

Kazan, Crimea and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania on the Arena of Diplomatic and Military Battles at the Turn of the 15th And 16th Centuries

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Abstract

The urgency of the problem under study is conditioned by the tendency of the events reconsideration from the 15th - early 16th centuries outlined in the historical science, caused by the changes in the economic, political and social-cultural spheres, in the theoretical and methodological methods of research. The problem is also conditioned by the staying in the shadow concerning the issue of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania relations with the splinters of the Golden Horde, especially concerning the political contacts with the Kazan Khanate, which played a significant role in the struggle for political supremacy in the post-Horde space. The purpose of the article is to clarify the nature and the characteristics of the relationship of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with two heirs of the Golden Horde - the Kazan and Crimean Khanates. The leading approach to the study of this problem is the comparative method. The study of the interstate relations of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the adjacent Crimean one and territorially removed from the principality by the Kazan yurts showed the existence of differences in the political line of Lithuania concerning the mentioned Tatar khanates and made it possible to find out the reasons for this. Two factors influenced the nature and the forms of studied state interrelations: 1) the presence or the absence of common borders; 2) the need to take into account the relationship between the post-Horde states and Lithuania with the Great Horde, the Ottoman Port and the strengthened Russian state. The diplomatic activity of the latter sometimes led to the change in the nature of interstate relations, conditioning the conversion of relations from diplomatic to military form, or the cessation of a military conflict, or a break of mutual contacts. The materials of the article can be used to reconstruct the general picture of state relations development in Eastern Europe during the period under review, as well as in the academic courses of lectures on general and Russian history.

Keywords: History, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Crimean Khanate, Kazan Khanate, Ottoman Port, Moscow Principality, Interstate Contacts.

Introduction

The development of interstate contacts in the western part of Eurasia after the breakdown of Dzhuchiev Ulus

and the change of political relation participants is one of the most interesting problems, requiring clarification of the role and the intentions of each of the state organisms claiming the Golden Horde heritage, the determination of their perception by states that have maintained political unity, and the identification of diplomatic tie nature, form and dynamics between specific parties [1]. Indeed, with a relative synchronism of development, they had to build relationships, overcome political, military and religious (ideological) differences. Eastern Europe was not only the territory that became the nucleus of successive empires. It was also the scene for the clash of cultures that differed significantly from each other, in particular, became the place of confrontation between the two world religions - Christianity (both Orthodox and Catholic branches) and Islam - eventually transformed into tolerant interaction [2]. During the period under review, the Turkish Sultan was the caliph, the head of all Muslims, and this status inevitably assumed the performance of his functions as a defender of the faithful. This meant an invisible presence of Sultan Turkey behind the backs of Muslim yurts in Eastern Europe [3]. The turn of two centuries turned out to be filled with a very fine diplomatic game, in which it began to take part and achieve profitable results for itself and the Moscow principality the power of which began to increase [4]. The European powers made unsuccessful attempts to make a conflict between the Ottoman Porte and the Moscow state. Often diplomatic intricacies developed into military conflicts of both a local and a more scaled nature [4]. In these conditions it is extremely important to determine the forms and the nature of contacts between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the two Tatar yurts, the Crimean one, which turned out to be vassal dependent on the Ottoman state, and the Kazan one, which fell under the protectorate of the Moscow principality, interrupted by the submission to the authority of the Crimean Gireys.

Methods

The attempt to unravel the intricacies of international relations in Eastern Europe in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the clarification of the peculiarities concerning the diplomatic cooperation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Crimean and Kazan khanates, required the application of a number of methods, including the methods of historicism,

analysis and synthesis. The leading approach to research was the use of the comparative method.

Results

The conducted research allowed us to reach the following conclusions. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania maintained diplomatic contacts with the debris of the former Dzhuchiev Ulus, that is, recognized these political entities as independent state entities. At the same time, the nature of interstate relations between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kazan and Crimean yurts differed significantly. The main factor that led to the difference was that the principality shared borders with the Crimean Khanate, while Kazan one was spatially removed from it and located south-east of the eastern neighbor of Lithuania - the Russian state. On behalf of the Crimean Khan, the Lithuanian prince saw the enemy rather than an advantageous neighbor who raided the southern outskirts of the state. The Lithuanian prince (who was often the Polish king) perceived the Kazan khan as an ally, with whom he had a common enemy in the person of the Moscow principality. At the same time, the absence of common borders between Lithuania and Kazan impeded mutual contacts significantly, but was strategically advantageous. The Ottoman government perceived these aspirations of the Crimea as a matter that concerns the khan exclusively, and did not help him.

Discussion

The problems of international relation history development in Eastern Europe are among the intensively developed ones since the XIXth century. It should be noted that the task of special consideration of interstate contacts dynamics between all states that existed on the territory of Eastern Europe remains difficult one. The researchers turned to the history of state mutual relations, mainly during the consideration of the foreign policy issues of a specific country (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Poland, Russia, etc.) during the study of the empire collapse causes and the development of new state formations and their political development on their territory, in particular when the history of the Golden Horde and its fragments is covered. The revival of the scientific interest in these issues was accompanied by the introduction of new documentary materials into the research.

At the turn of the XIX-XX centuries the study of the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania reached the highest degree of intensity. A large volume of material extracted from the archives was published, and to this day it serves as a multifaceted source of information on the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and its relations with other states. Historically, this problem was studied by historians of Poland, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and in our day it is studied by the scientists of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

Polish medievalists were mainly interested in the history of wars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland with the Tatars of the Great Horde and the Crimean Khanate. K. Pulaski was one of the first who considered the problem of relations of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Crimean Tatars

during the reign of the khan Mengli-Girey [5]. The pause in the study of international contacts of Lithuania was interrupted by the appearance of the work by L. Kolyankovsky, devoted to the study of Lithuanian-Moscow relations at the end of the fifteenth century [6]. It also touched the issue of the Crimean-Lithuanian ties. After a significant break L. Podgorodetsky [7], E. Okhmyansky [8] and D. Kolodzeychik [9] turned to the study of Lithuanian diplomatic contacts with Crimean Tatars. In recent decades, Ukrainian scientists V. Ulyanovsky [10], B. Cherkas [11] and V. Gulevich [12], O. Gayvoronsky [13], Ya.V. Pilipchuk [14] and others contributed into the coverage of the specified issue.

The relations of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Crimean Khanate and the Great Horde became the subject of analysis in the works of many Russian scholars. It should be noted that interest in the past of the Crimea and its relations with other countries, including the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Great Horde, the Ottoman Port and the Moscow State was not permanent in Russia either. It originated in the end of the 17th century, increasing in critical times, determining the moments for the course of the historical process, and fading away during the period of international contradictions reduction. It was conditioned by the desire to comprehend the experience of the relationships between the Moscow State and the Golden Horde, the Kazan and Crimean Khanates before the last push, aimed to complete the process of the post-Horde state uniting under the political supremacy of Russia, on the one hand, and gaining the access to the Black Sea, on the other. Among the researchers who turned to this problem, we should mention the following names: A.I. Lyzlova, A.I. Mankiev, M.M. Shcherbatova, N.M. Karamzin, S.M. Solovyov, V.D. Smirnov. In the USSR this problem was directly or indirectly covered in the works by N.A. Smirnov, N.A. Novoselsky, V.E. Syroechkovsky, R.Yu. Vipiper, V.D. Korolyuk, I.B. Grekov, K.V. Bazilevich, A.A. Zimin, B.N. Flory, A.L. Horoshkevich et al. [15]. The change in the form of political existence that occurred in the 90-ies of the XXth century, led to the activation of scientific thought in the study of the history of Dzhuchiev Ulus political heirs, the international relations formed by the end of the XVth century and their subsequent development. The historiography of the problem was enriched by I.V. Zaitsev's [16], V.V. Trepavlov's [2], V.A. Vinogradov's [17] and many other works. This issue was covered by the Belarusian scholars A. Lyubaya [18] and N. Voronin [19].

The studies showed that before the entry into the diplomatic game of the Moscow state, the Great Horde and the Ottoman Empire, the only partner of the Crimean Khanate was the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with the exception of the colony of Genoese. The arrival of the first Russian embassy to Mengli-Giray in 1474 with the proposal of an offensive alliance against the Polish king and the Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV and the Khan of the Great Horde Akhmat led to the break in relations with Lithuania and Poland

[18]. It is worth mentioning the assumption according to which the capture of Kiev by Tatars in 1482 finally destroyed the system of Crimean-Lithuanian diplomatic relations, based on common interests and the practice of written commitments. That Lithuania mutual interest with Poland and the Crimea in peaceful relations led to the formation of the institution of "mortgage" - the sending of a hostage from the nearest encirclement of the khan as the guarantor of obligation fulfillment by the Crimean khan. During the reconstruction of international relations, one should not confine himself to the clarification of the role of two counterparties (Crimea and the GDL), but it is necessary to clarify the nature and the forms of relations between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Great Horde, the Russian and Ottoman states. Only if this condition is met one can imagine the picture as a whole and understand the vectors of the Crimean Khanate and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania policy. At the end of the XVth century the relationship of the Moscow Principality with the Crimean Khanate was determined by a joint struggle with the common enemy - the Great Horde, and later determined by the confrontation between Moscow and Lithuania. Finally, there is the fact that A.L. Horoshkevich [20] attempted to generalize the world historiography of the problem and proposed the typology of international relations in medieval Rus.

Despite the breadth of the spectrum of views on the relations of the Moscow State with the Turkic-Tatar world, characteristic of modern historiography, the existing points of view can be reduced to two concepts. According to the first one, the Ottoman Empire played a decisive role in the post-Horde world, nurturing the aggressive plans for the Volga region and striving for hegemony in Eastern Europe. According to the second one, the Ottoman Port remained indifferent to what was happening in Eastern Europe, and was interested only in trade contacts with Russia. The supporters of both conceptual views recognize the Crimea as the conductor of Turkish politics, but at the same time they assess the degree of its actions independence in different ways.

One of the facets of interstate relations in Eastern Europe is the relationship of the Crimean yurt with Kazan one, the development of this aspect of the topic is implemented quite actively, despite the small number of surviving sources [21]. In a word, if the historiography of interstate relations of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Crimean Khanate has a developed tradition. And the researchers did not perform the comparison and the identification of the reasons and the nature of the differences in the political line of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in relation to two different Tatar khanates.

This state of affairs is primarily related to the fact that historians have studied political history and the dynamics of the international status of political organisms that continue their life activity: interstate contacts between the Moscow state and the post-Horde states and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and vice versa. Or they studied the relationship of potentially

doomed states to reciprocal contacts that were adjacent and had common borders. The diplomatic contacts between Lithuania and Kazan were not taken into account due to the earlier termination of the Kazan Khanate existence and its annexation to the Russian state, than it happened with the Crimean Khanate. Due to the relative short duration of the historical "take-off" and the ceased development of contacts between Lithuania and Kazan, they found themselves in the "shadow" of brighter and longer-term relationships, such as the interstate relations between Kazan and Moscow, and then the Crimea and Moscow, Moscow and the Lithuanian state, Lithuania and the Crimea.

Conclusions

This "distortion" in the reconstruction of the history of diplomatic ties between the political entities in Eastern Europe in the late fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries is undoubtedly connected with the extreme narrowness of the problem source. Unfortunately, there are few documentary evidences reflecting the chosen theme. The act materials and ambassadorial books on the connections of the Kazan Khanate with the Moscow Principality perished in the era of the "Kazan" wars and in the Time of Troubles, and the sources kept in the archives of Poland, Lithuania and other countries remain extremely unknown. And 22 ambassadorial books on Russia's relations with the Crimea kept in the Russian state archive of ancient acts, were practically not published, if we do not take into account the extracts published by N.I. Novikov in the XVIIIth century and extracts that appeared in the collections of the Russian Historical Society in the nineteenth century.

Summary

The study of political contacts between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Crimean and Kazan yurts showed that these relations differed in character and form. The existence of common borders and frequent military raids on the outskirts of the principality, which needed the means of existence of the Crimean Tatars, on the one hand, and the reluctance to strengthen the Moscow principality, on the other, forced the Lithuanian princes to exert efforts to prevent possible attacks of the Crimeans, and try to persuade the khan to join against the Grand Duke. At the same time Lithuania supported the Great Horde, in the elimination of which Moscow and the Crimea were interested. The Kazan Khanate established by Genghis Khan followers was territorially removed from Lithuania and was claimed by Moscow and the Crimea was perceived by Lithuania (which was not in a military confrontation with it) as a potential ally against the main "enemy" - the Moscow state. And if the Lithuanian prince perceived the Crimean yurt as an enemy, with whom it is more profitable to live in a "weak" peace, then he treated Kazan as the potential ally against the Moscow prince. A certain binding role was assigned to the Ottoman Porte, the "ruler" and the defender of the Muslims in the combination played out by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

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