XVII v. (po russkim istochnikam). Baku, 2004; Rybar L.: 1) Shirvān and its Role in the Russo-Safavid Trade and Diplomacy in the 16th Century // *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 2020. Vol. 65, issue 2. P. 605–617; 2) Širvān a jeho postavenie v európskom obchode (16.–17. storočie). Bratislava, 2014. (*Acta Historica Posoniensia* 26.)

¹⁷ Kukanova N. G. Očerki po istorii russko-iranskikh torgovykh otnoshenii v XVII — pervoi polovine XIX v. Saransk, 1977; Koraev T. K. Moskovskaia Rus' i Safavidskii Iran v Prikaspii XVI–XVII v.: Sosedstvo, sopernichestvo, sosushchestvovanie // *Istoricheskii vestnik*. 2015. No. 11 (158). P. 6–50; Bazilenko I. V. Očerki istorii rossiiko-iranskikh otnoshenii (konets XVI — nachalo XX v.). St. Petersburg, 2017.

¹⁸ Bushev P. P. Istoriiia posol'stv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii Russkogo i Iranskogo gosudarstv v 1586–1612 gg. (po russkim arkhivam). Moscow, 1976.

¹⁹ Liseitsev D. V. Priemy deloproizvodstvennoi raboty sluzhashchikh Posol'skogo prikaza nachala KhVII veka // *Issledovaniia po istochnikovedeniiu istorii Rossii* (do 1917 g.). Moscow, 2003. P. 24–51; Timoshina L. A. O meste stolbtsov v sovremennoi arkhografii // *Vestnik "Al'ians-Arkheo"*. 2015. No. 9. P. 16–72.

of courses in modern Iran). Another aspect highlighted in the report is that the governor (whose name is not given) inquired about the age of the young tsar²⁰. Ardabil seemed a hospitable place to the emissaries. The only disagreeable incident was the death of a gyrfalcon that had been intended as a present for Shah 'Abbas II.

On February 16, 1647, the envoys arrived in Qazvin, and on February 28, having travelled a significant distance, they were in Qom (one of the country's religious centres at the time as well as today). Not far from there they were met personally by the *qalandar* Muhammad Sayyid (Magmet Sayyid in the Russian sources) and his vizier Mirza Mu'azzin (Murza "Moezin" in the Russian sources). They were accommodated in a garden and were resting there after a long journey when they had a visitor, certain Ivan Onufriev, a Russian prisoner. He was a *strelets* from Astrakhan, who had served in Tarki. One day, when he was to guard the Terek, he and another soldier were kidnapped by the Kumyks. He was subsequently sold to Kubachi, from there — to Shamakhi, and eventually he ended up in Qom²¹. His name is mentioned in the report several times.

Between March 4 and 10, the emissaries were in Kashan, where another gyrfalcon died²². Two days later the emissaries were welcomed in the vicinity of the capital, Isfahan. The shah sent fewer people than the emissaries had expected, of which they immediately complained to the officer greeting them. They argued that they were to be received with the same honours as before²³, otherwise they would complain to Shah 'Abbas II. The Iranians referred to Nowruz celebrations the day before as their excuse. This was followed by the discussion of what today would be called the protocol. The Iranian side wanted the Russians to follow the "custom" and bow to the residence of Shah 'Abbas II. The Russians, however, thought it a disgrace and refused to bow to a "stone"²⁴.

After the delegation was accommodated in a guest house in Isfahan, they were visited by *kupchina* (trade representative) Anisim Gribov from Astrakhan. In contrast to the information about the embassy itself, a lot is known about Anisim Gribov's activities in Iran and on the border between the Safavid Empire and Central Asian states due to the fact that part of his own report (*stateinyi spisok*) was published²⁵. He might be called an 'emissary by accident' as he was to visit not Isfahan, but Bukhara, where he had initially been sent with the tsar's letter, presents, and trade goods. Having failed to arrive in Central Asia because of the war between Balkh, Samarkand, and Bukhara, in which the Safavid state also took part, he had to proceed to Isfahan by the order of Shah 'Abbas II.

On March 13, the emissaries were visited by the "shah's chancellor" Muhammad Salim Beg (Magmet Selim bek in the Russian sources). His duty was to find out whether the emissaries had had a good journey and had everything they needed on the way from Derbent to Isfahan. The Russians reported that they had been provided with food and horse carts as well as the monetary allowance of "eight tumans a day"²⁶, and that the only thing they requested was to be received by the shah as soon as it was possible. The chancellor promised to pass their request, and the emissaries treated him to "honey and wine".

²⁰ Stateinyi spisok... L. 3.

²¹ Ibid. L. 9.

²² Ibid. L. 10

²³ Ibid. L. 15.

²⁴ Ibid. L. 17.

²⁵ Russko-indiiskie otnosheniia v XVII v. Sbornik dokumentov. Moscow, 1958. P. 75–82.

²⁶ Stateinyi spisok... L. 18.

The chancellor Muhammad Salim Beg deserves our special attention. It is quite likely that he was Muhammad Salih Beg (Magmet Sali bek in the earlier Russian sources), former emissary to Russia. The report quotes the chancellor, who confirmed that it was the same “Magmet Sali bek” who had been sent to Russia by Shah ‘Abbas I in 1627²⁷. Collection 77 of the Russian State Archive of Ancient Document contains a record devoted to his visit²⁸. The visit, however, has not been a focus of any study known to us, and historiography has little to say about it. He arrived at the court of tsar Michael (1613–1645) with a number of political goals to achieve. First of all, he was tasked with bringing Persian merchants who had settled in Russia back to Iran²⁹. Secondly, he was to express the indignation of Shah ‘Abbas I at the inappropriate behaviour of the Russian emissaries G. Tyufyakin and G. Feofilatyev, who had visited Iran shortly before³⁰. Thirdly, and no less interestingly, while travelling through the North Caucasus, he managed to set up a trade deal to collect and sell madder roots (collecting four boatfuls of his commodity)³¹.

The reception by Shah ‘Abbas II was to take place on March 21 (the date is given according to the Julian calendar), of which the emissaries were informed by the same chancellor. The emissaries, in their turn, requested that, in accordance with the customary practice, no other delegation be received at the same time³². The request was met. A short account of the reception can be found in the report (*stateinyi spisok*), and there is no need to reproduce it here. Nevertheless, a few things related to observing the rules (which the delegation tried to stick to) might be noteworthy. For example, on entering the shah’s chamber and bowing to the shah, S. I. Kozlovsky read the tsar’s address. The shah’s chancellor then asked to pass the letter, which was not done because the shah had not inquired about the Russian tsar’s health. Only after the shah rose and inquired about the health of tsar Alexis, was the letter passed³³.

After that, the shah was given presents from the tsar. S. Kozlovsky gave one of the few surviving birds — a red gyrfalcon — to the shah in person³⁴. Upon giving the present, Prince Kozlovsky made a speech, in which he talked about the continuity of the policy of “amicable friendship”. The next to speak was *diak* I. Zinoviev, who conveyed some requests on the part of the Russian tsar, one of them being to allow tsar’s *kupchina* (trade representative) Danila Pankratov, who was member of the delegation, to buy “useful” commodities³⁵.

²⁷ Stateinyi spisok... L. 52.

²⁸ Priezd Persidskogo Posla Mamet Sali-beka i kupchiny Agi Asana. Rospisi Shakhovym k Gosudariu i k Patriarkhu podarkov. Tseremonial priemnoi Audientsii — primernye vypiski o dache Poslu i kupchinam korma i pit’ia. Perevody gramot k Gosudariu i Patriarkhu ot Persidskogo Shakha Abbasa ob pomianutym Poslom i Kupchinoiu i prislannym po tom gontsom Mineem // RGADA. F. 77. O. 1. Stolbtsy. 1629 Genv. — Sent. D. 1.

²⁹ Kostikov S. E., Iastrebova O. M. Chelobitnye iranskogo kupchiny Khvadzhi Rakhmata tsariu Mikhailu Fedorovichu (1613–1645) iz Rossiiskogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva drevnikh aktov // Pis’mennye pamiatniki Vostoka. 2019. No. 2 (16). P. 127.

³⁰ Andreev A. A., Rezvan M. E. Razvitie diplomaticheskoi traditsii persidskikh, khivinskikh i bukharskikh posol’stv v Rossii s kontsa XVI — do nachala XVIII v. // Kunstkamera. 2019. No. 2 (4). P. 58.

³¹ Kabardino-russkie otnosheniia v XVI–XVIII vv.: Dokumenty i materialy. Vol. I. P. 141.

³² Stateinyi spisok... L. 21.

³³ Ibid. L. 28.

³⁴ Ibid. L. 29.

³⁵ Ibid. L. 35.

The closing speech was made by Prince Kozlovsky. The shah then accepted the gifts, and the emissaries were allowed to kiss the shah's hand (there was a disagreement as to how many of them would be allowed to do so). Benches were put beside the shah for the prince and the *diak*. Another interesting detail is that the emissaries must have been observing a fast at the time, which was respected by the hosts, as they were served Lent-style porridges and fish, whereas the shah and his courtiers were eating meat dishes³⁶.

Another interesting aspect noted by the emissaries was that the shah and his attendants were not served beverages (i. e., liquor), as the shah "allegedly" did not "drink alcohol"³⁷. *Kupchina* Anisim Gribov of Astrakhan and emissaries from Bukhara were also present at the feast³⁸. This was somewhat a violation of the reception etiquette, but since the Russian emissaries had had a private audience with the shah, Kozlovsky did not focus on it.

The report also contains a description of the shah's appearance, his personality, and the chambers where the reception was held. "The face of Shah 'Abbas is rosy; his glance is cheerful; his eyes are grey; his nose is straight; and he is tall"³⁹. One of those providing information was shah's officer Alkhas(?) Beg (Alkhaz bek in the Russian sources), who passed the word that the emissaries had asked on behalf of 'Abd al-'Aziz Khan (Abdul Aziz Khan in the Russian sources) to let his father Nadir Muhammad Khan to Bukhara (where he would most likely lose his life because of the feud with his son). The response was that Nadir Muhammad Khan could go, but he would be accompanied by the shah's warriors, which meant that the shah did not support the khan of Bukhara in this conflict⁴⁰.

Diplomatic receptions, or the essence of the negotiations

On March 30, the emissaries were invited to watch "the shah's merrymaking" in the vicinity of Isfahan. S. I. Kozlovsky accepted on condition that no other delegation, whether Uzbek or any other, would be present⁴¹. The shah's official suggested a compromise: as there were going to be the emissaries of the Great Mughals at the event, their representatives would be sitting at a lower level than the Russian emissaries⁴². The report provides a vivid description of the event, but the most interesting things are yet to come. It is after the event that the real negotiations with the high-ranking officials would finally begin, and the Russian emissaries did their best to ensure the maximum effect (an insertion about bribery).

At Easter, Shah 'Abbas II had delicacies sent to the emissaries as they had been fasting in the preceding period. They were then told to prepare their "responses" (points to be negotiated with the shah's officials) for April 3⁴³. During the next audience, the emissaries formulated a number of requests. The first one was based on the agreement reached during the embassy of Prince Semen Volynsky to Iran about selling saltpetre to Russia⁴⁴.

³⁶ Ibid. L. 41.

³⁷ Ibid. L. 42.

³⁸ Ibid. L. 43.

³⁹ Ibid. L. 44.

⁴⁰ Ibid. L. 45.

⁴¹ Ibid. L. 49.

⁴² Ibid. L. 50.

⁴³ Ibid. L. 67.

⁴⁴ Ibid. L. 77.

The emissaries gave a brief account of saltpetre trade between Iran and Russia, concluding it with the tsar's request to send 50 000 poods of saltpetre⁴⁵. The negotiation rounds took place on April 3, 7, and 29. The shah's officials responded that Iran would sell as much saltpetre as possible without confirming a particular amount⁴⁶. The problem was that the Iranian side failed to say how much saltpetre would be produced in a year, whereas the Russian side insisted that they guarantee at least 30 000 to 40 000 poods of saltpetre for sale⁴⁷.

By the final round they were asking for "as little as" 10 000 poods of saltpetre. The shah's officials were uncompromising; in fact, this was not a turndown. Moreover, they promised not to sell saltpetre to any other country. Still, the permission to buy as much saltpetre as there would be available did not guarantee a sale. The responsibility for buying saltpetre lay with Danila Pankratyev. According to the report, he eventually succeeded in buying 9000 poods of it in Qazvin⁴⁸.

The next point was the issue of Russian emissaries' transit through Iran to the Great Mughal Empire⁴⁹. The person in question was Nikita Syroezhkin, who was to deliver the tsar's letters to Shah Jahan (1627–1658). The third point was to provide *kupchina* Danila Pankratov with carts and camels in Shamakhi so that he could deliver state-owned goods to Isfahan⁵⁰.

On April 3, an interpreter by the name of Bilal was sent to join the negotiations with the shah's officials. He was a member of staff at the Ambassadorial Chancellery, who played one of the leading roles in this particular embassy. By the time of his trip to Iran, Baitsyn Bilal Bezergenev, of Siberian Tatar descent, had already gained significant diplomatic experience. As a member of several embassies, he had visited Crimea (1630–1631, 1636–1637, 1639–1640, 1643–1644) and the Ottoman Empire (1632–1634). Some of the trips to Crimea posed dangers and risks to life⁵¹. Upon his return to the emissaries, he reported that he had been informed of the "non-friendship" between Shah 'Abbas II and Padishah Shah Jahan, but "letting the messengers pass on their own" (i. e., without security guarantee) was possible⁵². The issue was raised again during the audience with the shah on April 23 when the emissaries brought the tsar's letter on the subject of the messengers to India.

As for Danila Pankratov, the shah ordered that he be provided with carts to Isfahan and that the merchants collaborating with him be allowed to trade in whatever cities they found fit and therefore be given carts and aid⁵³. A shah's decree (*farman*) was issued to be sent to Khusraw Khan (Khosrow Khan in the Russian sources) in Shamakhi to ensure that the order was implemented. Two *streltsy* from Astrakhan were sent to Shirvan with the shah's messenger⁵⁴. Danila Pankratyev would soon lose the paper, which was reissued by

⁴⁵ Stateinyi spisok... L. 87.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid. L. 91.

⁴⁸ Ibid. L. 424.

⁴⁹ Ibid. L. 108.

⁵⁰ Ibid. L. 110.

⁵¹ *Beliaikov A. V., Gus'kov A. G., Liseitsev D. V., Shamin S. M. Perevodchiki Posol'skogo prikaza v XVII v.: materialy k slovariui*. Moscow, 2021. P. 59–60.

⁵² Stateinyi spisok... L. 113, 123.

⁵³ Ibid. L. 112.

⁵⁴ Ibid. L. 113.

the shah's officials with the help of Bilal Baitsyn (the mission's guardian angel)⁵⁵. A translation of an excerpt from this document can be found in the report⁵⁶.

On April 23, the emissaries had another audience with the shah. On the same day the shah also received an embassy from Venice. The Venetian Republic had been fighting a war for Crete with the Ottomans since 1645, which stimulated their policy towards Iran as a potential ally. Based on the mention of the time (spring of 1647) and on the reference to Venetians, it might be assumed that they were Giovanni Tiepolo and Antonio de Fiandra. The former was to pass an urgent message to the latter, while the latter participated in the Polish embassy to Iran (led by Jerzy Ilicz)⁵⁷. The report mentions an emissary by the name of *Jiři*. On September 5, just before leaving, he sent a messenger to the emissaries. There was, however, no other information about him, except that he was ill.

That year there was another emissary of Venice in Iran — Domenico de Santis, who decided to travel through Russia upon completing his mission. He was granted a letter of credence by Shah 'Abbas II, but was refused transit at the border⁵⁸. Back on April 23, the emissaries at the audience were "asking humbly" for the shah's attendants to meet with them more often so that they could discuss all the issues⁵⁹.

From the officer at their service Alkhaz Beg the emissaries learnt the names of the foreigners from Venice and the circumstances of their visit⁶⁰. It appears that they were not from Venice but from Portugal because there was a mention of the city of "Hormuz", but it must have been a corruption of the former Portuguese territories in the Strait of Hormuz⁶¹.

A month later, on May 23, negotiations with the shah's officials took place. The Russian side raised the issue of the insult to the tsar. Five years earlier, in 1642, a helmsman from Gilan by the name of Amir Khan was arguing with the headman of a tsar's boat and insulted the tsar and his entire family. The episode formed an investigatory case⁶².

Some new facts related to the case were discovered during the ambassadorial mission. Emissary Aqa Hasan (Aga Asan in the Russian sources), who had visited Russia after 1642, was supposed to pass the tsar's request concerning criminal Amir Khan to the shah, but he did not do so. The officials' response was that Amir Khan would be found and executed; those responsible for hiding him would receive a severe punishment, and Aqa Hasan would be interrogated⁶³. An investigation was carried out, which revealed that a Bukhara merchant called "Aidako" (he had stood bail for Amir Khan, who later escaped from the Russian emissaries) was staying at the house of Muhammad Salim Beg, the shah's chancel-

⁵⁵ Ibid. L. 425.

⁵⁶ Ibid. L. 426–427.

⁵⁷ Rota G. Diplomatic Relations between Safavid Persia and the Republic of Venice an Overview // *The Turks. Middle Ages. Vol. 2.* Ankara, 2002. P. 580–586.

⁵⁸ Guliyev A. Safavids in Venetian and European Sources. Venezia, 2022. P. 60.

⁵⁹ Stateinyi spisok... L. 120.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid. L. 121.

⁶² Sledstvennoe delo proizvodivsheesia v Astrakhani o govorenykh Kormshchikom Gilianskim Amirkhanom nepristoinykh pro gosudarevu osobu slovakh, ob otpravlenii ego k shakhu s Rossiiskim poslom Semenom Volynskim i s d'iakom Sergeem Matveevym. Tut zhe otpusk k shakhu gosudarevoio o tom gramoty // RGADA. F. 77. O. 1. Stolbtsy. 1642. D. 3. 62 l.

⁶³ Stateinyi spisok... L. 44.

lor, while Amir Khan himself was living in Mazandaran⁶⁴. The latter was going to be sent for and brought to Isfahan, but he managed to escape to Shirvan before being caught⁶⁵.

To assist in the case, *kupchina* Bijan Beg (Bedzhin bek in the Russian sources), who had visited Russia numerous times, was called in to Isfahan. He confirmed the whereabouts of the helmsman of Gilan. It was decided that as soon as the criminal was caught, he would be sent to Russia with an emissary from Shah 'Abbas II, and the tsar would have him executed if he wished to⁶⁶. Such a change of decision was an unpleasant surprise for the emissaries as they had been tasked to ensure that Amir Khan would be executed on the spot.

The negotiations with the shah's attendants were resumed as late as on August 21⁶⁷, to some extent because of the shah's being ill. In addition to the case of Amir Khan, the issue of restitutions was raised. This problem was discussed by us in detail in another paper⁶⁸. In short, Moscow demanded restitutions for a number of offences. Shah 'Abbas II accepted most of the demands, and Saru Khan Beg's (Saru Khan in the Russian sources) embassy was supposed to bring raw silk as a form of compensation, but the price could not be agreed on. The shah's officials promised to make up for what Saru Khan Beg did not fully complete, but refused to compensate for the robbery of the Russian merchant Chistov due to a long period of time that had passed since then⁶⁹.

The next negotiation point was the restitution for the offences (exactions, robberies, and humiliation) to the tsar's emissary prince Efim Myshetsky by 'Arab Khan (Arap-khan in the Russian sources), the *beglerbeg* of Shamakhi. The account of "the humiliations of Shamakhi" takes up about 30 leaves of the report. A full reproduction of the account does not render itself possible⁷⁰. History knows more about the prince's mission to Kakheti, whereas the harsh stay in Shirvan remains understudied⁷¹. In the end, the *qurchibashi* informed that 'Arab Khan had been executed for those wrongs (in reality he had been executed for being a participant of Jani Khan Bigdili Shamlu's plot).

The officials refused to punish 'Arab Khan's servants by death as they did not see it as fair. They had not taken part in the robberies and humiliations on their own free will, but acted on the *beglerbeg's* order⁷². Another large group of issues dated back to the early years of the reign of Shah Safi I. To some extent, we have discussed their number and complex nature earlier⁷³. For the purposes of this paper, the issues related to the stay of the embassy in Iran are more of interest. For example, the issue of the captive cannon-founder Ivashka, who was mercifully allowed by the shah to leave for Russia with the emissary⁷⁴.

The three prisoners of Shamakhi were less lucky. The negotiations revealed an episode that was not mentioned earlier in the report. While the emissaries were in Shirvan,

⁶⁴ Stateiny spisok... L. 147.

⁶⁵ Ibid. L. 151.

⁶⁶ Ibid. L. 164.

⁶⁷ Ibid. L. 168, 169.

⁶⁸ Andreev A. A., Kopaneva D. D. "Nevol'noe" posol'stvo Sarukhan-beka v Moskve v 1641 g.: prichiny i obstoiatel'stva // Klio. 2022. No. 5. P. 27–33.

⁶⁹ Stateiny spisok... L. 198.

⁷⁰ Ibid. L. 201–233.

⁷¹ Poliektov A. Posol'stvo kn. Myshetskogo i d'iaka Kliuchareva v Kakheti. 1640–1643. Tiflis, 1928.

⁷² Stateiny spisok... L. 233, 234.

⁷³ Andreev A. A., Kopaneva D. D. Paradoxes and Realities of the Iranian Politics of the First Romanovs // Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History, 2021. Vol. 66, issue 1. P. 5–18.

⁷⁴ Stateiny spisok... L. 275.

they were approached by three Russian prisoners who asked them to facilitate their release. The emissaries sent interpreters to the *yuzbashi* (because Khusraw Khan was absent from Shamakhi at the time), thus imperiling everyone. One of the Russian prisoners was consequently “lashed with swords”; the interpreter and those with him were banished. All this happened while the *beglerbeg* was absent. The shah’s officials’ decision on this incident was as follows. The shah’s people would be sent to Shamakhi to investigate the case. If what the emissaries said was confirmed, the *yuzbashi* and his servants would be punished. The prisoners, however, would not be released without an official letter from Tsar Alexis⁷⁵.

When in Shamakhi on their way back, the emissaries gave their interpreter Bilal the shah’s letter and sent him to Khusraw Khan. According to the report, Khusraw Khan unwillingly promised to send his *yuzbashi* to the emissaries. This was done, and the *yuzbashi* arrived in person to “ask humbly” to forgive him⁷⁶. It played no role in the release of one of the prisoners who had died earlier when the emissaries were travelling to Isfahan.

The fate of another prisoner, who visited the emissaries in Qom and is mentioned earlier in the report, was determined as follows. He could travel home if he had not changed his faith⁷⁷. In the end, the emissaries did not find him in Qom on their way back. The city governor said that he had been sent to Ardabil. In Ardabil, however, he was not heard of⁷⁸.

While the negotiations were in progress in June 1647, the tsar’s *kupchina* Danila Pankratyev (featuring in the report as a guest) arrived in Isfahan, and the emissaries made an effort so that he could have an official audience with the shah and could be allowed to kiss his hand. Bilal Baitsyn was assigned to assist him as an interpreter⁷⁹. His arrival raised the question of buying raw silk “sidestepping the shah’s treasury”, whereas the shah’s officials insisted that raw silk be bought from the shah’s treasury only and at the price set by themselves⁸⁰.

Danila Pankratyev, to be more precise — the emissaries, who had been informed by him, complained to the shah’s attendants about the arbitrariness of the local chief officials towards the *kupchina* and his people in Shamakhi and Ardabil⁸¹. It was promised to penalize those responsible (for service-men this meant capital punishment) and to oblige the *beglerbeg* of Shirvan to pay restitution from his own assets⁸². Daniil Pankratyev was given letters for Shamakhi, Ardabil, Tabriz, and other cities, confirming that he was officially a *kupchina* and was allowed to sell and buy goods (including raw silk and saltpetre)⁸³. Additionally, the local authorities were to provide him with food and carts along the entire journey.

⁷⁵ Ibid. L. 295–298.

⁷⁶ Ibid. L. 418.

⁷⁷ Ibid. L. 300.

⁷⁸ Ibid. L. 407.

⁷⁹ Ibid. L. 308.

⁸⁰ Ibid. L. 314.

⁸¹ Ibid. L. 319–321.

⁸² Ibid. L. 323.

⁸³ Ibid.

Overseas intelligence service of the mid-17th century, or fulfilling some of the tsar's orders

In addition to negotiating economic issues, the emissaries performed intelligence functions. One of their tasks was to find out why Shah Safi I had been visited in 1636 by an emissary of the Polish king Wladyslaw IV (1632–1648)⁸⁴. To bear the related costs, spare sables were reserved in the emissaries' funds. The first 'weak link' among the officials was officer Alkhaz Beg, who revealed that "the shah's ambassadorial clerk Mirza Zayn al-'Abidin (Murza Zeinab Abiddin in the Russian sources) had been in charge of the record-keeping and other work related to foreign embassies, that he had all the correspondence, and that letters abroad were prepared by him, too"⁸⁵.

Interpreters Bilal Baitsyn and Ivan Polshikov were sent to talk to the man. They brought "gifts": 40 sables worth 36 roubles and 19 altyn, four white two-arshin-long cloths worth 2 roubles per arshin, and other presents⁸⁶. After vain attempts to agree on the location for secret negotiations, the clerks sent an interpreter directly. His task was to seize an opportunity of a conversation with the shah's official, which he did. What he discovered was that the Polish king's emissary had asked the shah to attack the Ottomans as the king himself was preparing for a war with Turks⁸⁷. The Polish legate, according to Mirza Zayn al-'Abidin, died on his way back (he was killed in the vicinity of Buynaksk), and the Persian emissary, who had been accompanying him, returned to Isfahan. There were no other embassies, either from or to Poland.

The next point of the order was to find out how many brothers the shah had (to evaluate how likely a change of ruler was). Again, the "shah's ambassadorial department clerk" served as a source of information and reported that the shah had four younger brothers (giving their names as well).

Bilal also managed to know that the shah had had a recent visit by a messenger from the Pope, who had brought "letters" from Vatican, from the king of Spain, and the Venetian doge⁸⁸. The three letters contained the offer to attack the Ottomans. Shah 'Abbas II did not support the idea. In the report the messenger referred to "a Frenchman" by the name of "Count of Siddka" and that he was not called an emissary, but a tradesman⁸⁹. He might have actually been the Venetian legate Domenico de Santis⁹⁰.

More than a year later, on April 8, 1649, Prince S. Kozlovsky passed to the Ambassadorial Chancellery the following set of documents: a copy of the letter of Shah 'Abbas II to Pope Innocent X in the Persian language⁹¹ and seven copies of the shah's letters to European (Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III, Polish King Wladyslaw IV, a doge of Venice) and to Eastern (a Mughal Padishah, an Ottoman Sultan, and a khan of Bukhara) monarchs and rulers. How the emissaries obtained the copies of these unique documents is shrouded in mystery. The original letter to King Wladyslaw IV has been recently published in

⁸⁴ Stateiny spisok... L. 332.

⁸⁵ Ibid. L. 333.

⁸⁶ Ibid. L. 334.

⁸⁷ Ibid. L. 341.

⁸⁸ Ibid. L. 345.

⁸⁹ Ibid. L. 344.

⁹⁰ *Guliyev A.* Safavids in Venetian and European Sources. P. 24.

⁹¹ Stateiny spisok... L. 507.

Poland⁹². The authors comment that the letter was delivered by the Venetian legate Domenico de Santis, which supports the assumption made above.

The information contained in the letters does not have much value. For instance, the letter to Emperor Ferdinand III discusses only the shah's intention to maintain "amicable friendship" and to let merchants trade "freely on both sides"⁹³. The content of the letter to the Polish King Wladyslaw IV is of a similar nature⁹⁴. The only exception are the letters to the Mughal Padishah Shah Jahan and the Ottoman Sultan Ibrahim I. In the former case, after the obligatory diplomatic courtesies of the *'insha* letters, Shah 'Abbas II indicates his attitude towards the conflict between the pretenders to the throne in Bukhara. The shah expresses explicit support to the exiled Nadir Muhammad Khan⁹⁵. Support and even compassion are also expressed in the shah's personal letter to Nadir Muhammad Khan⁹⁶.

The letter to the Ottoman sultan (written in an extremely polite manner) emphasizes that Shah 'Abbas II was joyous about the establishment of peace between the Safavids and the Ottomans, and that he was determined to maintain it⁹⁷. There is an obvious contrast between the short messages to European and to Eastern monarchs, which is consistent with Iran's territorial disputes with its western and eastern neighbours. Besides the letters, the report contains a "catalogue" (a list of towns with their short descriptions) from a map owned by an official of Shah 'Abbas II⁹⁸.

The composition of the embassy and the way to Moscow

While Bilal Baitsyn was helping to obtain information about the shah's foreign policy, the time came to travel home. On August 26, 1647, Shah 'Abbas II sent Alkhaz Beg with presents. Prince S. Kozlovsky was given an argamak horse, a gilded saddle, a saber with a sheath, expensive fabrics and 100 "tuman" (equivalent of 1000 roubles)⁹⁹. The shah was also generous to *diak* Ivan Zinoviev and interpreter Bilal Baitsyn. The list of gift receivers included the prince's son, Grigory Kozlovsky, who is known to historians as the voivode of Surgut Grigory Savelyevich Kozlovsky-Zima¹⁰⁰. That he accompanied his father on the ambassadorial mission has not been known before.

The shah gave presents to all clerks, gyrfalconers, *sobolniki* and *streltsy*. Everyone received something¹⁰¹. The inventory of the gifts provides a general idea of the number of the members in the embassy.

After the final audience in late August, the embassy was to leave for Moscow. The day before the audience a disagreement occurred: Alkhaz Beg brought the presents from the shah, but the embassy members refused to wear these Persian clothes for the reception. The same incident had happened with the previous embassies, e.g. that of prince S. I. Islen-

⁹² Stosunki dawnej Rzeczypospolitej z Persią Safawidow I katolikosatem w Eczmiadynie w swietle dokumentow archiwalnych. Warszawa, 2017. L. 182–189.

⁹³ Stateyni spisok... L. 516–517.

⁹⁴ Ibid. L. 519.

⁹⁵ Ibid. L. 521–522.

⁹⁶ Ibid. L. 526–527.

⁹⁷ Ibid. L. 525.

⁹⁸ Ibid. L. 529–537.

⁹⁹ Ibid. L. 389–390.

¹⁰⁰ Baranov N. N. Drevnii gorod na Obi. Istoriia Surguta. Ekaterinburg, 1994. P. 117.

¹⁰¹ Stateyni spisok... L. 393.

yev and *diak* M. Gryazev¹⁰². In this case it was decided to act in the same manner. The emissaries wore the shah's presents, Persian clothes, on top of their own kaftans, which was rather heroic considering the quality of the fabric and the late summer weather in Isfahan.

After the reception, on the day before the departure the emissaries received gifts from the shah's officials¹⁰³. On September 11, the embassy, provided with carts, left Isfahan¹⁰⁴. As early as on October 27 they were in Shamakhi, where they were welcomed by Khusraw Khan. Having given them transport and food, he sent them to Derbent, from where they headed for Tarki. As they were travelling through the land of the Kaitag Utsmi 'Abbas Quli Khan, an attempt was made to charge them for transit¹⁰⁵.

The emissaries and the guides from Derbent showed the shah's letter to the utsmi, but without effect. A negotiation began, with the Kumyks making several attempts to rob the embassy¹⁰⁶. Having eventually given some of the shah's presents and one person (he was taken away by the renegade Savka Arapov who was with the utsmi) for the permission to continue their journey, the embassy moved on and left the utsmi's land¹⁰⁷. A similar incident occurred in the area of Buynaksk. Again, they had to resort to bribery to get out of trouble, but at night, at the station, they were bombarded with arrows, and a *strelets* was wounded. With great difficulty, as the guides from Derbent had left them upon reaching the Shamkhalate of Tarki and had taken the carts with them on December 21, the embassy made their way to the Kizlyar Pass on foot. On December 27 they arrived in Tarki. On the way to Tarki they had been joined by the *uzdens* of the shamkhal and accompanied to the fortress.

The embassy stayed in Tarki until March 1648. They sent a letter to the Chancellery, informing that they had been robbed with "tolls" on the lands of the utsmi, the shamkhal of Tarki, and in Buynaksk. On behalf of the tsar, a letter was sent to the shah asking for restitution. On March 20, the embassy left Tarki for the harbour and went to Astrakhan at their own expense. On September 28 they reached Moscow¹⁰⁸.

The robbery turned out a tragedy for *diak* I. Zinoviev. His petition (which is the last document in the report) says that before going to Iran he borrowed a large sum of money and pawned his estate and inherited lands in the village¹⁰⁹.

Conclusion

Despite the misfortunes of travelling through the North Caucasus on the way back, the embassy has not been given due attention by researchers. It stands out among the embassies of the 17th century owing to both the detailed diplomatic report (*stateinyi spisok*) and the successful activities of the emissaries. The ambitious goals were to a large extent achieved (one can learn about them by either studying the order given to the emissaries or reading excerpts from it included in the report). Besides the brief information on

¹⁰² *Shorokhov V. A.* Materials of the Russian Diplomatic Mission to Iran by Islen'ev and Griazev // Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History, 2022, vol. 67, issue 2, P. 599–615.

¹⁰³ Stateinyi spisok... L. 401.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. L. 403.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. L. 434.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. L. 442.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. L. 444.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. L. 506.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. L. 589.

the reasons behind the visit of the Polish emissary, S. I. Kozlovsky managed to obtain the copies of the shah's letters to foreign monarchs, which can be compared with the level of European intelligence of the day.

The *kupchina* travelling with the embassy succeeded in buying saltpetre (although not as much as it had been intended) and in selling the state-owned goods. This ambassadorial mission was but an episode in the little-studied history of Russia-Iran relations of the 17th century, in which the continuity of the issues on the agenda had an overriding significance, while the embassies discussing those issues were rather links in the chain than independent actors. Nevertheless, the micro-history of the embassy of S. Kozlovsky deserves to be the subject of deeper research.

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