

DIPLOMACY AND POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND
SAFAVID IRAN, 1639-1722

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**DIPLOMACY AND POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
AND SAFAVID IRAN, 1639-1722**

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ABSTRACT

Formally characterized by uninterrupted peace, dismissed as a period of marginal importance, and assumed not to have produced sufficient documentation for a monograph, the third and last phase of Ottoman-Safavid relations (1639-1722) is a virgin domain that lacks even formative works providing factual information. Several isolated publications that are available more misinform than inform the reader on the basics of the subject.

For such an uncharted territory with dispersed source material, the sound retrieval of factual information gains precedence over theoretical approach. Primarily, this dissertation fills a major gap in the historiography of the Early Modern Near East by establishing the history of diplomatic contacts, interstate correspondence, mission exchanges, negotiations, and frontier interactions by means of exploiting the archival records, chronicles, and reports left behind by contemporary Ottomans, Safavids, and Europeans. Using the hereby-unearthed information as a basis, the dissertation also examines the nature of these relations, highlights long-term trends, and situates the findings in the larger context of diplomatic and Middle Eastern history. Contrary to what earlier literature has suggested, the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations were neither eventless nor static: mutual negotiations, talks with the other party's adversaries, displays of goodwill, and submittals of unpleasant demands, empty threats, actual tours de force, exceptional privileges or concessions along with a structured inequality revealed by a highly formalized

hierarchy reflected in titulature, order of precedence, ranking, and protocol all testify for the lively content of peacetime relations.

This dissertation also sheds light on those hitherto neglected dimensions of the early modern diplomacy of the Ottoman Empire with the Safavids as well as with European states. My findings indicate that one does not necessarily need to look for traces of active engagement and innovative role only in the cases of permanent missions. Ad-hoc diplomacy could be equally sophisticated and contentful. In this regard, I introduce new paradigms as to how to identify and better appreciate the various aspects of this sophistication. I also propose how peacetime diplomacy can serve as an alternative platform on which to make a comparative power projection of the involved parties.

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making a survey of the Ottoman-Safavid frontier, he supported me with heart and soul upon my realization that first, a research of the 1638-1722 period of Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic and political relations was required. We agreed that this study could then serve as a solid base with the help of which the commensurate themes of religion and frontier could subsequently be studied. Attaining this doctoral degree will in no way alter how I conceive of the relationship we have built; I will always remain his pupil, and I look forward to benefiting further from the devoted master I was so lucky to find.

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اتحاف به ندا حکیمیان
که ذاتش گوهریست بی مانند.
با آرزوی آسودگی از همه پیچیدگیها.

اما بعد؛

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background

Relations between polities controlling Greater Iran and the eastern lands of the Roman Empire go back millennia, long before even *Iran* and the *Roman Empire* had emerged. Under different polities, peacetime and wartime interactions featured changes as well as continuities throughout the pre-Islamic and Islamic centuries. In some respects, Ottoman-Safavid relations introduced novelties into the picture; in many other respects, such as military strategies and territorial disputes, they featured direct continuity with the predecessors in Persia and the lands of Rome. Ottoman-Safavid contacts go back to approximately two centuries before 1639, the year from which the present study proceeds. The post-1639 era was marked by uninterrupted peace, distinguishing it from the first phase during which the Safavids were not yet a state and from the second phase characterized by a succession of conflicts, wars, and intervals of peace. Though lacking some essential themes and levels of analysis I offer in this study, the first and the second phases are covered relatively well by the historiography. Since the types of analysis of diplomacy and diplomatics that I offer in the dissertation are lacking in the works studying the pre-1639 phases, I will present here only a very brief summary of the political relations that brought about armed conflict, territorial change, and peace in order to lay the chronological groundwork and the base of factual information for my point of departure.

The Ottoman State's relations with Turkish (or Turkified) House of Safi began when the latter transformed itself under chieftain Cüneyd (r. 1447-1460) from the Sufi order it had been to a religious-military order with claims to territorial control and political power. For the overwhelmingly Turkish warrior-disciples and followers, the base of recruitment covered Asia

Minor, Azerbaijan, and northern Syria; therefore, Ottoman and Akkoyunlu territories automatically became of central importance to the Safavids both ideologically and politically. Several events led to Sheikh Cüneyd's migration including his expulsion from the order's center (Erdebil), as well as coming to the Karamanoğlu Principality's capital (Iconium) and establishing indirect contact with the Ottoman ruler Murad II; however, both the sultan and the prince denied him protection. Having reached capacity for undertaking raids against the "Empire" of Trebizond, Cüneyd increased the political clout of his house by marrying into the Akkoyunlu dynasty ruling central and western Iran, and his movement grew militarily to the extent that he went on a campaign against the Principality of Şirvânşâh. Under his son (Haydar)'s chieftainship (1460-1488), Kızılbaş religious indoctrination was coupled with the followers' ideological rejection of Ottoman subjecthood, while militarization peaked with the emergence of an army of disciples possessing an operational capacity covering east-central Asia Minor, Azerbaijan, and the southern Caucasus. Under Haydar's underage successor and son (İsmâil), the order summoned its disciples in 1500 to Erzincan and launched its ultimate emergence. As of 1501, the sheikh had become shah and by 1508, entire Greater Iran was brought under Safavid rule. Because central, northern, and southern Asia Minor was native land to many of the Kızılbaş, the Safavid military-nobility and eventually the ruling class in Iran, a direct confrontation ensued on ideological and territorial terms, even though Bayezid II's (r. 1481-1512) measures prevented the Safavids from making inroads to Ottoman territory.¹

¹ Hanna Sohrweide, "Der Sieg der Safawiden in Persien und seine Rückwirkungen auf die Schiiten Anatoliens im 16. Jahrhundert," *Der Islam* 41 (1965): 95-223; Adel Allouche, *The Origins and Development of the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict 906-962/1500-1555* (Berlin: Schwarz, 1983); Faruk Sümer, *Safevi Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerinin Rolü* (Ankara: Güven Matbaası, 1976); Michel M. Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safavids: Şiism, Sufism, and the Ghulat* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1972); Rustam Shukurov, "The Campaign of Shaykh Djunayd Safawî against Trebizond (1456 AD / 860 H)" *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 17, no.1 (1993): 127-140.

Bayezid II tried to sever the Safavids' ties from Ottoman Asia Minor by means of his policies of counter-mobilization, resettlement, and cordoning-off, which were implemented upon Safavid-follower Ottoman-subjects. Once the strife reached the extremes of the Safavid state's making border violations, harboring Ottoman princes, and supporting large-scale anti-Ottoman rebellions throughout Asia Minor that undertook massacres, sacked major cities, defeated the sultanate's armies, and killed a grand-vizier, hot war ensued. Selim I (the Grim)'s (r. 1512-1520) routing İsmâil Safavi (r. 1501-1524) in 1514 at the Battle of Çaldıran – after which the padishah even captured a woman of the shah and held court at the shah's capital (Tabriz) – led to the first Ottoman wave of expansion against Safavid Iran with the gradual incorporation of eastern Anatolia and western Kurdistan to the empire. Subsequently, the empire imposed a ban and embargo upon Safavid Iran, maintaining the state of war. After Süleyman I's (r. 1522-1566) accession, the last years of İsmâil and the first decade of Shah Tahmasb (r. 1524-1576) passed with informal dialogue via agents and covert support of each other's unruly frontier power-holders across the border in Azerbaijan and Iraq at the Safavid side, and Kurdistan and Asia Minor on that of the Ottomans.²

Hot war resumed in 1533, though unlike Selim I, the new padishah's policy was to contain and push the Safavids further east, rather than to annihilate them. Ottoman armies reentered to the royal capital (Tabriz) and Süleyman I held court there in 1534. However, Tahmasb did not give Süleyman battle, and instead tired out Ottoman forces with his scorched-

² Feridun Emecen, *Zamanın İskenderi, Şarkın Fatihî. Yavuz Sultan Selim* (İstanbul: Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2010); Şahabettin Tekindağ, "Yeni Kaynak ve Vesikaların Işığı Altında Yavuz Sultan Selim'in İran Seferi," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 17, no.22 (1968); Jean-Louis Bacque-Grammont, "The Eastern Policy of Süleyman the Magnificent," in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafadar (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1993); Reha Bilge, *1514 Yavuz Selim ve Şah İsmâil: Türkler, Türkmenler ve Farslar* (İstanbul: Giza Yayınları, 2010); Roger M. Savory, "Tajlu Khanum: Was She Captured by the Ottomans at the Battle of Chaldiran, or not?," in *Irano-Turcic Cultural Contacts in the 11th-17th Centuries*, ed. E. M. Jeremias (Piliscsaba: The Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2003); Refet Yinanç, *Dulkadir Beyliği* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989).

earth tactics. By 1535, the occupation of Azerbaijan was called off, but the second wave of Ottoman permanent conquests eventuated: new acquisitions in eastern Asia Minor, western Armenia, and central Iraq were retained and organized as the provinces of Erzurum and Baghdad. War continued in 1548-1549 with Safavid prince Elkâs Mirzâ's taking refuge at the Ottoman court (1547) and joining Süleyman I in undertaking a campaign with the objective of installing Elkas as the shah of Iran while scoring territorial gains for the empire in the process. Shah Tahmasb, instead of giving battle, devastated his Armenian and Azerbaijanian realms as part of his scorched-earth tactic. Though Süleyman again had to evacuate Azerbaijan after holding council yet another time at the Safavid capital, the major fortress city of Van and its adjacent countryside became definitively annexed to the empire. The two-year war involved Ottoman campaigns also in Georgia (where permanent conquests were also made), Şirvan, and Kurdistan. When a last campaign to Nahçıvan in 1553-1554 did not produce any results other than the by-now habitual cycle of the shah's devastating his own realm and the padishah's occupation followed by evacuation, the Peace of Amasya issued by Süleyman I in 1555 confirmed all Ottoman permanent conquests since 1533. This document drew the border between the empire and Iran in a way that, minor exceptions aside, would prove durable for centuries in the face of the handovers of territory in later wars and treaties, which proved to be temporary. It was also the first instrument establishing an accord for peacetime relations between the Ottomans and the Safavids.³

³ M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Arz ve Raporlarına Göre İbrâhim Paşa'nın İrakeyn Seferi'nde İlk Tedbirleri ve Fütuhâtı," *Bellekten* 21, no.83 (1957): 449-482; İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, "Kuzey Irak'ta Osmanlı Hakimiyetinin Kuruluşu ve Memun Bey'in Hatıraları," *Bellekten* 37, no. 146 (1973): 191-230; Rhoads Murphey, "Süleyman's Eastern Policy," in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, ed. Halil İnalçık and Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1993); Walter Posch, *Osmanisch-safavidische Beziehungen (1545-1550): Der Fall Alkas Mirza*, vol. 1-2 (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013); A. Ekber Diyanet, *İlk Osmanlı-İran Anlaşması (1555 Amasya Musalahası)* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1971); Remzi Kılıç, *Kanuni Devri Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri 1520-1566* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür ve Sanat Yayıncılık, 2006); Dündar Aydın, *Erzurum*

Ottoman imperial-prince Bayezid took refuge at Shah Tahmasb's court in 1559 after a fight with his brother (Selim) for heirship-apparent. Intensive correspondence, diplomacy, and bargaining between the two sides resulted in the Shah's delivering Bayezid to an Ottoman delegation in 1562 in return for a handsome payment in gold and heir-apparent Selim's issuing the Shah a prospective peace instrument. During the post-1555 peacetime relations, Safavid agents continued to function in Ottoman Asia Minor in the form of collecting donations and building up allegiance networks for the shah, which in turn sustained the drain of finance and manpower from the empire to Iran. Therefore, the disputes over legitimacy and ideology between the two dynasties, which characterized the sixteenth-century relations, also continued during this period of peaceful coexistence.⁴

After İsmâil II succeeded Tahmasb (1576) and an Imposter Shah İsmâil movement emerged in Ottoman Asia Minor (1577), war broke out in 1578 and continued for the next twelve years. In 1579, at the end of the first campaign, Ottoman armies had defeated the Safavids, annexed Kars, and taken Şirvan along with central/eastern Georgia. In 1583, after the Battle of Torches, the Ottomans took the province of Çukursa'd with its capital Erivan, and Bakü. In 1585, the Ottoman conquest of Azerbaijan was completed with the taking of Tabriz, the former capital of Safavid Iran. Karabağ also fell to the empire when its capital Gence was taken in 1588.

Beylerbeyiliği ve Teşkilatı: Kuruluş ve Genişleme Devri, 1535-1566 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998); Menûçihir Pârsâdüst, *Şâh Tâhmâsb-ı Evvel* (Tehrân: Şirket-i Sehâmî-yi İntişâr, hs.1381).

⁴ Şerafettin Turan, *Kanuni'nin Oğlu Şehzade Bayezid Vak'ası* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1961); Josef Matuz, "Vom Übertritt osmanischer Soldaten zu den Safawiden," in *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Festschrift für Hans Robert Roemer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Ulrich Haarmann (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft, 1979), 402-415; Elke Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik gegen die Safawiden im 16. Jahrhundert nach arabischen Handschriften* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1970); Istvan Nyitrai, "The Third Period of the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict: Struggle of Political Ideologies (1555-1578)," in *Irano-Turcic Cultural Contacts in the 11th-17th Centuries*, ed. E. M. Jeremias (Piliscsaba: The Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2003); Colin Imber "The Persecution of the Ottoman Shiites According to the Mühimme Defterleri 1565-1585," *Der Islam* 56 (1979): 245-273; Erhan Afyoncu, ed., *Venedikli Elçilerin Raporlarına Göre Kanuni ve Şehzade Mustafa* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2015); Rudi Matthee, "The Ottoman-Safavid War of 986-998/1578-90: Motives and Causes," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 20, no. 1-2 (2014): 1-20.

After the new shah (Abbas I) pleaded for peace by sending royal-prince Hamza as hostage to the Ottoman court, Murad III issued the imperial peace-epistle⁵ in 1590 confirming all Ottoman conquests, after which the new borders were demarcated on the spot by joint committees. In 1603, when no longer at a disadvantaged position, Shah Abbas broke the peace whose conditions were humiliating for the Safavids and, by 1604, he recovered the fortresses of Tabriz, Nahçıvan, and Erivan. Next, defeating a disorderly Ottoman army at the Battle of Sufiyan in 1605, Abbas's armies completely expelled the Ottomans from Azerbaijan, Şirvan, Gence, and the former Safavid Georgia. Refraining from giving battle to the Ottomans during successive campaigns, Shah Abbas managed to register the Safavid recoveries and thus the restoration of the 1555 (imperial Peace-epistle of Amasya) borders with the imperial Peace-epistle of Nasuhpaşa in 1612, in return for an annual silk tribute he was to pay to the padishah.⁶

War broke out again in 1615 because of border disagreements in the Caucasus. It saw a whirlwind of upheaval in which the Ottoman siege of Erivan failed, the Crimean raid of north-western Iran devastated the region, Abbas burned down Azerbaijan as part of the scorched-earth tactics, the Ottomans advanced in this ravaged zone and entered Tabriz, and the Safavids defeated an Ottoman contingent. Meanwhile, these events paralleled ongoing negotiations. The Serav oath-instrument⁷ issued in 1618 before Erdebil restored the conditions of the Nasuhpaşa Peace though with reduced silk tribute. The very next years were marked by exchanges of missions, observance of pacification conditions, and outwardly cordial correspondence. However, the indirect Safavid takeover of Baghdad in 1623, which occurred as a result of the

⁵ *sulhnâme-i hümayun*

⁶ Bekir Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İran Siyasi Münasebetleri (1578-1612)* (İstanbul: Fetih Cemiyeti Yayınları, 1993); Faruk Söylemez, "Anadolu'da Sahte Şah İsmâil İsyanı," *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 17 (2004): 71-90; Abdullah Gündoğdu, "Türkistan'da Osmanlı İnan Rekabeti (1583-1598)," in *Uluslararası Osmanlı Târihi Sempozyumu (8-10 Nisan 1999) Bildirileri*, ed. Gökçe Turan (İzmir: Türk Ocakları İzmir Şubesi, 2000), 141-152.

⁷ *ahid-nâme*

Local military's disobedience to imperial orders, upset the reinstated peace. Shah Abbas claimed that he did not break the peace because he had taken Baghdad not from the padishah but from a rebel ringleader, and accordingly asked the padishah to appoint his son, the royal-prince, as the guardian of the province; nevertheless, this far-fetched justification did not prevent the outbreak of another war. The protracted Ottoman siege of Baghdad in 1625-1626 and the subsequent confrontation of the two sides' armies did not bring about concrete results. In the meantime, the rebel pasha of Erzurum, Abaza Mehmed, defected to Iran, causing a major diversion in the Ottoman war effort. Yet, the Ottomans brought Erdelân/Kurdistan under control and raided Hemedân as a counterattack. Despite the follow-up victory at the Battle of Merivan with considerable psychological effect, the ensuing second siege of Baghdad (1630) again failed to bear results for the besiegers. The Safavids' siege of Van (1633) proved even less effective. It is noteworthy that almost every campaign in this fifteen-year war was both preceded and followed by diplomatic contacts between the parties. Breaking the deadlock, the Ottoman army led personally by Murad IV conquered Erivan in 1635. Marching southwards, the Padishah entered Tabriz but eventually had to evacuate the devastated province of Azerbaijan. In 1636, Shah Safi recovered Erivan after a winter siege. The definitive campaign that would end the war victoriously for the Ottoman side materialized in 1638. After a heavy investment, Murad IV captured Baghdad. Under the threat of further Ottoman advance into Iran, Shah Safi appealed for peace. The Peace of Zuhab signed in 1639 restored the pre-1623 borders with certain modifications to the advantage of the empire.⁸

⁸ Özer Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münasebetleri (1612-1639)* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2014); Claudia Römer, "Die osmanische Belagerung Bagdads 1034-35/1624-25. Ein Augenzeugenbericht," *Der Islam* 66 (1989): 119-136; Elke Niewöhner-Eberhard, "Machtpolitische Aspekte des osmanischen-safawidischen Kampfes um Bagdad im 16./17. Jahrhundert," *Turcica* 6 (1975): 103-127; Rhoads Murphey, "The Functioning of the Ottoman Army under Murad IV (1623-1639/1032-1049): Key to the Understanding of the Relationship between Center and Periphery in Seventeenth-Century Turkey" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1979).

I.2. Overview of Primary Sources

Due to the lack of literature on the subject, the present dissertation is based almost entirely on primary sources. The literary primary-source genres are chronicles, travelogues, diplomatic mission reports, and correspondence compilations. In this group, Ottoman sources surpass their Safavid counterparts by far, both in quantity and in quality. Admittedly, each source carries with it the biases, worldviews, or at least the perspective of its drafter or patron. This is more the case for literary sources. In this sense, Ottoman chronicles of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, despite their partiality in general, are far better than Safavid chronicles in terms of describing incidents, detailing developments, providing evidence, and even making criticisms of their own state. Ottoman examples of literary sources still present passages that flatter the monarch and present every occurrence as though it stemmed from his will, etc., but they reduce these to several clichéd adjectives within examples of a more or less realistic narrative. This of course does not mean that Ottoman chronicles were free from distorted narratives caused by factionalist concerns, which is another story.

In the Safavid chronicles of the age, in contrast, comparatively fewer textual examples detail occurrences. Beyond factual information, these sources provide insufficient evidence. This is the result of the fact that recognizing each occurrence formally as the manifestation of the ruler's will was not reduced in these sources to cliché expressions; this representation was narrated and re-narrated in long passages claiming the lion's share of the text on a given happening. Encomia to the ruler/patron and, as a result of the lack of criticism of the own state, making him take credit for irrelevant or even unfavorable incidents are frequent features. In this regard, Ottoman chronicles coincide more with works of history in terms of their textual characteristics, while Safavid chronicles resemble longer prose versions of praise-panegyrics

with history as their subject. This characteristic can reach an exaggerated degree, even in comparison to the Safavid average, with the occasional complete disregard for history-writing on the part of the chronicler, a tendency that is not observable in even the most factionalist examples of the Ottoman chronicle genre, which simply adhered to the by-then accepted standards of providing evidence and keeping encomia at a possible minimum. Meanwhile, the Safavid chroniclers generally pass over extremely important developments in a few lines, tend to reflect defeats and belittlements before adversaries as the victorious shah's grace to servitors, and re-narrate in pages-long passages at the beginning of every calendar year the miraculous coming of the spring. Even in such preambles, abstract analogies occupy the central narrative at the expense of the more meaningful court ceremonies connected with it. Yet, this does not mean that Safavid chronicles have been of little use. For a topic with dispersed source material, like that of this dissertation, each bit of information is extremely valuable. Milking the useful pieces of the Safavid texts still yielded an important deal of information that those who penned the Ottoman sources were not in a position to know or transmit.

Accordingly, the researcher should use the Safavid chronicles with extreme caution except in the cases of factual information on appointments and depositions. Only by filtering them via more comprehensive and less partial sources can one glean useful information. On the other hand, the Ottoman chronicles, despite carrying most of the characteristics and shortcomings of early-modern works of history, yield much more usable information after the filtering, verification, and disapproval processes. While they should nevertheless be subjected to the necessary source criticism, they yield comparatively much more information that is of tangible use than their Safavid counterparts due to their textual attributes. Additionally, European literary sources complement the domestic material coming from the two parties.

The archival sources are comprised of a variety of document and register genres, whose classifications, as well as those of the literary sources, can be seen below. In the archival group, documentation from the two sides is not even comparable. Ottoman archives contain a wealth of records, which is especially true for the period beginning from the later seventeenth-century. On the other hand, aside from a few published documents, a repository of Safavid archives does not exist. Keep in mind, however that this should not be a criterion for evaluating the characteristics of Safavid archival practices. Given the comparative quality, quantities, and scopes of the source material in literary and archival formats, it can be stated that a history of Ottoman-Safavid relations from the 1630s to the 1720s would be imperfect without the use of European material, incomplete without Safavid sources, and essentially deficient without the Ottoman ones.

Below is a breakdown of archival and literary genres according to origin and genre. For those genres begging description, several notes appear in this introduction as well as in the main chapters because of a perceived necessity to highlight a phenomenon. Those genres aside, I refrained from elaborating on each of the archival genres, whose names are more or less self-explanatory. The same goes for the literary genres, whose breakdown is provided below. However, as names were not allocated one by one to each applying chronicle or report, I deem the manner in which these sources are employed in the text and listed in the bibliography sufficient. Also, archival and manuscript repositories appear in the bibliography, as I did not want institutions to get mixed with overarching genres found in more than one repository.

Ottoman archival genres include: imperial epistles (*nâme-i hümayun*), grand-vizierial [diplomatic] letters (*mektub-ı sâmî*), governmental letters (*mektup*), imperial decrees (*fermân-ı*

hümâyün)⁹, imperial-writs (*hatt-ı hümâyün*), mandates (*buyrultu*), expositions (*arz*), memorandums (*kâime*), reports (*takrir*), petitions (*arzihal*), collective-petitions (*arz-ı mahzar*), judicial deeds (*hüccet-i şeriye*), charters and diplomas (*berat / menşûr*), summations (*telhîs*), ratifications (*tasdiknâme*), robe-of-honor bestowals (*hil'at ihsanı*), internal passports (*yol hükmü*), expense registers (*masraf defterleri*), treasury notes (*hazine tezkiresi*), breakdowns by the chief-accounting bureau (*baş muhasebe dökümleri*), comptrollership notes (*defterdar tezkireleri*), orders of payment (*tediye emri*), expenditure bills (*harcama tezkiresi*), reimbursement transactions (*geri ödeme muamelâtı*), military review lists (*yoklama / mevcudât defteri*), ammunition transfer registers (*mühimmat sevkiyâtı defteri*), notes (*pusula*), registers of the privy treasury (*hazine-i hassa defteri*). See the bibliography for the series referred to in the Prime-Ministerial Ottoman and the Topkapı Palace archives.

Ottoman chronicles (*vekâyinâme / târih*) total – 17. Distribution according to genre: by state dignitaries – 5, by central chancellery masters – 5, by Inner Court officials – 4, by official state chroniclers – 2 (both multi-volume), by a provincial chancellery master – 1. There are also other Ottoman chronicle-type sources referred to only once or twice. They are not included in the calculation above.

Ottoman correspondence compilations total – 9, plus modern compilations by editors in which Ottoman-Safavid correspondence is published. Additional genres within correspondence compilations with the omission of those common with the archival genres: diplomatic notes (*elçi tezkiresi*), letters-of-friendship (*muhabbetname*), letters-of-welcome (*istikbâl-nâme*). See the

⁹ A note on imperial decrees: the Imperial Council's decree registers have been lately suffering from diminishing attention. Historians underrating this genre's potential point out that the decrees reflect not the reality but the center's will, which might or might not have materialized. What these historians miss is the *narratio/expositio* constituent, which relates all that came to pass regarding a given incident until the issuing of the present decree, no matter how unpleasant the events might have been for the state. This dissertation makes active use of this dimension of imperial decrees.

bibliography for the manuscript series referred to in the Austrian National Library, the Berlin State Library, and the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library.

Ottoman mission reports (*elçilik takriri* / *sefâretnâme*, etc.) total – 3 (two of them inserted/published in larger works, i.e. a chronicle and a travelogue).

Ottoman registers of protocol and ceremonies (*teşrifât defteri*) total – 2.

Safavid chronicles and histories total – 6. Single-reference sources are not counted.

Travelogues and mission reports by Europeans by total: from Germany / the Holy Roman Empire – 4, from France – 4, from Sweden – 2, from Russia – 1, from the Papacy (Carmelites) – 1. Single-reference sources are not counted.

I.3. Secondary Literature

The 1639-1720 phase of Ottoman-Safavid relations has largely been ignored by the historiography. Major histories focusing on or covering the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Iran treat the topic almost as if relations did not exist after Zuhab until the last phase of the upheavals in Iran that led to the overthrow of the Safavids.¹⁰ General surveys of Ottoman/Turkish-Iranian relations looking at much larger time spans either almost completely skip the 1639-1722 period¹¹ or make brief evaluations that reproduce the judgments taken for granted in the literature.¹²

¹⁰ See Hans Robert Roemer, “The Safavid Period,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran* 6, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi*, vol.3/1-3/2-4/1 (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 3th ed. 1982-1983).

¹¹ Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *The Foreign Policy of Iran. A Developing Nation in World Affairs, 1500-1941* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966), 19.

¹² Menûçihir Pârsâdûst, *Revâbit-ı Târîhî ve Hukûkî-yi İnan, Osmânî ve İraq (1014-1970)* (Tehran: Şirket-i Sihâmî-yi İntişâr, hs.1365), 46-47.

Inevitably, attempts to allocate more space to this period in more comprehensive works have only resulted in the publication of more of the same problematic information.¹³

With regards to specialized studies, just as the previously summarized pre-1639 phase of Ottoman-Safavid relations is relatively well studied, so the post-1639 one is neglected. There seems to be an implicit consensus among historians, especially in Ottoman studies, on the supposed triviality of this eighty-four-year third phase of relations vis-à-vis the first and the second ones, due to non-existence of war between the two parties. This approach must have been the consequence of the nature of the sources and its contrast to the material that enabled the writing of the monographs, dissertations, and articles on the first two phases.

Wars and peace treaties produced case-specific treatises, specialized histories, separate archival record series, compiled correspondence, etc. For the purpose of Ottoman documentation, padishahly or grand-vizierial participation in campaigns further increased the volume of the directly relevant literary and archival genres. These sources in turn facilitated a relatively tidy and compact – if not simple – research agenda, though frantic searches could still be the case in exceptional cases. For the post-Zuhab years, this tidiness is out of the question. There is almost no single source which, by virtue of its title or main theme, directly concerns Ottoman-Safavid relations. The researcher in turn has to dig in chronicle entries for information that might even be hidden in the middle of a paragraph dedicated to another issue, because the part pertaining to Ottoman-Safavid relations might not have been regarded so important by the chronicler as to deserve its own section or intertitle. More crucially, there are no Ottoman special histories, treatises, or correspondence compilations focusing solely on post-Zuhab relations. On top of that, in the Ottoman archives, for the post-1639 phase, there are no campaign versions of

¹³ Abdürrızâ Hûşeng Mehdevî, *Târîh-i Revâbit-ı Hâricî-yi İran* (Tehran: Müessesesi-i İntişârât-ı Emîr-i Kebîr, hs.1349), 68, 77-78.

imperial decree registers. Besides, in each applicable register of the general series, a decree to a frontier province which might accidentally involve information on relations with Iran exists side by side with thousands of others sent to those in Asia Minor, Levant, Egypt, Hungary, the Balkans, the Mediterranean coast, etc. on any potential issue ranging from matters of local importance to the travel arrangements of the empress-mother from Adrianople to Constantinople. There are likewise neither “Foreign State Registers – Iran (*Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri – İran*)” nor “Decree Registers – Iran (*İran Ahkâm Defterleri*)” pertaining to pre-1722 years, because a Safavid resident mission in Constantinople, which would have occasioned the earlier formation of these series, did not exist. Uncatalogued Ottoman internal letter exchange and governmental transactions of various types – out of which over 70,000 documents pertain to the 1639-1722 period – are literally boxed in various Imperial Council document series, in which letters to and from provinces bordering Iran that might potentially provide information on frontier developments are piled side by side with, for example, the processing of grain transport from Wallachia, a Genoese diplomat’s petition on an incoming Italian ship in harbor at Constantinople, or an issue regarding the power balance between the *Mamlûk* nobility and the governor-general’s establishment in Egypt. For Iran-based sources, the contrast between the pre- and post-1639 phases is less distinct. As to the domestic sources of Safavid political history, historians do not have more than several chronicles which narrate only certain developments, a genre which suffers from serious interruptions, and also a few edited document compilations.

Probably for the reasons above, the subject matter of this dissertation has remained almost entirely unresearched. If one considers the available amount of the information on this subject from extant sources as a whole, what we do not know constitutes the overwhelming majority vis-à-vis the available bits and pieces. While we scarcely know anything about what

happened, we are in a situation even worse than knowing nothing with regards to how and why events happened. Therefore, the subject calls for reconstruction from scratch.¹⁴

Nevertheless, there are of course studies that have been of considerable help by virtue of their touching upon themes that belong to the topic of Ottoman-Safavid relations from 1638 to 1722 or publishing sources that shed light on a component of it. At times I traced their sources and at times I used them directly. On some occasions, I have benefited from the information these studies present or developed it further, while on other occasions, I have amended the data and the commentary found in them. I want to acknowledge the contribution of their authors to the field by briefly introducing these studies, if not offering a review of them.

Ernest Tucker, one of the last representatives of a millennium-old but almost-bygone tradition of Persian-Turkish bilingualism among historians and litterateurs¹⁵, has published an article on the general nature of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy as well as its evolution since its inception well into the later period,¹⁶ and he has also given references to its final phases in another article.¹⁷ Especially noteworthy is his comparison of the evolution of European diplomacy with the Peace of Westphalia as the reference point and the evolution of diplomacy in the Middle East with the Peace of Zuhab as an agent of transformation. His observations on the concepts of what I call *legitimate independence* and *unrestricted recognition* within Islamdom also come into prominence among the topics of discussion.

¹⁴ Moreover, I do not point out the factual, conceptual, or interpretive errors nor the misinterpretations, mistranslations, or relative nonuse of sources, which I identified in various published studies. Instead, I simply present corrected information and revised analyses.

¹⁵ I find this attribute crucial to the understanding of the Turko-Persian world of the entire second millennium.

¹⁶ Ernest Tucker, "From Rhetoric of War to Realities of Peace: The Evolution of Ottoman-Iranian Diplomacy through the Safavid Era," in *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, ed. Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig (London&New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 82, 86.

¹⁷ Ernest Tucker, "The Peace Negotiations of 1736: A Conceptual Turning Point in Ottoman-Iranian Relations," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 20, no.1 (1996).

Rudi Matthee, who broke new ground by revitalizing the scholarly production on the seventeenth-century Safavid history, also has a voice within the field of the Ottoman-Safavid relations from 1639 to 1722 through his articles and monographs. An article he published on European-Iranian diplomatic traffic concerning the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Shah Süleyman¹⁸ contributes considerably to our understanding of what I call the Ottoman-Safavid *diplomatic revolution*. In this regard, Eszer Ambrosius's earlier work on relevant sources,¹⁹ which both Matthee and I use extensively, should not go unmentioned. Matthee also published an article on the seventeenth-century Basra.²⁰ Particularly valuable is the supplemental information that comes from his use of commercial and missionary documents in languages that I am not literate in (Dutch, French, and Italian), an important complement to the set of subsidiary sources of Iranian-Ottoman relations.

Last but not least, Giorgio Rota – a specialist in Iranian-Italian relations and Safavid military history as well as the Iranian-vassal Georgia – contributes to our knowledge of the present subject in a specific manner with an article he published on a Ragusan source²¹ that helped confirm the answer I have found to an ambiguity within the 1641 Emirgüneoğlu affair. On a more general scale, his article on Safavid-Venetian diplomatic relations,²² throughout the course of which the Ottoman Empire many times enjoyed the position of primary subject, has been equally helpful. As the freshest arrival in the field, Hilal Çiftçi recently submitted her

¹⁸ Rudi Matthee, "Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy During the Reign of Shah Sulayman I (1077-1105 / 1666-94)," in *Iran and Iranian Studies: Essays in Honor of Iraj Afshar*, ed. Kambiz Eslami (Princeton, New Jersey: Zagros, 1998).

¹⁹ Ambrosius Eszer O.P., "Sebastianus Knab O.P., Erzbischof von Naxijewan (1682-1690). Neue Forschungen zu seinem Leben," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 43 (1973): 215-286.

²⁰ Rudi Matthee "Between Arabs, Turks and Iranians: The Town of Basra, 1600-1700," *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies* 69, no.1 (2006).

²¹ Giorgio Rota, "The Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr According to a Contemporary Ragusan Source," in *Iran und iranisch geprägte Kulturen. Studien zum 65. Geburtstag von Bert. G. Fragner*, ed. Markus Ritter, Ralph Kauz, and Birgitt Hoffmann, 54-63 (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2008).

²² Giorgio Rota, "Safavid Persia and Its Diplomatic Relations with Venice," in *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, ed. Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig (London & New York, I.B. Tauris, 2012), 149-160

dissertation on the diplomatic language of Ottoman-Safavid relations^{23,24}. Additionally, topics handled in some studies on the post-1720 relations between Iran and the Ottoman Empire²⁵ or in comparative overviews of the Ottoman-Safavid age slightly correspond with those in this dissertation,²⁶ though more in title than in coverage.

²³ On the subject of inter-monarch hierarchy as reflected in diplomatic titulature, if one excepts Lajos Fekete's subsidiary comments in his monograph on paleography (Lajos Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Palaeographie: 101 persische Dokumente* (Budapest: Akad. Kiado, 1977)), the field of Ottoman-Safavid relations was a completely virgin area until Hilal Çiftçi's "Osmanlı-Safevi İlişkilerinin Diplomatik Dili" (PhD diss., Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi, 2015) –see especially the pages 44-47, 49-50, 61, 64, 124. This dissertation was submitted in late 2015 and became accessible to me when the writing process of my dissertation was already in its final stages. In the larger field of pre-modern orientel diplomacy, Cihan Yüksel Muslu's *The Ottomans and the Mamluks: Imperial Diplomacy and Warfare in the Islamic World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014) is a pathbreaking study offering a reconstruction of the correlation between titulature and the diplomatic hierarchy of rulers.

²⁴ For preliminary remarks on diplomatic protocol in the Ottomans' relations with various European states, see Maria Pia Pedani, "The Sultan and the Venetian *Bailo*: Ceremonial Diplomatic Protocol in Istanbul," in *Diplomatisches Zeremoniell in Europa und im Mittleren Osten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Ralph Kauz, Giorgio Rota, and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 287-299; Maria Pia Pedani, "Osmanlı Padişahının Adına" *İstanbul'un Fethinden Girit Savaşı'na Venedik'e Gönderilen Osmanlılar*, trans. Elis Yıldırım (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2011), 60-67; İbrâhim Yıldırım, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Elçi Kabulleri* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2014); (Faik Reşit Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefâretnameleri*, pub. Bekir Sıtkı Baykal (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1968; Markus Köhbach, "Ein diplomatischer Rangstreit in Istanbul," *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 36 (1983): 261-268; André Krischer, "Souveraenitaet als sozialer Status: zur Funktion des diplomatischen Zeremoniells in der Frühen Neuzeit," in *Diplomatisches Zeremoniell in Europa und im Mittleren Osten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Ralph Kauz, Giorgio Rota, and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 1-32; and Ernst D. Petritsch, "Zeremoniell bei Empfaengen habsburgischer Gesandtschaften in Konstantinopel," in *Diplomatisches Zeremoniell in Europa und im Mittleren Osten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Ralph Kauz, Giorgio Rota, and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 301-322.

²⁵ Münir Aktepe, "Dürrî Ahmed Efendi'nin İran Sefareti," *Belgelerle Türk Târihi Dergisi* 1, no.1-6 (1967-1968); Muhammed Emîn Riyâhî, *Sefâretnâme-hâ-yi İrân. Güzârîşha-yi Mûsâferet ve Memûriyet-i Sefîrân-ı Osmânî der İrân* (İntişârât-ı Tûs, hs.1368), 9-98; Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations 1718-1743: A Study of Rebellion in the Capital and War in the Provinces of the Ottoman Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1975); Suraiya Faroqhi, "An Ottoman Ambassador in Iran: Dürrî Ahmed Efendi and the Collapse of the Safavid Empire in 1720-1721," in *Wahrnehmung des Fremden, Differenzenerfahrungen von Diplomaten in Europa (1500-1648)*, ed. Michael Rohrschneider and Arno Strohmeyer (Münster: Aschendorrf, 2007), 375-398, reproduced in Suraiya Faroqhi, *Another Mirror for Princes. The Public Image of the Ottoman Sultans and its Reception* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008); İlker Külbilge, "18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Osmanlı-İran Siyasi İlişkileri (1703-1747)" (PhD diss., Ege Üniversitesi, 2010).

²⁶ Metin Kunt, "Ottomans and Safavids. *States, Statecraft, and Societies, 1500-1800*," in *A Companion to the History of the Middle East*, ed. Youssef M. Choueiri (Chichester; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008).

I.4. The Present Study: Arguments, Novelties, and Scope

The primary accomplishment of this study is that it fills a major gap and advances our understanding regarding interstate contacts as well as the workings of diplomacy by reconstructing the 1639-1722 phase of Ottoman-Safavid relations for the first time. This is crucial in the sense that I establish almost the entire narrative on this uncharted field from scratch with source material which was not necessarily produced to shed light on the subject matter and which was presumed to yield next to nothing for the purposes of this dissertation. The unearthed information presented here is itself a proof that the bilateral relations of the period were far from being eventless and static as has been surmised but rather quite active and dynamic.²⁷ I restore, as far as my sources allow,²⁸ the emissary exchange and correspondence between both parties' state centers and frontier governorates, and ascertain the occasions that triggered these contacts, such as major conquests, crises, calls for coordination, and Ottoman accessions. In this regard, I show that in the absence of permanent missions, the parties sent out ad-hoc emissaries of various capacities dozens of times, who forwarded again dozens of identified written diplomatic

²⁷ The phenomenon of the historiography's deeming the 1639-1722 period eventless and static can be explained by the fact that Persian *and* Turkish primary sources have not been used together. This is understandable given the ever-growing specialization within Middle Eastern studies. Yet, one still might expect that a specialist of either Ottoman or Safavid history fully utilize at least his or her linguistic side of the source material. For instance, regarding the genres in Persian, the historiography has given less than due importance to Safavid royal and prime-ministerial letters, which are otherwise indispensable to studies in diplomacy. Besides, authorial and editorial errors in chronicles pertaining to chronology, names, titles, administrative mechanisms, particular developments, etc. have also been occasionally reproduced.

²⁸ Some source genres that are essential to such studies have hitherto received less than due attention. Of these, the extant material in Persian, the much richer literary sources in Turkish, and the immense documentation from Ottoman archives are *sine qua nons* before deriving any conclusions regarding mission exchanges, diplomatic correspondence, and the course of relations. The use of relevant European material also facilitates noteworthy upgrades after the building is constructed with the above-mentioned indigenous material. By the same token, in order to go rid our evaluations of abstractedness, I encourage that scholars not handle treaties and treaty-like instruments as the sole source material in studying diplomacy. Peacetime exchanges of epistles and letters are equally crucial. They enable us not to underrate congratulatory missions as mere formalities, because they indicate that these missions could indeed perform substantive activities and even represent revolutionary moments in diplomacy. By utilizing this genre, we will also end up having covered those decades that passed without the promulgation of a pacification instrument. It is also similarly important to accurately establish whether a pacification instrument was an *ahidnâme*, *sulhnâme*, *tasdiknâme*, or *muâhede*, which all fulfilled the function of a peace agreement but in different capacities and occasionally with varying political implications.

instruments of various genres. The content of these contacts tell us also that diplomacy conducted by frontier governors was not alternative to but rather coordinated with state centers.

The subject matters of this dynamic diplomacy, in other words, the information I have unearthed regarding political relations, include inter-audience negotiations of various formats, parallel talks between one of the parties and the other party's current adversaries, antagonizing demands, displays of goodwill and gratitude, false alarms of mobilizations, provocations, empty threats, actual tours de force, states-of-war involving central armies, and reassurances in the face of potential tensions. After evaluating each occurrence, I argue that each side followed what one can call long-term state policies vis-à-vis each other. In following these policies, the Ottomans regarded relations with the Safavids of secondary importance, if not trivial. The underlying principle was the preservation of the peace without necessarily making sacrifices to this end. On the other hand, for the Safavids, relations with the empire were essential to the wellbeing of the realm. Every possible sacrifice was made in order to preserve the peace and to bring about a further rapprochement with the Ottomans, a maxim borne out of the Safavids' past experiences and which ensured that the peace proved durable. By looking at the cases of armed encroachments in the forms of raids and punitive operations by state militaries, vassals, and tributaries; disputes on fortified positions, demilitarized zones, and territory; and border demarcations; I point out a striking feature of the center-periphery balance in the conduct of diplomacy and the course of relations. I argue that the hands of the central courts almost always steered these relations. The frontier could and did have a monopoly on the content to negotiate, agree, or disagree on that was presented to the centers, but in the final analysis, the central courts set the direction that relations would follow. This is how it became possible that the most

controversial upheavals at the frontier led to the closest rapprochement at interstate level, and that relatively minor violations gave way to major crises.

Beyond the unearthed information and the importance it carries as described above, my use of new paradigms in approaching sources enabled me to introduce essential revisions to the knowledge of not only the chosen topic but also Early Modern oriental diplomacy in general. The novel methodologies and levels of analyses employed in this dissertation call for an essential revision and even a partial re-handling of the history of diplomacy, if not foreign relations, in the Early Modern Middle East. This is because the diplomacy in question turns out to have been much more complex, hierarchically structured, multi-faceted, and elaborate than has been presumed. Below is a summation of the main points:

In the literature, the concepts of empire, kingdom, sultanate, principality, etc. are used in oriental context without the same degree of exactness demanded by and current in occidental context.²⁹ By integrating the Turkic system of hoetail-ensigns, corresponding thrones and posts, and a titlature analysis of the *intitulatio* and *inscriptio* constituents of the correspondence examined, I reconstructed the oriental order of precedence whose basic positions consist of supreme-monarchy, sultanate, and emirate/beğlik/hâkimship. These correspond respectively to occidental emperorship, kingship, and principality/duchy. I assert that the Early Modern oriental inter-state and inter-monarch hierarchy was as well established as that of its contemporary occidental counterpart, and that the creation of a consolidated table of correspondence involving both systems is achievable. In this hierarchy, the Ottoman padishah was a supreme-monarch/emperor and the Safavid shah was a sultan/king. This unequal partnership marked by

²⁹ Though there is an exception: in her *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, Yüksel Muslu tackles the issue of titlature and reconstructs parts of the terms used in *inscriptio* as indicators of the hierarchical relationship among various oriental rulers.

Ottoman primacy was reproduced on every formal platform in bilateral relations, such as rights of correspondence and orders of precedence, not to mention titulature. The hierarchical gap was not only an abstract construct, either. The Ottomans conceded promotions to the Safavids as incentives for the pro-empire policy Iran followed against third parties, while demotions served as part of a larger set of replies during the deterioration of relations.

The same goes for emissaries. Unlike the exactness displayed by colleagues working on Early Modern European diplomacy, when it comes, to the orient, with a few exceptions,³⁰ the terms of ambassador, envoy, and other emissarial titles are used interchangeably or arbitrarily. I firstly eliminate each weakpoint in the identification of the otherwise separate emissarial ranks of ambassador, envoy, and unaccredited agent in the cases that these are explicitly spelled out or presented in a manner from which rank can be directly identified. In the cases where the available information presents less favorable circumstances, I identify emissarial rank via a novel analysis of the credentials section in the accompanying epistle/letter. I also establish the separate capacities and exclusive authorities peculiar to ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents as well the specific occasions on which they were sent out.³¹ It should be noted that Ottoman

³⁰ Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, in his *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th-18th Century). An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), tackles this issue and successfully demarcates ambassadorship from the ranks below as well as covering considerable distance in distinguishing *ortaelçi* from *küçükkelçi*. I take up where Kołodziejczyk's pioneering study left off and carry the methodology for establishing each separate diplomatic rank one step further.

³¹ In addition to this liberal use of terminology pertaining to official hierarchy, historians' levelling off diplomatic missions of different ranks and capacities with each other by means of employing a general term for different types of emissaries is a common practice. One ubiquitous mistake is lumping all embassies together with legations by means of promoting all legations to embassy rank or grading them both as missions, and grouping together ambassadors with envoys by means of choosing one of these titles to denote both. On top of this, the rank of unaccredited agent is almost universally ignored. This indicates that the overgeneralization of otherwise-distinct phenomena in diplomacy is a widespread tendency rather than a set of isolated cases. With regards to this, historians have failed to recognize the otherwise obvious rank of the emissary along with its entire set of implications on inter-monarch hierarchy and diplomatic protocol, and thus also failed to set forth the very basics of what is expected from a study on diplomacy. Yet I must repeat: this is peculiar neither to the historians who published on this specific topic nor to Ottoman-Safavid studies but rather a commonplace shortcoming in the historiography on Early Modern orient. In publications pertaining to Ottoman diplomacy other than that in relations with the Safavids, even prominent historians use, for example, *Gesandter* with *Botschafter* or *Gesandtschaft* with *Botschaft* interchangeably.

hierarchical primacy was reflected onto the rank and occasion of each ad-hoc mission that was issued forth: for the same occasions, the padishah always enjoyed the prerogative of receiving a higher-ranking emissary from the shah than the one the padishah would send to the shah. Also, exclusively Ottoman accessions occasioned diplomatic contact; changes of Safavid monarchs simply did not. By virtue of the Safavids' sending ambassadors to new padishahs, the Ottomans made sure that any renegotiation, amendment, and new regulation would be discussed and enacted exclusively at the Ottoman court. This also indicates that accession embassies were formalities only in form, unlike what has been taken for granted in other studies. In fact, they were a platform on which the activities conducted by both sides could have even revolutionary implications.

Diplomatic protocol applied by host states when accrediting and hosting emissaries was aligned with the system of emissarial ranks. Historians have paid some attention to protocol, but mostly to its ceremonial capacity and at best to the differences between that enjoyed by different states' emissaries at the same court.³² I establish four separate, well-delineated, and formalized

Nonetheless, isolated exceptions where the historian made a consistent attempt to differentiate exist, such as distinguishing between *ambassador* and *envoy* to the extent that sources allow, using *Botschafter/Botschaft* not arbitrarily but in a conscious differentiation from the generic term *Gesandter/Gesandtschaft*, distinguishing *embassy* from *legation*, and making a distinction between *ambassador*, *envoy*, *emissary*, and *messenger* with self-developed methods due to the sources' not having made the delineation necessarily and literally clear. Because Ottoman sources occasionally reflect accurate terminology, this distinction between ambassador, envoy, and messenger is not unknown to Ottoman historians either. A few of them do point out the terms *ortaelçi* and *büyükelçi* used respectively for envoy and ambassador, however they fail to develop a consistent method for making an identification in cases where these ranks existed, but these specific terms did not apply, which is also true for the otherwise clear demarcation separating an envoy from an unaccredited agent. In addition to the establishment of rank, they also fail to offer a discussion of the different authorizations of ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents. A trend to reverse this erroneous approach has yet to emerge. The problem becomes only more acute when publishing in a European language, because when translating *elçi* variations to, for example, English, the distinction observed in Turkish in some cases completely disappears by the erroneous interchangeable use of *ambassador* and *envoy*.

³² The subject of diplomatic protocol suffers from a lack of diligence. No specific study is devoted to establishing various classes of Ottoman diplomatic protocol, let alone the specific case of Ottoman-Safavid relations. In handling of the Ottomans' relations with other parties, the historiography fails to discern the existence of different classes of protocol not only for different states but also particularly for the different ranking emissaries of the same state, and thus cannot make the connection between inter-monarch hierarchy and its reproduction within diplomatic protocol. Frequent deficiencies are that historians fail to observe the otherwise clear distinction in emissarial rank. In this manner, the literature does not go beyond describing the solely ceremonial dimension without establishing the

classes of protocol (top, high, medium, and low), show which protocol applied to which combination of emissarial rank and sender-receiver hierarchical relationship, and reconstruct the niceties of the accreditation process. As on other platforms, between the same-ranking emissaries, the Ottoman one always enjoyed one higher class in protocol than his Safavid counterpart.

Peacetime status quo is another realm on which I offer a novel approach. The literature has come to regard the regulation of the 1639-1722 period in Ottoman-Safavid relations as performed by a mere border border-protocol ratified into peace-epistles.³³ By analyzing the *narratio* constituent of epistles and letters, I establish from scratch the existence of and evidence for four different levels of peacetime relations: *non-hostility*, *friendly relations*, *ancient brotherhood*, and *perpetual peace in alliance*. I also delineate when each applied. Additionally, I show that the legal entities that were parties to bilateral relations consisted of the dynastic Ottoman and Safavid states, not the realms of Iran and Rûm³⁴ over which these ruled. The realm

existing hierarchical classes of protocol, and cannot make the connection between inter-monarch hierarchy and its reproduction on the platform of diplomatic protocol. It should be noted that the missing dimension here, which involves establishing each protocol class corresponding to each combination of inter-monarch and other diplomatic hierarchies, is indeed what the primary concern should be in studies dedicated to protocol or diplomacy. Descriptions of ceremonies without classifying their content according to existing hierarchies is only of narrative and complementary value. However, in the absence of an analysis in diplomatic protocol in Ottoman and Safavid studies, it has taken the position of primary theme.

³³ The historiography has failed to notice various peacetime levels of relations. Four of these indeed regulated Ottoman-Safavid relations from 1639 until 1722. It has been taken for granted that the post-1639 order only disengaged the parties militarily, executed an imprecise border demarcation, and established mere peace that otherwise lacked provisions regulating the formal dimensions of relations.

³⁴ This the then-standard use of *Rûm*, as had been the case for centuries by the late Safavid period. Especially in Persian of the day but also in Turkish as well, not only politically but also in terms of geography and subjects, *Rûm* referred to the Ottoman Empire *per se*. If used in a more restricted, cultural context, it then referred to the non-Arab Ottomans of Asia Minor and the Balkans. The equating of *Rûm* with *Ottoman subjects* and *the empire* was standard not only in unofficial prose and poetry but also in official diplomatic documents. Its medieval usage meaning *Roman/Byzantine* and the much-less used remnant of this, meaning *Greek Orthodox*, had survived, but this could be the case exclusively in situations explicitly making room for this interpretation. Particularly in Turkish, its employment as a noun or adjective along with the suffixes it did or did not have would determine the meaning. (*Rûm* as noun: the Byzantine/Ottoman realm in general, or the Ottoman province of Rum in central Asia Minor in particular. *Rum* as adjective: Greek/Byzantine/Orthodox Christian – the context must explicitly specify this usage. *Rumlu*: The cognomen of the members of the tribe that migrated from Asia Minor to Safavid Iran. *Rûmî*: That who is from or who lives in the Ottoman/Byzantine realm in general, or Asia Minor in particular.) Additionally, when

was connected to the concept of state, but it was not the legal entity in its own right. Not an abstract construct, this had tangible and serious implications in practice. So far, such a distinction has not been observed by the scholarship, and therefore its direct consequences in actual occurrences have not been recognized. Last but not least, I argue that even language, prose composition, poetry sessions, musical performances, and calligraphy counted: current contentions could easily translate into staged messages expressed on one of these platforms. Finally, I also expound extensively on hitherto-undelineated genres, such as letters-of-introduction by home state's governors-general to the host state for outgoing emissaries or letters-of-welcome by the host government to incoming emissaries, and on niceties, such as use of sarcastic, politically guided remarks in diplomatic conversations under the cover of exchanges of courtesy.

I.5. Methodology and Terminology

My analysis of the diplomatic correspondence, issued both by court- and provincial chancelleries, revealed that within the extremely ornamental style dominating the composition, certain terms, just like in the case of titulature, owed their presence in a given text not to their rhymes or stylistic features but to their use as standardized terminology denoting a specific level in bilateral relations. Between the empire and Iran, use of specific titles for specific regnal ranks had already become standardized, and there is good reason to believe that the terminology describing the level of relations followed a similar path towards standardization. In such

presented in contrast to *Arab*, it refers to non-Arab Ottomans. Also see Cemal Kafadar, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas* 24, *History and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the "Lands of Rum"* (2007): 7-25 for an overview of the evolution of the terms *Rûm* and *Rûmî* after the coming of the Turks to Anatolia. However, I should note that while Kafadar's argument that in the official language *Rûm* did not denote the Ottoman lands (see *Ibid.*, 12) holds true for internally issued documents, it does not reflect the reality in the official language used in diplomatic documents, especially those exchanged with Iran, as will be shown below.

instances, the choice of vocabulary was deliberate and it directly indicated the current level in relations. Accordingly, I establish four different levels of peacetime coexistence in the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations with specific vocabulary for each. In practice, the terminology belonging to a certain level was used together with the set of terms applicable to the levels below it. The order below ranges from the closest/highest form of relations to the most basic form of non-hostility.

Perpetual Peace in Alliance: alliance (*ittifâk*), two-eternal-states (*devleteyn-i müebbedeyn*), durable (*pâyidâr*), firm (*üstüvâr*), obliteration-proof (*masûn-/adîmü'l-indirâs*), fixed (*sâbit*), stable (*ber-karâr*), hereditary/inherited (*mevrûs / mütevâris*), god-given (*hüdâ-dâdî*), corruption-immune (*halelden-/ez-halel masûn*) eternity-qualified (*ebediyü'l-ittisâf*), steady (*muhkem*)

Ancient Brotherhood: ancient (*kadîm*), brotherhood (*uhuvvet / müvâhât*), since many centuries and eras (*nice dühûr u kurûndan beri*), time-honored (*ahd-i baîd*), continuous (*müstedîm*)

Friendly Harmony: union (*ittihad*), concord (*yek-cihetî / vifâk*), unity (*yegânegî*), amity (*musâfât*), affection (*muhabbet*), friendship (*dusti/dostluk / müvâlât*), union-of-hearts (*yektâ-dilî*), affinity (*vedâd*), candour (*hulûs/muhâlasat*), attachment (*meveddet*), cohesion (*ülfet/müvâlefet*), harmony (*tevâfuk*), concurrence (*muvâfakat*), fidelity/honesty (*sadâkat/musâdakat*)

Non-hostility: peace and righteousness (*sulh u salâh*), pact (*mîsâk / ahd*), treaty (*muâhede*), covenant (*peymân*)

Diplomacy is *the* field where one should not have the luxury of ignoring interstate hierarchy. Therefore, coming up with a system of corresponding regnal positions became necessary for a reconstruction and analysis of inter-monarch ranking. This system was to serve the purpose of codifying the complex orders of precedence in oriental and occidental

terminologies of rulers. That the Ottoman Empire was a participant in both spheres, not just as a correspondence partner but rather as an essential actor, made the idea of reconstructing a consolidated system of hierarchies an achievable goal for me. The occidental, top-down hierarchy of independent and vassal rulers (emperor, king, duke/prince) and the oriental hierarchy (supreme-monarch [supreme-shah/-sultan/-khan]³⁵, sultan/shah/khan, beğ/emîr/hâkim), along with their inter-ranks, are each internally regular. However, making them correspond to each other with consistent and unbewildering terminology constituted a challenge. Titulature does not help much either, because the Ottomans had separate sets of titles applying to occidental and oriental rulers. As shown in an early eighteenth-century Ottoman manual on Europe,³⁶ some of these positions correspond without a problem: emperor is supreme-monarch and beğ is reigning prince/duke. On the other hand, sultans and full khans were equals of occidental kings and oriental shahs. In the inter-monarch correspondence between the Crimea and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as well as between the Crimea and Denmark, the khans' *intitulatio* and *inscriptio* were, in both directions, fully royal/sultanic, and the kings and the khans addressed each other as "brother", denoting equality.³⁷ That Mengli I Giray Khan, before the establishment of the Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimea, called his addressee Mehmed II "sultan" and "my brother"^{38,39} in his epistle of 1469 attests to the same fact. The below-kingly

³⁵ *şehinşâh/sultân-ı azam/kağan*

³⁶ *Muhtasar Coğrafya-yı Avrupa*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Orientabteilung, Hs. or. oct. 913, ff. 4a, 8a.

³⁷ See the documents published in Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania. International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th-18th Century). A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011); and Josef Matuz, *Krimitatarische Urkunden im Reichsarchiv zu Kopenhagen. Mit historisch-diplomatischen und sprachlichen Untersuchungen* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1976).

³⁸ "karındaşım"

³⁹ See the letter in Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivindeki Altın Ordu, Kırım ve Türkistan Hanlarına Ait Yarlık ve Bitikler* (İstanbul: Bühraneddin Matbaası, 1940), 81-86. In oriental diplomacy, seniority/youngership relationship between the corresponding monarchs in terms of age had also traditionally been calculated in as a factor when determining how to employ titles such as *father*, *son*, and *brother* in diplomatic compositions. In 1464, Mehmed II undid this practice and began to use these terms exclusively to denote hierarchical relationship in his epistles to Mamluk sultans; see Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 112, 119-121, 318.

and above-princely rank of autarch (corresponding approximately to grand-duke/grand-prince), which the khans later enjoyed vis-à-vis the emperor-padishah, is the legacy of the Crimean khanate's eventual recognition of Ottoman suzerainty. In this case, the khans' rank was demoted, but only in the empire's internal hierarchy.⁴⁰ Otherwise, as seen above, they still ranked as kings internationally.

In ascertaining the correspondence of rulers for the purposes of diplomatic hierarchy, onto which non-ruler actors in diplomatic hierarchy such as ministers and governors will also be superimposed in accordance with their corresponding rulerly rank, the ancient Turkic system of horsetail-ensigns, *tuğ*, came to my rescue. The number of *tuğ*s that were conferred upon appointment to a high office or that came along with accession to a hereditary rulership indicated rank and dignity. This system partially applied in the Ottoman Empire not only for appointees whose offices had counterparts in Iran but also for vassal and tributary rulers who held positions in occidental hierarchy. By putting together a table of correspondence and filling in the blanks via inferences, I managed to come up with an order of ranks that reconstructs the two separate hierarchies in one consolidated system.

The Ottoman padishah in the imperial age had seven-*tuğ*s.⁴¹ Uzunçarşılı's claim with reference to some sources that as of the seventeenth century the padishah's *tuğ*s numbered six⁴² must not have reflected the reality. I interpret this as a visual manifestation of the padishah's

⁴⁰ In the post-1475 imperial epistles sent to the Crimean khans, autarchical *inscriptio* was used, not sultanic/royal. In Mengli I Giray Khan's letter to Mehmed II sent in 1475/1476 immediately after the establishment of Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimea, the Ottoman monarch was now addressed to as "pâdişâh-ı a'zam (supreme-padishah)" and the previous address "karındaşım (my brother)" is replaced with addresses indicating the relationship between an overlord and a dependent: see the letter in Kurat, *Altın Ordu, Kırım ve Türkistan Hanlarına Ait Yarlık ve Bitikler*, 91-95. Also see Halil İnalcık, "Kırım Hanlığının Osmanlı Tabiliğine Girmesi ve Ahidname Meselesi" *Bellekten* 30 – Ayrı Basım, (1944): 184-229.

⁴¹ Bahaeddin Ögel, *Türk Kültür Târihine Giriş: 6. Türklerde Tuğ ve Bayrak (Hunlardan Osmanlılara)* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1984, rep. 2000), 43; Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, "Tuğ" in *Osmanlı Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü* III (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1983), 522-524; İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1945), 262.

⁴² Uzunçarşılı, *Saray Teşkilâtı*, 263-264.

practice of entrusting imperial campaigns to grand-viziers-commanders-in-chief rather than leading them in person. In his otherwise impressive monograph on the court organization, Uzunçarşılı seems to have failed to make the inference that it was impossible for all of the padishahly tuğs to be present on an imperial campaign which he did not personally lead, and that a number surpassing those of the commander-in-chief⁴³ would be sent along. As a result, the contemporaries whom Uzunçarşılı used as sources declared the number of the tuğs they had seen in the Imperial Army in the absence of the padishah. That the idiom “coming out of seven tuğs” meaning that the padishah was coming to assume personal command of the army was still current in the nineteenth century⁴⁴ supports my interpretation. Thus, at least for the purposes of creating a consolidated system of occidental and oriental hierarchies, emperorship/suprememonarchy can safely be associated with the rank of seven-tuğs. One and two degrees below this highest position were august-sultans/high-kings and sultans/kings/shahs/khans respectively. By inference, the insignia of august-sultans/high-kings, whose rank will be explained below, corresponded to six tuğs and the insignia of sultans/kings/shahs/khans to five tuğs.

⁴³ *serdâr-ı ekrem*. This title was given to a grand vizier assuming personal command of all imperial armies and acting not as the absolute-deputy but as the person of the padishah while on an imperial campaign. As a mark of the commander-in-chief’s temporarily unrestricted and non-accountable padishahly powers, the extraordinary regalia of this office included an aigrette (symbol of sovereign rulership) which was placed upon his head personally by the padishah. Likewise, the Illustrious Standard [of Prophet Muhammed] was assigned from the imperial court to the company of the commander-in-chief for the duration of the campaign. See İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998), 158-163 and Abdülkadir Özcan, “Serdâr,” *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 36 (2009): 551-552 for further implications of the Ottoman commandership-in-chief. I disagree with Savory’s translation of the Safavid *sipehsâlâr* as commander-in-chief [see Roger M. Savory, “The Office of *Sipahsâlâr* (Commander-in-Chief) in the Safavid State,” in *Proceedings of the Second European Conference of Iranian Studies held in Bamberg, 30th September to 4th October 1991*, ed. Bert G. Fragner, Christa Fragner, Gherardo Gnoli, Roxane Haag-Higuchi, Mauro Maggi, and Paola Orsatti (Roma: Istituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1995), 597-615]. The Safavid *sipehsâlâr* was indeed the top commander of the realm’s military, but unlike a commander-in-chief and *serdâr-ı ekrem*, was nevertheless subordinated to the command of a superior, first of all the shah. Therefore, his office corresponded much more to that of commander-general and Ottoman *serdâr*. See Savory’s article also for other historians translating the Safavid *sipehsâlâr* as *commander-general* / *Feldmarschall*, which are indeed much more accurate. The office of *commander-in-chief*, or the Ottoman *serdâr-ı ekrem*, the holder of which temporarily had the supreme command of the realm including its military, simply did not exist in the Safavid State.

⁴⁴ Bahaeddin Ögel, “Tuğ,” *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 12/2 (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1988).

Governors-general [Ottoman viziers] had three tuğs.⁴⁵ Again, Uzunçarşılı's claim that the grand-vizier also had three and his finding the statement in some sources that he had four or five contradictory⁴⁶ must be misinterpretations. We can consolidate the outwardly contradicting sources that provide the numbers of three, four, and five tuğs for the grand-vizier as follows: as he was unmistakably superior to governors-general, he cannot have had three. While on campaign in the extraordinary capacity as the acting-padishah when created commander-in-chief, he cannot have had the number of tuğs he normal possessed. On the other hand, a vizier created marshal⁴⁷ had grand-vizierial powers in his area of jurisdiction, positioning him over all other viziers. Thus, based on the undisputed fact that a vizier had three tuğs, it can be inferred that a grand-vizier as well as a marshal of the Imperial Army had four, and a commander-in-chief had five. In light of the fact that the Crimean khans, in their capacity as autarchs in Ottoman internal hierarchy, were equals of grand-viziers and second only to the padishah, the referenced claim that the Crimean khans were of two-tuğs⁴⁸ should also be incorrect. The sole source thereof refers only to the sending of two tuğs to a Crimean prince when the padishah appointed him khan, not to the total number possessed. Upon appointment to khanship, the total number must have been raised to four in observance of equality with the grand-vizier, from which it can be stated by inference that Crimean princes already had two tuğs.

⁴⁵ Pakalın, "Tuğ"; Uzunçarşılı, *Saray Teşkilâtı*, 268.

⁴⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Saray Teşkilâtı*, 268.

⁴⁷ *serdar*, or seldomly and in compound with the former designation, *sipehsâlâr*. A wartime office denoting the supreme command of the empire's military and paramilitary forces in a given war in the absence of the padishah and the grand-vizier on the front. A marshal had the authority to issue decrees and make appointments (subject to the grand-vizier's approval only after the end of the campaign) in the name of the padishah. For this, he was entrusted with a specific number of blank papers with the padishah's monogram drawn on them, enabling him to command via imperial decrees. If he ran out of monogram-drawn papers, he also had the authorization to draw the padishah's monogram on the decrees he issued on the front. In other words, the marshal had grand-vizierial powers in the area under his jurisdiction. For other extraordinary authorities delegated to a marshal, see İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilâtı*, 192-194. The office that approximately corresponded to this in Safavid Iran was that of the *sipehsâlâr*.

⁴⁸ Ömer Bıyık, "Osmanlı Yönetiminde Kırım (1600-1774)" (PhD. diss., Ege Üniversitesi, 2007), 29; Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Zeyl-i Fezleke* published in Nazire Karaçay Türkal, "Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa. Zeyl-i Fezleke (1065 – 22. Ca. 1106 / 1654 – 7 Şubat 1695)" (PhD diss., Marmara Üniversitesi, 2012), 892.

The *beğ/hâkim*-voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia, who were reigning-princes in occidental hierarchy and equals of non-vizier pashas in that of the Ottomans, had two tuğs,⁴⁹ and the Ottoman-vassal Georgian *melik*-princes of Imereti, Guria, and Mingrelia were of the same rank.⁵⁰ Accordingly, *melik* was not *king*, as mistakenly asserted by historians taking it in its modern-age semantic shift meaning,⁵¹ but a generic word meaning *monarch*. *Beğ* was used in the meaning of *prince/duke* elsewhere as well, such as in the Ottomans' translation of Muscovite/Russian rulers' *intitulatio*⁵² and *inscriptio*⁵³. The *hâkims* (as used by the Ottomans) /*voivodes/beğs* of Transylvania ranked as equals of three-tuğ vizier-pashas⁵⁴ and were also princes in occidental hierarchy.⁵⁵ The use of *hâkim* not only for the *prince* of Transylvania but also in the Ottomans' mid-eighteenth-century translations of epistles from Habsburg emperors⁵⁶ and Russian tsars⁵⁷, where the terms *prince* and *lord* in these rulers' *intitulatio* were translated into *beğ* and *hâkim*, attests to this correspondence. Moreover, the capacity of *territorial-lord* [*Landesherr*] of the rulers of Brandenburg and Bavaria was also denoted with the term *hâkim*,⁵⁸ while that of *duke/prince* was denoted with *beğ*, and *Kurfürstentum/prince-electorship* with

⁴⁹ Viorel Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace: The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2000), 344.

⁵⁰ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed Efendi, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, f. 101b published in Halil Mercan, "Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed Efendi'nin Defter-i Teşrifâtı" (Transkripsiyonu ve Değerlendirilmesi) (MA thesis, Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1996).

⁵¹ For example, Abderrahmane El-Moudden, "Sharifs and Padishahs: Moroccan-Ottoman Relations from the 16th through the 18th Centuries. Contribution to the Study of a Diplomatic Culture" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1992), 299.

⁵² See Halil İnalçık, "Power Relationships between Russia, the Crimea, and the Ottoman Empire as Reflected in Titulature," in *Passe Turco-Tatar Present Sovietique*, ed. Gilles Veinstein and S. Enders Wimbush (Louvain: Editions Peeters; Paris: Editions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1986), 386.

⁵³ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili (Diplomatik)* (İstanbul: Kubbealtı Akademisi Kültür ve San'at Vakfı, 1994), 150-151.

⁵⁴ Georg Müller, *Die Türkenherrschaft in Siebenbürgen. Verfassungsrechtliches Verhaeltnis Siebenbürgens zur Pforte, 1541-1698* (Hermannstadt-Sibiu: Krafft, 1923), 48-54.

⁵⁵ Panaite, *Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers*, 342.

⁵⁶ See the Turkish translation of emperor Charles VI's *intitulatio* in his ratification for the Peace of Belgrade, 1739, in Uğur Kurtaran, "Osmanlı-Avusturya Diplomatik İlişkileri" (MA thesis, Gaziosmanpaşa Üniversitesi, 2006), 299.

⁵⁷ See the Turkish translation of tsar Ivan III's *intitulatio* in his epistle to Mahmud I in Münir Aktepe, *Mehmed Emni Beyefendi (Paşa) 'nın Rusya Sefâreti ve Sefâretnâmesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1974), 127-128.

⁵⁸ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 935, 1167, 1431.

*hersek*⁵⁹. (Duke alone, when not *beğ*, was simply *duka*.⁶⁰) Thus, the Ottoman use of *hâkim* for Muslim rulers also accurately corresponds in the oriental hierarchy to the dignity of *territorial lord* [*Landesherr*] in occidental hierarchy. As a matter of luck, the early-eighteenth-century inter-rank of *caesar*/high-kingship used for Russian tsars, immediately below emperorship but above kingship,⁶¹ correspond perfectly. This correlation appears not only in rank but also in the reasoning employed in terminology. The adjective *hümâyün* (august) applied to the again inter-rank between supreme-monarchy and sultanate which the Safavid shahs enjoyed briefly in the later phase of the period I studied. The titlature of high sultans shared *hümâyün* with supreme-monarchs but not with sultans or below. By reconciling the abovementioned information brought together from four different media, I propose the following consolidated inter-monarch oriental and occidental hierarchy. The system of ranks and grades used throughout this study for the hierarchical positions of the padishahs, shahs, grand-viziers, prime-ministers, and governors[-general] is based on the integration of the systems offered here and on the juxtaposition of the titlature used for these posts with the corresponding rank.

supreme monarch – emperor: seven tuğs

august sultan – caesar/high king: six tuğs

sultan – shah – [full] khan – king: five tuğs

autarch – [lesser] khan – grand-duke/prince: four tuğs

beğ – *hâkim* (Ottoman usage) – territorial-lord – reigning-prince(fürst)/duke: three tuğs

lesser princes / margraves: two tuğs

⁵⁹ *Muhtasar Coğrafya-yı Avrupa*, ff. 4b-6a. The Turkish use of *hersek*, as prince-elect, contrasts with the German use of the original *Herzog*, which means duke.

⁶⁰ *Muhtasar Coğrafya-yı Avrupa*, ff. 10a-12a; Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 304, 309 (this example recurs in many other documents published in the same book).

⁶¹ *Muhtasar Coğrafya-yı Avrupa*, f. 4a.

As mentioned above, each ruler and minister participating in diplomacy had his specific, rank-denoting set of titles. The terminology in question here is not just several words; the lengths of titles, especially those of the highest-ranking rulers such as Ottoman and Safavid monarchs, varied from paragraph-long sections to uninterrupted passages over a page. An analysis of those that apply to my study revealed that the terms constituting a post's set of titles cannot be treated collectively. Different sub-sections had specialized, separate functions beyond the literal meaning or the political implication of the vocabulary used. In this regard, I offer the classification below for titulature pertaining to a certain post participating in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy.

The section that I name the *identifier component*⁶² employs explicit terminology that denotes rank. Identifier titles are to be found mostly in the second part of *inscriptio/intitulatio* and usually in a manner adjoined to the personal name directly before or after it. The section that I name the *descriptor component*⁶³ contains a set of terminology that describes the nature and scope of the rank denoted by identifiers. Descriptors are usually to be found in the first part of *inscriptio/intitulatio*. The third section is what I call the *filler component*⁶⁴, the titles belonging to which were interspersed throughout the first and the second parts of *inscription* and *intitulatio*. Mostly made up of an alternating combination between adjectives such as *sublime*, *elevated*, various historical personalities, etc., and nouns such as *eminence*, *glory*, *position*, fillers do not denote rank and were used liberally as necessitated by the internal rhyme of the composition for governors, ministers, princes, dynasts, sultans, and supreme-monarchs alike. There are also

⁶² Persian: *rukn-i taṣḫīs*; Turkish: *teṣhis rüknü*.

⁶³ Persian: *rukn-i ta'rîf*; Turkish: *târîf rüknü*.

⁶⁴ Persian: *rukn-i pur-kunanda*; Turkish: *dolgu rüknü*. Bert Fagner recognizes the existence of this component within the titulature by referring to "a series of sometimes-formulaic eulogia embedded (eine Reihe von manchmal formelhaften Eulogien eingebettet)." Bert Fagner, "Der Schah im Schriftverkehr mit dem Abendland," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 18 (1974): 134.

unshared, post-specific fillers that again do not necessarily denote rank in their capacity as vocabulary. As I do not present a full exposition of titlature but rather aim at analyzing the practical dimension of it concerning hierarchy, I will not deal with the terminology that fall into the category of fillers. Nor have I provided them in the quotations that are to be found in the chronological chapters.

When integrating titlature to the system of the order of precedence I established, the Ottomans' internal system of ranks and grades came to my rescue when denoting the niceties of interstate hierarchy. To this end, I married this system of internal ranks and grades to the diplomatic order of precedence in the following manner.

The titlature of a ruler, minister, or governor-general who principally enjoyed a certain hierarchical position as rank contained the standard set of vocabulary in turn; i.e. identifiers and descriptors of the same rank are to be found together. If promoted or demoted to another rank, both parts of the titlature would change accordingly. However, a half promotion would sometimes occur, and then the titlature would change in grade but not in rank. For example, a beğ/prince promoted in full to the next rank would become an autarch (grand-duke). But, if the retention of the current position was not politically feasible and a full promotion was undesired, then the promotion would be in grade but not in rank. In this manner, the new position would be princely rank with autarchy/grand-ducal grade in the given example whereby the applicable titlature would be assembled from the identifiers of the rank and the descriptors of the grade in question. Thus, in the given example, the titlature would be put together from princely identifiers and autarchical descriptors. Similarly, while a sultan (king) would become the supreme-monarch (emperor) via a full promotion, half promotion to would elevate him to august-sultanate (high-kingship). This second case would take place via bestowing the sultan

imperial grade and descriptors as boosters while retaining sultanic rank and identifiers. As an elevation in grade was aimed at making the person in question become *primus inter pares* among his counterparts, the booster descriptors of grade from the upper position would not apply in most of the cases when the promoted person/post was a non-dynastic minister and the addressee was a dynastic ruler. Thus, while a grand-vizier, who was of autarchical rank and sultanic grade, would take precedence over all office holders and reigners below the rank of sultan, his sultanic descriptors would generally drop when corresponding with a reigning sultan holding that position as full rank, such as the Safavid shah.

Accordingly, the following classification of titulature appears to have been the case for the oriental rulers of supreme-monarchical (imperial), sultanic (royal), autarchical (grand-ducal), and princely position. In this regard, it should be noted that my analysis revealed that contrary to the received wisdom, neither *hüsrev[âne]* [chosroes-like] nor *khakan* [the Arabicized version of *khan* used in the full royal sense of this term, i.e. *khan par excellence*, but not *kağan*] nor *iskender* [alexander] necessarily denoted imperial dignity. All, instead, belonged to the category of sultanic identifiers that could also be employed as complementary imperial titulature. Alone, they do not denote imperial dignity and thus shall not be translated in that context.

Supreme-Monarchical (emperorship) Identifiers: supreme-shah (*şehinşâh*), supreme-lord (*hünkâr/hândgâr*), supreme-sultan (*sultan-ı a'zam*), sultan-of-sultans of the Earth/World (*sultânu's-selâtîn-i ruy-i zemin/cihân*), supreme-khakan (*hâkân-ı efram*), khakan-of-khakans of the age (*hâkânu'l-havâkîn-i zamân*), sovereign of the Earth and the age (*fermân-fermây-ı zemîn ü zamân*), supreme-sultanate (*saltanatu'l-uzmâ*), [similar superlative constructions such as] most-impregnable and premier overlord (*hidîv[-i emna'-i ekrem]*), monarch of the Earth/Islam (*pâdişâh-ı rûy-i zemîn/Islam*), grandiose (*şevketlü* [Ottoman specific]), unrivaled (*adîmü'l-*

himâl), master-of-the-celestial-conjunction (*sâhib-kırân/kadr-kırân*), plus a series of titles denoting supreme-caliphate.

Supreme-Monarchical (emperorship) Descriptors: most-sublime majesty (*a'lâ hazret*), august (*hümâyün*), world-keeper (*cihân-bân*), world-possessor (*cihân-dâr*), refuge of the world (*cihân-penâh*), caesar (*kayser* [Ottoman specific]), supreme-khan (*kağan/kaan*).⁶⁵

Sultanic (kingship) Identifiers: sultan (*sultân*), khakan (*hâkân*), shah (*şâh*), chosroes (*hüsrev*) / chosroes-like (*hüsrevâne*), alexander (*iskender*), plus a series of titles denoting lesser-caliphate.

Sultanic (kingship) Descriptors: sublime majesty (*âlî/vâlâ hazret*).

Common to imperial, sultanic, and autarchical ranks: potentate (*şehriyâr*), monarch (*pâdişâh*).

Autarchical (grand-ducal) Identifiers: sublime excellency (*âlî/vâlâ cenâb* or *cenâb-ı meâlî-meab*), autarchy/sovereign (*fermân-râni* / *fermân-fermâ*), gauge of state (*devlet-nisâb*). To indicate autarchy, these titles were prepended to princely identifiers. To mark the difference between a reigning sovereign and a non-reigning minister enjoying the position as rank, references to the position's capacity as ruler, *emâret* (principality), *melik* (monarch), *hânedân* (dynasty), *dûdmân* ([dynastic] house), and *fermân-rân[î]* (autarch[y]), */fermân-fermâ[yî]* (sovereign[ty]), which belonged fully to this category as well as partially to princely identifiers, were omitted for non-reigning ministers, whose hierarchical position corresponding to that of an autarch was denoted with *sublime excellency*.

⁶⁵ It is likely to be established in another study that depending on the addressed state, some terms in the sets of identifiers and descriptors could change places. For example, *şehinşah* was among the ultimate emperorship identifiers in the Ottomans' diplomacy with the Safavids, probably because *şehinşah*, by virtue of being Persian and having a direct association in the Iranian context, could categorically delineate universal mandate from all other rulerly capacities. Probably, *kayser* was an emperorship identifier, not descriptor, in the Ottomans' dealings with various European states, due to *kayser*'s direct association with the Roman imperial tradition.

Princely Identifiers: excellency (*cenâb*), principshood (*iyâlet*⁶⁶), principdom (*emâret-meab*), *hâkim* (lord-prince), *melik*, *beğ*. In the cases of non-reigning ministers, vizierial excellency (*cenâb-ı vezâret-meab*), recourse of regency/deputyship (*niyâbet/vekâlet-iyâb*) would replace *emâret-meab*.

As opposed to the non-emissary actors in interstate relations, namely rulers and ministers, heads of diplomatic missions were subjected to a separate hierarchy. By the seventeenth-century, the Ottomans' diplomatic terminology had fully developed. In this early-modern set of terms, each emissary and mission was separately designated as shown below, in top-down order:

Top Rank – ambassador-plenipotentiary (*murahhas elçi*)

Rank 2 – ambassador-extraordinary / *nuncius* / *magnus orator* / [Groß]Botschafter
([*fevkalade*] *büyükelçi*, *sefir[-i kebir]*)

Rank 3 – envoy-extraordinary / minister-plenipotentiary / *internuncius* / *orator* /
Gesandter / *legate* (*ortaelçi*, *resul*)

Rank 4 – envoy-resident (*mukîm [orta]elçi*)

Rank 5 – minister-resident (*kapı kethüdâsı*); unaccredited agent (*küçükkelçi* / *nâmeber* /
nâmeresân)

Rank 6 – charge d'affairs (*maslahatgüzâr*).

Ambassadors led embassies (*büyükelçilik* / *sefâret*) and envoys led legations (*ortaelçilik* /
risâlet).

Even in instances when the Ottomans did not employ exact terminology for emissarial rank and instead chose to denote an emissary with a generic term, applied protocol and allocated

⁶⁶ In Arabic script, this word is spelled the same with *eyâlet* (province), however, Turkish diplomacy has a practice of vowelizing the first *elif* letter with a *fetha* when it meant province, hence *eyâlet*, and with a *kesre* when it meant principshood, hence *iyâlet*.

allowances were still in agreement with the implicit rank⁶⁷ that can also be confirmed via European sources.

The Safavids' diplomatic terminology was not so developed as to minutely reflect each separate emissarial rank.⁶⁸ This relative underdeveloped quality of Safavid terminology manifested itself not only in the realm of diplomatic missions but also in the terminology of diplomatics. For example, the Ottomans distinguished consistently between monarchical correspondence as "epistles" (*nâme*) and chief-ministerial correspondence as "[lofty] letters" (*mektûb[-ı sâmi]*) as well as all other lower-ranking letters (*mektûb*). Yet, in the Safavids's terminology, *nâme* was used to refer to both generically. In Turkish diplomatics, the *nâme* – *mektûb* differentiation was clear and established, but it disappeared in compound nouns, such as letter-of-quarter (*amân-nâme*) in contrast to ratification-epistle (*tasdik-nâme*).

Iran's apparently lesser developed and less complex set of diplomatic vocabulary might be partially attributed to its having exchanged extraordinary missions with European great powers much less frequently vis-à-vis the Ottomans. Moreover, Iran did not host any permanent state-mission unlike the Ottomans, though Christian religious missions acting as unofficial diplomatic representations did occasionally exist in Iran⁶⁹. Yet, interaction with Europe should not be perceived as the sole factor of the elaborateness in Ottoman diplomatic

⁶⁷ Peter Meienberger, *Johann Rudolf Schmid zum Schwarzenhorn als kaiserlicher Resident in Konstantinopel in den Jahren 1629-1643. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen Österreich und der Türkei in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Bern: Herbert Lang, 1973), 59; Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 45-46, 69-70.

⁶⁸ The discussion I offer below reminds me of Bert Fragner's valid argument that "the . . . Ottomans' elaborate chancellery system . . . wielded . . . just about no influence at all on the further development of the chancellery customs of the countries and state entities located beyond its eastern borders (Das . . . ausgefeilte Kanzleisystem der Osmanen . . . übte . . . so gut wie keinen Einfluß auf die weitere Entwicklung der Kanzleibräuche der jenseits seiner östlicher Grenzen gelegenen Länder und Staatsgebilde aus)." See Bert G. Fragner, "Historische Wurzeln neuzeitlicher iranischer Identität; zur Geschichte des politischen Begriffs 'Iran' im späten Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit," in *Studia Semitica necnon Iranica-Rudolpho Macuch septuagenario ab amicis et discipulis dedicate*, ed. Maria Macuch, Christa Müller-Kessler, Bert G. Fragner (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1989), 92-93.

⁶⁹ See, for example, John M. Flannery, *The Mission of the Portuguese Augustinians to Persia and Beyond (1602-1747)* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013).

hierarchy, ranking system, and terminology. As seen in the empire's diplomatic interactions with European great powers, not only was the Sublime Porte at least equally innovative in diplomatic business, but so were its emissaries, master-scribes, and ministers running foreign affairs pioneers in asserting the empire's position. They did so via setting precedents or creating trends. This in turn led to an even further increase in specialization for the gradation of ranks and the distinct terminology matching each one. Thus, in addition to Iran's less frequent diplomatic interactions with Europe, when it came to diplomatic gradation, for one reason or another, the Safavids did not share the Porte's fussiness and painstaking concern for exactness in terminology to the same extent. Yet, a rudimentary distinction did exist in Safavid diplomatics to indicate emissarial ranks.

The Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy of 1639-1722, which lacked peace conferences due to the non-existence of war and permanent missions⁷⁰, did not feature the positions of ambassador-plenipotentiary, envoy-resident, minister-resident, and charge d'affairs. The emissaries leading ad hoc missions were either ambassadors-extraordinary at the head of embassies, or envoys-extraordinary at the head of legations, or unaccredited agents. But even for these emissaries that functioned during the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations, the Ottomans, with likely concern for compatibility with the Safavid chancellery, which had a simpler set of diplomatic vocabulary, did not fully employ their elaborate terminology that existed in other contexts. For Ottoman/Safavid ambassadors and envoys, all chancellery documents and chronicle entries consistently used the generic term *elçi* (emissary), which could safely apply to any of these ranks. The specialized, rank-denoting terms *büyükelçi*, *ortaelçi*, and *küçükkelçi*, current in Ottoman

⁷⁰ We know that in the seventeenth-century, there was an Iranian "consul" in Bursa, charged with regulating the affairs of Iranian merchants who passed away there. Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600-1700* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1988), 116-118. However, this "consul"ship seems not to have had a diplomatic capacity. Apparently, it was a solely commercial office ran by the merchants.

diplomacy with European states, did not feature in the Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy of the examined period. The lack of these terms, however, does not simply mean that the positions they denoted did not exist. The ranks of ambassador, envoy, and unaccredited agent were referred to with the more vague and less specialized set of terminology *sefir*, *resul*, and *nâmeber*. The diplomatic rank of the mission, and thus of the emissary leading it, was denoted in the credentials part of the accompanying epistle/letter, which explicitly marked whether it was an “embassy” (*sefâret*⁷¹) or “legation” (*risâlet*).

It must be noted that strict distinctions existed only in the credentials part of official correspondence; i.e. the very phrases preceding the emissary’s titles and the definition immediately adjoining the *salutatio* following his personal name. Otherwise, even the initiatory⁷² epistle/letter involving the credentials, excluding the rank-displaying credentials in it that immediately followed the *salutatio* affixed to the emissary’s personal name, continued to define the mission liberally as both *sefâret* and *risâlet*, regardless of whether it was embassy or legation, and the emissary was termed as both *sefir* and *resul*, regardless of whether he was ambassador or envoy. Thus, the use of *risâlet*, *resul*, *sefâret*, and *sefir*, apart from the above-mentioned credentials section, should be understood not as an indicator of diplomatic rank but as generic words equivalent to *elçi* and *elçilik/elçigerî*.

As a hallmark of ambassadors, their credentials explicitly registered their exclusive authorization to orally report the matters that were not touched upon in the accompanying epistle/letter. The presence or the lack of this distinctive feature, coupled with the choice of terminology accrediting the emissary, confirmed whether the mission in question was an

⁷¹ The *sefâret* - embassy equivalence also manifests itself in the modern usage of *sefir* as alternative vocabulary for *ambassador*.

⁷² *hitâbî*

embassy or a legation. In the case of unaccredited agents, both the generic terms defining ambassadors as well as envoys and the vocabulary differentiating between them disappear from the accompanying document. If the name of the unaccredited agent was mentioned at all, no vocabulary that could hint at a higher-ranking mission was utilized. One ascertained his rank through the description of emissarial license, which indicated that he was [solely] conveying the accompanying correspondence. If the emissary was not mentioned at all in the accompanying writing, this was also by itself an implied reference to the mission's rank as unaccredited agentship.

A look at the extant diplomatic epistles and letters that were preserved in unabridged form⁷³ reveals the existence of the above-mentioned convention in the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations. As the domestically-held posts of ad hoc ambassadors and envoys also feature consistency, the diplomatic rank can be safely confirmed by looking at the title currently possessed and the post held by the head of mission in his home state for each mission whose capacity is not inferrible from the accompanying correspondence. The occasionally applied Ottoman practice of conferring temporary domestic grades to heads of missions with the purpose of making the domestic rank match the aimed diplomatic rank also contributes to this consistency when making such inference. However, in these specific cases of temporary grade conferral, the rank of the mission was already registered exactly, without leaving room for confusion.

Accordingly, an Ottoman ambassador would as a rule be an actual pasha or a temporary one with the grade of the governorship of Rumelia / Anatolia. In rare instances, which did not

⁷³ The initiatory epistles/letters sent with the Yusuf Agha legation (1643), the Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar embassy (1692), the Ebulmasum Şamlu embassy (1696-1697), the Rüstem Zengene embassy (1698), the Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy (1698-1699), the Mehmed Selim unaccredited agentship, the Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu embassy (1706), the Yusuf Agha legation (1716), and the Ahmed Dürri legation (1720-1721) satisfy the criteria.

apply to my subject matter, he could also be a bey. As a rule, a Safavid ambassador would be a xân, but in rare cases, a sũltân. An Ottoman envoy would either be an actual Outer Court agha or a master scribe with the temporary grade of either chancellor (*nişancı*) or comptroller (*defterdar*), while a Safavid envoy would normally be a Royal Court beyg. Unaccredited agents were exchanged for official business conducted between chief-ministers and for private correspondence between monarchs. Ottoman unaccredited agents had to rank below an Outer Court agha, and would accordingly possess the domestic rank of an Outer Court *çavuş* / Imperial Council bailiff or lower, such as a privy guard. Meanwhile, their Safavid counterparts would rank as Royal Court beygs / Royal Council ushers or lower.

Apart from the developed methodology for establishing rank and level on various platforms concerning interstate relations, I want to offer a corrective approach to scholars' not-so-consistent use of more common terminology, which was historically quite consistent otherwise. First and foremost, this pertains to the use of *sultan*.

In the course of the early eleventh century, when the power held by Turkish rulers within Islamdom grew obviously beyond that of a governor, viceroy, or prince, all denoting a certain level of vassalage or dependency to the caliph holding universal mandate, the Arabic word *sultan* emerged as a standardized and official term denoting a dignity with a clear definition and it corresponded roughly to that of *king* in Christianity. Its official use began with Mahmud b. Sebüktegin of the Ghaznavids and ahd become established thereafter since the Seljukids. Under subsequent dynasties of full-blown royal dignity in the Islamic world, Persian *shah* and Turkish *khan* became the equivalents of *sultan*.⁷⁴ In the hierarchy of rulers, Turkish *beğ* and Arabic *emîr*

⁷⁴ Osman Gazi Özgüdenli, "Sultan," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 37 (2009): 496-497; see the full sultanic *inscriptio* and *intitulatio* employed for the Crimean khan in his foreign correspondence as well as this royal Crimean khan's equality with his kingly addressees in the documents published by Dariusz Kołodziejczyk in his *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*; Mengli I Giray, khan of the Crimea, in his epistle sent to Mehmed II in

corresponded to *duke/prince*. The oriental version of the occidental concept *emperorship* was denoted by the versions of supreme-monarch, i.e. *sultan-of-sultans*, *supreme-sultan*, *supreme-shah*, and *supreme-khan*, and by their derivatives for *empire*, such as *supreme-sultanate* and *supreme-shahdom*.⁷⁵

The first three Ottoman (1302-1389) rulers were beğs. Of these, Osman Beğ's and Orhan Beğ's realm shall be defined as margravate, while that of Murad I was practically a full-blown, grand principality. While there is no contention on this point, the transition from principality to empire⁷⁶ featured a separate stage that the historiography does not duly reflect: with the reign of Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402), Ottoman rulers began to officially lay claim to royal dignity, as shown by the insertion of *khan* into the monarchical monograms⁷⁷ and the adoption of the title *sultan*⁷⁸. However, this was not immediately recognized by the stably hegemonic power in the orient of the day, the Mamluks, who instead began to classify the Ottoman ruler as full prince (one rank higher than the former one "margrave"),⁷⁹ while for others, especially in the occidental system, the Ottoman State was a sultanate (kingdom) par excellence after the 1390s. Therefore, this

1469 - before the establishment of Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimea in 1475 -, recognizes the Ottoman ruler as "sultan" and calls him, as a sign of equality, "karındaşım (my brother)". See Kurat, *Altın Ordu, Kırım ve Türkistan Hanlarına Ait Yarluk ve Bitikler*, 81-86. Note that under Tuğrul, Alparslan, and Melikşah of the Great Seljuks (middle and late eleventh century), *sultan* was briefly the equivalent of *emperor*.

⁷⁵ Rudi Matthee, in his "Was Safavid Iran an Empire?" *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010): 233-265, argues that Persian did not have a term for *empire* closer than "expansive realm (*mülk-i vasî'ül-fezâ*)". Similarly, Einar Wigen, in his "Ottoman Concepts of Empire," *Contribution to the History of Concepts* 8, no.1 (2013): 44-66, asserts that the Ottomans neither designated their realm as *empire* nor had a name for *empire* [in the sense of realm] in their language, but used alternative designations instead, such as *memâlik-i mahrûse* (the Well-Protected Domains). I agree with both points in general terms, and additionally argue that in diplomacy, Persian fully shared the terminology of interstate and rulerly hierarchy as established in this dissertation, including imperial rank. It must be noted that imperial [supreme-monarchical] designations in Persian and Turkish diplomacies pertained to the *emperorship* of the ruler, not to *empire* as realm. This was the case even when *saltanatü'l-uzmâ* (supreme-sultanate) and *hilafetü'l-kübrâ* (supreme-chaliphate) were referred to.

⁷⁶ See Gábor Ágoston, "The Ottomans: from Frontier Principality to Empire" in *The Practice of Strategy: from Alexander the Great to the Present*, edited by John Andreas Olsen and Colin S. Gray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 103-131 for an evaluation of the Ottoman principality's evolving into an empire.

⁷⁷ The title *khan* was used by the Ottoman rulers for the first time in Bayezid I's monogram: Suha Umur, *Osmanlı Pâdişah Tuğraları* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1980), 89-92.

⁷⁸ Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Sultanlarının Unvanları (Titulatur) ve Egemenlik Kavramı" in *Doğu Batı, Makaleler II* (Ankara: Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2010), 116; Uzunçarşılı, *Saray Teşkilâtı*, 232-233.

⁷⁹ Inferred from the information provided in Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 67-68, 76-77, 88, 306.

distinct phase in Ottoman history should receive full credit and be handled separately from the preceding age of principality and the following age of empire.

By 1433 under Murad II's reign (r. 1421-1451), the Mamluks had already promoted the rank of the Ottoman ruler in the oriental hierarchy from prince to sovereign (corresponding to *autarch* of the post-1639 order),⁸⁰ whereas as of 1444, the titles of Murad II, who was already a full king in the occidental hierarchy, included *sultan-beğ*, *rex*, and *imperator* in an oath-instrument negotiated with and issued to Poland,⁸¹ showing the Ottomans' recognized royal rank and indicating perhaps the first step of the gradual transition to imperial dignity. Mehmed II's (r. 1451-1481) official adoption of the title *kayser-i Rûm* i.e. *caesar of Rome*⁸² and his fixing the style *muzaffer dâimâ* i.e. *semper victor* in his monogram⁸³ after the conquest of Constantinople (1453) in addition to the ultimate adoption of the title *emperor* into the Ottoman rulers' internationally recognized occidental titulature manifested the beginning of this transition from kingdom to empire. Yet, the styles *imperator* and *caesar* denoted the recognition of Ottoman rulers as emperors only in occidental hierarchy. Mehmed II's reorganization of the state with imperial ideology or even the use of imperial titles for Ottoman rulers in treaties with European states cannot alone suffice to prove that Ottoman supreme-monarchy/emperorship was valid also in the non-European world. Nevertheless, Mehmed II defied the Mamluk hegemony in the

⁸⁰ Inferred from the information provided in Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 88-91, 103-104.

⁸¹ Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 197.

⁸² İnalçık, "Osmanlı Sultanlarının Unvanları", 117. It must be noted that the Ottoman title of *Caesar of Rome*, one of the two most common standard titles of Ottoman ruler used in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy, was exactly the same as that with which the sixth/seventh-century Eastern Roman / Byzantine emperors would be called in the early modern orient. See Dimitris Kastritsis, "Ferîdûn Beg's *Münşe'âtü's-Selâtin* ('Correspondence of Sultans') and Late Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Views of the Political World," in *Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space*, ed. Sahar Bazzaz, Yota Batsaki, and Dimiter Angelov (Washington, D.C.: Center of Hellenic Studies, 2013), 102 for the use of exactly the same title in Feridun Ahmed Bey's *Münşe'atü's-Selâtin* when titling Prophet Muhammed's letter to Heraclius. So, unlike the sense of difference that the reader of our day gets by seeing *Rûm* as opposed to Rome in the historiography, a differentiation which historians observe in order to mark separate polities, the early modern practice employed the exact same title for both the historical Byzantine/Roman and the contemporary Ottoman rulers as well as realms.

⁸³ See the text of Mehmed II's monogram in Umur, *Osmanlı Pâdişah Tuğraları*, 109-118.

oriental regimen and effectively imposed the House of Osman's already-claimed sultanship.⁸⁴ Under Mehmed II's and his son Bayezid II's (r. 1481-1512) reigns, in Islamdom, the Ottoman State was a sultanate coexisting with other sultanates. The Ottomans' attainment of the imperial position in oriental hierarchy must be considered consummated only with Selim I's (r. 1512-1520) conquest of southeastern Anatolia, western Kurdistan, Syria, and Egypt, his bringing an end to the Mamluk sultanate as well as to the Abbasid caliphate under its protection, and ultimately Süleyman I (r. 1520-1566)'s assuming supreme (rather than the already-existing lesser) caliphate, which came along with the adoption of above-sultanic, supreme-monarchical titles.⁸⁵

After these events, the Ottoman padishah became supreme-monarch/emperor. *Sultan* was among the group of his secondary sublime titles but not the ultimate one. While sources produced for an internal audience, such as poems, chronicles, and even official governmental documents, might reflect self perception and unilateral claims that are not necessarily valid at interstate level, the following excerpt from the Ottoman ruler's *intitulatio* used in interstate treaties "I, sultan of the sultans of the age, proof of the khakans of the era, crown-bestower to the monarchs of the world, shadow of God, . . . am the padishah . . . and supreme-shah . . . Sultan Murad Khan^{86,87} exhibits no flattery by a chronicler or fawning by a courtier. In choosing titles that reflect the accepted reality rather than self-perception, direct borrowings from (even official)

⁸⁴ Inferred from the information provided in Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 114-115, 119-123, 182.

⁸⁵ In the case of relations with the Safavids, the shahs addressed Ottoman rulers as "sultan" and "[lesser] caliph" along with other sultanic titles until the Battle of Çaldıran (1514) and Selim I's conquest of the Mamluk sultanate. The Ottomans' ensuing adoption of supreme-monarchy and supreme-caliphate was fully reflected to the *inscriptio* used by the Safavids for the padishahs via the insertion of *supreme-caliphate* [*hilâfet-i uz mâ*], supreme-monarchy/sultanate [*saltanatü 'l-kübrâ*] and the joint *sultan-khan*, established at the latest by Süleyman I's post-1554 reign. See in Çiftçi, "Osmanlı-Safevi İlişkilerinin Diplomatik Dili", 133-149 the *inscriptio* and *intitulatio* formulas used in Ottoman-Safavid inter-monarch correspondence. See Kastritsis, "Ferîdûn Beg's *Münşe'âtü 's-Selâtîn*," 97-101 for a brief overview of the inter-monarch correspondence titulature as featured in Feridun Ahmed Bey's compilation.

⁸⁶ "Ben ki sultân-ı selâtîn-i zamân, bürhân-ı havâkîn-i devrân, tâc-bahş-ı hüsrevân-ı cihân, zıllullah, . . . pâdişah . . . şehinşah . . . Sultan Murad Han"

⁸⁷ Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 285.

chronicles, poems, histories, governmentally issued documents, etc., cannot alone serve as evidence of the validity of a title and its implications outside the borders of the concerned state. Otherwise, one could be misled by Safavid chronicles to think that the shahs were also [full] *shadows of god* and *supreme-shahs* of their *supreme-sultanate*⁸⁸, or by modern historians' far-fetched, non-formal interpretations of *emperorship/supreme-monarchy*⁸⁹ in a manner that broadens the otherwise well-delineated scope of the term. For the rest of the world, especially in relations with the Ottomans, Safavid shahs were not *emperors/supreme-monarchs*. These designations were not recognized outside Iran and thus cannot go beyond reflecting a self-praise that could not be exerted outside one's own circle. What counts is the titulature that a state could assert in treaties and foreign correspondence, and only in the case that the other party would explicitly recognize the validity of this titulature as such by also registering it in its own diplomatic compositions. Ottoman rulers were emperors *par excellence* not only in their self-boosted image but also as registered by the treaties signed and correspondence exchanged with other states.⁹⁰ In my analyses based on interstate hierarchy and titulature, I will duly take into

⁸⁸ See Veli-kulu b. Dâvud-kulu Şamlu, *Kıyasü'l-Hâkânî*, ed. Seyyid Hasan Sâdât Nâsîrî (Tahran: Sâzımân-ı Çâp u İntişârât-ı Vezâret-i Ferheng ü İrşâd-ı İslâmî, hs.1371), 266-267; Muhammed İbrâhîm b. Zeynelâbidîn Nâsîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, ed. Muhammed Nâdir Nâsîrî Mukaddem (Tahran: Bünyâd-ı Mevkûfât-ı Doktor Mahmûd Afşar, hs.1373), 16, 79.

⁸⁹ See Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam. The Gunpowder Empire and Modern Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974); Douglas E. Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2011); and Matthee, "Was Safavid Iran an Empire?" for examples of historians' interpreting *empire*, in the case of the orient, in a liberality that the history/historiography of the occident would not allow for.

⁹⁰ In addition to the examples provided above from diplomacy with Poland, also see the following sources for references to other foreign addresses' readily employing the highest title *emperor* in the hierarchy of rulers for the Ottoman padishah in both official correspondence and unofficial writings. During the Early Modern period, "Turkish Emperor" was the standard official address used for the Ottoman ruler in Europe-sourced texts. For examples from the seventeenth century, see [for England] G. F. Abbott, *Under the Turk in Constantinople: A Record of Sir John Finch's Embassy 1674-1681* (London: Macmillan, 1920), 21; Paul Ricaut, *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1686), 5-6, 11; [for Sweden] Claes Ralamb, *İstanbul'a Bir Yolculuk 1657-1658*, trans. Ayda Arel (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2008), 54; [for the Holy Roman/German Empire] Markus Köhbach, "Casar oder imperator? – zur Titulatur der römischen Kaiser durch die Osmanen nach dem Vertrag von Zsitvatorok (1606)," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 82 (1992): 223-234; Anton C. Schaendlinger, "Die osmanisch-habsburgische Diplomatie in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları – The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 4 (1984): 184; Johann Rudolf Schmid, *Finalrelation 1-4 vom 12.*

account what counted and was recognized – the interstate subset of the chancellery-titulature⁹¹, not what was emulated internally but could not be asserted externally – the prose-titulature⁹² and the subset of the chancellery-titulature that was used in governmental documents.

As the period studied in this dissertation safely falls into the post-transitional period, I made a point of not naming the Ottoman monarch *sultan*. Titles denoting rank in hierarchy must be handled with care, especially in studies dealing with interstate relations and diplomacy. Just as one cannot claim that the pre-1450 Ottoman State was an empire,⁹³ one should not name the post-1514 Ottoman emperors *sultans*. As of the reign of Selim I, the Ottoman monarch was not sultan in the proper meaning of the term and never referred to as such by contemporaries. This title lived on in the secondary titulature, just like *beğ* (prince) had continued to be used as a complementary title⁹⁴ after the adoption of *sultan* in the 1390s. These facts should disqualify historians from using *sultan* as the distinctive one-word title of the post-1514 heads of the House of Osman. The use of *sultan* as *the* title of the Ottoman emperors in the modern historiography in occidental languages is a mumpsimus which is not only inaccurate but also misleading. Modern contributions to the literature in oriental languages also fall into the same mistake, in contrast to the originally correct use of *sultan* in the pre-20th century Turko-Persian world.

November 1643, published in Meienberger, *Johann Rudolf Schmid zum Schwarzenhorn als kaiserlicher Resident in Konstantinopel in den Jahren 1629-1643*, 160.

⁹¹ Bert Fragner names the titulature used in official documents and on coinage the “*divânî elqâb*,” a designation which I readily adopt.

⁹² Bert Fragner calls the type of titulature that is found in chronicles, poems, histories, etc. the “*prose-elqâb*,” a designation which I also readily borrow.

⁹³ Scholars of the Middle East use the term *empire* with a liberality that colleagues writing on European history would not allow for in similar cases. For example, one could not speak of early modern Germany and France as “both empires”, because what constituted a kingdom and what constituted an empire had been established. As *empire* cannot be used as a generic term for empires, kingdoms, and principalities, so is it incorrect to grant it this generic capacity when, as I show in the Ottoman-Safavid case, one party is an empire/supreme-monarchy and the other is a kingdom/sultanate. A fixed and clear distinction existed in early modern oriental hierarchy of monarchs and states, too.

⁹⁴ See Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 81, for the continued use of great-prince “*emîr-i kebîr / [ulu] beğ*” by Mehmed II.

The standalone use of *sultan* with reference to the reigning padishah survived in the imperial age only in the form of certain clichéd phrases, such as in the designation “sultanic mosque(s)⁹⁵”, or, together with its hierarchical equivalent *khâkân* in one of the charter/diploma opening-formulas “the ruling of the illustrious sultanic charter of sublime glory and resplendent Earth-conquering potentately monogram is that^{96,97}. Yet, these usages denoted respectively the imperial family members in general and unrestricted absolute sovereignty as the lord of the realm, not the distinctive rank of the imperial family members or of the lord of the realm. In addition, just as one does not and cannot translate the imperial-age phrases of *beğlik zindan* and *mîrî kalyon* respectively as “principality prison” and “principality galleon”, for which the prevalent and correct translations are “state prison” and “state galleon”, one also cannot take the use of *sultan* in equally clichéd formulas simply as justified evidence for referring to the Ottoman ruler with this title. In such exceptions, the use of *sultan*, *hakan*, *beğ*, *mîr*, etc. is not different than the generic use of *prince* in European languages for any prince, duke, king, and even the emperor, only to mean a crowned head without denoting rank.

Affixing the title *sultan* to Ottoman emperors is correct only when in joint use with *khan*, like in “Sultan Mustafa Khan”, or in its form denoting emperorship, *supreme-sultan*. The standardization of these technically correct usages is practically not feasible because their translations result in multi-word phrases, yet the fallacy arising from the use of *sultan* as the sole title is more essential than the impracticability of introducing these terms as standard titles. Referring to the Ottoman ruler as *the sultan* is the same as calling the post-1558 Habsburg emperors of Germany (Holy Roman Empire) the “kings of Bohemia”. They were indeed kings of Bohemia, of Royal Hungary, archdukes of Austria, etc. Yet, as all of these were secondary

⁹⁵ *selâtin câmii*

⁹⁶ *nişân-ı şerîf-i âlişân-ı sultânî ve tuğra-yı garrâ-yı gîti-sitân-ı hâkânî hükmü oldur ki*

⁹⁷ M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 126.

dignities, *king* or *archduke* never replaced *emperor* as the one-word title of Habsburg rulers in European literature except when retelling a specific event in which the given Habsburg ruler was acting exclusively in his capacity as king or duke of the applying realm. Thus, just as it is unacceptable that one styles the Habsburg emperors with the exclusive generic title *king* [of Bohemia] or *archduke* [of Austria], the Hanoverian British kings with *prince* [of Hanover], or the post-1569 kings of Poland with *grand-duke* [of Lithuania], so is styling the post-1514 Ottoman monarchs with the generic title *sultan* not admissible.

The inadmissibility of styling Ottoman emperors as *sultan* does not only stem from the latter term's denoting below-imperial, kingly dignity. After *sultan* became only a secondary Ottoman title, its functions in various official media expanded to cover novel areas. In the post-1514 period, empress-mothers were styled as *vâlide-sultan* ("sultan-mother") which meant not that they were the mother of the reigning sultan but that they themselves were sultans as the mother of the reigning emperor. The same was true for empress-consorts: *haseki-sultans* were not the "consorts of the sultan" but themselves "consort-sultans" of the reigning emperor. The same goes also for *sultans*, Ottoman emperors' daughters, whose sons in turn were named *sultanzâdes* ("sultan-born"): the referent of *sultan* was the daughter of the monarch, not the monarch himself. All imperial-princes⁹⁸ carried, both in internal documents and in their official diplomatic correspondence with foreign monarchs, the official title of *sultan* before their forenames in alternation with *khan* after their forenames,⁹⁹ in contrast to the royal-princely title *çelebi* (lord) current throughout the sultanic age. What differentiated them from the reigning

⁹⁸ *şehzâde*

⁹⁹ This was fully established by the reign of Süleyman (1520-1566) at the latest. See Turan, *Şehzâde Bayezid Vakası*, 188-191, 193-194, 200, and 210 for the recurring use of "Sultan Bayezid", "Bayezid Han", "Sultan Selim", and "Selim Han" for imperial-princes Selim and Bayezid in Ottoman internal correspondence and the peace-instrument issued to the Safavids. Their father, the reigning supreme-monarch of the House of Osman, was "Sultan Süleyman Han".

emperor was the joint use of *sultan-khan* for the latter. Likewise, all Crimean khanate-princes¹⁰⁰ were officially styled as *sultan*. Last but not least, in Ottoman bureaucratic correspondence, “*sultânım* (my sultan)” formed a part of the official address used in a letter or exposition written by an inferior to a superior, which many confuse with an address to the Ottoman ruler himself. Thus, in all respects, the use of *sultan* as the generic term for the post-1514 Ottoman rulers results in not only a technical mistake but also a violation of the emperorship of Ottoman monarchs, internally and externally recognized, which is contrary to the actual function of *sultan* as used by contemporaries themselves. As exemplified above, such use poses a problem that compares to calling the emperor in Europe a king.

What is the correct and at the same time practical way of referring to the Ottoman supreme-monarchs, then? Europeans addressed them first and foremost as *emperor*, both in diplomatic documents and works from various genres.¹⁰¹ This title was also official within the Ottoman Empire as well as in its relations with the states to its east. Apparently because the Habsburg monarchs of Germany were also emperors, later historians have shunned making *emperor* the generic term for the Ottoman monarch, which nevertheless does not justify the use of *sultan* as primary title. Ottoman diplomatics had the three above-mentioned alternative titles meaning directly *emperor*, whose use during the period in question however remained limited outside chancellery documents. Instead, *hünkâr/hândgâr* (“supreme-lord”), again denoting imperial dignity, was employed widely within the empire and, along with *kayser* (“caesar”), was *the* standard one-word title also used by Iranians to refer to the Ottoman ruler outside longer titlature-necessitating compositions such as *inscriptio* or *intitulatio*. *Hünkâr* could be the ideal replacement for *sultan* as used for Ottoman emperors in modern studies, and I do propose the use

¹⁰⁰ *hanzâde*

¹⁰¹ Also *Gran Signore* and *Gran Turco* were used, mostly in non-diplomatic writings.

of *hünkâr* in Persian- and Turkish-language texts except in the cases that the title is to be used together with the personal name. However, *hünkar* did not make its way into occidental languages in untranslated form, which rules out the possibility of its successfully replacing *sultan* in practice. On the other hand, another one of the most frequently used titles for Ottoman emperors, *padishah*, is the most practical replacement for *sultan*, as it does not create a problem of misused titlature and is also found in occidental languages.¹⁰²

As mentioned, *hünkar* and *padishah* were the one-word titles of Ottoman emperors, while *sultan* definitely was not. Because it is relatively better known in English than *hünkar*, the proposed use of *padishah* in replacing *sultan* in turn necessitates the clarification of this alternative term. *Padishah* had the misfortune of being interpreted mistakenly as *emperor* by many, including one of the indisputably biggest authorities on Ottoman history.¹⁰³ Hence, its widespread use in the literature falls in line with this interpretation. Post-1514 Ottoman padishahs were emperors; yet, *padishah* was not *emperor* but *monarch* in the strict sense. The theme of titlature in the seventeenth-century Habsburg-Ottoman diplomacy on the issue of equality in imperial rank is an obvious example that testifies to the fact that contemporary personages were well aware of the equivalence of *çâsâr* (caesar), *kayser* (caesar/kaiser), *imparator* (emperor), and *şehinşah* (supreme-shah);¹⁰⁴ this set did not include *padishah*.

¹⁰² Even though *padishah* has not enjoyed the currency *sultan* has had, it is not unheard-of either.

¹⁰³ Late Halil İnalçık mistakenly asserts that *pâdişah* was the equivalent of *emperor* and *şehinşah*. See Halil İnalçık, “Padişah,” *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 34 (2007): 140-143; Halil İnalçık, “Power Relationships as Reflected in Titlature,” 374, 381. This is despite the fact that İnalçık himself admits the use of *pâdişah* for the German emperor, the Russian tsar, the French king, and even princes. See İnalçık, “Power Relationships as Reflected in Titlature,” 382.

¹⁰⁴ See Köhbach, “Casar oder imperator? – zur Titulatur der römischen Kaiser durch die Osmanen nach dem Vertrag von Zsitvatorok (1606),” 227-230.

Crimean khans, who ranked as grand-dukes within the empire and kings externally, also styled themselves as “great padishah^{105,106}” when corresponding with non-Ottoman addressees in their capacity as full kings/sultans in terms of diplomatic rank. With the exception of within-the-empire *intitulatio*, the khans’ padishahship was also recognized in Ottoman court chronicles,¹⁰⁷ and this status as padishah was not a claim to imperial dignity. When the Ottomans styled French rulers as king and padishah in the same sentence,¹⁰⁸ or even gave the doge of Venice the title padishah,¹⁰⁹ they did not introduce confusion between princely, royal, and imperial ranks. It is true that European monarchs, such as the Habsburg emperors with reference to the kings of France, did negotiate for the Sublime Porte to use *padishah* in the *inscriptio* of its diplomatic correspondence.¹¹⁰ However, the use of *padishah* indicated a certain degree of favoredness in foreign relations, not a certain rank in diplomatic hierarchy. Otherwise, the insertion of *padishah* into the official *inscriptio* the Ottomans used for the rulers of Aceh,¹¹¹ not emperors or kings but princes, would create an even greater ambiguity. The same goes for the *padishahs* of the Uzbeks, whose rank alternated between that of autarch and sultan, let alone being emperors, and the *padishahs* of Mughal India, who were not emperors but sultans in diplomacy with the Ottomans. Equally, unlike the case presented by the confused historian,¹¹² the lord-prince (*hâkim*) sharif of

¹⁰⁵ *uluğ pâdişah*

¹⁰⁶ See the khans’ relevant *intitulatio* in Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 357-358; İnalçık, “Power Relationships as Reflected in Titulature”, 383-384.

¹⁰⁷ “Kırım hânı bir âkıl pâdişâh idi”. Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 818.

¹⁰⁸ “Frânçe kralı mülûk-ı nasârâ beyninde kuvvet ve kudret ile kemâl-meretebe . . . itibar kesb eylemiş nahvet ve gurûr sahibi hevâsı gâlip bir pâdişahdır” Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 774. See the imperial letter in *Münşeât-ı Divân-ı Hümâyûn*, published in Nihal Metin, “Viyana Avusturya Kütüphanesi Nr. H.O. 180D’de Kayıtlı Münşeât-ı Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn (Nâme-i Hümâyûn Suretleri) (Muharrem 1099-Cemaziyelahir 1108 / Kasım 1687-Ocak 1697) (İnceleme-Metin)” (MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2014), 107-108 for an example of the Ottoman official use of *pâdişah* for kings of France.

¹⁰⁹ M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 224 quoting from M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, “Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Vesikalar Külliyyâtında Kânûnî Sultan Süleyman Devri Belgeleri,” *Belgeler* 1, no.2 (1965): 172.

¹¹⁰ See Meienberger, *Johann Rudolf Schmid zum Schwarzenhorn als kaiserlicher Resident in Konstantinopel in den Jahren 1629-1643*, 30-31.

¹¹¹ M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı belgelerinin Dili*, 152

¹¹² See el-Moudden, “Moroccan-Ottoman Relations”, 299, for a typical example of the described fallacy.

Morocco was not declared king or emperor when he was addressed by the Ottoman ruler as *melik* or *padishah*, which stood for *monarch*.

All of these facts indicate that *padishah* did not correspond to *emperor*. It rather designated monarchs, i.e. princes, khans, kings, sultans, and also emperors with the function of revering the addressee or oneself without indicating rank, which found its arguably most explicit expression in the following quotation from the late seventeenth-century Ottoman case: “our *hünkar* (supreme-lord) his imperial majesty is also a warrior-*padishah*.¹¹³” In this sense, *padishah* is the exact equivalent of the all-encompassing (from emperor, through king, to duke), monarch-meaning use of *prince* in European terminology, as in Machiavelli’s *the Prince*. Although not denoting emperorship unlike *hünkar* does, *padishah*, at the same time does not conflict with emperorship and with the historically correct titulature, unlike *sultan* does. Therefore, it stands out as the most practical one-word alternative in English to replace the described incorrect use of *sultan*. Last but not least, not the Ottoman but the Safavid shah ranked as sultan in interstate hierarchy, making the use of *sultan* for the Ottoman emperor all the more problematic. Disregarding these equally problematic consequences of the mumpsimus of styling Ottoman monarchs as *sultan* would be self-contradictory in a study basing its main assertions regarding interstate hierarchy on continuities and changes in official titulature. I rather see it among my dissertation’s primary objectives to use titulature that at least coincides with facts, if not offering the literally precise term, and that the correct use of titulature be promoted in historiography at the expense of misleading terminology, even if the latter has attained the level of mumpsimus.

¹¹³ ”Şevketlü hünkârımız dahi bir gâzi pâdişaktır”, Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 997.

I want to clarify several more titles that feature in my text in order to promote their correct use by historians. In the period under investigation, the terms in this set were used in two separate, unrelated capacities: the original meaning in rulership hierarchy and the derived meaning in internal administrative hierarchy. The two should in no way be confused with each other. *Beğ* had acquired a derived, lower-ranking usage in Ottoman provincial administration and yet a further lower usage in that of the Safavids. At the same time, its use in rulers' hierarchy for its original meaning *prince* continued. That the word has three different transliterations in Latin alphabet (archaic – *beğ*, modern Turkish – *bey*, Persianized – *beyg*) is very handy for differentiating between the three different capacities of this term. Whenever used in the original meaning corresponding to *duke/prince*, I transliterate it as *beğ*, as to the Ottoman-derived capacity corresponding roughly to a count, the transliteration is *bey*, while the derived and in terms of rank further lowered usage in Safavid Iran is transliterated as *beyg*. The same goes for *khân*. Whenever used in its genuine meaning as the title of a ruler corresponding to *king* or *grand-duke*, the transliteration is the more common *khan*. The Safavid-specific, derived use in titling governors, governors-general, and grand-viziers in a way that was on par with the Ottoman title *pasha* is transliterated with the alternative romanization *xan*. In differentiating the use of *sultan* between its genuine meaning corresponding to *king* and in the derived one applying to Safavid provincial/military hierarchy where it corresponded to Ottoman *bey*, roughly a count, I did not need to innovate, as the Ottomans already had developed an alternative spelling¹¹⁴ for the Safavid-derived usage: *sültân* by means of replacing ط with ت.

In Ottoman military institution names, parallel terminology exists for the departments of the completely separate Sublime Court (*Dergâh-ı Âlî / Kapıkulu*) and Local (*Yerlî*) corps, in

¹¹⁴ Evliyâ Çelebi b. Derviş Mehmed Zillî, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnamesi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2011), 4/339.

addition to pashas' private court troops *kapı[halkı]*. Whenever a descriptor is not provided, the corps referent is of the Sublime Court and the descriptor is left out for concerns of practicality. In the cases of the Local corps, I always used *Local* as adjective to mark the difference and capitalized the first letter *L* in order to differentiate this case-specific terminology from the literal use of the word *local*. Pasha-courts are always designated with *household* as a distinguisher.

The word *hümâyun* also deserves highlight. In Ottoman historiography, it is consistently and correctly translated as *imperial*. However, due to the existence of more literal equivalents for *imperial* in Persian and Turkish, and because my analysis shows that *hümâyun* fell into the category of descriptors and not identifiers of imperial titulature, I translated it in its more exact meaning *august* in the cases of quotations that are of value for diplomatics and titulature. In non-quoted translations of institution names, I adhered to the universally consented and otherwise correct translation *imperial*.

Juxtaposing unquoted translations of post names with the original vocabulary used in the source languages might confuse the untrained reader, because in more than one instance, the common pool of vocabulary used in the Ottomans' Turkish and the Safavids' Persian documents provided the word *X* for the office *A* in a given party, which is denoted with the word *Y* in the other. In addition to that, the word *X* might denote the office *B* in the other party, with *B* corresponding to the office *C* in the first party. Furthermore, one party would retain its own differing uses of the same word and those of the other party if two or more different offices from the two sides sharing the same vocabulary in their names were to feature in the same piece of writing, adding to the outward confusion. In my text, I used a consistent English terminology for corresponding offices from both sides. Otherwise, Ottoman terminology could have made one assume that Safavid governors [Saf. *hâkim*; Ott. *vâli/beylerbeyi*] were viceroys [Saf. *vâli*; Ott.

hâkim], in the same way that Safavid terminology would in turn use the title that the Ottomans used for their governors for the Iranians' own viceroys. The same goes for governors-general, khans / xans, commanders-general, marshals, and even sub-governors, all drawing their titles at both sides from a common pool of vocabulary which denotes different offices respectively in Ottoman and Safavid usage. To help show which English office or institution name corresponds to which different terms in Ottoman and Safavid usage, or which one single word common to the source languages translates into two different English words separately for Ottoman and Safavid cases, I provided equivalents in a footnote in the first use of such terms.

My last remark relates to personal names, whose mere presence in the text does not outwardly imply more than a simple insertion of factual information found in primary sources. Yet, researchers and readers of Iranian and Turkish histories know well that this is not the case at all. If I had used the names as they appeared in the source used for reconstructing a given passage, even when coupled with personal or office-denoting titles, the reader would have ended up having a multitude of Mustafa pashas, Mehmed pashas, Ahmed aghas, Murtaazâ-kulu xans, Kelb-Alis, etc., almost all of whom in reality had surnames or surname-like cognomens. Unfortunately, in most studies, researchers spare the effort to find out the somewhere-existing distinctive names for historical figures, especially for those of secondary importance to the narrative. Just establishing full and distinctive names in each case cost me roughly a quarter of the total time dedicated to the writing of the entire research. However, I can safely say it was worth it. This dissertation does not present the reader with a bewildering number of persons sharing the same forename and the title. The processes of establishing full names are not necessarily reflected in the main text. Only in my first use of a surname or cognomen that is not provided in the quoted source(s), I inserted the additional reference to the source from which I

found the distinctive name to the footnote. Establishing full and distinctive names was arguably the most laborious part of the work that does not give itself away when reading the text, which I undertook with a conscious effort. I did so to encourage colleagues to no longer provide us, for example, with five or so different Ahmed pashas in their publications. I thereby show that with a painstaking collateral research, establishing full distinctive names are possible in the majority of cases.

**CHAPTER II. A TREATISE ON OTTOMAN-SAFAVID DIPLOMACY AND
POLITICAL RELATIONS, 1639-1722:**

OVERARCHING ESSENTIALS AND CONSTANT TRENDS

This chapter is a treatise on the entirety of the period covered in this dissertation. It establishes the fundamentals and overarching themes that defined the relations from 1639 to 1722, which were not affected by individual occurrences but rather simply accommodated them. As it is based itself on the information unearthed in the following chronological chapters, this portion of the text includes almost no citations.

One of the main arguments in the treatise is that the parties to diplomacy were exclusively the Ottoman State and the Safavid State, not the empire and Iran; the legal entities were dynastic states tied to but nevertheless existing above their respective realms. This dynastic state vs. real state distinction had critical consequences.

This chapter also establishes the partnership's officially unequal nature, in which the Ottomans enjoyed hierarchical primacy vis-à-vis the Safavids, a principle that manifested itself on almost all platforms. For instance, the Ottoman State and monarch held a supreme-monarchical/imperial rank while the Safavid State and monarch's rank was sultanic/royal. All in all, the Ottomans' and the Safavids' corresponding office holders were counterparts but not peers, a principle applicable to almost each corresponding post descending in rank from chief-vizierate. Ottoman hierarchical primacy was unmistakably denoted in titulature, which was anything but abstract. In comparable occasions, the Safavids sent higher-ranking emissaries than the Ottomans did in observance of the reverence necessitated by the padishah's supreme position vis-à-vis the shah. Likewise, with regard to equal-ranking emissaries, the Ottoman counterpart always enjoyed one class of protocol higher than the Safavid one. Similarly, only Ottoman

accessions occasioned diplomatic contact whereas Safavid accessions did not. Additionally, this treatise identifies each separate office and emissaryship through which diplomacy was conducted both at court and in the frontier provinces. It thereby distinguishes the specialized genres of written diplomatic instruments and the division of labor, for instance, between the court and the province, or between different offices and posts. The separate occasions for and exclusive authorizations of ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents are reconstructed detailing the backgrounds and careers of each post. The mere formality attributed to accession-occasioned missions underestimates them; they were indeed occasions for real negotiations that could even lead to revolutionary amendments of the status quo. The poorly documented but occasionally retraceable inter-audience negotiations, which were of central importance, are paid special attention.

Another accomplishment of this chapter is that it shows that bilateral relations were indeed formalized well beyond the implications of a pacification document. In fact, the different phases of the examined period saw four different levels of peaceful coexistence: *non-hostility*, *friendly harmony*, *ancient brotherhood*, and *perpetual peace in alliance*. In relations, the center could be active or reactive in the face of frontier developments. Nevertheless, the center did have the final say in setting the course of relations regardless of the frontier's capacity to determine the content of those relations. Both states featured long-term foreign policies. For the Ottomans, relations with the Safavids were of secondary importance; the preservation of peace without necessarily making a sacrifice was the maxim. For the Safavids, relations with the Ottomans were essential to the wellbeing of the realm. Hence, great sacrifices were made to preserve the peace and bring about further rapprochement. Bilateral relations were not static at all; in addition to intensive diplomacy, the frontier was almost uninterruptedly affected by cross-border

rebellions, encroachments, and violations. Such events occasionally led to states-of-emergency and war, though hostilities never ensued. Third parties were also a factor in bilateral relations. However, they could not play the decisive role but would rather give one of the parties more bargaining power according to the situation.

This treatise also establishes how Ottoman primacy in diplomatic hierarchy manifested itself as Ottoman supremacy in material relations. The Ottomans would assertively react to the Safavids' occasional unpleasant demands, support to rebels, and provocative trials of strength. Such responses ranged from sarcastic rejections to the elimination of rebels followed by the annexation of their territory and other major tours de force of military nature. Last but not least, this treatise draws attention to the role of literary and fine arts as constituents of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy serving as alternative platforms on which current diplomatic matters found direct reflections. Regarding official, native, and prestigious languages, the parties were fully integrated since Persian and Turkish were foreign to neither side: both languages were actively used in certain capacities by both sides.

II.1. Diplomacy

The non-existence of war, its major occasions, and the vast documentation that come along with it might give the initial impression that the diplomatic and political relations between the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Iran from 1639 to 1722 were mostly static. This, however, by no means reflects the reality. Just as Ottoman-Safavid relations cannot be reduced to a narrative of war even when speaking of the pre-Zuhab phases involving hostilities, the subsequent uninterrupted peacetime phase can also not simply be dismissed as eventless. In the period studied, there were there were myriad developments: active exchanges of diplomatic missions,

official correspondence, ups and downs, changing status quos, altered hierarchies, struck deals, negotiated accords, convergence and strife, trials of strength, tours de force, submitted demands, delivered threats, ultimatums, etc. Yet, in these otherwise active, non-stationary peacetime contacts, there were also constants constituting the essentials. Rather than being rendered void by the above-enumerated types of occurrences, these all-encompassing fundamentals accommodated such occurrences in their scope by leaving room for alterations.

The most prominent fundamental was that relations were defined not by the principle of egalitarianism but by that of Ottoman primacy and it was repeatedly reproduced on every possible platform. The parties considered their relationship equal neither in power nor in hierarchy, which in turn was reflected in the nature of their bilateral interactions and their conduct of diplomacy. The latter was entrusted to both states' corresponding emissary- and non-emissary dignitaries: padishah with shah, grand-vizier with prime-minister, state- and royal secretaries, governors-general, ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents. However, the incumbents of these parallel, corresponding posts were not peers. In interstate hierarchy, Ottoman dignitaries remained formally superior to their administratively corresponding Safavid counterparts, reflecting the Ottomans' imperial and the Safavids' royal positions. This disparity was reproduced at every step of diplomatic conduct, namely, right of correspondence, titulature, order of precedence, and applicable class of protocol. Indeed manifesting power relations in the realm of diplomacy, the Ottomans' hierarchical primacy vis-à-vis the Safavids was by no means an obsolete artifact of the olden days, or a unilateral claim aimed for an internal audience without validity at interstate level. As an extension, the diplomatics dimension of official correspondence, especially titulature, was far from being abstract. It reflected the concurrent hierarchical order in exact agreement with power relations.

Correspondence between Ottoman and Safavid monarchs was self-evidently the highest, the most formal, and at the same time the most binding level of diplomacy. The padishah and the shah shall not be attributed with performing the highest level of diplomatic representation though, as they were not only the rulers of their states but also the heads of the dynasties who themselves were *the* states. Therefore, they were not the highest representatives diplomacy; their persons were rather the very embodiment of the principal parties. For this reason, in the wording of diplomatic correspondence, the parties to relations were formulized to be the respective dynastic polities.¹¹⁵ This phenomenon finds its best expression in the official names of the polities in question vis-à-vis the names of the respective realms they ruled over: *Ottoman State*¹¹⁶ and *Safavid State*¹¹⁷. They occasionally appearing with adjectives, the most common of which are *sublime*¹¹⁸ and *eternal*¹¹⁹. In contrast, in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy, the [Ottomans'] empire was collectively designated as *Rûm* (i.e. [former eastern] Roman [Empire]), while in cultural and geographical references, *Rûm* denoted a narrower territory, namely the Asia Minor and Balkan

¹¹⁵ Thus, despite the fact that the Safavids revived the ancient realm of Iran as a political territory and the pre-Islamic concept of Iranian monarchy, they did not create and rule over a Persian state. Savory claims that the polity of the Safavids was a Persian state, see Roger M. Savory, “The Emergence of the Modern Persian State under the Safavids,” reproduced in his *Studies on the History of Safavid Iran* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1987), Chapter VII. However, his use of *Persian* rather stands for *Iranian*. Whether *Persia* and *Iran*, with an eye to adhering to the conventions of Western historiographical tradition, can still be used interchangeably, may be left to the author’s discretion. Yet, in a conceptual argumentation, the distinction between these two terms become too clear to omit. Accordingly, I assert that the Safavids did revive the ancient Persian monarchy and did rule over the realm of Iran, which can even be called *an* Iranian state, but definitely not a Persian state, for the reasons which even Savory himself satisfactorily explains in the rest of his article.

¹¹⁶ *Devlet-i Osmâniye*

¹¹⁷ *Devlet-i Safeviye*. Savory notes that the use of *devlet* in Iranian sources to mean the Safavid monarchical establishment – state – instead of the bliss or felicity of the ruler, is observed for the first time under Abbas I’s rule in the early seventeenth century. See Roger M. Savory, “The Safavid State and Polity” reproduced in his *Studies on the History of Safavid Iran* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1987), Chapter IX. However, *devlet*, which had been employed in Islamic/oriental historiography since the 8th century with the meaning of the ruler’s bliss, had acquired its meaning of the sovereignty and political institution of a ruling dynasty – the state – already by the 10th/11th century. See Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Devlet” *Türkiye Dîyânet Vakfî İslam Ansiklopedisi* 9 (1994): 234-240. The Safavids’ unawareness of this continued usage of six centuries and independently having [re]invented it in the early seventeenth century does not sound that plausible. Besides, Savory assumes the emergence of the concept of the realm/domains of Iran to be identical with the development of the concept of the [Safavid] state in his analysis. Here, I argue otherwise.

¹¹⁸ *aliyye*

¹¹⁹ *ebed-peyvend*, or *müebbedeyn* in dual case.

provinces of the empire excluding its Hungarian, Crimean-Ukrainian, Caucasian, Kurdistan, etc. frontiers and Arab provinces. In any case, *Rûm* was the sole designation with which the empire in its entirety was referred to, both officially and unofficially. In turn, the realm ruled by the Safavids was collectively named as *Iran* and *Ajam* by both parties with these names used in an interchangeable manner.¹²⁰

On the other hand, the names *Persia* and *Turkey*, customary in European languages for denoting the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Iran, are not only non-existent in Persian- and Turkish-language primary sources when denoting these realms but they also paint an inaccurate image when used in this context. Europeans referred to the Ottoman realms collectively as *Turkish Empire* and to the padishah as *Turkish emperor* in diplomacy as well as in published works, alongside the Ottomans' own terminology. These contemporaries did not dispute that the House of Osman, and that of Safi across the border, were of Turkish stock. No expert would dispute the weight Turkishness had in the Ottoman Empire. The same goes for the Persian language and political heritage in Iran, which was ruled by a Turkish dynasty and Turkish-majority administrative-military nobility side by side with other ethnicities and classes. However, these dynasties ruled over domains that were too diverse to be designated with single ethnic names. Consequently, the Ottomans never referred to themselves collectively as *Turks* nor to their empire as a whole as *Turkey*, except when relating from the speech of Europeans. Likewise, Iranians did not refer to themselves as *Persians* and to their kingdom as *Persia*. The identifiers *Turkish* and *Persian* were indeed used with reference to ethnic, cultural, and political phenomena of domestic relevance but never for naming the realm or the state.

¹²⁰ By handling the “political concept ‘Iran’ ” in a restricted scope whose limits I delineate here, I also happen to adopt – though in my small capacity – the direction Bert Fragner set by declaring his intention of “posing working hypotheses for a historical debate” on the mentioned concept. See Fragner, “zur Geschichte des politischen Begriffs ‘Iran’ im späten Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit,” 82.

In Ottoman-Safavid relations, there was no state of Iran nor an Empire independent of the dynasty naming it. A Safavid ambassador, for example, served as the ambassador of the Safavid Shah of Iran but not of Iran, just as an Ottoman envoy functioned as the envoy of the caesar/supreme-lord of *Rûm* but not of *Rûm*. These dynasties had not come to rule already-existing states by way of capturing the throne; instead, they had founded them.¹²¹ It was a matter of geography, not of statehood that later waves of expansion might have eventually made their respective territories similar in shape to those of pre-existing states. The realm enjoyed a continuity transcending the state in the spheres of geography, territory, borders, subjecthood of inhabitants, and even monarchy (throne and crown).¹²² Nevertheless, relations, treaties, accords, etc. took place between the dynastic Ottoman and Safavid states both officially and ideologically – not between the realms of Iran and *Rûm*¹²³, over which these dynasties ruled. Pacts were concluded between the persons of the monarchs, and if in perpetuity, then between their dynasties involving future successors.

Although in many levels of analysis some might argue that equating dynasty with state preserves an outdated construct which did not reflect the realities of the later seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy it was not so. By then, the state was in reality an autonomous institution, a fact that various platforms reflect concretely. However, in the case of Ottoman-Safavid relations, dynasties determined the names and *raisons d'être* of the

¹²¹ Yet, the Ottomans' claim to the political heritage of the Seljuks among other former polities, and the Safavids' connection to the preceding House of Akkoyunlu through the female line, shall not be ignored.

¹²² Apparently as a result of having internalized the state-realm distinction due to their mastery of the source material, two doyens of oriental studies use *Iran* and *state* in the Iranian context in complete accordance with the manner in which sources feature them. Roemer presents an accurate picture in which the Safavid establishment itself was the state, and that succeeding Turkoman/Turkish dynasties in Iran were separate states: see H. R. Roemer, "The Safavid Period," 189, 228, 232, 249, 332. Likewise, Fragner refers to the "Iranian highland," "state authority in Iran," dynastic rule in Iran," "the state of the Safavids," and "Iran" as "territory" and "territorial concept" as well as the fact that monarchy belonged to [the realm of] *Iran* [thus not to the *state*]. See Fragner, "zur Geschichte des politischen Begriffs 'Iran'," 87-88, 90-91.

¹²³ What we are dealing with here is exclusively interstate diplomacy between institutionalized dynasties, not between countries or nations.

states, whereby the states became institutionalized embodiments of the dynasties. This practice reflected an ideological reality rather than an abstract construct. In this setting, the term *state* refers to the institutionalized household and extended network of servitude of the reigning dynasty. Take the Ottoman and the Safavid dynasties out of the equation and all existing agreements between the empire and Iran would be rendered void because without the dynasties, the states, which were parties to all forms of relations, would cease to exist. That is why the Ottomans could argue that they did not break the peace when they occupied parts of the Iranian west after 1722. With the capital (Isfahan) fallen and the House of Safi, in the person of Sultan-Hüseyin, officially abdicated from shahship, there was no longer a Safavid State that had been party to interactions with the Ottomans. All deals with Iran were then void, because they had indeed never been struck with *Iran* in the first place. Thus, the concept that the dynasty did not represent the constituent of the crown within a larger state establishment but that the dynasty itself was *the* state by means of institutionalization was in no way an abstract construct in the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations. As an essential constituent, it had direct consequences on decision-making with regards to what constituted the state, which was party to bilateral relations, and on what defines the realm, whose continuity in certain spheres received reference but which was not a legal entity.

In this respect, the monarchs' role in diplomacy was not to represent their states at the highest level or to act on behalf of it. As heads and embodiments of their respective dynasties, their involvement in diplomacy defined the very position of the state in a given matter. This does not have anything to do with policy formation, in which monarchs might or might not have been involved at all. Yet, no matter in what manner foreign policy was formulated, it attained its most binding form when expressed at the level of monarch. This inter-monarch platform reproduced

Ottoman hierarchical primacy in its most manifest form. The very first documents initiating peacetime relations in 1639, namely, the shah's oath-instrument and the padishah's responsive peace-epistle that put the Border-Protocol of Zuhab into force, attest to the fact that hierarchical inequality was not acquired but inherent. Overall, the Safavid chancellery employed a deferent style, while the Ottomans chancellery opted for a condescending phraseology. In comparison to the padishah's titles, those of the shah are discernibly poorer in number, diversity, and most importantly, glorification. Although Murad IV emphasized Safi I's sovereignty over Iran, thus recognizing him as the rightful ruler of a neighboring, independent country, he abstained from using any titles that implied there were two equal parties corresponding with each other: the padishah's titlature was unequivocally supreme-monarchical (imperial) and the shah's sultanic (royal).

The 1642-1643 correspondence clinched the already struck deal. Every remark in the epistles the parties exchanged explicitly reveals the unequal positions of the Ottoman padishah and the Safavid shah. As in the previous round, both parties qualified the padishah with imperial titlature, while those reserved for the shah were of royal dignity. In a letter sent to the person of the shah, the Ottoman chancellery had no problem depicting the situation as one in which the shah, in the manner of a refuge-requester, had beseeched for the reconfirmation of the current peace, and the padishah granted it out of his benevolence. The Sublime Porte did not even entertain the possibility that such composition could harm the friendly relations, let alone provoke the shah to react tangibly. This affirms that the inequality of the partners in the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations was a maxim that both sides had internalized. The 1656-1657 round in the exchange of epistles continued to honor the principle of Ottoman primacy in bilateral hierarchy.

The elevation of the shah's rank within the scope of the *diplomatic revolution* (1686-1701) did not dismantle this principle by any means; it decreased the hierarchical gap from two degrees to one degree, but preserved the unequal nature in full. Yet, the shah's promotion from sultanic (kingly) to august-sultanic (high-kingly) status is still noteworthy. The 1688 imperial epistle initiated this promotion process, though it did not fail to explicitly assert the padishah's universal mandate over the shah via emphasized references to supreme-caliphate, divine rule, and imperial supremacy. Diplomatic correspondence from 1691 to 1695 gradually consummated the shah's promotion to august-sultanic rank. Yet, Ottoman sources do not call the royal epistle of 1691/1692 a "letter-of-servitude"¹²⁴ without reason. The Safavid establishment thereby paid unreserved homage to the Ottomans' imperial dignity in return for the elevation of the shah's rank. In this epistle, the royal government emphasized the padishah's unequalled, foremost position as *the* supreme-monarch/emperor of the world via the identifier titulature employed. It did so even more explicitly and directly than the Sublime Porte itself did in its replies. Further substantiating this reverence, the emphasis on the supreme-caliphate of the padishah in the royal epistle of 1696 surpasses even that of 1691/1692 in elaborateness and explicitness.

As the post-1685 convergence could not elude the ensuing crises after 1701 scot-free, the Sublime Porte gradually demoted the Safavid shah back to sultanic level over a fifteen-year period. As of the early 1710s, the process had been completed. In promoting or demoting positions in inter-monarch hierarchy, the Sublime Porte had a unilateral prerogative. In the post-1701 period of deteriorating relations, whenever the royal government appeared to attempt at a similar demotion of the padishah's position, the initiative was destined to remain merely an aspiration. The Safavids, as the lesser partner in the unequal relations, did not have the means to

¹²⁴ "ubûdiyet-nâme"

unilaterally implement such claims. As the senior partner, the Ottomans did, when and if they firmly stood behind an imposition they had resolved. Deeply antagonized in the post-1701 years, they resorted to this not-so-pleasant option, which they deemed the only remaining way to further impose their superiority without detriment to it.

The highest level of diplomatic representation was that of the chief ministers. As absolute-deputies of their respective monarchs, an essential definition of their office, grand-viziers and prime-ministers conducted top level, official, and binding diplomacy without the requirement of credentials giving them plenipotentiary powers. Though they normally expressed a unified political will, the most discernable difference between inter-monarch and inter-minister diplomacy was that the former featured the more overarching and structural dimensions of bilateral relations while the latter, in addition to these dimensions, also dealt with novelties, unprecedented developments, or adventitious occurrences.

As a continued reflection of Ottoman hierarchical primacy vis-à-vis the Safavids on diplomatic platform, Ottoman grand-viziers holding the rank of autarch (grand-duke) with sultanic (kingly) grade were superiors of Safavid prime-ministers who were of princely rank for most of the studied period. This is shown by not only the epistles and letters I analyzed in my research, but also by the template *inscriptio* for the prime-minister as is prescribed in Ottoman correspondence compilations.¹²⁵ During a total of sixteen years (1698-1702 and 1712-1722), Safavid prime-ministers briefly enjoyed the rank of autarch (grand-duke) without booster grade. The same inequality between these administratively matching dignitaries was reproduced in the domain of the right of diplomatic correspondence. Safavid prime-ministers could not exchange

¹²⁵ *Mecmua-yı Mükâtebât*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Orientalische Handschriften, Cod.Mixt. 371, ff. 31b-32a.

letters with Ottoman padishahs, while Ottoman grand-viziers could and did correspond with Safavid shahs as a mark of primacy.

Apart from the order of precedence, the distinctive role of chief-ministerial letters in the conduct of diplomacy is noteworthy. Monarchical epistles and chief-ministerial letters sent upon the same occasion should be regarded as two components of one single reply. It goes without saying that in this case, the epistle and the letter inherently agree in content, do not contradict, and represent the products of parallel political instructions given to chancelleries. Yet, there is more to their function than just maintaining consistency. For the cases in which both an epistle and a letter were dispatched, one must juxtapose the two documents to interpret the full nature of a party's reply. In doing so, whenever a matter is repeated in both writings in more or less similar wording, it must be regarded as emphasis or assurance. When different dimensions of the same matter or separate matters are covered in each writing, the reply on a given subject must be deduced by treating the two documents as complements to each other. When matters that outwardly seem contradictory are featured, it must rather be taken as warning by the senders' side to the recipient's. Such cases suggest that the recipient's side would not satisfy the expectations of the senders on a given issue, the more negative message of the outwardly contradicting replies would begin to apply without reservations.

The complementary role of letters to epistles is also observable in the realm of diplomatics. The conventional omission of the monarch's own *intitulatio* in epistles exchanged between Ottoman and Safavid rulers was compensated with monarchical titlature inserted into the chief-ministerial letter which, in this matter as well as in others, suited the described complementary role perfectly. On a different platform but nevertheless in the same vein, acts of courtesy displayed during interactions between incoming missions and host states in turn

complemented the warm mood of the prospective written replies, just as "diplomatic" insults complemented their menacing mood

Below the level of chief-ministers, if one excludes state- and royal secretaries, all dignitaries and emissaries needed authorization via credentials in order to permissibly function in interstate relations, i.e., to represent, speak for, negotiate on behalf of, and deliver correspondence from their home state. Governors-general at frontiers were among the dignitaries whose job definition granted them an integral role in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. In this regard, especially those of Erzurum and Baghdad from the Ottoman side and those of Çukursa'd from the Safavid side were almost constantly active in frontier diplomacy. Meanwhile other viceroys and governors[-general] also participated in cross-border correspondence, interaction, dispute-settlement, and conflict whenever necessary. As deputies – but not the absolute-deputies – of the monarchs, governors-general had to possess a recognized diplomatic capacity in order to serve in this function. The letters-of-friendship from newly installed governors-general to cross-border counterparts served as credentials that gave them limited authorization to act on behalf of the state in cross-border interactions along the frontier. In addition to this genre, there were also apparently letter exchanges between corresponding Ottoman and Safavid governors[-general] at the occasions of assuming the post, solving local disputes, regulating the cross-border movement of traveling groups, notifying warnings, coordinating the conduct of a joint initiative, etc. Although available source repositories have preserved only a few extant examples of this separate class of correspondence, cross-border inter-governorate correspondence must nevertheless be regarded as a component of Ottoman-Safavid relations due to its apparent frequency and coordinatedness with the centers. When considering the intervals that passed

between exchanges of missions at court level, one must keep in mind that the diplomacy conducted at the frontier on behalf of the states was continually active.

The letters-of-friendship that Ottoman frontier governors-general wrote upon personally assuming office also reflected how matching Ottoman and Safavid posts were counterparts but not peers in interstate hierarchy marked by Ottoman primacy. Ottoman governors-general sent these letters-of-friendship not only to their cross-border counterparts but also to either the prime-minister, who mostly stood as Ottoman governors-generals' peer at princely rank, or even the shah. On the other hand, it was out of the question for a Safavid governor-general to write a diplomatic letter to the Ottoman grand-vizier or padishah. Letter templates for this specific genre that were featured in correspondence compilations indicate how well established it was for Ottoman frontier governors-general to enjoy the right to correspond with the shah.¹²⁶

Exhibiting the same hierarchical disparity in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy, Ottoman governors-general enjoyed princely rank, but if they were created marshal, they ranked as princes with the grade of an autarch (grand-duke). On the other hand, their counterpart Safavid governors-general ranked as lesser princes as explicitly shown by the below-princely *inscriptio* used when Ottoman governors-general wrote letters to them.¹²⁷ In the same vein, Safavid shahs and prime-ministers did exchange missions with Ottoman governors-general, while a Safavid governor-general could in no way exchange missions with Ottoman grand-viziers or padishahs.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *Mecmua-yı Mükâtebât*, ff. 20b-21a.

¹²⁷ *Mecmua-yı Mükâtebât*, f. 32a.

¹²⁸ It should be noted that although provincial council chancelleries adhered to the Imperial Council consistently in using terminology defining the level of relations and generally in employing specific titulature, and although governors-general were corresponding even with officials from the other side who did not otherwise function in diplomacy, as documented by the discussion of titulature to be employed in letters from Ottoman pashas of Baghdad to Safavid heads of the Royal Guard or marshals of the Royal Court, master-scribe Nazmizade Murataza Efendi was, as an exception, unbounded by the current accord(s) in his use of *inscriptio* in the letters he composed in the name of

Next to the three above-mentioned non-emissary actors, ad hoc emissaries constitute the second group conducting diplomacy in the 1639-1722 Ottoman-Safavid relations. As the highest ranking among them, ambassadors were authorized to fully represent the monarch and state. In addition to conveying epistles, they could end wars with plenipotentiary powers, negotiate new agreements, make amendments to the existing ones, and be sent to mark the grand occasion of peace ratifications after these documents had been exchanged. In the case of an ambassador-plenipotentiary, the credentials-deed¹²⁹ of this emissary would specify the explicit coverage of his authority. However, throughout the post-Zuhab Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy until 1722, no emissary was created with plenipotentiary powers. In the case of the ambassadors-extraordinary of the period, their additional mission to orally submit matters that were not given a place in the accompanying epistle's content would be distinctively mentioned in a phrase inserted into the end of the credentials section within the epistle, and this clause would replace the separately issued plenipotentiary credentials-deed in the previous case. This was indeed a direct reference to the ambassador-extraordinary's exclusive right to conduct negotiations that could lead to alterations of the status quo and to formulate binding amendments as well as new clauses. Within such negotiations, the ambassador was duly authorized to go beyond the generally worded content of the epistle. This also reflected how both the Ottomans as well as the Safavids were prone to observing strict secrecy in mission reports and relevant chronicle entries. They habitually recorded formal meetings, non-political events, and protocol ceremonies in fairly good detail, while these sources relate literally nothing as to the content of negotiations.

various governors-general of Baghdad to prime-ministers and the shahs. Nazmizâde Hüseyin Murtazâ Efendi, *Münşeât-ı Nazmizâde*, Süleymâniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi no.3322, ff. 40b-41a. Also see the other letters in *Münşeât-ı Nazmizâde* for the following examples: the shah, when enjoying sultanic rank with imperial grade, could be addressed with the autarchical / grand-ducal title "his sublime excellency", or the prime-minister's inscriptio could begin with the sultanic title "his sublime majesty" when this dignitary was ranking as prince.

¹²⁹ *ruhsatnâme*

While his person officially represented the state, an envoy was only authorized to reconfirm the current status quo by delivering an epistle, gifts, and a message that would inform the other party of a major development. He could not negotiate to strike new agreements. If an envoy was dispatched to notify the other party of a novel development which did not necessitate negotiation, this development was described in full in the accompanying epistle and letter as an indicator of the envoy's non-authorization to personally negotiate alterations to the status quo or to go beyond the limits of reconfirming it.¹³⁰ Envoys therefore had less diplomatic authority than ambassadors to whom authorization for the *ex officio* submission and negotiation of unwritten matters were delegated.

The actual function of unaccredited agents, who carried messages, ratifications of protocols, or letters from chief-ministers, did not go beyond that of a diplomatic courier, and as a rule, they were not given audience by monarchs. Nevertheless, chief ministers duly received them at a ceremonial session of the Imperial or the Royal Council due to their emissarial capacity. Without meeting the host state's monarch, they would conduct business with the host chief-minister and other involved dignitaries below him. While changes of rulers through natural deaths did not occasion the affected party to send out an emissary before receiving the congratulatory mission from the other party for the new accession, it appears that enthronements upon the dethronement of the former monarch occasioned the party to send unaccredited agents to notify the neighbor of the change of ruler.

The post-Zuhab regulations demonstrated that as a rule, the shahs sent ambassadors to congratulate the newly enthroned padishahs. On the other hand, the padishahs did not send

¹³⁰ This capacity of envoyship and the *risâlet* - *envoyship* equivalence also manifest themselves in the usage of *risâlet* as a legal concept in the Ottoman Empire. It meant that the intermediary was to convey the entrusted words as they were, without having the right to add or omit anything. *Kubbealtı Lügatı*, comp. İlhan Ayverdi (İstanbul: Kubbealtı Neşriyatı, 2011).

envoys or apparently even unaccredited agents, let alone ambassadors, to the new shahs; the Ottomans' congratulations were instead forwarded with reply legations dispatched on the occasion of the next incoming Safavid embassy's completing its activities at the imperial court. This was yet another manifestation of the unequal positions of the padishah and the shah in inter-monarch hierarchy. Here, regulation depended on the principle of oriental diplomacy that primacy was symbolized by the prerogative to receive the highest-ranking emissary and the grandest mission. This contrasts with cases in occidental diplomacy of the same period in which the right to send the more senior mission denoted primacy. Moreover, the royal accessions strikingly did not occasion a reconfirmation or renegotiation process by means of exchanging emissaries and correspondence, however, the imperial accessions did. As only ambassadors could negotiate amendments and strike new agreements, the Sublime Porte made sure that any reconfirmation of the status quo and necessary amendments would be given its shape and initiated at the padishah's court – not in that of the shah. This also ensured the continuation of the established pre-1639 principle that no deal would be given its final shape at the royal court. Negotiations could be held either on the front or at the imperial court, and the imperial court had retained its prerogative of finalizing and promulgating pacifications. On the other hand, the extraordinary embassy of Ebukavuk Mehmed (1698-1699) was an exceptional show of gratitude by the Ottomans, in addition to the practical necessity that an intended campaign in Iraq had to be coordinated with the Iranians so that the militaries of the two parties do not find themselves in an uncalculated engagement with each other, whose unforeseeable consequences could pose a serious threat to the cordial relations therebetween.

In the Ottoman Empire, three different hosting and accommodation protocols for incoming emissaries existed: “high¹³¹”, “medium¹³²”, and “low¹³³”. Apart from chroniclers’ descriptions, the bureau of protocols¹³⁴ kept registers stipulating and recording which of these applied when and how. The actual expenditures made for incoming missions’ daily subsidies, travel allowances, host-officers, etc. were recorded in the registers kept at the Chief-Accounting Bureau.¹³⁵ These different protocols existed not only for hosting and accommodation but also for the ceremonies performed during monarchical and chief-ministerial audiences, as can be observed in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy from 1639 to 1722. Additionally, there was a yet higher protocol that did not apply within the Ottoman Empire, as Ottoman ambassadors going abroad solely enjoyed it. For the set of regulations belonging to this class, I propose the term *top*¹³⁶ protocol. In determining the level of the protocol of ceremonies, the political background of a given mission was also a factor: gratefulness, reverence, discontent, and threat could be translated into the application of a protocol higher or lower than was the convention at a given occasion. As a rule, the rank of the mission and the hierarchical relationship of the sender-monarch with the receiver reflected the Ottomans’ inherent and official primacy in their relations with the Safavids.

Ottoman missions began to enjoy higher protocol than the Safavid missions immediately upon the emissaries’ arrival at the border. The governor[-general] of a given mission’s home state that was situated on the mission’s route closest to the border of the host state would send a

¹³¹ *a’lâ*

¹³² *evsat*

¹³³ *ednâ*

¹³⁴ *teşrifât kalemi*

¹³⁵ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 100b, 115a, 121a-121b.

¹³⁶ *aliyü’l-âlâ / en âlâ*

missive to the host state, for the genre of which I propose the term *letter-of-introduction*¹³⁷. For example, the Ottoman governor-general of Baghdad would write to the Safavid governor of Kirmanşah. This letter-of-introduction would serve as the home state's first official outgoing document declaring the rank, quality, and the imminent arrival of a mission to the host state. The governor receiving this letter-of-introduction at the host state would then duly inform his government, attend to the preparations, and the organize a welcome ceremony that was proper for the protocol applicable to the incoming emissary. This protocol was determined depending on the sender's, the receivers, and the mission's rank. Thus, due to its content, official quality, and inter-province nature, letters-of-introduction can be regarded as the initial submission credentials constituting the first of the three steps in the accreditation of an incoming diplomat.

Enjoying higher protocol, the Ottomans' letters-of-introduction had more formal weight than those of the Safavids. Governors-general of Baghdad, or Erzurum, and in some instances Van, were also entitled to write directly to the shah or the prime-minister in certain matters, including this occasion. Safavid governors-general did not enjoy the reciprocal right to do so due to the hierarchical inequality between the emperor-padishah and the king-shah. Hence, the Ottoman letters-of-introduction sent by governors-general to either the shah or the prime-minister must have also covered the second step in the accreditation process by inference. Yet, the Safavid emissaries had to separately write to the Sublime Porte to introduce their missions and send notification of their ranks after having covered considerable distance within the empire. After the completion of this second phase, the grand-vizier would officially recognize the still-traveling mission with a reply letter, for whose genre I propose the term *letter-of-welcome*¹³⁸, and appoint a host-officer. This would normally take place after entering Erzurum and before leaving

¹³⁷ *takdîm-nâme*

¹³⁸ *istikbâl-nâme*

Tokat. Apparently, an Ottoman mission, unlike a Safavid one, would proceed to the current location of the Safavid court without having to introduce itself, submit credentials, inform rank, or wait for the letter-of-recognition due to an Ottoman governor-general's authorization to introduce an imminent mission not only to his Safavid counterpart across the border but also directly to the royal court. As a result of this, the second step of accreditation for outgoing Ottoman emissaries was already covered by the additional act of the first step. For both sides, the third step consummating the accreditation was of course the moment of the presentation of principal credentials via the monarchical epistle or the chief-ministerial letter during the welcome audiences at court.

After putting together the available information and making inferences, it appears that in the case of an emissary's enjoying top protocol, host governors rode out of their provincial capitals to welcome the traveling diplomat, who then rode together in procession into the provincial capital and were saluted with cannon shots. At the chief-ministerial welcome audience, the emissary and the host chief-minister enjoyed equal diplomatic standing. They would enter the audience chamber concurrently, meet in the middle of the chamber after walking towards each other, and sit side-by-side. The emissary in question would not submit his own chief-minister's letter in the host chief-minister's welcome audience before the submission of the epistle at the monarchical welcome audience. In the latter event, the epistle would be carried on a portable throne to the audience hall entrance, and upon entering it would be carried over the head. After pronouncing the greeting address, the emissary would deliver it unmediatedly to the hands of the host monarch. In high protocol, host governors entertained traveling missions in their provincial capitals but did not ride out to welcome and processionally let them in. At the chief-ministerial welcome audiences, host chief-ministers would enter the room after the

emissary, who would be kept waiting on foot until then. Alternatively, host chief-minister would arrive beforehand, wait seated, remain seated as the emissary entered the chamber, and only then stand up to greet him. Yet, he would content himself with only taking a few steps, but without meeting the entering emissary in the middle of the room. Subsequently, the emissary would take his seat below the chief-minister according to the hierarchy. To the monarchical welcome audience, the epistle would be carried over the head, but no portable throne was involved. The emissary would forward the epistle to the host monarch via the agency of the chief-minister. In medium protocol, the ceremonial manifestations of hierarchical inequality performed in high-protocol would be further boosted. The distinctive feature was the epistle's being conveyed from the hands of the emissary to the host monarch via first the present ministers and then the chief-minister as intermediaries. In low protocol, no monarchical audience took place and the ceremonial activities of the emissary were much more limited. A distinctive mark of low protocol was that the letters of introduction and welcome were exchanged between the unaccredited agents and the chief-ministerial lieutenant, not the chief-minister himself.

On the whole, the Ottomans' diplomacy with the Safavids featured the exactness on precedence and protocol which one can observe in contemporary Europe.¹³⁹ The protocol classes that applied between 1639 and 1720 were arranged to register the Ottomans' hierarchical primacy vis-à-vis the Safavids. Accordingly, Ottoman ambassadors enjoyed top protocol and Ottoman envoys high protocol, while Safavid ambassadors enjoyed high protocol and Safavid envoys medium protocol. This diplomatic demonstration of inequality was observed consistently in all receptions. During the formal activities of the exchanged missions in 1721 and 1722, the already existing one-degree gap between the positions of the parties doubled by the application

¹³⁹ See Krischer, "zur Funktion des diplomatischen Zeremoniells in der Frühen Neuzeit," 1-32.

of top protocol for the Ottoman envoy and medium protocol for the Safavid ambassador. Lastly, one can assume that both state's unaccredited agents were hosted and received with low protocol; due to the non-representative quality of a diplomatic courier, the hierarchical inequality must not necessarily have been reflected in the activities of unaccredited agents.

As a rule, Ottoman envoys were selected from among senior Outer Court officers, with the one exception of a master-scribe, while the sole Ottoman ambassador was a former state-secretary. In return, Safavid ambassadors were mostly governors, and in one exceptional case, the chief-vicegerent¹⁴⁰ of the Safavid Order. With one exception,¹⁴¹ all Safavid ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents sent to the Sublime Porte from 1640 to 1722 were from the Turkish clans of the Kızılbaş nobility. The same goes for the accompanying personnel in all of these Safavid missions. Although there is no official record to serve as reference that Kızılbaş lineage was a criterion of selection, this phenomenon features a continuity so uninterrupted and consistent that makes it impossible to be attributed to coincidence. The Ottomans, while occasionally noting Kızılbaşness, were not that interested in which Kızılbaş tribe an incoming Safavid emissary was from, so they generally omitted Kızılbaş tribal surnames, except in official reply correspondence, as seen in Ottoman sources.

Cultural interaction through poetry and music was an integral part of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. Readings and discussion sessions, similitude composition contests, exchanges of odes composed specifically for the occasion, and compendia¹⁴² collection both in Persian and in Turkish were inseparable parts of the missions' inter-audience activities and events in which missions met up with host statesmen both at court and on the journey way stations, with the

¹⁴⁰ *halīfet'ül-hulefâ*, commonly abbreviated to *hulefâ*. See Willem Floor, "The *Khalifeh al-kholafa* of the Safavid Sufi Order," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 153, no.1 (2003): 51-86.

¹⁴¹ Rüstem Xan Zengene is an exception in the sense that the tribe Zengene were a Kurdish member of the predominantly Turkish Kızılbaş.

¹⁴² singular: *dīvân*

major exception of monarchical welcome and farewell audiences. Whenever an emissary distinguished himself in his knowledge of literature, it pleased the host statesmen and was considered so important that the occasion was entered into chronicle records. The same goes for the litterateurs traveling with emissaries; these were commissioned to join outgoing missions specifically for the concrete cultural-diplomatic achievement expected to arise from the other party's appreciation of their mastery in belles-lettres. Musical performances and applied calligraphy were also arts featured in the cultural dimension of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. Great care must have been shown by both parties in choosing emissaries who could distinguish themselves in such interactions with host dignitaries. In turn, host states made a point of having their best available intellectuals, scholars, litterateurs, poets, singers, instrumentalists, and calligraphers present in both formal and informal meetings. On the other hand, a positive trajectory in current relations was no condition for arts to inhabit a constituent of activities between missions and host states: ongoing contentions could be translated into implicit messages or "diplomatic" insults delivered via poetical, musical, or other artistic media.

That various branches of arts, first and foremost poetry and music, could be on the fixed agenda of diplomatic meetings was of course contingent upon not only a native(-like) but also a literary knowledge of the common languages, which in our case were Persian and Turkish. As graduates of Inner Court training or masters in chancellery service, Ottoman emissaries as well as a certain part of Ottoman hosts of Safavid emissaries not only had a good command of Persian but also were equipped with compositional skills in it and had studied its literature in addition to a self-explanatory mastery of Turkish.¹⁴³ After Turkish, Persian was the most prestigious language in the Ottoman Empire, to the extent that, alongside Arabic, it was not considered

¹⁴³ Ülker Akkutay, *Enderûn Mektebi* (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Basın-Yayın Yüksekokulu Basımevi, 1984), 63-65, 124-151.

foreign despite being non-native to the realm. Its literature in prose and poetry was *the* model for those composing in *dîvân* Turkish. Its chancellery and literary phrases were not only directly borrowed into Turkish terminology but also innovatively produced by Persophone Turks/Ottomans within Turkish. It was widely taught, and for poetry, it continued to flourish in the empire not only by influencing Turkish but also via compositions authored directly in Persian. In diplomacy, it was the lingua franca between non-Arab Muslim courts.¹⁴⁴ In the Turko-Persian world extending from Hungary to central eastern Asia, Persian enjoyed a similar, if not the exactly the same, prestige and use with that of Latin in Europe in many respects. This cultural, linguistic, and artistic integration had parallels in the still ongoing (though at a decreasing rate) scholarly exchange between Greater Iran and Rûm.¹⁴⁵

On the other side, Turkish was the native language of not only the Kızılbaş but also the Safavid dynasty and extended household itself. Turkish, unlike Persian in the Ottoman Empire, was native in Iran due to the presence of a strongly represented Turkish minority. As a result, Turkish retained its position as the primary spoken language at court, language of command in military, and consequently lingua franca, not only during the first century but until the very end of the Safavid period, among the ruling elite including those that were not ethnic Turks.¹⁴⁶ As opposed to Persian, the most-preferred language of chancellery composition and literary production in Safavid Iran, Turkish was the must-learn tongue for officials in order to be able to

¹⁴⁴ See Bert G. Fragner, *Die "Persophonie": Regionalität, Identität und Sprachkontakt in der Geschichte Asiens* (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1999) for a very good analysis of Persian's position in Islamdom. See Muhammed Emîn Riyâhi, *Zebân u Edeb-i Fârsî der Kalem-rev-i Osmâni* (Tehrân: İntişârât-ı Pâjeng, hs.1369) for an evaluation of Persian's influence on Turkish and position in the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁴⁵ See Florian Schwarz, "Writing in the Margins of Empires – The Husaynâbâdî Family of Scholiasts in the Ottoman-Safavid Borderlands" in *Buchkultur im Nahen Osten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Tobias Heinzelmann and Henning Sievert (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 151-198.

¹⁴⁶ See Tourkhan Gandjei, "Turkish in the Safavid Court of Isfahan," *Turcica* 21-23 (1991): 311-315, 317-318; John Perry, "The Historical Role of Turkish in Relation to Persian of Iran," in *Iran & the Caucasus V. Research Papers from the Caucasian Centre for Iranian Studies, Yerivan*, ed. Garnik Asatrian (Tahrân: International Publications of Iranian Studies, 2001), 193-194, 198; John Perry, "Cultural Currents in the Turco-Persian World of Safavid and post-Safavid Times," in *New Perspectives on Safavid Iran*, ed. Colin P. Mitchell (London: Routledge, 2011), 87.

function within the royal court, provincial administrations, and the military. Not limited to the level of vernacular tongue, Turkish literature continued to be produced, promoted, and read in Safavid Iran, both royally and provincially. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Iran displayed the utmost level of cultural intertwinement by virtue of their cherishing interests for similar branches of arts and due to the prestigious positions both sides' official and native languages enjoyed in one another's realms. This intertwinement had achieved so high a degree that it was unmistakably reflected on the platform of diplomacy.

The language of epistles and letters in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy was Turkish and Persian, respectively. Ottoman diplomatic notes were in Turkish, while I could not verify whether Safavid diplomatic notes were in Persian or Turkish, as no extant original or copy could be located. It is worthy of note that in contrast to the pre-1639 period, the Safavid court never composed in Turkish in its correspondence with the Sublime Porte, though the court spoke and occasionally issued documents in this tongue. The Sublime Porte, despite still producing documentation in Persian in other areas, likewise never wrote to the Safavids in Persian. Yet, in epistles and letters addressed to Iranians, the Ottoman chancellery preferred a much more florid, poetical style and an extremely Persianate Turkish than already was the case in other genres of official composition.¹⁴⁷ By extension, the technical parts of correspondence, such as *inscriptio*, *intitulatio*, final *salutatio*, and the terminology defining the level of bilateral relations were same in both languages, though alternative vocabulary existed in Turkish and was used in diplomacy with various European states. But, just like in the case of naming different emissarial ranks, this terminology did not make its way into the jargon used in diplomacy with the Safavids. As for the

¹⁴⁷ The chancellery Turkish used in the Porte's compositions addressed to the Safavids could become so Persianate that in many long sentences, if the one-word Turkish verb was to be replaced with its Persian counterpart, the composition itself could be regarded as completely in Persian. A note pertaining to personal taste: the Persian in the Ottomans' Turkish compositions was in many cases more flowing and sophisticated, and at the same time less artificial than the Persian in Safavid-drafted correspondence.

technical peculiarities, imperial epistles to Safavid shahs were authenticated not with the padishah's monogram on top but with his vertically written two-line signature in gold on the right margin corresponding to lines one-two or two-three of the horizontally written main body. Replacing the monogram at top with signature at the upper right margin in official imperial epistles, inserting a literarily composed superscription, and omitting the *intitulatio*¹⁴⁸ as well as the decree formulas *when the elevated august decree arrives, let it be known that*¹⁴⁹ and *know as such, place trust in the Illustrious Emblem*¹⁵⁰ were practices applied for the Safavids, as was the case with epistles written to Muslim rulers with the rank of autarch and above.¹⁵¹

One more remark on diplomatic epistles and letters: in the case of a change of ruler, the dispatch of a mission and an epistle was among the formalities necessitated by the occasion, but the content of the resultant diplomatic initiative as reflected in correspondence, negotiations, and outcomes, was comprised of anything but formality. In a setting where no new peace instrument was concluded after the peace of Zuhab (1639), these documents played the primary role of registering alterations of or reconfirming the status quo, accord, level of relations, and hierarchy, not only for the modern researcher but also for the parties themselves. My analysis of diplomatic correspondence after establishing and weeding out filler phrases revealed this crucial dimension of the accession-congratulating epistles. In this regard, the unprecedented frequency with which accessions took place from the late 1680s to the early 1700s presented me with exceptionally rich documentation to reconstruct all stages of the coinciding diplomatic revolution. These accession-occasioned epistles, in which the current state of relations were reconfirmed or

¹⁴⁸ Note that whereas Ottoman oath-instruments issued to European states included the *intitulatio*, this component was omitted also in the ratificatory Safavid oath-instrument of 1639.

¹⁴⁹ "tevkî'-i refî'-i hümâyün vâsıl olucak, mâlum ola ki"

¹⁵⁰ "şöyle bilesin, alâmet-i şerîfe îtimad kılasın"

¹⁵¹ *Mecmua-i Mekâtib*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Orientabteilung, Ms. or. quart. 1577, f. 1b; M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 155-158.

modified, did not include the part where all of the currently valid conditions and clauses were enumerated, unlike in the case of relations with the Habsburgs or Poland. Instead, keyword-level references to the peace of Zuhab and any still-valid subsequent alterations to the status quo – in the most ornamental composition possible – sufficed. Except at the ratification stage, reconfirmations between the Ottomans and the Safavids did not include full texts of treaties and amendment clauses. While in the case of the Ottomans' relations with Poland or the Habsburgs not only the resultant pact but also subsequent reconfirmations were in most of the cases a mutually negotiated but unilaterally issued oath-instrument, which was ratified by the receiver in some cases, in the case of this third phase of relations with the Safavids, the subsequent reconfirmations of the ratified deal were promulgated via monarchical epistles, which must explain the abridged texts. On the other hand, the issuance of an oath-instrument as the ratification of the peace of Zuhab indicates a pattern in Ottoman-Safavid relations: in the cases that the pacification was negotiated and concluded at the Ottoman court with a Safavid delegation, a peace-epistle ratified the pact. In contrast, in the cases that the deal was struck by plenipotentiaries at peace talks on the front, first the drawn-up protocol was signed and then at least one oath-instrument became involved in the ratification process.

Official correspondence and short bravuras aside, the language of oral communication between host states and guest missions was Turkish, as Turkish was the primary language of court and the lingua franca among the ruling elite at both sides. This was the case both when Safavid missions were in the empire and Ottoman missions were in Iran, at monarchical audiences, chief-ministerial events, inter-audience negotiations, and unofficial interactions. Thus, in the oral stage of Ottoman-Safavid interactions, the use of two languages was non-existent, unlike in the written media or the agency of interpreters in the case of diplomacy with European

states. By way of inference, the Safavids must not have employed the agency of translators for the incoming Turkish correspondence. At the Sublime Porte, it seems that translations of incoming Persian correspondence into Turkish was done for the non-Persophone padishahs and grand-viziers or as a byproduct of the summation-writing process. As a direct consequence of primarily using Turkish in oral diplomacy and employing a common, standardized vocabulary for the technical parts of chancellery instruments in both Persian and Turkish, the parties did not experience controversies stemming from mistranslations or word-choice disputes between bilingual texts.

In this regard, the concept of state secret, as inferred from the lack of references in a variety of documents to otherwise crucial political matters, also deserves mention. In inter-monarchical epistles, political matters considered to be of top importance were almost always omitted as if there were none. The secrecy measures regarding the matters considered state secrets went so far that neither their contents nor their existence were even pronounced in epistles, or to a certain extent in letters. Instead, they were entrusted exclusively to inter-audience negotiations, for the conduct of which in *propria persona* with the host state the ambassador-extraordinary was authorized via credentials. But, as the subjects of these negotiations were again considered state secrets, this essential part of the conduct of diplomacy unfortunately also went essentially unrecorded. The negotiations conducted orally were never converted into session proceedings and the diplomatic notes exchanged did not make their way into the registers recording interstate correspondence. In exceptional cases, one is lucky to discover diplomatic notes in private correspondence compilations. Otherwise, the only way to figure out the content of inter-audience negotiations is to look for traces in the post-mission interstate correspondence, alterations to the status quo, or documents issued to internal addressees on a topic concerning

foreign relations. If a negotiation subject did not lead to repercussions on the platform of high politics, it is most probably doomed to never come to light via research. That Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha does not relate anything beyond feasts and entertainment, even in the private account he gave to a close friend,¹⁵² at a time when the dispatch and the activities of his extraordinary embassy represented the zenith of Ottoman-Safavid harmony during the diplomatic revolution, is one of the best attestations to of this phenomenon.

Inter-audience diplomacy was essential to the negotiation process. As an integral element of the diplomatic business complementing correspondence, this phase was shaped by oral negotiations and exchange of written diplomatic notes between embassies and host states. Though fundamental to Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy, this aspect is not necessarily noticeable at each occasion. The oral negotiations were apparently not written down and only a few of the diplomatic notes are extant in private correspondence compilations, because these were not entered into registers by the Ottoman chancellery or recorded by chroniclers. In most cases, with some luck, one is able to determine the nature of these negotiations via the novel content of the next interstate correspondence, amendments to the status quo, or references found in consequently issued documents circulating internally that made due regulations. Complementing each other with oral negotiations, exchanges of diplomatic notes normally took place between the welcome and farewell audiences. The content of this inter-audience diplomacy included the matters touched upon in epistles as well as in subsequent submissions by ambassadors, which were not recorded for a range of reasons. This was true both when the talks only dealt with formalities of good-will gestures and when they covered topics so critical as to have a potential of occasioning a crisis. The executions of prominent Iranian xans in Constantinople (1641) that

¹⁵² *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi (1099-1116 / 1688-1704)*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 141.

were captives at or had defected to the Ottoman court, for example, were the result of the negotiations between the Porte and ambassador İbrâhim Xan Yirmidört-Kacar. Likewise, Sultan-Hüseyn's request to undertake renovations at Sâmarrâ were submitted, negotiated, and granted wholly during the inter-audience diplomacy of the respective embassies of Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu, Rüstem Xan Zengene, and Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha. In the case of the latter, it can also be inferred that another matter of major importance regulated during the inter-audience contacts was that the Safavids coordinate the insitu execution of priorly agreed-upon measures to reinstate order in Kurdistan, Iraq, and the Gulf region with the Ottoman governor-general of Baghdad. This official, in his temporary capacity as marshal, represented imperial authority not only in his province but also throughout all of Iraq, granting him agency to carry out such measures. On the other hand, even the grand-vizier could not make a decision on certain matters and needed to submit them to the padishah, as in the case of the Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu embassy's activities, so unrecorded inter-audience diplomacy covered not only formalities or conventional business but also issues of greatest importance carrying the potential of creating a full-blown crisis by upsetting the established harmony overnight.

In the discussion of the dignitaries conducting diplomacy, the chief secretaries must also be mentioned. In the documents produced within the scope of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy after 1639, the state-secretary and the royal secretary are not mentioned at all. In chronicles and reports, these dignitaries appear only in ceremonies, which does not give the sense that the function of their presence there was more than that of court- and council marshals, whose role was central but yet solely ceremonial. This must be due to two reasons: firstly, a peace conference in which the chief secretaries evolving into foreign ministers could come to the forefront did not exist, and secondly, the convention of not publicizing the content of inter-

audience negotiations as these were considered state secrets remained intact. Nevertheless, in negotiations whose proceedings were apparently not kept or archived, chief-secretary must have played a leading role just like in the cases of the Ottomans' relations with European missions.

The prominent role played by the chief secretaries in inter-audience negotiations also explains the fraternization that came about between Ottoman state-secretary Râmi Mehmed Efendi and Safavid ambassador Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu, which continued after these two dignitaries' official cooperation was over, as reflected in the subsequent correspondence of courtesy when the former ambassador was governor-general in Tabriz. Such exchanges between Ottoman dignitaries and former Safavid ambassadors give some insights about the nature of the conduct of diplomatic business. That Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha defined this courtesy exchange as an ancient tradition demonstrates that when a new Safavid ambassador to the padishah's court was appointed, the former ambassador would send along gifts and letters of courtesy to Ottoman dignitaries and former co-laborers, especially if he was then holding a prominent office. There is every reason to assume that it was also the case in the opposite direction. On the other hand, as mentioned above, the intimate, informal style of the exchange between Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu and Râmi Mehmed Efendi suggests that the correspondents had developed a friendship during Ebulmasum Şamlu's stay in Adrianople, which could have been possible only with frequent meetings and intensive co-labor. Unrecorded by chroniclers and undocumented by the chancellery, these visits between Ottoman state-secretaries and Safavid ambassadors must have indeed been the norm for the conduct of diplomatic business. Talks during formal audiences and recreational assemblies with the padishah and the grand-vizier must have been shaped by ambassadors' negotiations with state-secretaries at least as much as by the epistle(s) and the letter they had brought along from Isfahan. However, events involving the padishah and the

grand-vizier made their way into the records due to their ceremonial dimension and because the negotiation sessions were, as noted, considered state secrets, while these inter-audience sessions did not. In this regard, we can assume that Ottoman state-secretaries played a key role in diplomacy conducted with both resident and extraordinary emissaries from various European states and ambassadors-extraordinary from Safavid Iran.

II.2. Relations

Pax reigned between the Ottomans and the Safavids uninterruptedly from 1639 to 1722. During the course of this period, peacetime relations transpired at various formal levels. During the first four years, there was *non-hostile* coexistence. From 1643 to 1686, *friendly harmony* defined the interactions. From 1686 until 1694, the parties enjoyed a higher level yet, *ancient brotherhood*. The years 1694-1705 constituted the climax of the rapprochement as a result of the elevation of relations to the level of *perpetual peace in alliance*.¹⁵³ This trend reversed gradually from 1705 to 1711 though, and after 1711 until the end, the relations returned back again to a form of *consolidated peace*. Yet, despite all of these advancements and setbacks, peace reigned uninterruptedly, and even though exceptionally fragile situations occurred, interstate hostilities never ensued.

At all these different official levels of relations, both sides recognized Ottoman primacy in hierarchy and the empire's superiority in power as fundamentals. Even the later elevations of the shah's and the prime-minister's ranks did not change the correlation. In this sense, with its undeniable cruciality and unprecedentedness aside, the diplomatic revolution of 1686-1701 does

¹⁵³ The initiation of the *perpetual peace in alliance* between the two parties as well as the accompanying references to *both states'* being *eternal* mean that we can date the formal Ottoman recognition of the Safavid State's unrestricted legitimacy and right to exist in Iran to the last decade of the seventeenth century.

not represent a rupture or even an interruption in the unequal positions of the partners, a constant of relations from 1639 to 1722. Promotions and demotions affecting the Safavids should rather be considered as various pitches forming one single tune. The elevation of the shah's and the prime-minister's positions from two steps to one step below their Ottoman counterparts was crucial enough to be called a revolution, but rather than changing the track of relations, it only accelerated the course boosting bilateral relations without upsetting the post-1639 order. In turn, the reversal of the gains of the diplomatic revolution triggered by the subsequent anti-Ottoman policy of prime-minister Mehemmed Mümin Xan Şamlu, though representing a major turn, could not go beyond relegating the relations back to a level of *friendly harmony / ancient peace*. Variations in the form of modified status quos occurred within the essential course set by the post-1639 order. Otherwise, the Ottomans neither tolerated a restructuring against their interests and primacy nor could the Safavids enforce it. It is worthy of note that the Safavids could negotiate for their promotion or against their demotion in hierarchy. However, when the Ottomans deemed the time ripe to impose a new status quo, the Safavids simply had to, and did, come to terms with it.

In terms of the intensity of relations, the studied period can be classified under the reactive and the active periods. A total of fifty-three years (1644-1683 and 1707-1719) out of eighty-four belong to the reactive period, during which the content of bilateral relations was determined by developments at and news coming from the common frontier to the respective courts as a result of the virtual non-existence of foreign policy initiatives by the states themselves. The active years cover 1639-1643, 1684-1706, and 1720-1722, making a total of thirty-one years. Direct steering by the courts set the course of relations during these years.

A state's determination to make gestures of good will could lead to unprecedented convergences and such gestures came even at a time when its declaring war could have been justified with reference to the other party's shortcomings causing substantial damage. For instance, during times of greatest upheavals affecting not just localities but entire frontier countries as a result of extraordinary deficiencies of state authority, bilateral relations were as good as they had never been. In such instances, sacrifices and concession by the Safavid side were greater than those of the Ottomans, as was the case on other platforms, because it was the Safavid side for which the perpetuation of harmonious relations was more vital. At the helm, the courts set the course of relations, as long as they opted for it. Unless central dignitaries were involved in the planning, *faits accomplis* staged by and imposed upon the states by frontier elements could not impair relations. Thus, whenever a frontier development served as justification for a given party's unpleasant appeal to the other, it indicated intent on the part of the initiating party, and did not attest to the frontier's capacity to impair relations. Briefly stated, the frontier could provide the courts with capital stock to negotiate on, but even the most peace-threatening developments at the frontier could not set the direction for relations at the expense of the centers' will.

When observing how Sublime Porte instated its political will at the Iranian frontier, exceptional cases aside, Baghdad in the southern and Erzurum in the northern flanks come to the fore by overshadowing other frontier provinces in terms of authority, military investment, and role in interstate relations. This leading role of Erzurum and Baghdad in frontier diplomacy with the Safavids was not just an actual state; the Porte's policies made it official and promoted it. While the province of Çukursa'd (with its capital Erivan) was in this sense Erzurum's counterpart in Iran, the Safavids seemingly lacked the concentration of military power and the

manifestation of political will at one southern frontier province to match the Ottomans' Baghdad, though, in case a war had broken out, this could have been compensated by the weightier Safavid Tabriz overlooking Ottoman Van. The Safavid side of the southern flank of the frontier had more vassal principalities than regular provinces, and, in terms of relations with the Ottomans, it seems that not one single major province to capable of instating the center's will subordinated this southern flank. Across the border between Ottoman- and Safavid-vassal principalities, the developments at the Georgian frontier almost never became subject matters of interstate relations, even when upheavals, encroachments, and coups involving both sides of the border upset the established order. Apparently, neither side wanted to get entangled in a contention over the rather unpredictable moves of Georgian princes.

Despite the non-existence of hostilities, the frontier was not free from conflict. At both sides and in a cross-border manner, tribes rebelled, pillaged the countryside, formed coalitions, and even completely overthrew state control at entire provinces, while Georgian princes attempted at uniting separate principalities under one kingdom, governors[-general] intervened, armies took punitive action, et cetera. Though peace reigned with Iran, the empire held the Iranian frontier in an official state of war by fielding secondary imperial armies that were commanded by marshals and by maintaining extra-peacetime Sublime Court contingents subordinated to the chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps during a total of eleven years of the eighty-four year period, not to mention the more frequent employment of relatively smaller but still considerably large armies under commanders-general. Yet, as the states did not opt for a war, even the most militarily tense situations in which imperial and royal armies were at each other's line of sight did not unfold into actual engagements. However, unruly vassals in cross-border tribal coalitions did engage militarily with both states' forces.

Given that, in the final analysis, the royal government and the Sublime Porte could effectively determine the course of bilateral relations at the expense of those frontier elements that were not necessarily in coordination with their governments, the question comes up whether there existed long-term state policies unaffected by changes of persons holding power. The Safavids definitely had long-term state policies: preserving the peace with the Ottomans at almost whatever cost and furthering the relations even when this cost their own side more sacrifices and concessions than to the Ottoman side. The maxim of preserving the peace was apparently shared with the Ottomans, though it might be said that the Ottomans were not prepared to pay any extraordinary cost for the sake of perpetuating the peace. On the other hand, working towards the elevation of bilateral relations to levels higher than solely peaceful coexistence was discernibly exclusive to the Safavids as a state policy. Bare commitment to peace was sufficient for the elevation of peacetime relations from *non-hostility* to *friendly harmony* over the decades following the Peace of Zuhab. However, if it were not for the royal government's unbending commitment to shouldering the burden of making more sacrifices, the level of *perpetual peace in alliance*, which lasted close to twenty years together with the level of *brotherhood*, would never have been attained. In Iran, the senior status of the Ottomans and the junior status of the Safavids in the hierarchy of this partnership were internalized. Long-term policies and goal setting did not aim at upsetting the order at the expense of alienating the Sublime Porte. The royal government rather tried to maximize its gains from the established order, which it deemed profitable enough.

For the Ottoman government, the state policy vis-à-vis the Safavid Iran was simpler. Preservation of the peace and the status quo can be taken as the Sublime Porte's mottos in this regard. As long as they were not detrimental to their interests and primacy, the Ottomans allowed

alterations and amendments. When it came to furthering the relations, the Porte was prepared to make fewer sacrifices than the royal government. Only when the Safavid side indeed made sizable concessions, was the Porte then ready for the upgrade of relations to a higher level. As much as the unequal partnership defining the order, the reason for this was that bilateral relations had different degrees of relevance for Constantinople and Isfahan. Peace with the empire, the ultimate foreign power that Iran knew, was essential to the well-being of the Safavid State. In contrast, the Ottomans considered Iran a major neighbor, which was respected but which posed no serious threat in their calculations, so they did not consider peace with Iran a vital matter per se. That is why some Ottoman dignitaries could occasionally undertake initiatives that would venture a rupture with the Safavids. In such instances, the materialization of even the worst-case scenario would not be disastrous according to the empire's estimations. At the same time, as a result of the fact that the Sublime Porte did not prioritize relations with the shah's government, factionalism based on differing policies towards Iran did not form at the imperial court. Except for several major occasions, developments concerning relations with the Safavids did not even make their way into the chronological narration of chronicles and were instead related at the end of a given year as a note in the form of *this year, this also happened*. Ottoman chroniclers did not provide political background explanations with regard to developments concerning relations with Iran, or necessary reasons for the Ottoman responses thereto, unlike in the cases of relations with the Habsburgs or Russia,. In contrast, relations with the empire were crucial enough for the Safavids to give rise to the formation of factions based on different policy views. Yet, at the same time, the maxims of the state policy were so established that even anti-Ottoman factions did not venture to undertake initiatives that could lead to a full-fledged confrontation with the empire.

In bilateral relations, the role of third parties was also a factor to be reckoned with. Until the end, European adversaries of the empire in a given war – such as Poland, Venice, or Germany – did not cease to make successive, serious offers of alliance to Iran. The Safavids could have occupied entire Ottoman provinces if they had accepted these offers. However, the royal government consistently rejected all such offers, even when the empire's armies were preoccupied at multiple faraway fronts making the materialization of a quick Ottoman response apparently impossible. Territory could be captured from the empire, but Iran's having internalized the Ottomans' superiority in actual power led to the rejection of any offer that would lead to hostilities. Thus, in the macro-level balance of power, the principles of caution with long-term considerations, beware of war, and contentment with the Zuhab order defined the Safavids' Ottoman policy. If attempted, in extraordinary instances, advances against the empire could be made. However, in the long run, both parties were convinced that the empire inherently possessed the strength to not only reverse the Safavid advance but also to score additional gains. Thus, the Safavids did not embark on a hazardous adventure with the consideration that there was nothing permanent to gain, but much to lose from a war with the empire.

Yet, contacts between various European states and Iran aroused the Porte's suspicions regardless of intentions of the parties to the exchange, especially when the Ottoman Empire was fighting a war in Europe. Missions exchanged between Iran and European states were persecuted even at those times when both parties to the exchange had friendly relations with the empire. This must have been regarded as the Porte's natural right not only by the Ottomans themselves but also by the Safavids, insomuch that even the Ottomans' intercepting and imprisoning missions exchanged between Ottoman-friendly third parties did not lead to protests, let alone reprisal actions, from the shah's government.

The counterpart of the Safavids' relations with European states were the Ottomans' contacts with the Uzbeks and Mughal India. Similarly, the Ottomans never technically called off the idea of an anti-Safavid alliance with these powers on the platform of official correspondence. But just like the Safavids, although they were happy to see Iran suffer from unilateral attacks from central and southern Asia, the Ottomans never seriously entertained the idea of coordinating a multi-front war against their eastern neighbor. In this sense, potential alliances with European and Asian states in Ottoman-Safavid relations did not play more of a role than a stabilizing factor as they could deter both sides from alienating each other to the extent that one side might seek allies against the other. As yet another sign of unequal positions, evidence that the Safavids detained emissaries and intercepted correspondence exchanged between the Sublime Porte, the Uzbeks, and Mughal India – so long as these third parties had peaceful relations with the the shah's government – does not appear in the sources that I could locate, unlike the Porte's dealing with the cases of European-Iranian third party exchanges.

The Ottomans' unfriendly handling of emissaries exchanged between Iran and third parties – in form hostile but perceived as natural and held separately from the ongoing peacetime relations – resembles the domain of intelligence gathering and spying. Espionage was also a natural part of peacetime relations. Centrally run intelligence networks seemingly did not exist. Isolated tasks were delegated by the central governments to governors-general, who in turn would commission their own men as agents sent in disguise to the other party's capital, residence location of the court, army, province, frontier, etc., either independently or as part of diplomatic mission. In the cases of Iranian espionage in the empire, the spies, or the officials relating their reports, were prone to considerably exaggerating the magnitude of a negative development that befell the Ottomans. If disclosed, the target state would intercept espionage correspondence and

execute the spy. Yet, the cases of attempts, disclosure, or even executions did not have an effect on the positive direction of the ongoing relations.

Under normal circumstances, the frontier policy followed by both parties was to ensure the tributaries' obedience with minimal effort by assigning them various tasks or using the nearby representatives of the central authority as checks. Whenever persons of weight defected to the other side, even in the cases that their new masters gave them office, these acts alone did not become the subject of an interstate contention. Such defections took place even at pasha/xan level, but as long as the cause was the political alienation of the individual or fear of punishment due to failure in performing an entrusted task, defection from the original master and protection by the new master did not necessarily lead to a confrontation. Along the same lines, border- or even peace-violations committed by vassal elements did not constitute a breach of peace between the royal government and the Sublime Porte. The minimum requirement for a border violation to be regarded as gross breach with responsibility lying with the state was the involvement of governors, central contingents, and as distinguishing marks, the fielding of artillery and the playing of military band. In such violations, states were held politically responsible, and the resulting diplomatic effort would clearly reflect this in the accusations raised and compensations demanded. In the cases of violations by vassals such as princes, viceroys, and tribes, the states were only held viable but not held responsible. The punishment of offenders and recompense for the wronged party by the state were sufficient measures to satisfy the obligations born out of this liability.

The disparate relationship, which manifested itself in actual relations as unequal shares in sacrifices and concessions, was also reproduced in attempts to gain advantage at the expense of the other party, and the other party's retaliations thereto – a constant in the contacts involving

vassal elements at the frontier. These cases must be considered apart from the personal defections of pashas/xans. Whenever a defection from the Ottoman side to the Safavids involving territory and subjects led by a vassal chieftain or viceroy was attempted at tribe, subprovince, or *tributary-dominion* level, the royal government rejected it categorically. Yet, Safavid officials, subjects, or vassals were mostly involved as allies of Ottoman-vassal rebels against the empire. Viceroys¹⁵⁴ recruiting troops from across the border to fight against their suzerains was a common feature of frontier contentions. Such Iranian involvement in within-the-empire rebellions was not counted as a form of direct violation.

However, the Ottoman punitive action that would sooner or later eventuate would not only prohibit the loss of territory by means of crushing the movement but also annex the thitherto tributary or autonomous unit into the centrally governed provincial system, removing the tributary-principality in question from the equation. Thus, while instances of internal unrest were dealt with the general policy of spending the minimum possible effort for tributaries, attempts by the latter to defect from Ottoman to Safavid suzerainty eventually resulted in their finding themselves within a regular imperial province via annexation. This must have been a conscious policy on the part of the Porte with the aim that after the annexation, any Safavid attempt at building up influence in the concerned section of the frontier would be regarded as direct intervention to the padishah's realm, and in turn, it could justify a declaration of war by the Ottomans against the Safavids. Finding such a consequence in direct contradiction with its fundamental interests, the royal government refrained from making ventures at increasing its weight or supporting anti-Ottoman actors at the frontier once the concerned region ceased to enjoy a tributary or autonomous status. Moreover, such response by the Ottomans also gradually

¹⁵⁴ Ott. *hâkim*, Saf. *vâlî*; hereditary ruler-governors of tributary provinces in the Ottoman case and vassal provinces in the Safavid case that were otherwise principalities.

prohibited future Safavid ventures in still-tributary, or autonomous, sections of the frontier, as the Safavids discerned that sooner or later, their attempts to increase their influence at the frontier at the expense of the Ottomans would only lead to increased imperial authority across the border, even when the empire had to shoulder the financial burden of annexing and controlling the tribal countryside. Thus, Safavid cross-border interventions only served the purpose of the gradual elimination of potential Iranian fifth columns within the Ottoman system, as the Safavids did not have the hard power vis-à-vis the empire to follow up on their initial attempt. As the empire managed to impose annexation on formerly tributary units, the Safavids could not do anything else besides come to terms with the new situation of Ottoman authority reinforced across the border. On the other hand, regarding their own share of the tributary governments along the frontier, the Safavids did not or could not intervene with enough forces to upset the balance of power in favor of the royal government and at the expense of local houses.

When the Safavids assembled armies for one reason or another in the proximity of the border instead of merely helping or giving protection to Ottoman rebels – including the cases of Ottoman false intelligence of Safavid military activity at the frontier, the empire responded by assembling a secondary Imperial Army, creating a marshal, and transporting Sublime Court Corps, artillery, and ammunition. The Imperial Army, regardless of whether it would engage rebels or not, would not attack the Safavids themselves, however. It would stage major tours de force with military parades held at sites chosen specifically for their visibility to Iranians. These tours de force had an observably intimidating effect on the Safavids, who did not respond or retaliate but simply cowered whenever faced with such a move. Furthermore, the normal peacetime figures of the Sublime Court, Local, provincial, and pasha-household troops maintained along the frontier were strong enough by themselves to keep the Safavids in check

and to undertake punitive expeditions if necessary. In times of military inactivity outside garrisons, major frontier fortresses, which were refortified, repaired, renovated, and upgraded on occasion, in turn served as constant concentrations of Ottoman power facing Iran. The mobilization of an Imperial Army under a marshal served only to boost the already-existing sanction power.

Surprisingly, these exchanges of provocative trials of strength by the Safavids and shows of force by the Ottomans did not cause deterioration at interstate relations. The Sublime Porte was satisfied with the effectiveness of its measures, while the Ottomans's non-hostility was always the better option for the royal government in the face of the alternative. As a final remark, as the relations deteriorated for other reasons, the degree of Ottoman military retaliation to encroachments coming from Iranian territory increased and took the shape of cross-border operations, which the Iranians simply had to acquiesce to. At the end of the day, the stick was in the hands of the Porte. In the sequences of provocations and retaliations, the Safavids occasionally attempted to measure their sword, in response to which the Ottomans performed intimidating tours de force. These sequences of Safavid trials of strength that were retaliated by much stronger Ottoman self-assertions were also manifest during exchanges of missions and correspondence. The Safavids' diplomatic boldness while demanding the introduction of novelties contrary to the principle of Ottoman primacy resulted in the Sublime Porte's cutting its addressee down to size in writing by mockingly rejecting the demands, staging symbolic acts of superiority through the means of artistic performances, and issuing sarcastic replies. When the Sublime Porte considered a certain act by the Safavids an intervention to its sovereign rights, it issued an ultimatum and supported the ultimatum in deed. Whenever Iranians gave military

support to border-crossing bandits, the empire's provincials *in propria persona* crossed the border to punish the transgressors.

Apart from instances of the escalation of tensions at the frontier, also Ottoman victories elsewhere served the purpose of reminding the Safavids of both the empire's hierarchical primacy and superiority in deployable power. Major victories occasioned the dispatch of letters-of-conquest to the Safavid court. The tours de force performed on the field via armies assembled at the border area were repeated by this genre in writing, which enumerated the participating corps, related the conduct of successful operations, sieges, and battles, mentioned the vast mobilization base, and gave insights to the logistics and transportation of western campaigns. In this manner, although letters-of-conquest formally shared rejoice for victory attained elsewhere with the friendly Safavids, they also reminded the shahdom what it would have to cope with if it were to take on the empire. The grand festivities held at the Ottoman provincial capitals of the frontier on the occasions of such victories in turn constituted the embodied version of the same single message.

In cross-border felonies of apparently non-political nature involving defections by local military personnel, as a rule, the governor of the province from which the perpetrators originated compensated the wronged subjects of the other side, though only after authorization by his state. This suggests that the defections from low-ranking officials that were not interpreted as political asylums and the violations that were reckoned as small-scale disturbances to which provincial administrations attended did not necessarily trigger diplomatic contact at the state level. Wronged inhabitants of one side even had the right to petition the provincial council of the other side without the intermediacy of their own state's corresponding officials. Alternatively, the authorities of one side could unilaterally take a border violation to their own courthouse in order

to prohibit the offenders that were their own side's subjects from carrying on with their felonies. This process would also become repeated on the other side and finalized with the meeting of joint committees at the border, where they would negotiate a deal and register the agreement via a judicial-deed. Petitioning of one side's provincial council by the subjects of the other side or registering the injuries by the insitu meeting of joint committees triggered direct governmental action in the form of issuing of orders. In showing us examples of border violations, conflict resolution at the local level, and government decrees thereto that did not necessarily generate interstate contact, such cases reflect the dimension of Ottoman-Safavid relations that were current but did not make their way to the diplomatic platform. There must have been a mutual understanding that matters of this size would not be subject to diplomacy as long as the parties were taking due action. Only in the cases of extraordinarily large scale violations of non-political nature did governors[-general] establish direct contact with their cross-border counterparts via emissaries. Verbatim copies of the current peace-instrument and the former annulled ones were kept at provincial chancelleries to reference if necessary.

CHAPTER III. 1639-1655:

NORMALIZATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATUS QUO

This chapter establishes the history of the first seventeen years of the Ottoman-Safavid relations after the Ottoman recovery of Baghdad and the signing of the peace in the form of a border-protocol. This era was inaugurated with the newly instituted status quo of Zuhab, according to which, the hierarchically unequal nature of bilateral relations between the Ottoman's supreme-monarchy (empire) and the Safavids' sultanate (kingdom) was registered. This maxim, despite minor revisions, would remain valid until the termination of relations in 1722. Not merely an issue pertaining to formality, Ottoman precedence would be a constant factor in the conduct of diplomacy and balance of power. Immediately after the war ended, the Ottoman Empire entrenched itself in recovered central Iraq, refortified its positions there, and temporarily held its own side of the frontier in a formal state-of-war for several more years. These were the first steps of the Ottomans' long-term policy of also maintaining the upper hand at the frontier in terms of hard power vis-à-vis their eastern neighbor. Next came a series of exchanges of letters and multiple missions. That the potentially fragile peace could gain stability can be attributed to this intensive diplomacy that upgraded the level of contacts from *non-hostility* to *friendly harmony*. After the Cretan War began in 1645, Venice dispatched several emissaries to Iran in order to have the Safavids join the anti-Ottoman alliance, all of which the shah rejected. This was also the first manifestation of similar sequences that would later recur; the Ottomans' European foes would try to have Iran declare war on the empire and Iran would reject them, apparently due to its conviction that the empire was essentially stronger, that permanent gains could not be scored against it, and, hence that Isfahan's interests were best served by preserving the peace with

Constantinople. Yet, other actions must have also contributed to the shaping of the Safavids' decisions. For instance, the Ottomans created a marshalship of Iran at Erzurum in 1646 and fielded a large army close to the border, concurrently with the ongoing war in the Mediterranean. The next several years saw close cooperation between the two sides towards the realization of their common foreign policies concerning Mughal India and the Bukharan Uzbeks. The Safavids' intended campaign of 1651 against Ottoman-tributary Basra had the potential for initiating hostilities. Triggering and Ottoman intervention from Baghdad, the subsequent throne fight in Basra also contributed to the deterioration in relations because of the Basran anti-Ottoman camp's recruitment of troops in Iran. The borderland around the Persian Gulf area, due to its demographics, was a hotbed for anti-state coalitions joined by elements from both sides of the border, which even had the potential for setting the agenda of bilateral relations. Yet, despite certain setbacks, the Ottomans turned the tide after the operations: Basra was degraded from a tributary-government to an autonomous-province. In 1656, the empire further responded to indirect Iranian hostility of the early 1650s by creating yet another marshalship of Iran at Van and fielding an Imperial Army in Kurdistan. As in the previous case, the objective of subduing Iran was accomplished after the exchange of cross-border missions at the frontier. Assured that the Safavids would not pose a threat, the Sublime Porte did not take the 1656 Mughal offer of conquering and partitioning Iran into consideration.

III.1. Founding Documents and Fundamental Principles

The Pacification of Zuhab (or of *Kasr-ı Şirin*), unlike what is suggested by the title *treaty* with which it also came to be referred to, is technically of a border-protocol¹⁵⁵ ratified by an initiatory

¹⁵⁵ *sınır-nâme*

Safavid oath-instrument¹⁵⁶ and a responsive Ottoman peace-epistle. On 17 May, Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha (Ottoman commander-in-chief, grand-vizier, and plenipotentiary¹⁵⁷) and Saru Xan Tâleş (Safavid plenipotentiary¹⁵⁸) signed the border-protocol at Zuhab. The pictured treaty¹⁵⁹, referenced both by the signatory parties and by historians, is indeed the war-ending capacity of this border-protocol which became official with the Shah's oath followed by the Padishah's putting it into force. During the ratification stage, the text remained virtually unchanged, without being expanded in content. Both states wanted peace to be reestablished with the least possible complication or procrastination. Thus, to the exclusion of all other matters that could potentially be covered by the clauses of a peace treaty, the negotiators focused on demarcating the border, taking into account the new status quo that had come into being after the Ottoman reconquest of Baghdad.

In principle, the parties accepted *uti possidetis* as maxim, with minor modifications to the advantage of the Ottomans as the victorious side. The city of Baghdad and its surrounding region constituting the province of the same name were restored to the empire. The border that ran from

¹⁵⁶ *ahid-nâme*. Contrary to what is taken for granted, Shah Safi's ratificatory document was in form not a royal epistle but an oath-instrument. The formulas used by the shah "We deigned an oath (*ahd farmûdîm ki*)" and "We made an oath (*ahd kardîm ki*)" leave no room for doubt as to the genre. Likewise, Murad IV openly refers to Safi's "oath-instrument (*ahidnâme*)" and calls the resulting agreement a "treaty (*muâhede*)" in his responsive peace-epistle. See below for the references to both documents.

¹⁵⁷ The Ottoman terminology for plenipotentiary (*murahas*) and plenipotentiary powers (*ruhsat-ı kâmile*), which would soon become fixed, were not used in this instance. Instead, the grand-vizier's capacity as the padishah's "absolute deputy (*vekil-i mutlak*)," which stemmed from the description of the grand-vizierial office, was highlighted. In addition to this "plenary deputation (*vekâlet-i âimme*)," the extraordinary statement that Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha also possessed the "absolute regency (*niyâbet-i mutlaka*)" and the "particular regency (*niyâbet-i hâssa*)" of the padishah placed special emphasis to his plenipotentiary powers. See below for the reference to the letter he sent from Zuhab to Shah Safi.

¹⁵⁸ In contrast to the previous Safavid emissary in Zuhab, Saru Xan Tâleş was additionally designated as "credible deputy (*vekil-i mu'temed*)" with reference to his plenipotentiary powers. See below for the reference to the letter that Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha sent from Zuhab to Shah Safi.

¹⁵⁹ *muâhede*

the Persian Gulf through Iraq, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, and the Caucasus was fixed by the protocol as follows¹⁶⁰:

The Ottoman side of the southern border, mostly corresponding to [Arabian] Iraq, consisted of Basra (under the Efrâsiyaboğlus' *tributary-dominion*), the provinces of Baghdad (whose borders with Safavid provinces were demarcated with erected posts after the finalization of the peace)¹⁶¹, and Şehrîzor¹⁶² along with their counties¹⁶³ and appendages. Across the border, the Safavids retained respectively the vassal-principality of Huveyze (governed by the Musha'sha'), the province of Kirmânşâh, and the vassal-principality of Erdelân/Kurdistan. Northwards, the empire retained the provinces of Van¹⁶⁴ and Erzurum across the Safavid provinces of Tabriz and Karabağ. In the Caucasus, the provinces of Kars¹⁶⁵ and the half-autonomous Çıldır (the Atabeğlis) remained in Ottoman hands across the Safavid province of Çukursa'd. The frontier at Georgia was divided between the Ottoman-tributary principalities of

¹⁶⁰ *Muahedat Mecmuası 2* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008), 308-312; Özer Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri (1612-1639)*, 276.

¹⁶¹ Cessan, Badrah, Mendelcin, and the plains next to them remained on the Ottoman side. The border passed from Derne and Derteng, and separated there at the border-post (*sermîl / mil başı*), leaving Derne and Derteng to the empire. The Iranian territory began from the mountain to the left of the border-post and included Dergezîn, Hemedân, Bâğ-ı Cinân, Mihribân, and Sin, while the territory and villages to the east of the mountain by the border-post were left to the Ottomans. In this region, the Ziyaeddin and Haruni branches of the Câf tribe would be under Ottoman authority, while the Bire and Zerdüvi branches would remain under Safavid authority. The Iranian fort Zencîr on the abovementioned mountain would be demolished. Ibid.; Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 4/229-249. "Derteng Boğazı: . . . Acem Şâhıyla bu Derteng Boğazı'nda hudud kesilip hâlen bu boğaz ağzında bir amûd-ı müntehâyâ hududnâme yazılmış ve celî hatt ile sikkeyi mermerde kazılmış bir mîl-i mermerdir. Andan içeri cânib-i kibleye Âl-i Osman'ın Bağdad hudûdudur, ol amûddan taşra taraf-ı şarka Acem şâhı hudûdudur." Ibid., 4/249. Note that the translated use of *sermîl - mil başı* and Evliya Çelebi's description of the *amûd-ı müntehâ* lead to the conclusion that what is in question here is a border-post, which apparently also became the name of the location in time.

¹⁶² The fort Zalim and part of the mountain behind it overseeing the fort remained under Ottoman control. The fort Orman with its attached villages remained in Iran. Along the border, the Ottomans retained Çağangediği, Kızılca, and their attached territories. Iran retained Mihribân and its environment.

¹⁶³ *sancak*

¹⁶⁴ The forts Kotur and Makü were to be demolished.

¹⁶⁵ The fort Mağazberd was to be demolished.

Mingrelia (the Dadianis), Guria (the Gurielis), Imereti (the Bagrationis) and the Safavid-vassal principalities of Kartli (the Bagrationis) and Kakheti (the Bagrationis).¹⁶⁶

Shah Safi's ratificatory oath-instrument¹⁶⁷ gives away the fact that the Ottoman negotiators dictated the conditions of the border-protocol because basically they had won the war and thus were in a position to launch further incursions into Iran if armistice would not be signed. The padishah was recognized as emperor, something to which the Sublime Porte attached a lot of importance in its interactions with other states. Titulature proves that the shah did not insist on his desire to be recognized hierarchically as the padishah's equal. Rather, he recognized the Padishah as emperor/supreme-monarch and thus, the superior, and himself as king/sultan and thus, the inferior. Phrases in the *inscriptio* such as the "supreme-shah"¹⁶⁸, "supreme-sultan"¹⁶⁹, and "most-just khakan"¹⁷⁰ more than prove the shah's compliance with the padishah's demand for being recognized as the highest-ranking ruler in the interstate hierarchy. Complementary to the recognition of the Ottomans' imperial dignity, the Safavids also acknowledged the padishahs' preeminence stemming from his position as the foremost ruler of Islamdom, the supreme-caliph. The Safavid chancellery's selection of the titles "padishah, the Islam's

¹⁶⁶ Sadık Müfit Bilge, *Osmanlı Çağı'nda Kafkasya 1454-1829* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2015), 127, 139-143, 492, 506.

¹⁶⁷ Issued between 18 and 21 May 1639. The negotiations were concluded on May 17 and the Safavid embassy headed by Saru Xan Tâleş carrying the ratifications had reached the Grand-Vizier's encampment on May 22. In the month of Rebiülahir, Mehmed-kulu Beyg Çağatay, the Safavid envoy carrying the ratification and the oath-instrument to Murad IV, arrived in Constantinople. Mustafa Naîmâ Efendi, *Târih-i Na'imâ*, ed. Mehmet İpşirli (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), 926-928; Abdülkâdir Efendi, *Topçular Katibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi Târîhi 2*, ed. Ziya Yılmaz (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2003), 1126. For Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha's letter to Shah Safi communicating the settlement reached at Zuhab, see İskender Beyg Türkmân Münşi, *Zeyl-i Târîh-i Âlem-ârâ-yı Abbâsî* [quoting from Muhammed Yusuf Vâlih Kazvînî-İsfahânî's *Huld-i Berîn*], ed. Ahmed Süheylî Hânsârî (Tahrân: Çâphâne-i İslâmiye, hs.1317), 223-227; Muhammed Masum bin Hâcegi İsfahânî, *Hülâsatü's-Siyer*, ed. İrec Afşar (Tahrân: İntişârât-ı İlmî, hs.1358), 271-275; İE. HR. 18. For Shah Safi's ratificatory oath-instrument, which was addressed to Murad IV and initially sent to Kemankeş Mustafa Pasha, see İskender Türkmân, *Zeyl-i Âlem-ârâ* [quoting from Muhammed Yusuf Vâlih Kazvînî-İsfahânî's *Huld-i Berîn*], 220-223; İsfahânî, *Hülâsatü's-Siyer*, 268-271; İE. HR. 407

¹⁶⁸ "şehinşâh"

¹⁶⁹ "sultân-ı a'zam"

¹⁷⁰ "hâkân-ı a'del"

refuge”¹⁷¹ and “[greater] shadow of God”¹⁷² made this recognition official.¹⁷³ Perhaps as a sign of the fact the Ottomans’ will had more weight in instating the peace of Zuhab, the Safavids’ oath-instrument did not include the formula that the issuer *gave* or *granted* it, the presence which was almost standard in Ottoman oath-instruments.

The style and the text of Murad IV’s ratificatory peace-epistle¹⁷⁴ further support the inferences made from that of Shah Safi. First of all, the ratification process itself was not reciprocal; i.e. the rulers did not simply ratify the border-protocol and exchange the documents. Only after the Shah’s oath-instrument had reached Constantinople did Murad IV issue his peace-epistle. Such timing cannot have occurred accidentally. With this deliberate act, Murad IV stressed his supremacy vis-à-vis the Shah with the manner he put the pacification into effect by reserving for himself the position of the ultimate decision maker. Thus, even in the rather bilateral character of the Pacification of Zuhab, the Ottomans’ exclusive position as the ultimate issuer of the definitive text was preserved. In various formats, this Ottoman prerogative had been in place since as early as the first Ottoman-Safavid pacification, which was negotiated bilaterally in Amasya and drawn up unilaterally as an imperial peace-epistle (1555).

Although Shah Safi denoted his side as the “house of sainthood-sign”¹⁷⁵ and that of Murad IV’s as the “padishah of sublime-eminence”¹⁷⁶ in his oath-instrument, Murad IV chose to denote his side as “our august side”¹⁷⁷ and that of Safi’s simply as the “side beyond”¹⁷⁸ while

¹⁷¹ “pâdişâh-ı İslâm-penâh”

¹⁷² “zill-ullah”

¹⁷³ Feridun Bey, *Münşeatü’s-Selâtîn* vol. 1 , ([İstanbul]: Takvimhâne, h.1275), 299-301 [entry: “İran Şâhı Şah Safi tarafından hudud ve sugûra dâir takdim olunmuş olan nâmenin sûretidir].”

¹⁷⁴ Dispatched with envoy Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha, a court-notable (*müteferrika*) who accompanied Mehmed-kulu Beyg Çağatay on his way back to Iran after delivering the Shah’s ratificatory peace-epistle.

¹⁷⁵ “dûdmân-ı velâyet-nişân”

¹⁷⁶ “pâdişâh-ı vâlâ-cah”

¹⁷⁷ “cânib-i hümâyunumuz”

¹⁷⁸ “öte taraf”

establishing territorial distribution between the states. In order to save face, Safi, stated that he had taken initiative for the reestablishment of peace upon Murad IV's declaring his intention in the same direction. However, Murad IV phrased his intention with words that clearly reflect how the Ottoman victory on the battlefield resulted in the peace agreement. The victorious padishah directly stated that the reasons for his ratifying the protocol were that the Shah had sued for peace, pledged oath, sent the agreement with his seal impressed under the text, and "pled for [Murad's] august approval¹⁷⁹."

There is no doubt that the negotiations, scope, and content of the Peace of Zuhab were the result of a pragmatism that both parties deemed necessary to adhere to after sixty years of intermittent and inconclusive warfare. This pragmatism manifested itself in the drafting of peace instruments with the content of a border-protocol.¹⁸⁰ Still, this pragmatism should not overshadow the fact that the Safavids had accepted defeat and that, on the same year of losing Kandahar to the Mughals¹⁸¹, the Safavids could not afford to fight against the empire's armies, which had already thrust into Iranian territory. The ultimate defeat with the loss of Baghdad had confirmed for Iran the time-tested conviction of its military inferiority vis-a-vis the empire. The reestablishment of peace would be followed by political stability and a relief for Iran's financial and military commitments, all of which would benefit from the assurance that the Ottomans would no longer present an impending threat of hostilities, which seemed definitely more desirable to the royal government than any other option.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ "makbûl-i hümâyunumuz olmasını istid'a"

¹⁸⁰ Ernest Tucker, "Evolution of Ottoman-Iranian Diplomacy through the Safavid Era", 86.

¹⁸¹ Roemer, "The Safavid Period," 283; Andrew J. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London & New York, I.B. Tauris, 2006), 73-74. Mirza Saru Taki was to blame for the loss as he had followed an uncompromising policy against its governor, who then placed himself and the province under Mughal sovereignty.

¹⁸² Rudi Mathee, *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 118-119.

The Ottoman Empire felt satisfied with its recent gains, but also war-weary; nevertheless, the royal government still had to buy the peace. The ratifications did not only transform the border-protocol into a definitive pacification, they also established the constants of Ottoman-Safavid relations that would remain unaltered for eighty-four years: Ottoman superiority in power relations and primacy in hierarchy. Shah Safi's acknowledgement and acceptance of these maxims are noteworthy because the ratifications, making up the final correspondence reestablishing peace, set the tone for the course of Ottoman-Safavid relations until the fall of the House of Safi as kings of Iran in 1722. For the shahs, lasting peace could be secured only by accepting inferiority in hierarchy and in terms of power. Recognizing Ottoman supremacy in arms and rank would continue to shape Iranian decision makers' rationale in their formulation of policies towards the empire. The formation of the post-1639 balance of power as such also indicates that the Ottomans were in a position to enforce impositions, or at least they trumped the Safavids when it came to bargaining and sanction power. These would remain constants in the formula defining bilateral relations until the very end. Each development that took place between the empire and Iran during this eighty-four-year peace should be read against this background that had been set at the moment of initiation.

III.2. Disengagement, First Post-War Contacts, and the Dismantling of Safavid Influence in Ottoman Iraq

The ratification of the Peace of Zuhab by both parties initiated the military disengagement process. Immediately after retaking Baghdad, Murad IV ordered the repair of the fortress and the filling of the trenches with earth to consolidate his hold on this precious conquest while the war was still going on. On 28 December 1638, just two days after the reconquest was completed, he

appointed Küçük Hasan Agha, then chief of the Janissary Corps¹⁸³, as the provisional governor of the province of Baghdad, Tezkireci Musa Efendi¹⁸⁴ as the new judge¹⁸⁵, and Zeynelabidin Efendi as the mufti¹⁸⁶.¹⁸⁷ Janissary chief-of-staff¹⁸⁸ [third-general of the corps] Bektaş Agha was assigned with the fortress's defense with 8,000 janissaries serving under him as an extraordinary wartime measure.¹⁸⁹ The Padishah soon departed for Constantinople and left his grand-vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha both as commander-in-chief of the empire's armies and plenipotentiary negotiator for potential peace talks.¹⁹⁰

Before departing, Murad IV accepted Efrâsiyaboğlu Ali's presents symbolizing Basra's subjugation to the new sovereign of Baghdad, and the latter was duly reconfirmed as viceroy. The same conduct took place with the viceroy of el-Hasa (Şefî Khan of Benî Hâlid¹⁹¹), the viceroy of Oman (Şefî Khan), and the seigneur¹⁹² of Cezâyir-i Hâridât (Şemseddin Emîr). The Bedouin chieftains¹⁹³ and Kurdish seigneurs whose zones now remained on directly controlled

¹⁸³ *Yeniçeri Ağası*

¹⁸⁴ Former lecturer (*müderris*) of the Şahkulu seminary (*medrese*) in Constantinople. He then served at Baghdad until his appointment as judge of Egypt in June/July 1643. His tenure in Egypt ended in late April 1644. Karaçelebizâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, published in İbrâhim Özgül, "Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr [Kara Çelebi-Zade Abdülaziz Efendi'nin Ravzaü'l-Ebrâr Adlı Eseri (1299-1648) Tahlil ve Metin]" (PhD diss., Erzurum Atatürk University, 2010), 337; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 970, 999.

¹⁸⁵ *kadı*

¹⁸⁶ a canonist of Islam

¹⁸⁷ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/263.

¹⁸⁸ *kul kethüdâsı* [literally lieutenant of the servitors]

¹⁸⁹ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, published in Zeynep Aycibin "Kâtib Çelebi. Fezleke. Tahlil ve Metin. I-II-III" (PhD diss., Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, 2007), 897; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 894. In early March 1640, about a month after Murad IV's death and İbrâhim's enthronement, a sizeable treasury was dispatched to Baghdad to pay for the accession bonus of the Sublime Court troops serving there. That Baghdad was the only province which Abdülkadir Efendi specifically named for the dispatch of the accession bonus, although all Sublime Court soldiers serving in all provinces were entitled to this payment, hints at the extraordinarily high number of janissaries serving at Baghdad as a [post-]war measure. Kadrî Efendi, *Târih*, 2, 1137.

¹⁹⁰ *Naîmâ*, *Târih*, 896-898

¹⁹¹ see Mustafa L. Bilge, "Lahsa," *Türk Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 27 (2003): 59-60 for the tribe Benî Hâlid ruling el-Hasa under Ottoman suzerainty.

¹⁹² also *hâkim*

¹⁹³ *şeyh* (sheikh)

Ottoman territory came in person to the Imperial Marquee¹⁹⁴ with gifts. In return for military service to the empire in the form of reporting for duty with their troops under the banners of the governors-general of Baghdad whenever summoned, they received imperial reconfirmation of their chieftainships and fiefdoms.¹⁹⁵

The repair of the fortress of Baghdad was the immediate concern of the Padishah and the Grand-Vizier, and had to be undertaken regardless of whether the war would continue or peace would be instated. Taking advantage of the Imperial Army's presence at Baghdad with all its manpower and the expertise of its technical staff, Murad IV ordered the repairs to begin and then assigned each section of the fortress to one of the present viziers, governors, and companies of various Sublime Court¹⁹⁶ Corps along with provincial cavalry, with each group being assisted by the architects, engineers, builders, and carpenters on campaign.¹⁹⁷ Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha personally oversaw the repairs before initiating the march into Iranian territory with an eye to dictating the conditions of peace. The Chief-Comptroller¹⁹⁸ himself, the new chief of the Jannisary Corps, battalions of the Sublime Court Cavalry Corps, the Munitioners, the Artillerymen, the Artillery-Carters, the deputy of the Treasury-Chancellor¹⁹⁹, scribes of the financial department and the Imperial Registry²⁰⁰, remaining janissaries, the governors of the provinces of Rumelia, Anatolia, Karaman, Rum (Sivas), Aleppo, Syria, Tripoli, Zülkadir (Maraş), and Mosul, the entirety of the present provincial cavalry, etc. all participated in this repair and re-fortification campaign. Vast numbers of pack animals that accompanied the army

¹⁹⁴ *otağ-ı hümayun*

¹⁹⁵ As a symbolic sign of submission to Ottoman suzerainty, apart from presents, these viceroys also sent the keys of their principal fortresses. The viceroy of Basra, for example, sent the keys of Kurna. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/261-262.

¹⁹⁶ *Dergâh-ı Âli / Kapıkulu*

¹⁹⁷ Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1104; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/260.

¹⁹⁸ *başdefterdar / defterdâr-ı şikk-ı evvel*

¹⁹⁹ *Ruznamçe efendisi*

²⁰⁰ *defterhâne-i hümayun*

were also put to use. Abundant provisions, ammunition, and money were stored²⁰¹ to sustain this frontier fortress for the empire in times of need. The campaign brought fortress and its fortifications to an even better condition than had been the case upon the initiation of the Ottoman siege. On 23 March 1639, the day of the Grand-Vizier's departure with the Imperial Army to proceed into Iranian territory, 12,000 men were enlisted for the Local Corps in addition to the 8,000-strong janissary force under chief-of-staff Bektaş Agha assigned with the province's defense, and an additional 1,000-strong Sublime Court Cavalry contingent was left there with the promise of promotion upon the completion of this temporary garrison duty.²⁰² Since the enlistment of the Local garrison troops were on a permanent basis and all of those enlisted were freshly entering the province's service, a condensed register showing the breakdown of the corps- and within-corps divisions was drafted and sent to Constantinople.²⁰³

Eventually, walls, bastions, and towers were rebuilt and equipped with artillery. Despite being situated on lowland, the restored fortress stood as a stronghold of concentration for Ottoman military power and political presence. Its massive size, organization, manning, and equipment made up for the disadvantages that might have stemmed from the shallow depth of its surrounding moat. In about a decade after the end of the war, Baghdad would feature as a large fortress-city. The post-1639 repairs and upgrades of fortifications were completed and the bastions were equipped with strong, up-to-date artillery. The upkeep of the moat was attended to as if an attack from outside was expected anytime; the idea was that the moat would present defenders a favorable room to offer resistance, which would even prevent the city from suffering a full-fledged siege. The parts of the walls overlooking the land were relatively better fortified,

²⁰¹ Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1109.

²⁰² Karaçelebizâde, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, 338; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 901; Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1112.

²⁰³ İE.AS. 267. See also A.DFE.d. 93 for the register of the post-reconquest survey of the houses, shops, inns, gardens, and orchards in the city of Baghdad, March 1639.

manned, and equipped than the part overlooking the Tigris. A sizable garrison steadily watched over fortifications. Even merchant caravans had to sign in and surrender their weapons when entering through the city gates.²⁰⁴ Apart from the non-garrison military personnel within the walls – such as the governor-general’s household troops, the garrison consisted of rotating janissaries, Artillerymen, and the Local Corps. Particularly, the White Gate²⁰⁵ (east) and the Dark Gate²⁰⁶ (west), the citadel, the Ajam Tower²⁰⁷ (south), and the Imam-ı Azam Gate along with Küçükhasanpaşa Bastion, Melekpaşa Bastion, Musapaşa Bastion, Hasanpaşa Tower, the Flat Tower²⁰⁸, and Zülfikar Bastion were furnished with artillery more than sufficient to defend themselves from a besieging force as isolated units with almost no support from the rest of the fortress. The massive garrison strictly observed the night watch, while the officers patrolled in disguise for inspection. The Sublime Court Corps watched the citadel, where the treasury, provisions, and ammunition were kept, even more strictly.²⁰⁹ After the garrison was more than filled with Sublime Court and Local corps, Kurdish tribal militia were assigned with the safety of the different sections of the countryside.²¹⁰

The work on the fortifications was completed on 18 February 1639. As a reminder of his achievement, Murad IV had poems dating and celebrating his conquest of Baghdad from the Safavids engraved on the arches above the fortress gates and newly built structures. Again, to symbolize the newly reinstated Ottoman sovereignty, a full-fledged military-band²¹¹ was

²⁰⁴ Jürgen Andersen and Volquard Iversen, *Orientalische Reise-Beschreibungen* (Schleswig: Fürstliche Druckerei durch Johan Holwein, 1669), 166-167; Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Tavernier Seyahatnâmesi*, trans. Teoman Tunçdoğan (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2010), 236.

²⁰⁵ *Ak Kapı*

²⁰⁶ *Karanlık Kapı*

²⁰⁷ *Acem Burcu*

²⁰⁸ *Yassı Kule*

²⁰⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/263-267.

²¹⁰ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 900; Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1127.

²¹¹ *Mehterhâne*

established at Baghdad as the finest of its kind in all Ottoman frontier provinces (including the famous one of Cairo), performing twice daily.²¹² The celebrations of enthronements, births of imperial-princes²¹³, and victories at faraway frontiers would take place in Baghdad with elaborate festivities.²¹⁴ The scope of the diligence exercised in Baghdad went beyond the practice of stamping provincial capitals with marks of Ottoman sovereignty. No doubt, such instances embodied the imperial policy of exhibiting might and grandeur from this prestigious metropolis to neighboring Iran.

On 5 May 1639, the Grand-Vizier replaced Küçük Hasan Pasha with Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha as governor. Right after the signing of the Border-Protocol of Zuhab on 17 May 1639, he aborted the Imperial Army's march on Iranian territory and initiated the return. Murad IV's decrees declaring his consent to the negotiated clauses and affirmation of the appointments, which also conferred vizierate upon Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha, were dispatched from Constantinople in July and reached Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha's headquarters in Diyarbekir on the 24th. After Murad IV communicated his consent to the conditions of the protocol to the Grand-Vizier, the latter demobilized some of his forces in mid-July,²¹⁵ and departed for the capital. From then on, each appointment to the governorship of Baghdad would be accompanied

²¹² The poems dating and commemorating the conquest were engraved on white marble pieces in pure gold with *celî* characters, so that they could easily be read even from a certain distance. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/260, 263. The kettle-drum played by the Baghdad Military Band was so large that the player needed to climb several stairs to position himself. The renown of this particular kettle-drum had spread to other parts of the Ottoman Empire and Iran. *Ibid.*, 266.

²¹³ *şehzâde*

²¹⁴ See Nazmi-zâde [Hüseyin] Murtezâ [Efendi], *Gülşen-i Hulefâ: Bağdat Târîhi 762-1717*, ed. Mehmet Karataş (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014), 235, 239, 241-242, 270, 273, 291, 295 for the celebrations and ceremonies held in Baghdad for the enthronements of İbrâhim (1640), Mehmed IV (1648), for the births of imperial-princes Mehmed (IV) (1642), Ahmed (III) (1673), and for the conquests of Chania (1645), Rethymo (1646), Varad (1660), Ujvar (1663), Candia (1669), and Kamianets-Podilskyi (1672).

²¹⁵ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 907-909; Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 277-278; Naîmâ, *Târîh*, 929, 936; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 910.

by the conferral of vizierial rank if the appointed governor²¹⁶ was not already a vizier.²¹⁷ Thus, the empire's top administrative-military official at the province would always be a governor-general²¹⁸.

The reasons for Küçük Hasan Pasha's replacement with Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha were seemingly of military and disciplinary nature, and had a lot to do with policies aimed at consolidating power and establishing authority in the reconquered province at the expense of Safavid influence. During his four-month tenure, Küçük Hasan Pasha had made a name for himself as a just governor by actively holding court to dispense justice. The implications of this must have been much more important during this reintegration period than they would have been in ordinary times. Most of his activities must have been aimed at regulating the transition of power from the Safavids to the Ottomans via reorganizing the urban space, guaranteeing property rights, and filling key posts. Yet, no matter how just and conscientious Küçük Hasan Paşa might have seemed to some observers, the Grand-Vizier, with an eye to the level of discipline and authority he deemed necessary after the reconquest, regarded the former janissary chief's manner of governing too complaisant, and had him replaced. As the incoming surrogate, Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha was expected to not display his predecessor's permissiveness in governing, and to subject the Kurdish and Arab tribes of the province to strict discipline. Also,

²¹⁶ Ottoman terminology: *beylerbeyi* / *mir-i miran* / *emirü'l-ümera* / *vali*; Safavid terminology: *hâkim*

²¹⁷ A governor with vizierial grade, i.e. a three-horsetail-ensign pasha, had far more authority and sanction power than a governor without vizierial grade, i.e. a two-horsetail-ensign pasha. This appointment was made for frontier provinces of strategic importance regarding foreign relations, such as Buda (later Belgrade), Egypt, and Baghdad. In response to urgent developments of interstate importance, three-horsetail-ensign pashas, unlike their two-horsetail-ensign colleagues, could personally take initiative and act promptly until the arrival of directives from the Sublime Porte. With the authority drawn from the Imperial Council connection of the vizierate, the governor-general could hold "the padishah's council" and distribute justice, even when passing from or present in another province governed by a two-horsetail-ensign pasha. Until abrogation in 1642 by grand-vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha, vizier-governors could also draw the padishah's monogram, thus issuing their orders in the form of imperial decrees. For more information, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı*, 206-207; Halil İnalcık, "Vezir," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 43 (2013): 90-92; M. Uğur Derman, "Tuğra," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 41 (2012): 336-339.

²¹⁸ Ottoman terminology: *vali/beylerbeyi* – *vezir*; Safavid terminology: *beylerbeyi*

with regards to the command of the Baghdad garrison that numbered more than 20,000 as a post-conquest wartime measure, almost as large as a mid-sized field army of a large state, Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha suited the “subduing lord²¹⁹” role that Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha had in mind²²⁰ for dismantling Safavid influence. The extraordinary military measures resembling wartime practices were not immediately dispensed with after the exchange of ratifications. Until the end of April 1640, almost a year after the signing of the border-protocol, Bektaş Agha and the extraordinary Sublime Court Corps companies left with him continued to stand guard against Iran in the fortress of Baghdad.²²¹

Following the exchange of ratificatory documents, the process of repatriating the prisoners of war began and continued until the termination of activities of the first mission exchange in 1641. As the first move, Shah Safi sent back Atabeğli Murtazâ Pasha, governor of Çıldır, to the empire along with several other pashas who had been held in captivity since the Safavid recovery of Erivan and earlier stages of the last war. İsmâil Beyg Çepni was appointed as the Shah’s commissioner to deliver this group of captives.²²²

Not long after, Murad IV passed away unexpectedly. Since his return to Constantinople, his health had been deteriorating. Following a feast involving heavy drinking at the freshly appointed admiral-in-chief Silahdar Mustafa Pasha’s new residence (İbrâhimpaşa Palace), Murad

²¹⁹ “hâkim-i kakhâr”

²²⁰ Nazmizâde, Gülşen-i Hulefâ, 232-234.

²²¹ Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1140. The rest of his career is evidence to the importance the Sublime Porte attached to this extraordinary garrison duty at Baghdad. After Bektaş Agha returned from this assignment in November/December 1641, he was promoted to vice-chiefdom – *sekbanbaşı* [literally, chief-dogkeeper] i.e. second-general – of the corps. On 20 February 1642, he became the chief of the Janissary Corps. On 29 June 1643, he was pensioned, however, he remained as an influential figure whose word had a serious weight for the corps. Until 1651, although a pensioner, he was one of the strongest men at Constantinople, a constant member of the triumvirates which made and unmade grand-viziers. Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1160, 1162, 1173. At the command of janissaries at Baghdad, Bektaş Agha had equally high-ranking successors such as *zağarcıbaşı* Hamza Agha and *seksuncubaşı* İbrâhim Agha, who replaced the former in early December 1645 after serving at the siege of Chania with distinction. Karaçelebizâde, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, 380.

²²² Muhammed Yusuf Vâlih Kazvînî-İsfahânî, *Huld-i Berîn [İran der Zaman-ı Şah Safi ve Şah Abbas-ı Düvvüm]*, ed. Muhammed Rızâ Nasîrî (Tahran: Encümen-i Âsâr u Mefâhir-i Ferhengî, 2003), 291.

became bedridden and died on 8 February 1640 at the age of twenty-seven. His brother, imperial-prince İbrâhim, succeeded him to the throne. Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha retained the grand-vizierate; he would stay in power until January 1644. Including his term under Murad IV, he was an exceptionally independent and strong minister, insomuch as he did not even refrain even from withholding the promulgation of some already issued imperial-writs²²³ (which were even more preponderant than imperial decrees), on the grounds that a certain matter was against the empire's interests. He also did not refrain from openly reproaching the padishah during a face-to-face interview for his ignorance in statecraft.²²⁴ The news of Murad's death was received with joy at the Safavid court;²²⁵ it appears that his wartime resoluteness to complete the recovery of the territory lost to Iran continued to make his existence daunting for the Safavids even after the signing of the Peace of Zuhab. His death, from the Safavid point of view, must have decreased the possibility of hostilities to be reinitiated by the personal influence of the Ottoman ruler.

On the instant, the high-ranking Iranian prisoners of war at Constantinople, who had probably been subjected to a kind of forced residency at the capital rather than imprisonment due to their worth, sent a letter to Iran reporting Murad IV's death. On February 9, the dispatch was intercepted in Scutari. As a result, the favorable conditions that these prisoners – most notably Kumuşlu Mir-Fettah and his son²²⁶ – had been enjoying, came to an end, and they were imprisoned to Rumelihisarı^{227 228}.

²²³ *hatt-ı hümayun*, an imperial decree superscripted with the padishah's own hand-writing for emphasis, or an order that the padishah himself penned *ex officio*. See Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Hatt-ı Hümayun," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 16 (1997): 485-488.

²²⁴ İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 3th ed. 1983), 206-207, 209-215.

²²⁵ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 294

²²⁶ See below for more details on these two personalities.

²²⁷ The fort to the north of Constantinople at the European banks of the Bosphorus.

²²⁸ Rota, "Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr," 56.

To initiate the process of this accession-occasioned reconfirmation, Shah Safi sent his first post-Zuhab embassy to the Ottoman Empire on 15 October 1640.²²⁹ The missions's departure was apparently delayed because it had to wait for the Ottoman envoy Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha, who had brought Murad IV's peace-epistle ratifying the Border-Protocol of Zuhab.²³⁰ In the meanwhile, the prince²³¹ of Imereti, who had remained an Ottoman vassal after 1639, sent an emissary to Shah Safi with gifts.²³² He his principality had once been vassal to the Safavids in the last war, so these gifts had the apparent objective of reestablishing contact with the shah's court on the principles of the new status quo.

Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha was very well received in Isfahan. His counterpart, Mehmed-kulu Beyg Çığatay who had been dispatched to Constantinople to deliver Safi's ratificatory peace-epistle, had preceded him. The formal finalization of the peace still had to wait for Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha to be given audience in Isfahan. Hence, the Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed and the Mehmed-kulu Çığatay missions cannot be regarded as the first diplomatic exchange after Zuhab. Kara Xan Şamlu, brother of chief of the royal guard²³³ Câmı Xan Şamlu, was appointed Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha's host-officer at the head of a group of military officers and notables leading the entry procession to Isfahan. In turns, chief-justice Mirza Habibullah Kereki, prime-minister Saru Taki, and Câmı Xan Şamlu hosted the Ottoman envoy at feasts. After the completion of formalities, the Shah feasted, entertained, and honorably discharged Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha. He was to return to Constantinople in the company

²²⁹ Isfahânî, *Hülâsatü's-Siyer*, 286. Note that the dating of the Islamic-lunar years in this chronicle is flawed. Each date provided for post-1638 occurrences should be calculated by adding one to the given year.

²³⁰ İskender Beyg, *Zeyl-i Âlem-ârâ*, 245.

²³¹ *melik*

²³² Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 299.

²³³ *kurçibaşı*

of İbrâhim Xan Yirmidört-Kacar, the governor of Berde (in Karabağ) and the Shah's new ambassador to the Ottoman court.²³⁴

In late-March/early-April 1641, Kumuşlu Mîr-Fettah's son (Mîrfettahoğlu) was executed as his "extermination [was deemed] necessary".²³⁵ His and his father's previous record of conduct with the Ottomans might suggest what the reason behind this exception to the exchange of prisoners could be. Mîr-Fettah's engagement with the Ottomans had started when Shah Abbas I had sent him and his troops to Baghdad to relieve the Ottoman siege in 1626, and later on he had assumed the command of the defense effort. During the Ottoman siege of Erivan that resulted in the fortress's fall (1635), this time Shah Safi had sent him, now the musketeer-major²³⁶ of Isfahan, to reinforce the defense. Towards the end of the siege when fortress guardian Emirgûneoğlu Tahmasb-kulu Xan Kacar was negotiating surrender, Mîr-Fettah had sabotaged the orderly execution of the handover by opening fire on Ottoman troops during ceasefire. At the 1638 Ottoman siege of Baghdad, he was promoted to the command of the royal musketeers²³⁷ and assigned to lead the musketeer contingent defending Baghdad. When Bektaş Xan, Safavid guardian of the fortress of Baghdad, consulted his officers about surrendering, Mîr-Fettah had firmly opposed, knowing that once he would become prisoner, he would probably be the target of Murad IV's personal wrath as a consequence of what he had done in Erivan in 1635. After surrendering, Mîr-Fettah was among the Iranian commanders who delayed the evacuation of the fortress, refused disarmament, and did not demobilize their troops, which in turn was used by the Ottoman troops entering the fortress as an excuse for the subsequent massacre of the defenders.

²³⁴ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 301; see Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 270n, 272, 279 for the cognomen "Hamzapaşazâde" of Mehmed Agha.

²³⁵ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 896, 916; Vecîhî Hasan Efendi, *Târih-i Vecîhî*, f. 20b in Buğra Atsız, *Das Osmanische Reich um die Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Nach den Chronicken des Vecîhi (1637-1660) und des Mehmed Halîfa (1633-1660)* (München: Dr. Dr. Rudolf Trofenik, 1977).

²³⁶ *tüfenkçi minbaşısı/binbaşısı*

²³⁷ *tüfenkçi ağası*

In the end, Mîr-Fettah fell captive. Even after this, his sons still refused to surrender and disarm while Ottoman forces had already taken over at parts of the fortress, which then incited the second massacre, and only after this did his sons join the rest of the Safavid captives.²³⁸ Seemingly, Mîr-Fettah was also executed alongside his son.²³⁹ By the time of these executions in 1641, Kumuşlu Agha-Tâhir, Mîr-Fettah's brother, was the Shah's chief of the musketeers.²⁴⁰

The Ottoman court thus excepted and executed the prisoners of war who, from the Ottoman point of view, had violated the quarter conferred upon them by choosing to resist even after their Safavid superior had laid down arms. Even more striking is the fact that at the time of execution, the convicts' brother/uncle was still the incumbent chief of the musketeers, one of the military dignitaries of Safavid Iran. Iranian sources speak of neither the execution nor a reaction thereto from the royal government, and Ottoman sources do not provide further information. However, as is seen from the final *relazione* of the Habsburg minister-resident in Constantinople, Johann Rudolf Schmid, Mîrfettahoğlu and several other prisoner xans, who had been until then held honorably due to their having capitulated but who were eventually imprisoned in Seven Towers after Murad IV's death, were executed as the final act that consummated the ratification in compliance with the recent talks between the two courts. The public opinion, or the general consensus of Ottoman statesmen, opposed the executions though, and instead, favored good treatment of these high-ranking prisoners as dictated by political reason in order to encourage future defections from Iran to the empire. Such personalities, discouraged by these executions,

²³⁸ Kûpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 153, 159, 212, 214, 248, 259, 263-265.

²³⁹ Rota, "Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr", 56-57

²⁴⁰ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 332. In the following works, Agha-Tâhir is confused with his deceased older brother Mîr-Fettah, apparently misled by the former's nickname "the second mir-Fettah": Muhammed Tâhir Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbâsnâme, yâ Şerh-i Zindegânî-yi 22-Sâle-i Şâh Abbâs-ı Sâni (1052-1073)*, ed. İbrâhîm Dihgân (Erâk: Kitâb-furûşî-yi Dâvudî-yi Erâk, hs.1329), 56-58; Kathryn Babayan, "The Waning of the Qizilbash: The Spiritual and the Temporal in the Seventeenth-Century Iran" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1993), 316. Kumuşlu Agha-Tâhir was executed after 1643 when he was still occupying the abovementioned post.

would be urged to remain loyal servitors of the shah to the death in future cases. The minister-resident also remarked that the deal had been concluded between an Ottoman Empire superior to Iran. Neither court would contrive to resume hostilities, which could occur only if a rebellion in Ottoman east would pave the way for it. Otherwise, Iran's inferiority vis-à-vis the empire was too structural and inherent to be regarded as a temporary state.²⁴¹

Apparently, Kumuşlu Agha-Tâhir had to politically disown his brother and nephew after the Peace of Zuhab because the latter had violated the quarter and caused the Ottoman massacre of the Safavid garrison in Baghdad. The executions were carried out after prior arrangement with Isfahan. The Sublime Porte thereby got rid of an unruly enemy who had disregarded the granted quarter, and the royal government of several high-ranking commanders whose obstinacy during Baghdad's capitulation had cost the Safavids the slaughter of the elite troops of their army. Thus, both sides removed the potential causes of disturbance via these political executions. That the Porte agreed to these executions while negotiating as the stronger party demonstrates that it did not consider renewed hostilities with the House of Safi in its interest, which it thought would be best served by perpetuating the 1639 order. Thus, instead of setting a precedent for conciliation and incentive to potential high-ranking defectors from the Safavid side in a future war, it chose to consolidate its current gains by getting rid of the personalities whose further presence at court would be a constant source of belittlement for the other party. It is highly possible that the Safavids had originally requested the extradition of the prisoners, but as the victorious signatories, the Ottomans must have insisted on not delivering these excepted ones, and consented only to executing them. In doing so, they would further appease the Safavid side while staging yet another preemptory act indicating that they had the upper hand in bilateral relations.

²⁴¹ Schmid, *Finalrelation Nr.4*, 259-260.

Safavid ambassador İbrâhim Xan Yirmidört-Kacar accompanying Ottoman envoy Hamzapaşazâde Mehmed Agha on his return journey reached Constantinople on 16 June 1641, about three months following the execution of Mîrfettahoğlu. This conventional embassy to congratulate İbrâhim (the Mad)'s accession to the throne should be regarded as the first post-Zuhab diplomatic contact. The Padishah commissioned Grand-Vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha, Marshal of the Imperial Council²⁴² Boynueğri Durak Agha, and the Privy Arms-Bearer²⁴³ to personally oversee the reception at the capital. Hüseyinpaşa Palace in the vicinity of Bayezid Square was reserved for the ambassador's and his retinue's accommodation. However, it was emphatically ordered that nobody from outside should meet or contact them. A janissary captain and his company were attached to their service, for the dual purpose of ensuring their safety and restricting their contact in line with the limit deemed appropriate by the host state. As was the law, the Central Treasury²⁴⁴ covered their entire expenses of travel, accommodation, and food.²⁴⁵ Clearly, the state wanted to control the flow of information to the Safavid ambassador as much as possible. Customarily, the host state strictly monitored an embassy's activities while simultaneously offering a courteous reception.

On 14 July 1641, the Padishah received İbrâhim Xan Kacar at audience in Topkapı Palace. Adhering to the convention, the event was made coincide with the quarterly session of the Imperial Council at which the pays of the Sublime Court Corps were distributed to officers, a show of force to the received guests. These type of special sessions where the Sublime Court Corps officers mustered and foreign embassies entered audience were called "triumphal

²⁴² *dîvân-ı hümâyün çavuşbaşısı / divan-beyi*

²⁴³ *silahdâr-ı şehriyârî*

²⁴⁴ *Hazîne-i Âmire*

²⁴⁵ Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* 2, 1153; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 951; Murat Uluskan, "Dîvân-ı Hümâyün Çavuşbaşılığı (XVI. ve XVI. Yüzyıllar)" (MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 1998), see the list of the marshals of the Imperial Council in the unpaginated appendix.

councils²⁴⁶”. The Grand-Vizier, Imperial Council viziers, the chief of the Janissary Corps, the Chief-Comptroller, financial and chancellery staff, Imperial Council bailiffs, the two chief-justices, etc. all attended. Ceremonies began with the orderly arrival of the Sublime Court officers along with the Inner Court²⁴⁷. Upon seeing the splendor, the ambassador was allegedly overwhelmed and on the verge of trembling, insomuch that the marshal of the Imperial Council uncustomarily offered him a chair – an offer which might have also been made to create the impression that the ambassador was overwhelmed. Following the session, the disbursement of the salaries of the central military, and the feast, the gatekeepers of the Sublime Court took delivery of the Shah’s presents. Then, the Imperial Council members proceeded to the audience chamber. The senior members of the embassy were first invested with robes of honor and then received into the audience hall. The Grand-Vizier placed next to the legs of the throne the Shah’s epistle, which congratulated İbrâhim’s accession and wished for the continuation of friendly relations. Granted permission, the ambassador approached the Padishah and kissed his hand. Reportedly, he showed signs of being deeply impressed and overwhelmed by the stateliness of the audience itself. This occasion was also a big public event for the residents of the capital; the people had filled the road leading from Hagia Sophia to the Imperial Gate, the entrance to the outermost courtyard of Topkapı Palace, in order to see the procession of the Safavid embassy.²⁴⁸ Without any doubt, all of these ceremonies were planned with the motive of displaying the might and discipline of the empire’s pillars to the representative of the Shah.

²⁴⁶ “galebe dîvânî”. For a detailed description of the protocol and ceremonies, see Yıldırım, *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Elçi Kabulleri*; Mehmed Es’ad Efendi[’nin] *Teşrifat-ı Kadime*[’si], ed. H. Ahmet Arslantürk, Miraç Tosun, and Serdal Soyluer (İstanbul: Okur Kitaplığı, 2012), 108-127.

²⁴⁷ *enderun*

²⁴⁸ Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1154-1155; *Naîmâ, Târih*, 951; the special session of the Imperial Council for İbrâhim Yirmidört-Kacar’s audience coincided to a stormy day with successive lightnings and thunders. During the ceremonies, a domed, worn-out building next to Hagia Sophia and facing the Imperial Gate was hit by lightning at a time when it was swarmed with people watching the procession. Because of the lightning bolt, crash of thunder, and consecutive stampede, more than ten people died and many were injured. Ibid.

The ambassador's outward astonishment must have been the result of symbolic acts that adhered to the oriental diplomatic etiquette of feigning to be stunned and to forget speech in the presence of a host monarch superior to the ruler who had dispatched the emissary.²⁴⁹ Not long after the imperial audience, the embassy was also received by the Grand-Vizier, during which its thirty-nine members were presented with robes of honor appropriate for each one's rank.²⁵⁰ Following these official interviews, İbrâhim Xan Kacar was hosted with considerable respect at the Ottoman capital; Imperial Council viziers held separate feasts of their own in his honor.²⁵¹

At the beginning of September 1641,²⁵² İbrâhim Xan Kacar requested permission to leave. The Padishah granted it and gave the ambassador a farewell audience during which the previously mentioned ceremonies were repeated. The ambassador then set off for Iran on September 7.²⁵³ At the same time, the Iranian prisoners of war who were still being held in Seven Towers were released and sent along the departing embassy in return for the remaining Ottoman captives that İbrâhim Xan Kacar had brought from Iran.²⁵⁴

On the very day of the embassy's departure (September 7²⁵⁵), the Sublime Porte carried out yet another execution whose timing arouses attention. The person in question was Tahmasb-kulu Xan Kâcâr / Emirgûneoğlu Yusuf Pasha.²⁵⁶ Son of Emirgûne Xan Kacar whom Abbas I had appointed governor of Çukursa'd in 1604,²⁵⁷ he was the guardian at Erivan who defended the

²⁴⁹ Pedani, "Ceremonial Diplomatic Protocol in Istanbul," 296-297.

²⁵⁰ AE. SİBR. 495. Although this document giving detailed information about the type and the value of the robes of honor distributed to each embassy member was drafted on 23 February 1642, one can safely suppose that it did not take this long for the embassy to set off on its return journey. This document registering the cost of these items was most probably drafted some time after the audience took place.

²⁵¹ Solakzâde Mehmed Efendi, *Târih* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, h.1298), 767.

²⁵² Cumâzeyilâhir 1051

²⁵³ Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1158; Isfahânî, *Hülâsatü's-Siyer*, 292.

²⁵⁴ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 917; Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1158.

²⁵⁵ Rota, "Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr", 57.

²⁵⁶ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 917.

²⁵⁷ *The Journal of Zak'aria of Agulis*, annotated translation and commentary by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 63.

fortress and consequently capitulated during the 1635 Ottoman siege. Upon surrender, Murad IV, who was commanding the army in person, received him in the Imperial Marquee. After the audience, he adopted a new name, becoming Emirgûneoğlu Yusuf Pasha (the old one, also adopted, carried a direct reference of servitude to the House of Safi). In return, the Padishah created him vizier and appointed governor-general of Aleppo, while his former lieutenant, who also sought asylum at the Ottoman court, received the governorship of the Tripoli.²⁵⁸ Not long thereafter, Emirgûneoğlu came to Constantinople and became one of Murad IV's closest courtiers while holding office as resident-vizier²⁵⁹ until his execution, after which the Padishah confiscated the pavilion and the gloriote Emirgûneoğlu had erected in the district of Kağıthane.²⁶⁰ It should also be noted that he was present in both the welcome and the farewell audiences of the 1641 conventional Safavid embassy as a vizier of the Imperial Council.²⁶¹

According to the publicized course of events, during the Grand-Vizier's farewell feast, İbrâhim Kacar communicated to his host that he wanted to return to Iran together with Emirgûneoğlu (his co-tribesman); the latter wanted to restore his allegiance to the House of Safi and asked for the ambassador's intercession. Because this former Safavid xan was now an Ottoman vizier whose attempt at transferring loyalties would be nothing short of high treason, Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha could not act solely upon his own initiative. Knowing this exactly, the ambassador asked whether the Padishah would grant this request. Padishah İbrâhim, averse to it, in turn asked whether Emirgûneoğlu himself wanted to go or it was only the ambassador's envisagement. The Grand-Vizier replied that it was Emirgûneoğlu who had sent a

²⁵⁸ Kûpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 215.

²⁵⁹ *kubbe vezîri*

²⁶⁰ *Naîmâ, Târih*, 951; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 917.

²⁶¹ *Kadrî Efendi, Târih* vol. 2, 1154, 1158. His brother, Emirgûneoğlu Abbas-kulu Kacar, had remained in Iran, whom we see in 1663 as the governor-general of Çukursa'd, where he would die in 10 October 1666. *The Journal of Zakaria of Agulis*, 68, 75.

discreet message to İbrâhim Kacar, asking him to duly convey to the Grand-Vizier his wish to return to Iran. The Padishah, infuriated upon learning this, said: “those who do not appreciate Our beneficence must be punished. You shall rub out his impure existence from the page of the age!”²⁶² Emirgüneoğlu was lured into a staged meeting with the Grand-Vizier and summarily executed.²⁶³ However, this was only the officially declared, politically distorted justification for the execution.

As documented by a letter from a Ragusan doctor, Francesco Crasso, to the Venetian bailo in Constantinople, Alvise Contarini, public opinion alternated between buying the official justification and believing the unpublicized truth²⁶⁴ – that İbrâhim Xan Kacar himself requested Emirgüneoğlu’s execution.²⁶⁵ As explicitly recorded in Johann Rudof Schmid’s (Habsburg minister-resident in Constantinople) final report, Emirgüneoğlu basically met the same end as the earlier executed xans and met as a part of the deal consummating the ratification of the Peace of Zuhab.²⁶⁶ The only part that remains ambiguous is whether Emirgüneoğlu’s fate had been decided together with that of the executed prisoners executed earlier (most notably Kumuşlu Mîr-Fettah and his son) and carried out later due to his currently being a Imperial Council vizier, or, whether the Safavid request that the Ottomans extradite – and if this would not be acceptable then execute – him was communicated later via the incoming ambassador. The latter case seems more probable given the timing of the execution. In either case, in the eyes of the Safavid court,

²⁶² “Bizim nîmetimizin kadrini bilmezlere cezâsı verilmek gerektir. vücûd-ı nâ-pâkini sahife-i rûzgârdan hakkedesin”

²⁶³ Hacı Halife Mustafa Nihâdî, *Târih-i Nihâdî*, published in Hasine Biga, “Târih-i Nihâdî (1b-80a) (Transkripsyon ve Değerlendirme)” (MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2004); Satiye Büşra Uysal, “Târih-i Nihâdî (80b-152a) (Transkripsyon ve Değerlendirme)” (MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2004); Hande Nalan Özkasap, “Târih-i Nihâdî (152b-233a) (Transkripsiyon ve Değerlendirme)” (MA thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2004) f. 113a; Solakzâde, *Târih*, 767-768; Vecîhî, *Târih*, f. 21a; Rota, “Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr”, 57. See Ibid. for more details on the staging of the execution.

²⁶⁴ Rota, “Death of Tahmâspqolî Xân Qâjâr”, 57.

²⁶⁵ Karaçelebizâde, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, 350.

²⁶⁶ Schmid, *Finalrelation Nr.4*, 259.

Emirgüneoğlu was no doubt a very high-ranking traitor, and the memory of his defection to the Ottoman side was still fresh. The favor that he had been enjoying until Murad IV's death must have come to an end with İbrâhim's enthronement; however, he kept his Imperial Council vizierate until the very end. His further presence at the Ottoman court along with the highest favor he enjoyed must have been taken as an insult to the Safavids' dignity from a state with which they now had peaceful relations. Because the ruler who had personally favored him was now deceased, discarding Emirgüneoğlu would not be that much of a political sacrifice for the Sublime Porte. By consenting to his removal, the Porte confirmed its long-term interest in preserving the peace. By executing instead of extraditing him, it sent the message that peaceful relations would continue to be defined by its superior position vis-à-vis the royal government.

Concurrent with the departure of the İbrâhim Kacar embassy, Padishah İbrâhim appointed Kabil Agha, a court-notable²⁶⁷, to lead his return legation to Shah Safî. Kabil Agha accompanied İbrâhim Xan Kacar during the latter's return journey.²⁶⁸ In Iran, royal-guard officer Abbas-kulu Beyg and his troops who were appointed as host-officers, welcomed and entertained Kabil Agha upon his arrival. During the audience with Shah Safî, the envoy announced İbrâhim's confirmation of the current peace and presented his gifts.²⁶⁹ Like İbrâhim Xan Yirmidört-Kacar, Kabil Agha was held in high esteem during his presence at the Safavid court. Safavid officials regularly attended to him as he enjoyed his host's honors and treats. At the behest of the Shah, prime-minister Saru Taki, ministers, and other dignitaries hosted, feasted, and entertained the envoy one by one. After the formal business and the courtesy receptions were

²⁶⁷ *müteferrika*

²⁶⁸ Cevrî İbrâhim Çelebi and Sarı Abdullah Efendi, *Düstûrî'l-İnşâ*, Süleymâniye Kütüphanesi, Nûr-ı Osmâniye no. 4304), entry title: "bâlâda mestûr olan mufassal olmakla gönderilmeyip tekrar muma-ileyhe Abdullah Efendi müsveddesiyle ber-vech-i ihtisar bu nâme tahrir olunup Sadrazam'dan Şâh-ı Acem'e gönderilmiştir"; Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1158.

²⁶⁹ İsfahânî, *Hülâsatü's-Siyer*, 294.

completed, Kabil Agha received permission to leave. Karadağî Maksud Sûltan, the chief-vicegerent²⁷⁰ [of the shah in the latter's capacity as chieftain of the Safavid Order], became Safi's extraordinary ambassador to Padishah İbrâhim and would accompany Kabil Agha during the latter's return journey.²⁷¹

Around the same time, in 1641, governor-general of Baghdad Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha continued the military operations aimed at firmly reestablishing Ottoman authority over the province's insubordinate Arab tribes, which had a potential to trigger an interstate crisis. In the fiefdoms Semavat and Halid, the Huza'lı and the Benî Lâm tribes, both Ottoman subjects, wanted to defect en masse to the Safavid side, which would mean loss of territory and revenue for the empire. They eventually rebelled against Ottoman rule and began committing banditry as an expression of their dissent. Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha appointed his lieutenant Ali Agha as the leader of his select forces and sent them to oppose the insubordinate tribes. After a battle shorter than two hours, most of the Benî Lâm rebels were killed while the chieftain of the Huza'lı fled to Iran with some of his retinue. The above-mentioned fiefdoms were annexed to the province of Baghdad as counties.²⁷² Shah Safi gave Zeydân, located at the eastern coast of the Persian Gulf, as fief to the chieftain of the Huza'lı and his tribesmen,²⁷³ but refrained from taking any action that would affect territory under Ottoman sovereignty.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ He had previously served, when holding the same office, as the Safavids' wartime ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1637, held as captive until and sent back in 1639 in the post-conquest and pre-negotiation period. See Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 233-236, 247, 269-270. See also Vâlih Kazvîni, *Huld-i Berîn*, 242-243, 255.

²⁷¹ İskender Türkmân, *Zeyl-i Âlem-ârâ*, 250-251; Floor, "Khalifeh al-Kholafa," 56.

²⁷² Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 234. Heads of the 600 killed rebels were sent to Baghdad along with a sizable booty. Naîmâ, *Târih*, 955.

²⁷³ İskender Türkmân, *Zeyl-i Âlem-ârâ*, 252.

²⁷⁴ MHM.d. 89, ent. 57. About a year later, when Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha was no longer the governor-general of Baghdad, his household was still in possession of prisoners from the Benî Lâm; most of whom were women and children. On 11 August 1642, the Imperial Council ruled that these prisoners be set free.

It seems that Bıyıklı Derviş Mehmed Pasha proved to be the “subduing lord” that the Sublime Porte felt it needed in central Iraq after having recovered it from Iran. Through preemptive and swift military responses to crises with interstate implications in the province, he prevented defections of considerable size to the Safavid side. When the military disengagement was still underway and the post-war normalization was yet in its early stages, such defections could potentially trigger a crisis if not nipped in the bud.

Shah Safi died on 14 May 1642 at the age of thirty-one from heavy drinking and his nine year-old son royal-prince²⁷⁵ Mehmed (Abbas II) succeeded him. With his early dynastic massacres and the ultimate loss of Mesopotamia to the empire aside, Safi had left his successor a relatively smaller but more defensible realm. The losses of Baghdad and Kandahar constituted heavy blows to Safi’s prestige both internally and externally. Although it had sealed loss and defeat for the Safavid side, the Peace of Zuhab removed the greatest threat and destabilizing factor – Ottoman menace – from the scene. This contributed considerably to the realm’s internal stability in turn. Safi also left behind an established grand-vizier, Saru Taki, who had served in this capacity since 1634. The change of ruler did not disrupt governmental stability. The triumvirate of Saru Taki, Mehmed Ali Beyg, and Cânı Xan Şamlu (chief of the Royal Guard) ensured a swift transition in harmony with queen-mother Anna Khanum until Cânı Xan, at Abbas II’s behest, killed Saru Taki in his residence.²⁷⁶ As the reestablishment of peace was still fresh, Abbas II turned his enthronement into an opportunity for reinforcing the foundations of the peace via diplomacy.

For the occasion, Karadağî Maksud Sültañ, whom the deceased shah had priorly appointed as ambassador, received new instructions and letters in line with his revised mission

²⁷⁵ *mîrzâ* (when affixed following the personal name).

²⁷⁶ Roemer, “The Safavid Period,” 287-288; Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*, 41-43.

objectives. Alongside the business of accession and peace reconfirmation, he had also come to seek the demolition of the castle of Melet on the Van mountain range from the Ottoman court, in accordance with the peace conditions. The extraordinary embassy consisting of 150 personnel arrived in Constantinople in early December 1642. It was accommodated at Ferhadpaşa Palace near Bayezid Square, and a certain Dilaver Agha was appointed as host-officer²⁷⁷. On December 30, the customary triumphal council was held for the occasion. Abbas II's presents were delivered, the embassy staff was invested with robes of honor, and lastly the Padishah received the ambassador in audience.²⁷⁸ Abbas's generosity with gifts had ensured an extraordinarily good reception for his ambassador.²⁷⁹ Maksud Sülтан must have also delivered Abbas II's epistle to İbrâhim during this audience.

The *expositio* component of Abbas II's epistle, constituting its content, is relatively short and precise. It reports that some time after having sent his ambassador to the Ottoman court (a reference to İbrâhim Yirmidört-Kacar), Shah Safi had died suddenly while traveling on the road to Khorasan in order to deal personally with the Mughal issue at his eastern frontier. According to his successor, the deceased shah had also bequeathed to him the throne and the policy of "preserving the thread of friendship and attachment which was consolidated with the servitors of the Padishah . . . his most-sublime majesty²⁸⁰". Abbas II notified İbrâhim of his accession and stated that his entire diligence was directed towards "consolidating the pedestals of affection and healing that have been fixed therebetween²⁸¹". He requested that the "honor-joining side of the

²⁷⁷ *mihmandar*

²⁷⁸ Kadrî Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1169; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 961; *Düstûrü'l-İnşâ*, entry title: "Sultan İbrâhim . . . taraf[ına] Şah Abbas-ı Sâni cânibinden gelen nâmedir". In Sarı Abdullah Efendi's correspondence compilation, this epistle is misdated to 10 October 1646.

²⁷⁹ Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* vol. 5 (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1963), 306.

²⁸⁰ "hıfz-ı ser-rişte-i düstî ve meveddetî ki bâ bendegân-ı A'lâ-Hazret-i Pâdişâh istihkâm pezîrûfte"

²⁸¹ "istihkâm-ı kavâid-i muhabbet ve iltiyâmî ki fimâbeyn istikrâr yâfte"

Padishah the Shadow of God²⁸²“ also observe the same priorities and that Ottoman officials be assigned with adherence to the conditions of peace. Abbas II added that Maksud Sültañ would report “the remaining matters²⁸³” orally.²⁸⁴

While Abbas II’s ambassador was still in Constantinople between the two imperial audiences, Padishah İbrâhim’s reciprocal envoy to Abbas II, Yusuf Agha (probably a court-notable²⁸⁵), was appointed and allocated budget in February to congratulate the royal accession and deliver the replies.²⁸⁶ After residing in the capital for the fulfillment of formalities, Karadađı Maksud Sültañ was once again received in audience following a triumphal council on 20 February 1643. Reportedly, the ambassador was held in esteem at the Ottoman court. After securing the reconfirmation of the peace, handing in Padishah İbrâhim’s reply epistle to Abbas II, and receiving the permission to return, the extraordinary embassy left Constantinople on February 23.²⁸⁷

Yusuf Agha’s conventional legation met the Safavid court in Kazvin. To his honor, festivities were held in the gardens of Saâdet-âbâd, where the envoy’s quarters must have been located. After several days, the delivery of replies and gifts in reconfirmation of the peace took place at the audience.²⁸⁸

²⁸² “taraf-ı karîn-üş-şefar-i pâdişâhî-yi zıll-ullahî”

²⁸³ ”bâkî umûr”

²⁸⁴ *Düstûrü’l-İnşâ*, entry title: *Şehinşah . . . Sultan İbrâhim . . . taraf[ına] . . . Şah Abbas-ı Sâni cânibinden gelen nâmedir . . .*

²⁸⁵ The incomplete titulature in the copy of the accompanying epistle (see below) is “kıdvetü’l-emâcid ve’l-ekârim”, the one used for court-notables of the Imperial Court. See M. Kütükođlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 105.

²⁸⁶ Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1168; Vahîd Kazvîni, *Abbasnâme*, 54.

²⁸⁷ Kadri Efendi, *Târih* vol. 2, 1169; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 961. On February 22, one day before departure, the entire Ottoman civil, military, and judicial dignitaries on the highway from Constantinople to the Iranian border received the customary decree ordering them to facilitate the return journey of the embassy in every possible way. A host-officer was also sent along to act as road guide until the embassy left Ottoman territory. See the relevant decree: MHM.d. 89, ent. 153.

²⁸⁸ Vahîd Kazvîni, *Abbasnâme*, 45.

In his reply,²⁸⁹ after expressing his condolences for Shah Safi’s passing away, the Padishah appreciated Abbas II’s “favoring the side of concord and union²⁹⁰ [between the two states]” and “strictly admonishing the governors of his country to act with positive diligence for consolidating the foundations of concurrence and erasing disagreement in line with the promised conditions.”²⁹¹ The Padishah added that he happily accepted Abbas’s offer to reconfirm the peace and that he had also sent decrees to the empire’s frontier officials to observe the pacification conditions. He emphasizes that Maksud Sltan had properly performed his commission and was given the permission to depart with full honors. Then, the Padishah formulated the manner in which he reconfirmed the current peace:

Until this moment, Our justice-accustomed and pure-breed father and forefathers reigning on the Ottoman throne, may God light up their sleeping-places, have not wantonly rejected those amity-qualified monarchs – who are constant requestors at their [i.e. Ottoman emperors’] beneficence-bringing Sublime Threshold and refuge-seekers under the shadow of their [i.e. Ottoman emperors’] quarter-necessitating canopies of mercy – when these [monarchs] opened all around the doors of friendship, prepared the causes of mutual aid, and by submitting [their] veracity and designs, knocked the door of manliness and cast down the garments of hostility²⁹²

In his reply²⁹³ – composed by former secretary of state Sarı Abdullah Efendi – to the separate epistle addressed to him by the “Shah his sublime majesty²⁹⁴”, Grand-vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha reformulated and repeated almost all the themes present in the Padishah’s epistle. He then stated in the same manner that upon being informed of the Shah’s intentions, the

²⁸⁹ *Dstr’l-İnşâ*, the untitled letter following the letter titled *bu cnıpten Şah Abbas-ı Sn tarafına gnderilmek iin sbıkan reislkttap olan Abdullah Efendi msvedde ettięi nmedir, lkin bu mektup gnderilmeyip bdehu yazılan gnderilmiřtir.*

²⁹⁰ “cnib-i vifk ve ittihda ikbal”

²⁹¹ “hkkm-ı vilyetinize řeryit-i mev’de zere istihkm-ı ess-ı muvfakat ve indirs-ı muhlefet bbında hsn-i ihtimm etmeleri iin tenbh-i ekd”

²⁹² “evreng-niřin-i Osmn olan ab ve ecdd-ı nıřfet-mtd-ı pk-nejdımızın, *nura allahu mazaci’hum*, atebe-i aliyye-i ihsan-resnlarından ricda ve sye-i syeban-ı merhamet-i mstelzim-l-amanlarına ilticda olan seltin-i musfat-ittisaf etrfa ebvb-ı mvlt gřde ve esbb-ı mmlt mde klp bu na deęin arz-ı huls ve taviyyet ile kar’-ı bb-ı mrvvet ve hal’-ı siyb-ı husmet edenleri bil-mcib reddetmemiřlerdir”

²⁹³ *Dstr’l-İnş*, entry title: “blda mestur olan mufassal olmakla gnderilmeyip tekrar muma-ileye Abdullah Efendi msveddesiyle ber-vech-i ihtisar bu nme tahrir olunup Sadrazam’dan řh-ı Acem’e gnderilmiřtir”

²⁹⁴ “l-hazret”

Padishah's "seas of overlordly benefactions have undulated and he [i.e. the Padishah] deigned to bestow upon his [i.e. the Shah's] honor-joining side of cordiality the friendship-sealed august epistle attesting the alignment of the rites of peace and righteousness."²⁹⁵ Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha's portrayal of the transaction and the mere fact that the Ottoman grand-vizier could correspond with the shah though the Safavid prime-minister²⁹⁶ could not correspond with the padishah attest further to the Safavids' inferior position in the post-1639 hierarchy.

Safavid dignitaries, namely grand-vizier Saru Taki, chief of the Royal Guard Câmı Xan Şamlu, the marshal of the Royal Court²⁹⁷ and marshal of the Royal Council²⁹⁸ Murtazâ-kulu Xan Bîcerlu-Şamlu assumed the responsibility of hosting and entertaining Yusuf Agha in turns by royal command after the day of audience. At the farewell audience, the legation personnel were invested with the customary robes of honor and gifts along with the reply epistle and letter, after which they set forth for Constantinople.²⁹⁹ During his stay in Kazvin, Yusuf Agha impressed his hosts with his diplomatic, linguistic, and literary skills.³⁰⁰

Apparently, the states took no border issue grave enough to make room for them in their correspondence, not even the abortive defection attempt of the Benî Lâm from Ottoman to Safavid vassalage. The interpretation of this concerning the Safavid side is that dealing with unrest across the border was a monopoly of Ottoman authorities, even when caused by Safavid-friendly actors. In other words, the royal government was satisfied with the current borders and not on the lookout for an opportunity to expand them. Complications of this caliber would be

²⁹⁵ "bîhâr-ı eltâf-ı hıdıvâneleri temevvüc etmekle cânib-i şeref-karîn-i hullet-güzînlerine tensîk-i merâsim-i sulh u salâhı mübeyyin nâme-i hümâyun-ı müvâlat-nigîn erzânî buyurup"

²⁹⁶ "itimâdü'd-devle" but also "vezîr/sadr-ı a'zam", hence grand-vizier. This second title, which is more common in modern English usage for the Safavid chief-ministers, is replaced with "prime-minister" to avoid confusion with the Ottoman grand-vizier.

²⁹⁷ *Eşikağası-başı*

²⁹⁸ *Dîvân-beyi*

²⁹⁹ Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasnâme*, 45; Babayan, "The Waning of the Qizilbash", 316.

³⁰⁰ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 299-300.

dealt with locally, and at best initiate correspondence between the neighboring provinces of the empire and Iran in order to ensure swift, coordinated action.

III.3. Challenges to the Unconsolidated Peace: the Proposed Iranian-Venetian Alliance and Escalating Tensions at the Frontier

As observed in the post-conquest reconstruction and refortification of Baghdad, the empire was trying to consolidate its position along the Iranian border. Northwards, on 1 May 1642, the Imperial Council issued decrees to the governor of Van, janissary captains at the fortress of Van, four autonomous principalities subordinated to the province of Van, and the governor of Diyarbekir that they coordinate and undertake the repair project of the mentioned fortress. The broken and ruined sections were to be repaired to “complete firmness³⁰¹”.³⁰² Around the same time, a development in Baghdad verifies the existence of a state policy along the same lines. Acting in harmony with the Porte’s post-war campaign of strengthening the fortifications guarding the border with Iran, Küçük Hasan Pasha, now serving his second term as governor-general of Baghdad, built three solid towers within the fortress of Baghdad on Zülfikar Hill in proximity to Ajam Tower, in order to consolidate the defensive works.³⁰³ In 1645-1646, further large-scale repair and restoration projects were undertaken at the fortresses of Van and Kars.³⁰⁴

³⁰¹ “kemâl-i metânet”

³⁰² MHM.d. 89, ent. 14.

³⁰³ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 236.

³⁰⁴ MHM.d. 90, ent. 402; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 992; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/128: A severe earthquake brought down sections of the fortress of Van in ruins. Upon the governor’s submission of the issue, in 1645-1646, the center once again commissioned the Kurdish autonomous seigneurs and certain estates with the repair and the rebuilding of the ruined parts of the fortress. The council chamber in the governor’s residence should also have been rebuilt shortly before these repairs. In the same year, the governor of Kars submitted to the court a report that there were ruined sections in the citadel and in the second-line walls of the fortress of Kars. The decree issued after this report emphasized the utmost importance of the good upkeep of the fortress and commissioned the governor with its restoration.

In 1645, a new factor entered into the formula determining the course of the relations between Constantinople and Isfahan: the Cretan War between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Venice had begun. Within same year, the Ottomans scored an early and important success by taking one of the principal fortresses of the island, Chania. The war soon spread to cover the Mediterranean, the Aegean Sea, the Dardanelles along with the empire's coastline on these waters, and the island Crete itself. It would claim the full naval and a large-scale army mobilization that the empire could organize, and continue for the next twenty-four years until the completion of the Ottoman conquest of Crete.³⁰⁵

Especially during the early stages of the Cretan War, the Venetians seriously entertained the idea of forcing the Ottoman Empire to a double-front war by bringing Iran in as an ally. They made their first attempt at such an alliance in 1645 via Giovanni Tiepolo, their ambassador to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1646, Tiepolo succeeded in persuading King Wladyslaw IV Vasa to send an emissary carrying a letter from Prandota Dzierzek, oriental dragoman of the Crown Chancellery, to Abbas II with the proposal that Iran and the Commonwealth declare war on the Ottoman Empire in alliance with Venice. Tiepolo forwarded the Senate's separate letter to the Shah via Antonio de Fiandra, a Dominican father accompanying Jerzy Ilicz, the Commonwealth's envoy to Isfahan.³⁰⁶ Upon Ilicz's death in Isfahan on 17 October 1647 before the royal audience, de Fiandra took on delivering also Dzierzek's letter as the deceased envoy's official designee. In his reply to Dzierzek dated November 1647 that was conveyed back to Poland via de Fiandra, Abbas II committed to nothing else other than the continuation of friendly

³⁰⁵ The chain of events that led to the outbreak of the war was triggered by a corsair attack of the Maltese Knights [Hospitaller] to an unarmed Ottoman galleon carrying the new judge of Mecca, the deposed Chief-Eunuch, and the latter's riches along with 600 other pilgrims. After the attack, the Maltese used island Crete, Venetian territory, as safe haven by a *fait accompli*. For details on the outbreak of the Cretan War and the Ottoman conquest of Chania in the same year, see Kenneth M. Setton, *Venice, Austria, and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1991), 110-127 and Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi* vol. 3/1, 216-218.

³⁰⁶ Rota, "Safavid Persia and Its Diplomatic Relations with Venice, 151.

relations.³⁰⁷ This contact took place in the year that marshal Deli Hüseyin Pasha expanded the Ottoman occupation zone on Crete by further conquests including the key fortress-city of Rethymno, while the naval warfare ensued with full investment from both sides.³⁰⁸

Again in 1646, a merchant named Domenico de Santis, commissioned jointly by Venice and Poland, set out for the Safavid court as secret emissary carrying another letter to Abbas II repeating the proposal that Iran enter the Cretan war as a Venetian and a Polish ally. De Santis joined caravans in Aleppo and traveled over land across Ottoman territory in disguise as a plain merchant. As he was about to cross the border from the province of Şehrîzor, a rabbi from de Santis's caravan informed the governor that de Santis's bales looked unusual for a simple merchant and that he was secretly carrying gifts to the shah. Although the governor sent troops to detain him, the caravan managed to cross the border before an engagement with Ottoman troops took place. As soon as the caravan arrived on Iranian territory, de Santis revealed his real identity. In Isfahan, the Shah received him in audience and he delivered the abovementioned letters. Despite the warm reception, however, de Santis's send-off was not as honorable as his welcome,³⁰⁹ indicating the finality of Abbas II's rejection of Polish and Venetian offers.

In the year, the protracted war over Candia began. Marshal Deli Hüseyin Pasha further expanded the Ottoman-controlled zone and ordered contingents, artillery, and ammunition from the capital for the next major investment, Candia. The Venetian blockade of the Dardanelles,

³⁰⁷ Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie*, 525-527, tables 222-223; Îrec Afşar [ed.], "Dü Fermân-ı Safevi Merbût be Revâbıt-ı İrân ve Lehîstân," *Râh-nümâ-yı Kitâb* 5 (1962): 581-585. Afşar's interpretation that Abbas II accepted the proposal to enter the war against the empire and that this did not only materialize due to Wladyslaw IV's death in 1648 is supported neither by the course of events which followed nor by the document he published in this article.

³⁰⁸ Setton, *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, 139-141; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi* vol. 3/1, 219-220.

³⁰⁹ Tavernier, *Seyahatnâme*, 212-221; Jan Reychman and Ananiasz Zajaczkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomacy*, rev. and trans. Andrew S. Ehrenkreutz (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), 181. Also see Chardin's narration of a Jesuit father, who, in his capacity as the representative of the Pope, the King of France, and several other European-Christian princes, offered a joint invasion of the eastern Ottoman domains to Abbas II in 1645. Jean Chardin, *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin en Perse, et autres lieux de l'Orient* vol. 8 (Paris: le Normant, Imprimeur-Libraire, 1811), 106-107.

however, prevented the Ottoman navy carrying this shipment from delivering it. Then, in 1648, contrary to decision taken previously to wait for reinforcements, the Ottoman army present on Crete began the siege of the heavily-fortified and -manned Candia, initiating an uninterrupted trench and mine warfare.³¹⁰ While these developments were occurring on the extended Venetian-Ottoman front, Venice made its last attempt for the moment to pull Iran into the Cretan War by sending a priest as emissary in November 1647. The Safavid court replied to all three attempts between 1645 and 1647 with letters of friendship but did not seriously entertain the idea of entering into a military alliance with Venice or of declaring war on the Ottoman Empire.³¹¹ The royal government had received the news of the Ottoman advance on Crete and the conquest of Chania with caution³¹²; Safavid dignitaries probably wished that the Ottoman Empire would bleed over a protracted war, if not ultimately be defeated. However, this expectation in no way translated itself into an anti-Ottoman policy.

During this early phase of the Cretan War and within Venice's diplomatic contacts with Iran in connection with it, the frontier at Armenia-Azerbaijan witnessed a serious development. In September 1646, Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha, from whose father's (Defterdar Softa Mustafa Pasha) household the current grand-vizier Nevesinli Salih Pasha had stemmed³¹³, was appointed governor-general of Erzurum. The unusual aspect of this appointment, however, is that he was also created marshal. Before departing to assume office, Padishah İbrâhim received him in audience and made the following address: "act upon this Imperial-Writ of mine, and if the bad-subsistenced Kızılbaş rebel or run wild, you are the Revered-Minister³¹⁴ drawing the

³¹⁰ Setton, *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, 147-150; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 220.

³¹¹ Rota, "Safavid Persia and Its Diplomatic Relations with Venice", 151.

³¹² Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/157.

³¹³ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/185, 189. Nevesinli Salih Pasha had succeeded Sultanzâde Civankapıcıbaşı Mehmed Pasha in office (1645). Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 223.

³¹⁴ *düstûr-ı mükerrem*. A title reserved for viziers. M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 102.

Resplendent Monogram³¹⁵. As far as Erivan, the entire legions of Islam in the Asia Minor provinces are at your command.”³¹⁶ In reaction to the rumors that troops were being gathered across the border at Erivan, Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha was “encouraged to do whatever [he deem proper to] do at the Ajam frontier³¹⁷“. Upon commissioning Seydi Pasha as well, the Padishah saw him off, saying “go get ‘em, may you undertake many expeditions at the Ajam frontier.”^{318,319}

The apparent reason for this extraordinary appointment, indeed a wartime measure, was the false rumor that Abaza Mehmed Pasha (d. 1634, a former *celâli*-rebel, sea captain, governor-general, coup-attempter, and then marshal against Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth who had been executed in 1634) had actually escaped execution, and after years of absence, entered Erzurum from Iran, raising an army for himself. Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha’s proxy³²⁰ rode in haste to Erzurum and took over the reins while his master was still in Scutari. There, Defterdarzâde soon learned that the rumors were false and that his proxy had taken everything under control on Defterdarzâde’s behalf.³²¹ Despite this, approximately three months after the falsity of the rumors was verified, the governor-general’s marshalship of Iran was still not revoked. In his entry procession to his provincial capital, he was revered as the authority arising from this combination of offices necessitated. As an indicator of his extraordinary authority as marshal, the Sublime Court Corps stationed in the province and provincial troops saluted his

³¹⁵ *tuğra*

³¹⁶ “bu hatt-ı şerîfime amel eyleyüp kızılbaş-ı bed-ma’aşın ısyân [u] tuğyânı olursa tuğrâ-yı garrâ-keş-i düstûr-ı mükerremsin. Ta Erivan altına varınca cümle Anadolu eyâletlerinin asker-i İslâm’ı senin ferman-berindir.” Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/87.

³¹⁷ “Acem serhaddinde ne işlerlerse işlesinler deyü istimâletler verilir”

³¹⁸ “göreyim seni. Acem serhaddinde nice gazâlar edersin”

³¹⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/188.

³²⁰ *mütesellim*

³²¹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/88. Scutari is the city overlooking Constantinople across the Bosphorus, the first way station on the journey to the east.

arrival along the entire road of six-hour's march.³²² The display was nothing short of a military procession that a wartime marshal would stage at the way station of Erzurum en route to the Iranian combat zone.

At this point, it should also be said that in 1645, the tributary government of Basra had suffered incursions coming from the Iranian side.³²³ This development prompts a revisiting of the real Ottoman motives behind the mobilization at Erzurum. Abaza Mehmed Pasha was an anti-janissary figure who had rebelled and marched to Constantinople with an army upon hearing Osman II's regicide; in this coup-d'état the janissaries had played a prominent role. Later, Murad IV had pardoned him and restored his honor. Some trouble that might have potentially been caused by his resurgence must have alarmed the dignitaries at the capital, which justifies the taking of extraordinary military measures. However, İbrâhim's words of benediction to Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha suggest that there was more to the Padishah's creating the pasha a marshal than just the Abaza Mehmed affair. Official chroniclers and Constantinople-centered histories do not speak of a contention with Iran. On the other hand, the Padishah's benediction to Defterdarzâde Mehmed is too explicit to leave no room for ambiguity or misunderstanding. The possibility of a transgression by the Safavid military was openly mentioned and, in that case, Defterdarzâde was specifically told which outside-Erzurum troops he would have under his command and how far he would be permitted to advance on Iranian territory as the Ottoman marshal of a potential war. The silence of all other sources in this issue leads to the conclusion that before the rumors eventually proved false, it had been calculated that if Abaza Mehmed Pasha entered the Ottoman Empire and seized Erzurum, the Shah could take advantage of the lack of authority in this key province, or at least one of the Shah's frontier governors might

³²² Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/103.

³²³ Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 119.

cooperate with Abaza Mehmed. In any case, the rumors proved false and a potential friction between the empire and Iran did not materialize. Yet, the military activity in Iran across the border in Azerbaijan and the Persian Gulf, which the Porte seems to have been monitoring, resulted in the continuation of mobilization measures.

As one of the largest, richest, and strategically located provinces of the empire, Erzurum, like Baghdad, was extremely important with regards to Ottoman-Safavid relations. Since the 1620s, the Porte had boosted its presence there by increasing the number of Sublime Court troops stationed at the fortress of Erzurum, furnishing it with strong artillery and using it to store supplies³²⁴ for the maintenance of the garrison during long sieges or for provisions to the army during campaigns. The square-shaped fortress itself was large and made of stone. double-walls and a moat surrounded the well-fortified and solid citadel. By 1646, the military build-up was especially strong at the side looking to the direction of Tabriz in terms of artillery.³²⁵ Since the sixteenth century, it was also a site of second-rate gunpowder production.³²⁶ On his Iranian campaign (1635), Murad IV had additionally established a small artillery-foundry to cast siege and fortress guns. Sublime Court troops garrisoned the fortress, while the province maintained a sizable cavalry reserve.³²⁷ Thus, along the Ottoman-Safavid border stretching from Georgia to the Persian Gulf, Erzurum was one of the sites where the empire had invested the most and concentrated its military build-up. As authority and order in Erzurum were regarded as essential to the Sublime Porte's control over foreign policy concerning the Safavids, even a small possibility of unrest at the provincial capital could trigger immediate reaction from Constantinople. We can indeed observe such a reaction in the affair of 1646-1647.

³²⁴ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/105.

³²⁵ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/105-106, 108.

³²⁶ Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 128; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/104.

³²⁷ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/107.

The strategic counterpart of Erzurum at the Iranian side was the province of Çukursa'd with Erivan as its capital. From the north of the empire, it accessed Safavid Armenia and Azerbaijan. It was regarded as a politically prominent province, and just as the governors-general of Erzurum could correspond, negotiate, and cooperate with Safavid authorities across the border, the governor-general of Çukursa'd had the authority to do so with the Ottoman side.

By 1646, the single-walled fortress of Erivan seemed firm and solid. It was encircled in part with moat and in part with crenellation, manned by royal troops, and well-furnished with artillery (left by the Ottoman garrison) and ammunition. The governor-general had his own household regiment, to which one must also add the provincial troops. Erivan's available peacetime military force numbered slightly less than that of Erzurum.³²⁸ An observer who had toured the entire Ottoman Empire and the Iranian west assessed that against a potential Ottoman siege, it could hold no longer than seven days. The blows dealt by artillery fire during Murad IV's siege of 1635 were still visible on the ramparts.³²⁹ The walls and towers themselves looked rather irregular due to the fortress's location on a steep cliff, but this made it extremely difficult to conquer. By 1673, the garrison troops would number 2,000. Lacking bastions and battlements, the walls only offered the artillery placed on their terraces as a defense. The redoubt Keçikale placed on a hill 1,000-feet to the north also supported the fortress.³³⁰

³²⁸ Evliyâ Çelebi indeed provides numbers (Erzurum Sublime Court Corps – 2,500; Erzurum governor-general household – figure missing; Erzurum timariots – 14,000; Erivan royal troops – 3,000; Erivan governor-general household – 3,000; Erivan provincials – 7,000. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/107,143. The renowned traveler's observations are a mine of information. However, as a rule, the figures he provides must be approached with caution as he was prone to exaggerating numbers. Yet, these figures can still be useful for comparison purposes.

³²⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/143.

³³⁰ Jean Chardin, *Chardin Seyahatnâmesi: İstanbul, Osmanlı Toprakları, Gürcistan, Ermenistan, İran 1671-1673*, trans. Ayşe Meral, ed. Stefanos Yerasimos (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2013), 257-258.

By coincidence, a development that occurred shortly after Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha's entry to Erzurum demonstrates how crucial the position of this province was in the empire's dealings with Iran, and how the Ottoman power based there could effectively be used.

Presumably towards the end of 1646, Mustafa Bey, Ottoman-vassal seigneur of Şuşik, a fort between Erzurum and the Iranian border³³¹, pillaged counties attached to Erivan across the border, in violation of the Pacification of Zuhab. The governor-general of Çukursa'd reported the violation to Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha by sending a letter accompanied with gifts for dispatch along with an emissary. The provincial council of Erzurum ruled in favor of a punitive campaign and put together an army of considerable size composed of provincial cavalry, half of the Sublime Court contingents stationed across the province, and the governor's private troops. The size of the gathered army was so greater than what was expected that the emissary of Erivan felt uneasy: this army, which had assembled upon his request, was simply too strong, even enough to besiege Erivan itself. Further east from Erzurum, at the way station of Gümüşlükümbet, Defterdarzâde held a military parade, which alarmed the Iranian scouts, who could observe the event from three different directions.³³²

The assembled army besieged Şuşik and forced the garrison to capitulate on the second day. The palace, estate, herds, and armory of its seigneur, Mustafa Bey, were in part plundered by the victors and in part confiscated. Mustafa Bey, however, taking advantage of the darkness at the night before the capitulation, managed to escape and sought refuge at the fortress of Mekü that was currently under Safavid control. An Ottoman contingent pursued the seigneur, negotiated his extradition with the Safavid garrison at Mekü, took him over, and brought him to

³³¹ Located across the mountains to the south of River Aras. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/111.

³³² Although Evliyâ Çelebi's estimate of a total of 76,000 for the gathered army must be approached with caution, it still denotes the unexpectedly large size of this force. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/111.

Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha's headquarters. As punishment, his entire wealth was confiscated and his entitlement to the seigniory of Şuşik was abrogated.³³³

The fortress of Mekü was among those that the Pacification of Zuhab stipulated be demolished and demilitarized, and the Ottoman side had already carried out these stipulations. During the disorder caused by Mustafa Bey, the Safavids had manned the ruined fortress with a sizable garrison³³⁴ of musketeers from Mâzenderân. After the punitive campaign had ended, Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha received the emissaries coming from the governors-general of Çukursa'd, Karabağ, and Azerbaijan in audience. Defterdarzâde's own emissary Evliyâ Çelebi would accompany his three Iranian counterparts on their way back. In this mission, Evliyâ Çelebi was entrusted with conveying Defterdarzâde's letters of friendship and gifts. However, before the Iranian emissaries set off, Defterdarzâde inveighed them:

In the State of the House of Osman, we do not deem it proper to perpetrate acts in violation of peace. We have plundered the territory [and] country of Mustafa Bey and bestowed his fortress to another bey; as your xan of Erivan – Our brother – had complained from him, he was dealt with. Now, you should also perpetrate no acts in violation of peace, remove the troops that you put to the fortress of Mekü, and demolish it in line with the law of peace. If you do otherwise, I am currently the Monogram-drawing great marshal, I [will] plunder the climes of Erivan and Nahçıvan with sea-resembling legions³³⁵

The three Iranian emissaries raised no objection to Defterdarzâde's threat justified with pacification conditions, and undertook to abide by them on the part of their masters.³³⁶

Clearly, Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha did not need an army of such size to safely undertake this punitive campaign; a much smaller contingent would have sufficed. Therefore,

³³³ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi*, 2/114-115.

³³⁴ According to Evliyâ Çelebi's habitually exaggerated figures, 2,000. See below.

³³⁵ “Âl-i Osman devletinde biz sulha mugâyir iş işlemeği revâ görmeyüp Şuşik Beyi Mustafa Bey'in ilin vilâyetin nehb ü gâret edüp kal'asın âhir beye ihsân etdük kim sizin Erivan xânı karındaşımız andan şikâyet etmeğile hakkından gelindi. İmdi sizler dahi sulha mugâyir iş etmeyüp Mekü kal'asına koyduğunuz askeri çıkarup kânun-ı sulh üzre kal'ayı harâb edesiz ve illa hâlen tuğrakeş serdâr-ı mu'azzamım. Deryâ-misâl asker ile Revan ve Nahşivan diyârların nehb u gâret ederim”

³³⁶ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 2/115.

what induced him to take such course of action must have been the monitored Safavid military activity across the border. Firstly, by mobilizing half of the Sublime Court troops stationed in the province, he made an explicit point. He only had the authorization to do so by virtue of holding office as both marshal and governor-general. Secondly, the military parade held at Gümüşlükümbet was directed at the Iranian audience more than providing of the means for ensuring military discipline. The Pasha knew well that Iranians could easily view that spot from across the border. Obviously, he wanted to demonstrate what an Ottoman marshal was capable of even in the absence of a state of war and of any extraordinarily deployed troops from outside the province. Ottoman dignitaries apparently did not know the reason behind the military activity across the border, so they seem to have opted not to communicate their concerns via official channels. Instead, they made a tour de force at the frontier to strategically daunt the Safavids. The threatening address Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha delivered during the audience of the emissaries indicates these points. Most importantly, that he could make this tour de force without committing any breach of peace meant that Defterdarzâde, so to speak, hit the bulls-eye, because the campaign was formally undertaken upon Safavid request to restrain the Ottoman-vassal Mustafa Bey from making plunder raids to Iranian territory,

The reason for the extension of Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha's marshalship in addition to the Safavid military activity at Azerbaijan and the Persian Gulf region, even after the falsity of the rumors about Abaza Mehmed Pasha had been proved, must have also been events connected with the Ottoman awareness of the diplomatic traffic between Venice, Poland, and Iran regarding an anti-Ottoman alliance. By 1646, within a year of its outbreak, the Cretan War had spread all over to Crete, the Aegean Sea including the islands on it, and the Dardanelles, compelling the empire to channel almost all of its available resources to the war effort. This redistribution of

sources would continue until the ultimate victory in 1669. By staging this tour de force from a far corner – Erzurum, the Sublime Porte must have aimed at giving Iran the impression that even when its armies were completely preoccupied in the Cretan War and all available funds were being allocated to the Venetian campaigns, the empire could simultaneously maintain and mobilize troops at the Iranian frontier which, if necessary, would alone suffice to fight a separate war.

In late 1647, the Porte feared the possibility that Abaza Mehmed Pasha could trigger turmoil in Erzurum with serious consequences for Iranian relations. Yet, such a possibility came closer to materializing in Baghdad. The current governor-general of the province, [Sâlihpaşalı] İbrâhim Pasha, had previously served the former grand-vizier Nevesinli Sâlih Pasha as treasurer, and was now his personal appointee at Baghdad. In September, admiral-in-chief Kapıcı Semiz Mûsâ Pasha, having just returned to the capital from the Cretan front, expected to be appointed grand-vizier, but instead, Tezkireci [Hezârpâre] Ahmed Pasha received the Padishah's seal. In order to send Semiz Mûsâ Pasha away from the center of power, the new grand-vizier appointed him as the new governor-general of Baghdad in early October. At first, Semiz Mûsâ Pasha resisted and attempted to govern the province via his proxy while trying to have his appointment annulled but was then forced to assume office in person. İbrâhim Pasha, already aware of his patron Nevesinli Sâlih Pasha's deposition and execution, refused to surrender office to his nominated successor. Although İbrâhim Pasha was on bad terms with the Baghdad Local Corps during his term in office, the Locals, after learning what happened, gave their support to the deposed governor-general's cause and prevented Semiz Mûsâ Pasha from entering the city. However, it should be noted that the Local Corps did not attribute its cause to rebellion against imperial authority, but rather declared securing İbrâhim Pasha's reconfirmation in office from

Constantinople as its purpose. Regardless, knowing only too well that this meant disobedience against the state, the Sublime Court troops disputed İbrâhim Pasha's and Local Corps' course of action. After the Sublime Court troops gathered, a fight broke out the two camps. The Sublime Court Corps, holding the citadel, garrisoned themselves there, and resisted all attacks from İbrâhim Pasha and the Locals.³³⁷

Following the stalemate, the Sublime Court officers, knowing that İbrâhim Pasha was a “simpleton”, feigned submission and invited him into the citadel. They then confined him there, while the Locals' attempts to break in were to no avail. This situation continued for about three months during which the Porte heard of the turmoil. At last, second-master-of-the-horse³³⁸ Cündî Mehmed Agha arrived in Baghdad, oversaw İbrâhim Pasha's execution, and reconfirmed Semiz Mûsâ Pasha in office. Along with İbrâhim Pasha, his lieutenant and principal officers who had participated in the disobedience were also executed. After reestablishing order, Semiz Mûsâ Pasha initiated the persecution of the pro-Nevesinli faction.³³⁹

Several notables of Baghdad who had aided İbrâhim Pasha's cause were subjected to confiscation, imprisonment, or exile. Semiz Mûsâ Pasha had many of the Local Corps members decommissioned, thrown out of the fortress, pursued, caught, or executed, accusing them of supporting the disobedience. Some Local troops among those that were under accusation and persecution crossed the River Diyale³⁴⁰ and escaped to Iran in order to save their lives.³⁴¹ Only after intervention by three other governors-general (Çavuşzâde Mehmed Pasha, Tayyazâde

³³⁷ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 1016-1017; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 240; *Naîmâ, Târih*, 1114.

³³⁸ *Mîrahur-ı sâni*

³³⁹ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 1084; *Naîmâ Târihi*, 1303-1305; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/173.

³⁴⁰ A tributary of River Tigris.

³⁴¹ Andersen, *Reise-Beschreibungen*, 156. The “sûltan” who “was dispelled by the Turks” from “Sangiar” and reached the Shah's encampment on 25 December 1648 during the Kandahar campaign must have been one of these exiles. He petitioned for residence permit via the Prime-Minister, and the Shah granted it.

Ahmed Pasha, and Câfer Pasha along with their own troops), order was reestablished and life returned to normal.³⁴²

The turmoil that the Ottomans had feared would break out in Erzurum materialized in Baghdad, instead. İbrâhim Pasha's disobedience might be interpreted just as an effort to remain in office and thus escape from the persecution that befell the Nevesinli Sâlih faction. In any case, such a crisis at Baghdad would have borne critical results if it could have escalated because having a consolidated central authority there was essential to the empire's dealings with Iran. Unlike it had in the Defterdarzâde affair, Constantinople did not use this uneasy situation to stage a justified and intimidating tour de force to Iran. This is because, to the Sublime Porte's relief, the crisis had been eliminated before it could boil over beyond Baghdad's fortress walls. Thus, a potential complication with Iran was avoided. Even the escape of some Local troops to Iran did not seem to bring about a problem of minor scale. We can thereby understand that those who had escaped had no political motive beyond personal attempts to avoid persecution. In the final analyses, if a problem had occurred, the new grand-vizier Tezkireci Ahmed Pasha had only himself to blame for having used the appointment of a governor-general to Baghdad, so critical a province regarding relations with Iran, as a mere tool in a factional strife to remove a political rival from the capital. Yet, the 1647 Baghdad affair also revealed the ease with which frontier

³⁴² Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 241; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 1017; *Naîmâ, Târih*, 1115. Kapıcı Semiz Mûsâ Pasha's persecution of his predecessor's co-factionalists in Baghdad was indeed an extension of the new grand-vizier Tezkireci Ahmed Pasha's empire-wide persecution of his own predecessor Nevesinli Sâlih Pasha's faction. Tezkireci Ahmed Pasha was a long-time enemy of Sâlih Pasha, and upon the latter's elimination, he initiated a persecution to root out the faction of statesmen associated with the former grand-vizier. İbrâhim Pasha was among Sâlih Pasha's closest co-factionalists. In the midst of the Baghdad turmoil, after Sâlih Pasha's execution, his brother and former governor of Buda, Nevesinli Murtazâ Pasha, was first lured with a feigned appointment to Baghdad. However, the concealed decree ordering his execution reached Diyarbakir before him, and was carried out. Sâlih Pasha's lieutenant Zülfikar Agha's estate was confiscated too. Again in 1648, Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha, who was from the same household with Sâlih Pasha, was transferred to the province of Kars as a part of the intrigue to execute him. To save his life, he joined insubordinate Varvar Ahmed Pasha's movement. Those members of Sâlih Pasha's faction and household who could escape persecution regrouped at Defterdarzâde's household. *Naîmâ, Târih*, 1128; Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 1017, 1032.

elements from both sides crossed the border to escape persecution by leaving their superiors' area of jurisdiction. This is a recurring theme in Ottoman-Safavid relations throughout the entire period examined here.

In 1648, back at the capital, Padishah İbrâhim had begun issuing a chain of orders in relation to his latest obsession, sable furs. Fascinated by the stories told by Voyvoda-kızı, a courtier and fortune-teller based in the district of Eyüp, he “invented” a new dress series for himself made exclusively of sable fur and jewels, ordered pavilions in Topkapı Palace and other imperial residences in Constantinople to be covered all around with sable fur, harassed dignitaries and officials by exacting on them enormous loads of this commodity to be delivered as presents, and even deposed the chief-comptroller just for failing to satisfy his sable fur craze. The imperial court's fur expenditure went so high that it caused a discernable cash flow from the empire to Russia and [temporarily] increased the price of this commodity eight to tenfold.³⁴³

As an extension of his sable fur craze and in imitation of Indian rulers' “elephant-riding” which he had heard from Voyvoda-kızı's stories, Padishah İbrâhim sent a private epistle to the Shah, placing an order of two elephants and 500 pieces of *serâser*-type golden cloth. Contrary to the diplomatic custom, the mission that conveyed this letter was composed of several imperial-guardsmen,³⁴⁴ one of whom must have been an unaccredited agent, which indicates the initiative's unofficial, private nature. The mission reached Abbas II's encampment in Bestam, as he was marching east for the Kandahar campaign.³⁴⁵ Hinting at what would soon become the official Ottoman policy, İbrâhim, in his “letter of friendship”, also congratulated Abbas II on his launch of the Kandahar campaign against Mughal India. The Shah, more than happy to learn of

³⁴³ *Naîmâ*, Târih, 1144-1146; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 231-233.

³⁴⁴ *bostancı*

³⁴⁵ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 454.

the Padishah's blessing of his campaign, which he appreciated in the carefully worded reply epistle that referred to the "preservation of union and . . . observing the necessities of peace,"³⁴⁶ indeed dispatched the expensively adorned elephants with along several elephant-riders, the precious cloths, and additional gifts with his envoy Mehmed-kulu Beyg Burun-Kasımoğlu.³⁴⁷ After entry to Ottoman territory from Baghdad but before reaching Constantinople, the envoy heard of İbrâhim's dethronement and imperial-prince Mehmed (IV, the Hunter)'s enthronement, which meant that he had to immediately notify his government.³⁴⁸

Presumably in the spring of 1648, during İbrâhim's last days on the throne, the Ottoman and Safavid courts struck a deal concerning India. During the 1640s, the Khanate of Bukhara was going through civil war as a result of a within-dynasty rivalry over the throne. Following the talks with the 1647 Mughal embassy, the Safavid government had first feigned neutrality in the Mughal-Bukharan conflict. However, in the summer of 1648, Abbas II and his prime-minister Halife-Sultan launched the campaign to take Kandahar from the Mughals, and they captured the city in 1649.³⁴⁹ Driven by the current diplomatic tensions between the Ottoman Empire and India, Padishah İbrâhim reportedly even gave his assent to the Safavid campaign and implied that he would not raise any objections if the Safavid armies proceeded beyond Kandahar towards India proper. The Porte's obvious neutrality and covert consent gave the Safavids free reign in this undertaking. However, they would be preoccupied until 1654 with defending their

³⁴⁶ Veli-kulu Şamlu, *Kıyasü'l-Hâkânî*, 313; "pâs-ı ittihâd u . . . riâyet-i levâzım-ı sulh", Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 454. Vahîd Kazvînî remarks that İbrâhim had indeed dispatched the letter to make sure that the gathered Iranian army was not targeting the empire's territory, and that the order of elephants was used as an excuse to create an occasion for correspondence: Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasname*, 97. In light of available sources and factual information, Vahîd Kazvînî's claim seems to have been fabricated for patronage concerns.

³⁴⁷ By inference from his name, he must have been the son of Yâdigâr Ali Sûltan Burun-Kâsım, the former chief of Mâzenderân[î musketeers] and thrice the Safavid wartime ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1615-1617, 1618, and 1619. See Küpeli, *Osmanlı-Safevi Münâsebetleri*, 117, 119, 122.

³⁴⁸ *Naîmâ, Târih*, 1146; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 241-242; Karaçelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, ed. Nevzat Kaya (Ankara: Türk Târih Kurumu, 2003), 26; Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasnâme*, 98.

³⁴⁹ Roemer, "The Safavid Period", 299; Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*, 45, 123-124. Iranian military would be preoccupied with defending this acquisition from successive Mughal sieges.

reconquest from successive Indian sieges.³⁵⁰ It is important to note that the Kandahar campaign, having been decided on as early as Safi's last years on the throne, entered the agenda of the Safavid court as the direct result its assurance that after the Peace of Zuhab, there would be no prospects of hostilities with the empire.³⁵¹

We do not have any Ottoman-Safavid correspondence that could shed light on the nature of the deal struck and the negotiations that led to it. Nor do we know of any mission exchanged between the courts that might have facilitated these talks. The available information only allows us to take into account the possibility that İbrâhim struck the agreement with Abbas II concerning the Kandahar issue and that this agreement was made either in writing via his private epistle to Abbas II in which he had placed an order of elephants and luxury cloths, or, as the least likely possibility, orally via the unaccredited agent that carried this epistle.

On 8 August 1648, a coup d'état in the capital dethroned İbrâhim and enthroned his six-year-old son, imperial-prince Mehmed. This coup was indeed the result of a series of the arbitrary decrees, bizarre requests, uncalculated appointments, wasteful expenditures, and highhanded executions that İbrâhim had commanded over the course of his eight-year reign. All of these had accumulated, leading to a general sense of insecurity regarding life, office, and property among the statesmen. Eventually, a triumvirate of generals from the Janissary Corps assumed the leadership of the coup, dethroned İbrâhim, enthroned imperial-prince Mehmed, and appointed a new grand-vizier. At times by calling upon puppet grand-viziers and at times by directly assuming this top office, the "Agha-triumvirate" would control the situation in

³⁵⁰ Naimur Rahman Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1986), 57-58, 90; Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 124.

³⁵¹ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 305-306.

Constantinople in harmony with and under the regency of empress-mother Mahpeyker Kösem Sultan until 1651.³⁵²

At the time of Mehmed IV's enthronement, the crisis originating from the dynastic civil war in the Khanate of Bukhara had reached to a peak. Nezir Muhammed Khan, who had first thought Padishah İbrâhim would not help him and thus had not asked for his support, eventually had sought assistance after the Mughals occupied Balkh instead of coming to his aid. Meanwhile Iran, despite the Khan's taking refuge there, did not provide concrete help. In the letter delivered by his ambassador in Constantinople on 30 March 1649, Nezir Muhammed Khan acknowledged that he had made the mistake of believing he could receive concrete help from Iran without seeking Ottoman support, and asked the Padishah to intervene on his behalf in cooperation with the Shah.³⁵³

Without waiting for the arrival of the conventional accession embassy, an imperial epistle was sent in April 1649 to Abbas II in the name of the new padishah, seemingly forwarded with an unaccredited agent. The Shah was informed of the writing of the imperial epistles inviting Nezir Muhammed Khan and his son Abdülaziz Khan to bring an end to the dynastic strife. Reconfirming the peace and referring to the friendly relations between the Ottomans and the Safavids, the Shah was asked to cooperate in mediating in the Bukharan conflict and consequently to repatriate the Uzbek refugees that had sought asylum in Iran from the dangers of

³⁵² For more details, see Halil İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye II – Tagayyür ve Fesad (1603-1656)* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2014), 251-290; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi* vol. 3/1, 223-259. For a more recent treatment of Mahpeyker Kösem Sultan's political weight, see Murat Kocaaslan, *Kösem Sultan. Hayâtı, Vakıfları, Hayır İşleri ve Üsküdar'daki Külliyesi* (İstanbul: Okur Kitaplığı, 2014), 25-70.

³⁵³ J. Audrey Burton, "Relations between the Khanate of Bukhara and Ottoman Turkey, 1558-1702," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 5, no.1-2, (Winter 1990-1991), 99-100.

war. The Shah was also kindly requested to command his eastern frontier governors to stay on good terms with Nezir Muhammed Khan.³⁵⁴

The degree of urgency attributed to the Bukharan crisis and the positive role that Abbas II was expected to play are evident from the manner the epistle was sent. The Sublime Porte knew well that the accession embassy was already on its way to Constantinople. This issue could have been inserted as a subject in the prospective imperial epistle reconfirming the Peace of Zuhab or discussed during the negotiations that would take place with the incoming Safavid ambassador. It is highly possible that, from the Porte's point of view, this epistle, although addressed to the Shah, was a part of the correspondence concerning Bukhara and not necessarily its relations with the Safavids. That the notification of Mehmed IV's accession is not found in this epistle means that the change of ruler was communicated with an earlier writing, or maybe orally, via a separate unaccredited agent. This fact further supports the possibility that the requests made from the Shah in this epistle were regarded as otherwise unrelated to Ottoman-Safavid relations.

In the meantime, the Safavid envoy Mehmed-kulu Beyg Burun-Kasımoğlu had received the new letters and updated mission instructions in accordance with the occasion of accession. He reached Constantinople on 2 June 1649. During his audience on June 8 following the customary Imperial Council session, he presented the Shah's epistle and lavish gifts. The envoy also delivered the former padishah İbrâhim's order of two elephants and golden cloths, his

³⁵⁴ *Mecmua-i Mekâtib*, ff. 68b-70a; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât-ı Siyâsî-yi İrân ez Sâl-i 1038 tâ 1105*, ed. Abdülhüseyin Nevâî (Tahran: Bünyâd-ı Ferheng-i İrân, hs.1360), 203-205. For the Porte's attempt to coordinate with India in order to bring an end to the Bukharan civil war, see Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations", 56-57.

original mission objective. The renewal of the peace became official during the envoy's short stay in Constantinople. On June 22, the Porte issued his permission to depart.³⁵⁵

It seems that the legation did not negotiate or strike any deal with the Ottoman court other than the renewal of peace. The 1646 Erzurum affair, which was dealt with by Defterdarzâde Mehmed Pasha, had apparently aroused no hostility though the empire had boosted its presence at the frontier through an intimidating display of might as its direct result. Likewise, the 1647 Baghdad affair, which could have escalated into a crisis potentially involving in also Iran but was nipped in the bud, apparently had not become matter of contention. The same goes for the correspondence between Iran and Venice from 1645 to 1647 and the proposal of an anti-Ottoman alliance that the Shah had kindly rejected. That such talks, even if they took place, did not leave written records provides evidence that both sides were satisfied with the current state of affairs and did not deem any matter of contention worthy of bringing forth in the face of the potential complications which would be born out of it. Regarding the anti-Ottoman alliance in the Cretan War, the Safavids' manner of refusal must have convinced the Sublime Porte that its eastern neighbor had no intention at all of reassuming hostilities. In the same manner, the Safavids acquiesced in considering the Ottoman tour de force at the Armenian-Azerbaijani frontier a legitimate measure. They must have been daunted by this display and thus become convinced not to show any form of uneasiness.

With an eye to the war with Venice, the 1650s were more exhausting than the 1640s for the empire. Crete had almost been completely conquered by Ottoman armies under the marshalship of Deli Hüseyin Pasha, however, the Venetian garrison at Candia, the island's

³⁵⁵ Abdurrahman Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyi-nâme*, ed. Fahri Ç. Derin (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2008), 20; Karaçelebizâde, *Ravza Zeyli*, 26; Vecîhî, *Târih*, f. 44a. Mehemed-kulu Beyg Burun-Kâsımoğlu's departure might have been delayed until as late as January 1650. Karaçelebizâde, *Ravza Zeyli*, 31.

capital, continued to put up resistance.³⁵⁶ With the regular fleet support Venice received from the Papacy, Spain, Malta, and Florence, the naval war turned into a confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and the Catholic alliance.³⁵⁷

As the Cretan War continued, the news of turmoil at Van reached Constantinople in Spring 1651, which reported that Iranian troops were approaching the borders of this province. As an initial measure, additional janissaries were dispatched to reinforce the garrison. In his report, governor Mehmed Emin Pasha stated that Süleyman Bey, seigneur of Hoşab, had undertaken large-scale plunders in Amuk, Erciş, Ahlat, and Adilcevaz, robbed traveling merchants from Iran, and illegally withheld in the region the collection of the poll-tax from which the salaries of the Local Corps at Van were to be paid. Mehmed Emin Pasha enjoyed the favor of janissary chief-of-staff Çelebi Mustafa Agha, and had paid a large amount of money for this appointment. He was also on good terms with the inhabitants of Van. However, when the inquiries yielded that the accusations had indeed been slanders originating from the governor's personal grudge against Süleyman Bey, the province of Van was conferred upon Sarhoş İbrâhim Mehmed Pasha.³⁵⁸

The reports of alleged Iranian military movement across Van were seemingly ungrounded or not directed against the empire. In any case, this seemingly false report draws attention to the potential importance of Van, which was otherwise administratively and militarily overshadowed by Erzurum and Baghdad along the empire's frontier facing Iran. It also shows

³⁵⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 327-338.

³⁵⁷ İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 2, 321.

³⁵⁸ Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 1083; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1289, 1303. Sarhoş İbrâhim Mehmed was the former head of the imperial-guard (*bostancıbaşı*), who had carried out the execution of the grand vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha. Murat Yıldız, "Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Bostancı Ocağı" (PhD diss., Marmara Üniversitesi, 2008), 369; also see Murat Yıldız, *Bahçivanlıktan Saray Muhafızlığına Bostancı Ocağı* (İstanbul: Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2011).

that despite heavy investment elsewhere, the empire was always ready to take measures in some manner against even the weakest rumors of any Iranian military activity.

By the 1650s, following the 1642 and 1646 repairs³⁵⁹, the fortress of Van stood as one of the principle sites of the empire's military and political concentration at the frontier overlooking Iran. The twofold outer walls of stone surrounded the city and the fortress from three directions, while the fourth was naturally protected by a hill of giant rocks on which the citadel stood. A lower, crenellated rampart and the moat in turn surrounded the outer wall.³⁶⁰ The rocky hill also contained hundreds of caves, which were used to store cannonballs, gunpowder, various artillery equipment, muskets and musket-parts, grenades, melee weapons, bows and arrows, crossbows, trebuchets, etc. along with a variety of durable provisions. The artillery placed atop the fortifications protected the fortress against approaching enemies from water and land. With consideration for the possibility that the enemy might approach the foot of the hill, Süleyman the Magnificent had had holes opened in many of the caves, which were then used just like artillery-holes in galleons. Another floor of caves was furnished with stone-throwing cannons. Of course, the walls, towers, and bastions were also furnished with artillery with consideration for the enemy in trenches. In total, the fortress was protected with four separate layers of artillery sets with specific ranges and targets. The main fortified gate, the four-tier Waterfront Gate³⁶¹ facing the pier at Lake Van, was located at the western side of the fortress; the northern side had triple walls garrisoning the Locals. The southern frontage where the Middle Gate³⁶² and the Stealthy Gate³⁶³ were located, as the best-protected direction by the natural rock, did not have any walls.

³⁵⁹ See the previous chapter

³⁶⁰ Orhan Kılıç, *XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Van (1548-1648)* (Van: Van Belediye Başkanlığı Kültür ve Sosyal İşler Müdürlüğü, 1997), 204-205.

³⁶¹ *Yalı Kapısı*

³⁶² *Orta Kapı*

³⁶³ *Uğrun Kapı*

It became the location of residence for the governor, the janissary commanding-officer, the fortress-keeper, and council officials in addition to housing the Sublime Court troops' barracks. From atop, a waterway provided the city with abundant fresh water even when under siege. As a rule, the Stealthy Gate remained shut and locked. The governor himself kept its keys and opened the gate only when a courier or spy came to inform him at nighttime. The eastern frontage, where the five-tier Tabriz Gate and the fort Kesikdeveboynu were also located, had fivefold walls, was furnished with an extraordinary artillery concentration, and was watched over by the Locals. Inside, tunnels connected the different sides of the rock, granting access between towers in order to easily support bombarded positions during a siege. The citadel was reserved only for the Sublime Court Corps and declared an exclusive imperial military zone; the Locals lodged themselves in the fortress outside the citadel. The military corps at the fortress constantly kept watch, including at night when disguised sergeants inspected the night duty. The fortress's internal warning mechanism that would instate full alert in the event of spotting the enemy was well exercised even sixteen years after the Pacification of Zuhab.³⁶⁴ Just like in other similar fortresses, the fortress-keeper³⁶⁵, to whom the entire Local Corps were subordinated, was chosen from among the Sublime Court Corps members serving in the garrison.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/115-121. Evliyâ Çelebi gives the number of the janissaries garrisoning Van during Melek Ahmed Pasha's term as 3,000 in six companies, commanded by Deli Abdi Ağa. The munitioners numbered 1,000 in three companies, and the artillerymen 1,000 in two companies. The Locals, composed of the *sağ-kol* under the command of Hüsrevpaşayeğeni Süleyman Bey, *sol-kol* under Demircioğlu, *çavuşân*, *müstahfizân*, *cebeciyân*, *topçuyân*, *azebân*, and *hisar erleri* made up the total figure of 6,000, with an additional total of 6,000 stationed at the forts of Amık, Erciş, Adilcevaz, Ahlat, Tahtıvan, and Vestan in the province. Half of this 12,000-strong Local corps was to be mobilized for offensive operations. To this total, Evliyâ's figures of 3,000 timariots and further inflated numbers of troops coming from the fiefdom-counties of Hakkari, Mahmudi, Pinyaşi, and the fiefdom-principality of Bitlis should be added. Evliyâ compares the discipline and perfection of the military class in Van only to Kars in the east and to Egri, Buda, and Bosnia in the west. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/122-126.

³⁶⁵ *dizdar*

³⁶⁶ see İE.AS. 917 for the exposition (*arz*) to the Porte by governor of Van Abdullah Pasha, processed on 10 July 1677.

False rumors concerning the border at Van aside, there had indeed been a real escalation of tensions at the border in the vicinity of Bagdad, though not of major scale. On 7 November 1649, the Ottoman customs-superintendent inspected an entering Iranian caravan accompanied by some German merchants, priests, and travelers at the customs border post of Pâdişah Bridge, located exactly on the Iranian-Ottoman border. When the superintendent wanted to search the German priest more rigorously than was normal because he suspected that the jewelry the priest carried could be merchandise rather than personal belonging, a conflict broke out between the caravan group and the customs personnel. Eventually, the entire group was arrested, while its wares and personal belongings were put under temporary injunction. The governor-general of Bagdad suspected Jürgen Andersen, who travelled along with the caravan on his way back to Germany from Iran, of espionage after finding out that he carried a passport issued by the Safavid government. It was supposed that he had acquired it thanks to his undeclared service to the Shah. The governor personally interrogated Andersen, who declared his intent to return to “Christendom” and not to travel again to Iran. When this declaration was coupled with Andersen’s courtly speech appropriate for the governor’s dignity and expression of gratitude in Turkish, which he had acquired during his stay at the Safavid court, he was set free, his belongings were restored, and he was equipped with an Ottoman passport, a horse, and travel allowance.³⁶⁷

Though there was not concrete evidence for it, the Ottoman customs-superintendent suspected that a joint German-Iranian espionage activity was underway. By this time, the

³⁶⁷ He departed on 24 December 1649. Andersen, *Reise-Beschreibungen*, 164-166. In Andersen’s travelogue, the name of the governor is given as İbrâhim, 167-169. However, if the dates he provides are correct, then the actual governor should have been Nogaypaşazâde Arslan Pasha. İbrâhim may have been his lieutenant, as suggested by the title of “agha” used in Andersen’s address in Turkish: “Ey büyük ağa, Allah-ı Teâlâ seni saklasın ve bir gününü min gün eylesin”; the German translation (“Großer Herr / Gott bewahre dich / und mache dir einen Tag zu tausend Tage”) which Andersen himself provides is completely accurate. 166.

extraordinary postwar measures that applied at the Iranian frontier must have eased off considerably. Though we do not have more insightful reports of this incident, it can be said that the rigor displayed by the customs-superintendent was not necessarily the result of such temporary measures. It was rather the manifestation of a general Ottoman policy that applied to any contact, or the attempt thereto, between Europe and Iran that the Ottomans could detect.

In 1651, concurrent with the spread of false rumors of Iranian military activity across the border by Van, couriers from Baghdad informed the capital of yet another Iranian military activity, this time aimed at this province. As an initial measure, additional janissaries from the center were dispatched to the fortress of Baghdad. Bosnevi Süleyman Efendi, the former judge of Baghdad who then happened to be in Constantinople, carried the news that a 15,000-strong army commanded by Kör Hüseyin Xanoğlu had been deployed at Huveyze. Viceroy of Basra Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha's spies and merchants coming from the region reported that the objective of this expedition was to pillage the outskirts of Baghdad and carry away that year's harvest. According to them, the Shah, under the pretext of going on the Kandahar campaign, was amassing troops and provisions in order to launch an offensive in the autumn. Thus, they reported it had become necessary to inform the Grand-Vizier to ask for the dispatch of reinforcements as soon as possible.³⁶⁸

Indeed, this sense of threat was not out of apprehensiveness. Neither was Kör Hüseyin Xanoğlu's contingent sent to pillage the outskirts of Baghdad an isolated case, nor were the rumors of a royal campaign against Iraq false. By June 1651, Abbas II set off from Isfahan to personally lead his forces with the aim of taking Basra, promising to launch the actual campaign after observing Ramadan [18 August - 16 September]. If Basra could be taken, the Shah would

³⁶⁸ Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1289.

then move northwards with the objective of capturing Baghdad. The attack was only halted by the Shah's necessity of responding to the Mughal operations aimed at Kandahar, which forced the Shah to march back towards Isfahan.³⁶⁹ Again for 1651, the Ottoman official chronicler recorded that "contrary to the conventions, . . . the Shah of Ajam sent an emissary to the King of Poland, and a reputable infidel named Pruska also went to the Shah with an epistle from the King."³⁷⁰ The Ottoman government found the dispatch of this mission quite unusual³⁷¹, however, it could not ascertain the intent behind the initiative or the content of the correspondence.

Due to Basra's status as *tributary-dominion*³⁷² within the Ottoman system, we are not in a position to know which of these several courses of action Abbas II was planning to take with his projected attack on Basra. It might have been to declare war on the Ottoman Empire, to present the case as a punitive campaign in retaliation to border violations by an unruly Ottoman vassal, or to claim that Basra's tributary status did not necessarily make it Ottoman territory meaning an intervention against it would not constitute a violation of Ottoman sovereignty. In either case, Abbas's projected Basran campaign did not materialize, but the preceding mobilization alarmed the empire's officials at Baghdad, who in turn informed the capital of the developments as intelligence came in. The Iranian-Polish exchange of emissaries and letters, on the other hand, must have only increased the suspicions at Constantinople vis-à-vis Abbas II's intentions. However, without a materialized attack or concrete evidence, the Sublime Porte contented itself by staying on full alert, without displaying hostility that could be interpreted as aggression by the other side.

³⁶⁹ Willem Floor and Mohammad H. Faghfoory, *The First Dutch-Persian Commercial Conflict: The Attack of Qeshm Island, 1645* (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2004), 183-184.

³⁷⁰ "Hilâf-ı âde . . . şâh-ı Acem Leh kralına elçi gönderip kral tarafından dahi Pruska nâm bir mûteber kâfir nâme ile şâh tarafına gitti."

³⁷¹ Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1374.

³⁷² *hükûmet-mülkiyet*

In 1653, Abdürrahim Bey, viceroy of Basra Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha's relative and emissary, was received by Abbas II in Mâzenderân together with a group of other missions at provincial and state level, which also included Imereti and Mingrelia, Ottoman-tributary Georgian principalities. Abdürrahim Bey brought gifts and a letter from his master.³⁷³ Although we do not know what he orally conveyed to the Shah or what the content of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's letter was, it seems probable that the latter made an attempt to secure Safavid protection, or even suzerainty, in the case of a showdown with the Ottomans on the tributary status of Basra. By 1654, we observe the first full-blown crises in the dominion of Basra that would preoccupy the Porte for a considerably long time, while at the same time making relations with the Safavids more fragile than was the case during the 1640s.

After Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha succeeded his father (Ali) as viceroy of Basra, both of his uncles, Ahmed Beğ and Fethi Beğ, disputed his succession. Their contention seems to have originated from personal grudges rather than from Hüseyin's style of governance. The new viceroy's ill-treatment of his uncles, whom he no doubt saw as potential contenders, pushed them to seek asylum in el-Hasa. Theseafter, with a letter secured from its viceroy, Mehmed Pasha of Benî Hâlid, these two traveled to Baghdad in order to submit their case to the governor-general, Kara Murtazâ Pasha. Following the complaints from the viceroy's conduct, the governor-general was asked to choose one of the Efrâsiyaboğlu uncles to be installed as the new lord-prince. In return, certain revenues of Basra would be allocated to the provincial treasury of Baghdad and Kara Murtazâ Pasha would also make personal profit. To take advantage of the double opportunity of making a fortune and expanding the directly governed province of Baghdad at the expense of the hereditary dominion of Basra, which would no doubt gain him the padishah's

³⁷³ Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasnâme*, 161; Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 511.

favor, Kara Murtazâ Pasha dispatched troops to Basra under the command of his lieutenant with the declared objective of deposing Hüseyin and installing Ahmed. By this time, however, both the notables and commoners seem to have favored the side of Hüseyin, while Ahmed and Fethi only enjoyed the support of the disenfranchised.³⁷⁴

Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha denied Kara Murtazâ Pasha's lieutenant admission to the dominion's capital. The latter had to return empty-handed but Hüseyin gave his uncles two subgovernorates in the dominion as compensation. This must have been a delaying tactic. A while later, Efrâsiyaboğlu princes Ahmed Beğ and Fethi Beğ entered the dominion's capital. After a short period of good conduct, Hüseyin conspired to assassinate his uncles, but they fought against the assassins and saved their own lives. Peacemakers interceded, and in accordance with the solution had found, the uncles were exiled to India. However, on their way to India, they escaped from the ship and again found shelter at the court of the viceroy of el-Hasa, who wrote another letter to Kara Murtazâ Pasha in order to have him intercede on behalf of the exiled Efrâsiyaboğlus. In a letter to Constantinople, Kara Murtazâ Pasha accused Hüseyin of tyranny against the inhabitants and related that they had sent collective-petitions in support of the installment of one of the uncles. He also mentioned which revenue items were to be redirected from the Basran treasury to that of Baghdad and the Central Treasury respectively. Convinced of the justifications and promises, the Grand-Vizier commanded Kara Murtazâ Pasha to install Efrâsiyaboğlu Ahmed Beğ as the new viceroy and to arrest Hüseyin.³⁷⁵

Upon the arrival of the grand-vizierial mandate³⁷⁶, the governor-general of Baghdad invited the two Efrâsiyaboğlu princes to Baghdad, who happily rushed thereto, and announced

³⁷⁴ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 249; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1626.

³⁷⁵ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 249; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1626-1627.

³⁷⁶ *buyrultu-yı/fermân-ı âlî*

the launch of the military campaign in the late summer of 1654. He gathered his private troops and the Baghdad Locals, reinforced them with artillery, and dispatched them to Basra under the command of his lieutenant (Ramazan Agha). A few days later, before the army entered the borders of Basra, he left Baghdad to personally assume the command at Arca, recently annexed from the dominion to the province. Daunted by the might of Kara Murtazâ Pasha's army, and with hopes of earning rewards under the prospective new leadership, countryside notables and tribal-chieftains in the dominion did not put up much resistance as the troops marched upon the capital, occupying some positions and laying waste to others. Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha initially had the fortifications of the city strengthened and he reinforced his troops both in number and in equipment. However, seeing that he had no power to resist the approaching army and that his troops were reluctant to fight against those of Kara Murtazâ Pasha, which represented Ottoman imperial authority, he took his movable fortune and fled to Iran on September 26 with the assistance of a friendly tribe. After the 7,000-strong garrison of Basra surrendered unconditionally to Kara Murtazâ Pasha on September 28, the latter entered the city with a pompous procession. The Basran notables also participated in the procession, by doing which they displayed their approval of Efrâsiyaboğlu Ahmed Beğ's appointment. On September 30, Kara Murtazâ Pasha invested Ahmed Beğ with a robe of honor and installed him to viceroyship.³⁷⁷

Prior to escaping to Iran, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin had written Abbas II a letter with which he asked for military support in return for bringing Basra under Safavid suzerainty. The Shah, ruling out any violation of peace with the Ottoman Empire, did not even send a reply.³⁷⁸ If stopped at this point, Basra's ties to the empire could have stably remained stronger than before

³⁷⁷ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 250; Rudi Matthee, "Basra," 65-66.

³⁷⁸ Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 531; Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasnâme*, 178

as a result of the abovementioned fait accompli. However, as all sources agree, Kara Murtażâ Pasha's inappeasable greed for wealth and power turned the tide for the imperials.

As promised, Efrâsiyabođlu Ahmed Beđ confiscated and gave Kara Murtażâ Pasha the remaining estate of Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin. In addition to this, the governor-general of Baghdad received lavish gifts from the notables of the dominion. However, his insistence that Ahmed Beđ and Fethi Beđ bring him the merchandise stored at the fortress of Kapan ebbed the flow for the imperials. Not lending an ear to the strong opposition coming from these Efrâsiyabođlu princes, who had warned against the sedition that would arise from oppressing civilian merchants, Kara Murtażâ Pasha gave them a contingent of troops and ordered the confiscation to be carried out. At the same time, he placed artillery in front of the viceroy's palace and had his military band perform there. Executions of those affiliated with the previous lord-prince followed: in early October, Mustafa Bey (subgovernor of el-Jazair), Kadir Bey (former subgovernor of Kapan), [Efrâsiyabođlu] Abdullah Kâşî (Hüseyin's uncle), and several other inhabitants along with a few Baghdad Locals accused of oppressing the inhabitants were all put to death. These shows of strength further alienated the inhabitants of Basra from Kara Murtażâ Pasha. After the shipments of the confiscated goods began to arrive, the populace understood that the persecutions were not limited to the pro-Hüseyin faction and that the new regime did not offer any security of property. To appease the protestors who rose against illegitimate confiscations, Kara Murtażâ Pasha this time had Ahmed and Fethi executed, the very same Efrâsiyabođlu princes who legitimized his presence there. He placed the blame of what had come to pass on them, and appointed his own lieutenant Ramazan viceroy. Nevertheless, the inhabitants, who were loyal to the House of Efrâsiyabođlu, knew who was responsible for the oppression so the executions caused only further provocation. The governor-general's greed and killings brought about the formation of a

coalition consisting of all power groups of the dominion: the Basran residents joined forces with tribes from the countryside to take the revenge of Ahmed and Fethi. The fortified positions of el-Jazair, Falluja, and Kurna (the principal fortress of the dominion), which had previously submitted to the imperials, revolted to overthrow their new masters.³⁷⁹

When the news of the gatherings and revolts spread, the inhabitants of Basra secretly invited Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha to come back from Iran. He immediately aborted his journey to Ishafan upon receiving the invitation and returned to assume the leadership of the movement. To support his efforts, he brought a convoy of freshly raised troops consisting of Safavid-vassal bedoin and several thousand Safavid-subjects. The Efrâsiyaboğlu faction first attacked the Ottoman garrison that had been left at the fortress of Kurna. To relieve the besieged, Kara Murtazâ Pasha sent infantry with a fleet, and over land, a 3,000- to 4,000-strong cavalry contingent put together from the Local Corps and his private musketeer companies. At the battle that broke out at the site Şeriş between the Efrâsiyaboğlu faction and the relief army, which was well equipped with gunpowder weapons, the marshy terrain decided the fate of the conflict to the advantage of the anti-imperial coalition before the fleet carrying Kara Murtazâ's infantry could reach Kurna. When an additional group of bedoins led by Muhammad Rashid arrived at the battle site and then charged, the imperials took flight. Again, before the arrival of the mentioned naval relief force, the bedoins assaulted and took the fortress of Kurna, whose garrison partly fled and partly fell prey to the massacre.³⁸⁰

After entering Iranian territory with hopes of securing some kind of support, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin had first headed to Devrak and Huveyze. Before marching towards

³⁷⁹ Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1627-1629; Matthee, "Basra," 66. Kapan, named after the the weighhouse at its harbor, was a major customs point for incoming and transit ships. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/309.

³⁸⁰ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 251-252; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1629; Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 532; Matthee, "Basra," 67.

Isfahan for an audience with Abbas II, he had sent his relative Abdürrahim Bey in advance with gifts and a letter repeating the request of aid. The Shah helped Hüseyin's cause³⁸¹ by apparently not ordering his provincial officials to prohibit Hüseyin from enlisting soldiers. However, in light of the fact that the campaign and the deposition were executed under grand-vizierial orders, a direct contribution to Hüseyin's cause could have most possibly led to an Ottoman-Safavid confrontation as it would come with the expectation that Basra would be transferred to Safavid suzerainty. The Shah's refusal to directly contribute must have been the result of his ultimate commitment to the current peace with the empire and the estimation that winning an unreliable vassal such as Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin would not be worth its consequence of attracting the empire's armies upon his domains. On the other hand, Kara Murtazâ Pasha's ill-treatment of the merchants, inhabitants, and the Ahmed-Fethi household may have justified the Shah's decision not to prevent Hüseyin from recruiting in Iran, as this ill-treatment violated the directives from the Grand-Vizier and continued despite the obedience and cooperation of these groups even after having secured the entire dominion of Basra.

At this point, the Local Corps withdrew allegiance from Kara Murtazâ Pasha, deserting him by departing for Baghdad. The apparent reason for the desertion was the resentment between the governor-general and the Locals that had been caused by their discontentment regarding the pasha's crackdown on them in reaction to their previous unruly behavior back in Baghdad. After a series of defeats, flights, and desertions, Kara Murtazâ Pasha – in order to save his life – left all the property he had brought along and appropriated so far. In accordance with the counsel they had received, the Basrans did not make an attempt on the governor-general's life, but instead gave him and other survivors horses to ride back to Baghdad. Setting off, Kara Murtazâ reached

³⁸¹ Vahîd Kazvîni, *Abbasnâme*, 178-179. For an alternative account of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's course of action after entering Iran, see Matthee, "Basra," 65.

the Locals at Arca. When the campaigners reached their provincial capital, the residents displayed their discontent with the governor-general, and the janissary garrison refused to admit him into the fortress. Lodging at the Fort Kuşlar, Kara Murtazâ Pasha petitioned Constantinople and was accordingly deposed on 8 July 1655 to be temporarily transferred to Aleppo. Back at Basra, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha sent his tributary presents to Constantinople and had himself reconfirmed to office.³⁸²

The return of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin to his domain and the later failure of the Baghdadi campaign, however, did not mean that Basra would return to its status quo. Kurna, which stood at the confluence point of the Tigris and the Euphrate, had been the principal fortified and garrisoned position protecting the city of Basra, but it was now permanently detached from the dominion and brought under direct imperial supervision as a *salyâneli* subprovince with its governor and judge appointed from the center. Apart from the governor's troops who were to be maintained by the subprovince's revenues, the imperial government garrisoned janissaries and artillerymen there. Basra itself, in addition to losing territory and revenue while being deprived of its principal fortress, was converted from a dominion to a hereditary-fiefdom³⁸³. Thus it became an autonomous province and no longer a tributary government. As a sign of the increased ties to the center, the governor (no longer viceroy) of Basra would pay quarterly taxes to the governor of Baghdad and annual taxes to the padishah and the grand-vizier. The judge residing in the city of Basra would be appointed from Constantinople.³⁸⁴ Despite the campaign

³⁸² Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 248, 252-254; Matthee, "Basra," 67. When Kara Murtazâ Pasha's household troops and the Locals reached the vicinity of Baghdad, they were so mired in mud because of having drunk from muddy ponds in order not to die of thirst in the desert, that their condition gave rise to the following proverb: "At the battlefield, I will turn your mouth into that of a Murtazâ-follower" [mahall-i harpte ağzını Murtazâlı ağzına döndürürüm], Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1630.

³⁸³ *yurtluk-ocaklık*. For more information on the dominions and fiefdom administrative units along the Ottoman eastern frontier, see Orhan Kılıç, "Ocaklık," *Türk Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 33 (2007): 317-318.

³⁸⁴ Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*. Published in Abubekir Sıddık Yücel, "Mühürdar Hasan Ağa'nın Cevâhirü't-Tevârihi" (PhD diss., Erciyes University, 1996), 294; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 1/85, 4/302-305

which did not end with full satisfaction, the imperial government must have been satisfied with Kara Murtazâ Pasha's performance in subjugating Basra, because we soon thereafter see him in Asia Minor commissioned as marshal to root out rebel pashas³⁸⁵, and later, find him first reconfirmed in this office and then reappointed to Baghdad.³⁸⁶

In less than a year of the first Basran affair, the Shah sent Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin an emissary, Yâr-Ali Xan. The occasion for this mission was most probably the confirmation of the altered status quo after the confrontation. This mission seems to have been a part of the Safavid diplomatic initiative to reconfirm friendly relations with the Ottoman Empire by recognizing the latter's sovereignty over Basra along with Basra's altered status, an initiative which also included the sending of an extraordinary embassy to Constantinople. Arriving in the frontline fortress of Böğürdelen, the mission processionally crossed the Shatt-el-Arab on galleys and boats into the city where it was saluted with cannon shots. In the council held, the Shah's letter was read aloud and gifts were presented. That Hüseyin received the gifts only after observing them one by one³⁸⁷ must be due to his painstakingness not to even implicitly enter into any transaction with the shah that would be contrary to his or his fiefdom's status within the Ottoman Empire.

The Sublime Porte must have perceived the presence of Iranians in Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's army as a provocation and an act of hostility, no matter whether Abbas II had directly provided them or only consented to recruitment from among his subjects. İpşir Mustafa Pasha,

³⁸⁵ For the rebellion led by Abaza Hasan and its suppression by Kara Murtazâ Pasha, see Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1805-1822; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 266-267

³⁸⁶ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 267-271; CV.ML. 2532; Râşid Mehmed Efendi and Çelebizâde İsmâil Âsım Efendi, *Târih-i Râşid ve Zeyli* vol. 1-2-3, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan, Yunus Uğur, Baki Çakır, Ahmet Zeki İzgöer (İstanbul: Klasik, 2013), 20; Mehmed Halife, *Târih-i Gilmâni*, f. 105a, published in Buğra Atsız, *Das Osmanische Reich um die Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Nach den Chronicken des Vecihi (1637-1660) und des Mehmed Halifa (1633-1660)* (München: Dr. Dr. Rudolf Trofenik, 1977).

³⁸⁷ The fortress of Böğürdelen was the frontmost point of Ottoman territory bordering the Safavids around Basra. Its name was indeed chosen with reference to its location and purpose for in Turkish *böğürdelen* means "flank-piercer" in the anatomical sense. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/312

who had arrived in Scutari on 25 February 1655 to personally assume the grand-vizierate to which he had been appointed several months earlier, was informed of the Iran-related developments at the southern frontier. En route to the capital from Aleppo, he had already submitted a summation³⁸⁸ to the Padishah reporting Iranian military activity across the border. Once at the capital, he appointed former grand-vizier Melek Ahmed Pasha to serve as governor-general of Van (which normally had plain governors), with the pretext that Iranian military activity there had necessitated that such an influential figure who had previously governed the empire attend to that province at this critical time. Upon Melek Ahmed's submission of concerns that the revenues of the office were not appropriate for a former grand-vizier and that the appointment was a factionalist move on the part of İpşir Mustafa to remove a potential rival from the imperial court, Mehmed IV himself penned the diploma creating Melek Ahmed Pasha marshal of Iran. Thereby, the padishah also gave his marshal appointment and deposition rights in all Asian provinces – an extraordinary authority as such appointments would usually not confer jurisdiction over Syria and Egypt in addition to Asia Minor, decorated the marshal with due regalia, and added that he himself together with İpşir Mustafa Pasha would soon depart at the head of the Imperial Army to join him at the front.³⁸⁹ İpşir Mustafa Pasha's real motive behind appointing Melek Ahmed Pasha to Van, however, was to counteract the latter's alleged lobbying against the former.³⁹⁰

Despite gatekeeper Yıldırım's delivery of the news of İpşir Mustafa's fall when Melek Ahmed's convoy reached Van,³⁹¹ the marshalship was not immediately called off. Melek Ahmed Pasha made his official entry to Van on 7 June 1655 with a pompous procession led by his court,

³⁸⁸ *telhis*

³⁸⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 1/133-134.

³⁹⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 11.

³⁹¹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 1/134.

household troops³⁹², and military band, joined by the Van Local Corps and Sublime Court Corps stationed there. At this point, the fate of the Basran affair between Kara Murtazâ and Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin, whose faction was reinforced by Iranian recruits, was still uncertain. To welcome the marshal, to whom they were subordinated, tens of thousands of troops from all fiefdom/regular counties and tribes of the province of Van also presented arms. After the welcome feast from the notables, Melek Ahmed Pasha held the “Padishah’s council”, as a marshal was the acting-grand-vizier, and hence, the Padishah’s absolute-deputy in this extraordinary office’s area of jurisdiction. At the council, he had his council-master Gınâyizâde Ali Efendi read aloud the imperial-writ empowering him, and immediately exercising his authority stemming from it in public, he pardoned a death sentence and carried out several others which had been previously ruled by the Imperial Council.³⁹³

Soon enough, perhaps with regard to a potential Iranian-Ottoman war, he attended to the military works. The earthen hill at the northern side of the fortress-rock piled up during several [Iranian] sieges throughout the past centuries could present a potential besieger [i.e. Iranians] with a favorable position to encamp. Melek Ahmed Pasha ordered his entire household troops and the Locals, summoned the province’s timariots and the fiefdom-subprovince seigneurs with decrees, and mobilized the urban inhabitants to discharge this earthen hill into Lake Van, declaring his orders and their efforts as service to the padishah.³⁹⁴ Later, he had the Tower of the Citadel Gate³⁹⁵ completely rebuilt to a condition stronger than before and placed long-ranged artillery to the crenels. Additionally, he upgraded the defensive works of Tabriz Gate to a firm

³⁹² *kapı halkı*, composed of *sekban* (infantry) and *sarıca* (cavalry) companies. See İ. Metin Kunt, *Sancaktan Eyalete. 1550-1650 arasında Osmanlı Ümerâsı ve İl İdâresi* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1978), 98-109 and Mehmet İpşirli, “Kapı Halkı” in *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 24 (2001): 343-344 for more information and further bibliography on pasha household contingents.

³⁹³ Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 4/109-112.

³⁹⁴ Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 4/112-113.

³⁹⁵ *İçkale-Kapısı Kulesi*

bastion. The new winder bridge that gave access to Tabriz Gate over the moat was raised up and chained to the wall every night as a routine security measure.³⁹⁶

It is important to note that the camp set up outside the fortress of Van to remove the earthen hill was referred to as the “army of Islam”. This is exactly what the Imperial Army would have been called when on campaign. Such naming could be easily justified with the governor-general of Van’s marshalship, a wartime measure. Indeed, the summons he had sent to provincial troops and seigneurs were for military service, even though there was no active campaigning announced. However, the army was soon put to use: Melek Ahmed Pasha’s punitive campaign during July 1655 against Koca Abdal Khan, viceroy of Bitlis who had not obeyed the summons, resulted in the installment of Koca Abdal Khan’s son as an Ottoman-friendly viceroy.³⁹⁷ Like the 1654 Basra campaign, the 1655 Bitlis campaign would soon constitute a matter of contention between the Ottomans and the Safavids, but in a different capacity.

After a while, gatekeeper-captain Benli Ömer Agha arrived in Van carrying mandates from the new grand-vizier, Kara Murad Pasha – formerly fifth-general of the Janissary Corps³⁹⁸ during the 1638 campaign of Baghdad. In these mandates, the latter spoke of his predecessor İpşir Mustafa’s designs to declare war on the Safavids and promises of promotion and additional revenues to Kurdish seigneurs at the frontier in order to encourage them to attack, which he in turn would use as pretext for the declaration of war. Seigneurs of Pinyanişi in the Province of Van, giving credence to İpşir Mustafa’s encouragements, had crossed the border from Şahgediği and looted sheep from the Safavid-subject tribes of Afşar and Dübülü. İpşir Mehmed Pasha had

³⁹⁶ Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 4/120-121.

³⁹⁷ Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâme*, 4/132-175.

³⁹⁸ *seksuncubaşı* [literally, chief-mastiffkeeper]

also disregarded the Shah's epistle of inquiry as to the reasons of the unrest along the frontier. In reaction to the cross-border raids and İpşir Mustafa Pasha's uncooperative stance, the Shah had the governor of Urûmiye, along with the governors of Çevlan, Biredos, Dümdümi, Dümbüli, and Salmas, raid the Ottoman-subject Pinyanişi, carrying away sheep to Urûmiye. Melek Ahmed Pasha's appointment as marshal outwardly materialized as a result of İpşir Mustafa's reaction to the cross-border strife which he himself had devised in order to create pretexts for his anti-Safavid policy. Now, Kara Murad Pasha ordered Melek Ahmed Pasha the peaceful settlement of the issue.³⁹⁹

Next, the marshal ordered Gınâyizâde Ali Efendi, the council-master of Van who had previously composed a letter to the shah when stationed in Baghdad['s provincial council], to "pen a pleasing, eloquent epistle" to the Shah, and separate letters to the governor-general of Azerbaijan, Kayıtmaz Xan, the governor of Urûmiye, Genc-Ali Xan Afşar, and to the subgovernors involved. In these letters, Melek Ahmed Pasha demanded the restitution of the looted sheep to Pinyanişi, and otherwise he threatened his addressee with "falling in with the legions of Van on the clime of Azerbaijan, and pillaging their territories [and] countries⁴⁰⁰". Around the same time, on 4 September 1655, Kara Murtazâ Pasha's gatekeeper [of the Sublime Porte] Ali Agha arrived with a letter written from his master to Melek Ahmed. It asked for Gürcü Temres Bey, Kara Murtazâ's brother, to be rescued. Gürcü Temres Bey, who did not speak Turkish, had been detained by the [Safavid] subgovernor of Dümbüli while traveling from

³⁹⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/176; Abdülkadir Özcan, "Kara Murad Paşa," in *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 24 (2001): 363-365.

⁴⁰⁰ "asâkir-i Van ile diyâr-ı Azerbaycan'a çöküp illeri vilâyetleri nehb ü gâret olunur"

Georgia on his way to join Kara Murtazâ after fifty years of separation. Kara Murtazâ Pasha also congratulated his addressee on his successful Bitlis campaign.⁴⁰¹

Once the letters were drafted, gifts chosen, and allowances distributed, a mission led by Sarı Ali Agha was sent to Isfahan for an audience with Abbas II. Another mission led by Evliyâ Çelebi set off to Urûmiye and Tabriz. Apart from the official matter, Evliyâ Çelebi was also to inquire into whether the governors he would visit were content with the Safavid regime, and whether they had a fondness or inclination towards the House of Osman. Melek Ahmed Pasha was paying special attention to the governor-general of Azerbaijan, Kayıtmaz Xan: the Iranian side, as the marshal told, had concerns about the allegedly secret motives behind the recent Bitlis campaign. For this reason, Evliyâ Çelebi was to brief Kayıtmaz Xan, who was to be treated with utmost dignity, on the justified reasons for the mobilization and operations.⁴⁰²

On 11 September 1655, the emissaries departed from Van.⁴⁰³ In the subprovince of Harîr, the second last way station from Van to the fortress of Urûmiye, the governor's lieutenant welcomed the Evliyâ Çelebi mission. The governor was a former Ottoman subject from the province of Şehrîzor who later had joined the Safavids. After deliberations, the lieutenant agreed to return his province's share of the looted sheep if the Shah would tell them to do so. Displaying extra courtesy and fondness to the Van mission because it had come to represent the empire, he explained that the governors of Çevlan, Afşarlı, Biredos, Enzeli, Habbane, and Harîr, all on the road from Van to Urûmiye, had been Ottoman dependents under the reigns of Ahmed I and Mustafa I, and came under Safavid sovereignty in 1622 at the early stages of the last Ottoman-

⁴⁰¹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/176-177, 201. Kara Murtazâ Pasha's gatekeeper [*kapıcı*] was welcomed into Van with a procession of 2,000 Van Local troops led by the marshal's lieutenant Yusuf Agha.

⁴⁰² The gatekeeper-captain Benli Ömer Agha was sent back to the capital with the assurance to the grand vizier that the collection would be made. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/177-179.

⁴⁰³ Evliyâ Çelebi's mission was escorted by a delegation led by Ali Agha, the representative of Kara Murtazâ Pasha. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/179.

Safavid war. During stops at these way stations, they all gave gifts to the Ottoman mission and allegedly, perhaps as a courtesy, said that they would prefer to be Ottoman vassals⁴⁰⁴.

Genc-Ali Xan Afşar, governor of Urûmiye, welcomed emissary Evliyâ Çelebi outside the city on the plain. The Evliyâ Çelebi mission attended the first meeting there fully armed, in ceremonial attire. The governor and the emissary met and exchanged words of courtesy on horseback, after which they rode together to the fortress. Beginning from an hour's distance to the fortress, troops and inhabitants held a parade. At the time of entrance, the Genc-Ali Afşar rode forward, and cannon-shots saluted the entry procession.⁴⁰⁵

After the feast, Evliyâ Çelebi gave Melek Ahmed Pasha's letter to Genc-Ali Xan Afşar at the provincial council session, where it was received in high esteem. After it was read aloud by the governor's chancellor, talks opened with the governor's complaint from the Pinyanişi's killings and raids which were contrary to the current peace. He added that after they heard the Pinyanişi raids across the border, they had informed the Shah, who in turn had written to the Padishah and İpşir Mustafa Pasha. When the Shah's initiative with İpşir Mustafa Pasha had not produced a result, the punitive campaign had been undertaken under the command of the governor-general of Azerbaijan. Evliyâ Çelebi had the grumbling sheep owners from Pinyanişi leave the chamber in order to discuss the matter privately with Genc-Ali Afşar.⁴⁰⁶ After going over the pacification clauses, the emissary said that the Iranians' rightful retaliation against the

⁴⁰⁴ The governor of Çevlan, a Kurd originally from Gâzikıran, held a feast for the delegation. The governor of Afşarlı was also a former Ottoman vassal who later defected to the Safavids. The governor of Harîr, a Turkish nobleman from the Oğuzs' Kızık clan, happened to be away hunting on the day the delegation passed from Harîr. To Evliyâ Çelebi, the governor of Enzeli said: "Hey kurbân-ı tu Osmanlı kayser-zemin!" and the lieutenant at Harir said: "Hey kurbân olayım Osmanlı sana!" All of these governors received separate letters. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/186.

⁴⁰⁵ In Hirmenşâhî, the last way station before Urûmiye, the mission sent a messenger to the xan's lieutenant to announce their arrival, who kindly instructed them to depart early in the morning from Hirmenşâhî and sent a welcome letter. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/187.

⁴⁰⁶ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/188.

raids should have been to arrest and deal with the violators, not to devastate Pinyanişi as a whole with a full-fledged army consisting of tens of thousands of men equipped with artillery and attended by numerous governors. Pacification regulations particularly stipulated that fielding artillery – even without firing it – and shooting muskets in company of a military band were violations of peace. Both sides had an understanding that the described provision applied exactly to the actual case. When the governor asked what he could do to compensate what had come to pass, Evliyâ Çelebi said:

Take no offence, . . . soon enough you see, Melek Ahmed Pasha gets his hands on the Resplendent Monogram and drives the 80,000[-strong] legions of the provinces of Diyarbekir, Erzurum, Ahıska, and Van, and devastates these climes. In particular, the felicitous Padishah has been saying: >>I shall campaign upon Ajam and conquer the fortress of Erivan which my uncle [Sultan] Murad Khan had taken<< and >>Ajam broke the peace and the pact by garrisoning troops in the fortresses of Mekü and Kotur, and now hit my country Pinyanişi<<. The Padishah is restless. . . . Hence, my xan, the consequences of this affair will get violent; immediately collect the sheep, deliver them to the pasha, and renew the peace before all [these] legions hit this clime. Otherwise, . . . the legions of Islam will not leave these climes for five to ten years; [in that case] may the Shah not address you with wiggling! Consult with provident, unbiased persons^{407 408}.

Genc-Ali Xan Afşar understood, or at least pretended to have understood, the seriousness of the situation. Hâce Nakdî, one of his council-masters, implied that the Ottoman reference to the Erzurum-Mekü affair of 1646 indicated that the empire might be on the lookout for justifiable pretexts to open hostilities, and advised in favor of eliminating the risk by returning the looted sheep. The first session ended when Evliyâ Çelebi reminded Genc-Ali Xan that on the

⁴⁰⁷ “incinme . . . hemen bir gün görürsün, Melek Ahmed Paşa tuğra-yı garrâya dest vurup bu madde için eyâlet-i Diyarbekir’i ve eyâlet-i Erzurum’u ve eyâlet-i Ahıska ve eyâlet-i Van’ı cümle seksen bin asker ile bu diyarlara çekip harâb u yebâb eder. Bâ-husus saadetlü pâdişah dâima, <Acem üzerine sefer etsem, emmim Murad Han’ın aldığı Revan kalesini feth etsem> ve <Acem sulhu bozup Mekü kalesine ve Kotur kalesine asker koyup ahid-şikenlik eyledi ve şimdi benim Pinyanişi vilâyetimi vurdu> diye pâdişah zaptolmayıp . . . İmdi xânım bu işin âkıbet-i kârî müşted olup cümle asker bu diyarı vurmada hemen koyunları tahsil edip paşaya teslim edip tecdîd-i sulh edesiniz. Ve illâ bu iş aykırı olursa . . . beş on yıl bu diyarlardan asker-i İslam çıkmayacak, şah tarafından size bir itâb-ı hitâb olmaya. Âkıbet-endiş bî-garaz kimseler ile müşâvere edin”

⁴⁰⁸ This private conversation began upon Evliyâ Çelebi’s request. The council members stayed in the chamber, but they only contributed to the negotiations when addressed. It was also the emissary’s proposal to compare the current incident with the articles of the Pacification of Zuhab. Council-masters Hâce Nakdî and Hacı Kurbân-kulu produced a copy of the pacification kept at the Urûmiye provincial chancery’s portfolio-desk. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/188-189. Even copies of nullified pacts were still preserved in provincial chancelleries; Evliyâ Çelebi reports seeing a copy of the peace-epistle of Nasuhpaşa (1612) in the archives of Sheikh Safî shrine in Erdebil, *Ibid.* 4/214.

road, he had already given Melek Ahmed Pasha's letters to the governors who had participated in the Iranian punitive campaign upon the Pinyanişi. The emissary asked his host to summon them to the council of Urûmiye in order to close the deal. After this first round of talks, the mission was quartered in the city with an escort led by a *dizçöken ağası*. In the next day's session, after receiving Melek Ahmed Pasha's gifts with esteem, Genc-Ali Afşar, recognizing Melek Ahmed's seniority in rank and, calling him "our vizier-father", agreed to summon the involved governors in order to restore the booty. The governors reported in at the council of Urûmiye on the third day. Along with 20,000 sheep, Evliyâ Çelebi's report to the marshal was dispatched to Van, with a promise to send the rest of the sheep as soon as possible.⁴⁰⁹

After the festivities involving hunting, polo-games, and feasts, Genc-Ali Xan Afşar came to visit Evliyâ Çelebi in his residence to inquire about Sarı Ali Agha's mission to Isfahan. Fearing that he would be accused by the Shah of harming bilateral relations, the governor panicked. On the third day of the talks, he immediately gave the emissary a considerable sum of money along with handsome gifts. The next shipment of 20,000 sheep was sent to the complainants along with an additional 10,000 as gift to Melek Ahmed Pasha's person. The Pinyanişi representatives, upon Genc-Ali Afşar's demand, went to the local court to receive a quittance, a copy of which they delivered to the governor. The second shipment was also accompanied by the emissary's report to the marshal. The delegation entrusted with the sheep and the letters to Melek Ahmed Pasha left immediately. The emissary also gave Genc-Ali Afşar a letter addressed to the governor-general of Azerbaijan registering what had come to pass. A separate letter from the Evliyâ Çelebi mission to Sarı Ali Agha was written with the intention of

⁴⁰⁹ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/189-190.

giving him an update about the peaceful settlement and the closing of the case before he reached Isfahan. Furthermore, it was sent to save Genc-Ali Xan Afşar from the Shah's fury.⁴¹⁰

Next, the Evliyâ Çelebi mission redeemed Gürcü Temres Bey, Kara Murtazâ Pasha's brother, from detention in Dömbüli. According to the Iranian subgovernor, he had detained Temres Bey upon receiving correspondence from the [Safavid] viceroy of Kartli who named the detained person a Bagrationi prince from Imereti escaping to Baghdad, adding that the empire might demand for his release from Iran. The subgovernor claimed that he had learned that Temres Bey and Kara Murtazâ Pasha were brothers only after putting him under custody. The hostage was delivered to the mission when Evliyâ Çelebi agreed to pen deeds registering the handover that would be produced before the Shah and the governor-general of Azerbaijan.⁴¹¹ On the eve of departing from Urûmiye for Tabriz, right after the receipts from Melek Ahmed Pasha for the incoming deliveries had reached the mission, an usher⁴¹² from Abbas II's court arrived to depose and arrest Genc-Ali Xan Afşar after confiscating his estate. The new governor Takî Xan arrived at Toprakkale immediately afterwards. Evliyâ Çelebi was present in Genc-Ali Afşar's council when the usher entered the chamber. Among the reasons for the deposition was his antagonism against the subjects and his non-proportional retaliation to Pinyanişi, which the Shah now claimed could harm relations with the empire. Abbas II's order was executed even though

⁴¹⁰ Responding to Genc-Ali Xan Afşar's inquiry into İpşir Mustafa Pasha's execution, Evliyâ Çelebi, most certainly with an eye to the prestige of the empire, claimed that the reason behind the execution was that İpşir had provoked the Pinyanişi tribes to violate the peace and this had in turn resulted in the counter-raid from Iran, and had tried to incite Mehmed IV to an Iranian war. Thus, he made the Padishah look so diligent on maintaining good relations with Iran that he had even sacrificed a strong grand-vizier to this end. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/190-192.

⁴¹¹ The governor of Dömbüli, originally from Maraş, welcomed the mission outside the city, and after shaking hands, they together rode back in with procession. Cannon-shots marked their entrance. In the council session, the governor received Melek Ahmed Pasha's, Kara Murtazâ Pasha's, and Genc-Ali Xan Afşar's letters, and gave gifts to the delegates. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/200-201.

⁴¹² *eşik ağası*

the emissary had produced the courthouse quittances and the receipts documenting the resolution of the conflict. The mission left Urûmiye on 2 October 1655.⁴¹³

The entrance to Tabriz was processional, as had been the case at the previous locations. Opening with the deliveries of the letters and gifts, the provincial council session held for the visiting mission gave Evliyâ Çelebi and Kayıtmaz Xan a forum to discuss Genc-Ali Xan Afşar's acts and fate. Kayıtmaz Xan argued that he had warned Genc-Ali Afşar not to provoke an Ottoman attack, but the latter had too much self-confidence due to the presence of his uncles at the royal court. When the emissary produced quittances and receipts, the governor-general took no further action against his deposed inferior, and left the issue to the discretion of the Shah. For intercession, Evliyâ Çelebi and Kayıtmaz Xan separately sent new letters and the copies of the quittances to Abbas II.⁴¹⁴

At the end of the second day of talks, Kayıtmaz Xan sent Melek Ahmed Pasha a letter and gifts along with an eighty-men mission led by emissary Esed Agha, accompanied by twenty men from Evliyâ Çelebi's mission. Early in the morning of Evliyâ Çelebi's third day in Tabriz, one of Kayıtmaz Xan's spies, named Gökdolak, rode back in haste from Van to inform his master that Melek Ahmed Pasha had set up his military encampment at Gökmeysan with troops and siege artillery. The spy had no further information as to the campaign objective. The governor-general diplomatically questioned Evliyâ Çelebi, pointing out the contradiction

⁴¹³ Before the execution of confiscation, Genc-Ali Xan Afşar managed to convince the usher to reward Evliyâ Çelebi with handsome gifts from the estate he was about to lose, saying that he owed this to the emissary for his admirable services. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/201-203; Vâlih Kazvîni, *Huld-i Berîn*, 535.

⁴¹⁴ It turned out that Kayıtmaz Xan and Evliyâ Çelebi knew each other from the latter's travels in the Caucasus when the former was the governor of Gilân. From Urûmiye, Genc-Ali Xan had left under the usher's custody with the Shah's chains around his neck and shackles around his feet. After hearing the emissary and seeing his official deeds, the governor unchained Genc-Ali Xan's shackles and improved his conditions of arrest while in Tabriz. The deposed governor of Urûmiye could move and join events like feasts more freely, though with the Shah's golden chain around his neck, which Kayıtmaz Xan did not deem himself authorized to remove. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/206-207.

between Melek Ahmed Pasha's peace-seeking missions and aggressive actions. The emissary tried hard to convince the governor-general that the marshal might not have meant to threaten Iran, and that the campaign was surely upon Bitlis, for its former lord, Koca Abdal Khan, had escaped capture in the previous operation. Kayıtmaz Xan suspected that this justification could be a tactical diversion aimed at taking Iran by surprise with an unexpected attack. At a time when the governor-general did not know what to write to the Shah about this incoming intelligence, suspicions disappeared with the arrival of another spy of his, who reported that the campaign was indeed upon Abdal Khan who had resurfaced in Bitlis. Yet, in the meantime, Melek Ahmed Pasha had found out about this spy's and his partner Hüdâdâd's real identity. This one had been left alive to return to Tabriz, however, his partner Hüdâdâd had been executed for espionage at the behest of the marshal.⁴¹⁵

On 13 October 1655, another usher from Isfahan brought the news that the Shah had met Sarı Ali Agha and that the correspondence regarding the Pinyanişi transaction had been received. The accompanying royal rescript⁴¹⁶ revoked the confiscation of Genc-Ali Xan Afşar's estate. His office regalia (horsetail-ensigns, standards, banners, kettledrums, horns, and trumpets), however, were to be carried away as a mark of his deposition. After his whipping, he was to be set free, with the condition that he must stay in exile [outside his former governorate]. The mission left Tabriz after being entertained by the governor-general and the notables for a while.⁴¹⁷

While the perception of threat described above did not translate into concrete action, the Sublime Porte's extraordinary measures at Van against Abbas II's support of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin at the Persian Gulf region warrant attention. It is true that İpşir Mustafa Pasha, an unruly

⁴¹⁵ Because of his partner Hüdâdâd's fate, this spy refused to go back to Van to collect further intelligence. For the gifts exchanged and more details on the mission's activities in Tabriz, see Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/207-210.

⁴¹⁶ *rakam*

⁴¹⁷ Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, 4/210.

personage, used his own summation equally an excuse to justify his reluctance to report for duty at the capital after appointment as grand-vizier. It is also true that sending Melek Ahmed Pasha, a former grand-vizier and thus a very influential figure, from the capital to one of the farthest provinces with an extraordinary commission was equally a part of policies stemming from a factional rivalry. Yet, what matters for Ottoman-Safavid relations is that, İpşir Mustafa Pasha would not have been able to allege the Iranian military activity across the border as an excuse to justify his procrastination in coming to Constantinople and his arbitrary appointments if the non-İpşir-sourced reports reaching the capital from the frontier had not confirmed the rumors. Abbas II's support of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin before the latter's reinitiation was obviously an unfriendly move but still too vague to be unmistakably taken as an act of hostility. To this, the Sublime Porte responded in kind by formally instituting an Iranian war zone and creating a marshalship in the absence of an ongoing war, but nevertheless did not undertake a campaign. As soon as any virtual circumstances leading to a confrontation – plotted by İpşir Mustafa Pasha – disappeared with his removal, the new government under Kara Murad Pasha took concrete steps towards eliminating the complications that had come about from his predecessor's policies. As it was seen that there were no real reasons to break the peace with the Safavids and that after the crisis of Basra the Shah was trying to appease the Padishah, Melek Ahmed Pasha's objectives were redefined: the new directives that he received prescribed a policy of preserving the peace and assuring the other party of the Ottomans' firm but friendly stance. Yet, this would still be accomplished with covert threats and implied shows of force. With the subsequent termination of Melek Ahmed Pasha's marshalship, almost a decade-long sequence of Safavid provocations in the form of trials of strength and Ottoman retaliations in the form of tours de force came to a close. Having passed this test, the peace would from then on be regarded as a consolidated one,

and the status quo, according to which the Ottoman side enjoyed primacy vis-à-vis the Safavids, was left untouched.

Regarding Iraq, it is beyond doubt that the governor-general of Baghdad undertook the Basra campaign to replace Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha with his uncle Ahmed Beğ only with official endorsement from the Sublime Porte. With the information they provided, Kara Murtazâ Pasha, Ahmed Beğ, and Fethi Beğ had obviously inclined the center to rule in favor of such an intervention, so we can attribute the primary role in the making of this policy to them. Yet, Kara Murtazâ Pasha would not have been able to go on the campaign to depose the viceroy and install a governor, deprive Basra of its key fortress along with considerable revenue, or abolish its tributary status by converting it into an autonomous province if he had not secured the decree explicitly empowering him to do so. From what can be deduced from the sources, the Porte did not envisage a change of dynasty at Basra – the new governor to be installed was still an Efrâsiyaboğlu – but it did order a status change which prescribed increased ties with the empire. For the center, Ahmed Beğ must have appeared to be a potentially more cooperative governor, who would also make the province contribute more to the empire's finances. The transfer of certain revenue items from the Basran treasury to the empire's Central Treasury and to that of the Province of Baghdad, and the formal incorporation of territory into the empire were alterations prescribed at the outset, while it seems that the annexation of Kurna was a *fait accompli* which the center did not want to relinquish once it happened. It can even be said that the prospect of increased revenues for the Central Treasury and for a regular province at the expense of a dominion or a fiefdom could have been the most decisive incentive. In the last analyses, except for replacing Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha, the Ottoman Empire attained its political, administrative, and financial goals with Kara Murtazâ Pasha's Basra campaign.

Apparently, Kara Murtazâ Pasha's actions after entering the city of Basra that alienated the inhabitants and caused them to revert back to the side of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha stemmed from the former's personal ambition for power. Otherwise, there is no evidence that his oppressive actions were coordinated with the center. The limits of the authority conceded to the governor-general of Baghdad and his decision to overstep these limits after entering Basra also explain the course of action Abbas II took in 1654-1655 and the Ottomans' reaction thereto. For as long as Kara Murtazâ Pasha was executing the orders of the imperial government to replace Hüseyin Pasha with Ahmed Beğ, Abbas II denied Hüseyin Pasha active support, political asylum, or an audition. It was only after Kara Murtazâ Pasha's unwarranted executions and appropriations that Abbas II seems to have indirectly helped Hüseyin to raise troops in Iran, or at least connived at it. In doing this, the Shah must have calculated that after that stage, his contribution to Hüseyin's cause would not be perceived as hostility by the padishah. This interpretation is further supported by the course of the Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic contact that followed and the Porte's accepting of Hüseyin's presents as a sign of recognizing him the governor of reorganized Basra.

Probably informed of the situation and Iran's connection to it, Şahcihan, ruler of Mughal India, sent Mehmed IV an embassy led by Kaim Beyg, prefect of the Mughal army at the height of the Basran crisis in autumn 1654. The embassy entered Constantinople on 4 May 1656. Kaim Beyg conveyed Mehmed IV Şahcihan's appeal for military aid to retake Kandahar.⁴¹⁸ Indeed, the political atmosphere was not so unfavorable for the Sublime Porte to issue a positive reply. In autumn, the governor-general of Erzurum (Zurnazen Mustafa Pasha) even reported Iranian military activity across the border. In reaction thereto, the Porte decreed in October 1656 to Kara

⁴¹⁸ Karaçelebizâde, *Ravza Zeyli*, 257; Hammer, *Geschichte* vol. 5, 645.

Murtazâ Pasha, then governor-general of Aleppo, that he stay on alert and, if the situation necessitated it, then he go to Baghdad without waiting for a second decree.⁴¹⁹ The Mughal request was not just for the sake of securing Ottoman know-how, material, or personnel support. Şahcihan was envisaging an alliance with the Padishah to occupy and share the entire Iran itself. Grand-mufti Hocaşâde Mesud Efendi, as the spokesman of the opposition at the capital against such an endeavor, said that the Ottoman Empire could deal with Iran anytime it wanted to, regardless of whether the empire had other concurrent military and financial commitments. According to the Grand-Mufti, the benefit that the Padishah would draw from keeping Iran intact, however, was that Iran would continue to act as a barrier between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire. If eliminated, India would become a neighbor, and based on the Mughal claim of dynastic seniority justified with Timurid (paternal) and Genghisid (maternal) lineage, it would strive for attaining the protectorate of Hijaz, i.e. Mecca and Medine [and consequently the position of supreme-monarch/emperor, a monopoly of the Habsburgs in the occident and the Ottomans in the orient]. Kaim Beyg was given a reply stating that the empire was at war with the Republic of Venice and its allies at the moment, which necessitated the commitment of most of the available military, financial, and material capabilities; besides, the Padishah did not want to violate the current pacification with the Safavids.⁴²⁰

It is clear that Ottoman policy-makers did not want to embark on a military adventure with an unforeseeable extent. The Shah could be, and indeed was, daunted by occasional shows of force, but ultimately, the Sublime Porte felt satisfied with the status quo reached at Zuhab in

⁴¹⁹ See the summary of the mentioned decree in İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, İbrâhim Kemal Baybura, Ülkü Altındağ (eds.), *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Osmanlı Saray Arşivi Kataloğu: Fermanlar. I. Fasikül* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1985), ent. 367.

⁴²⁰ Ralamb, *İstanbul'a Bir Yolculuk*, 92.

1639, saw its interests in perpetuating it, and did not want to risk a war unless the open aggression came from the Safavid side.

During Melek Ahmed Pasha's dealings with the Safavids, most of the empire's energy was still dedicated to the war with Venice. During the 1650s, the Venetian fleet was patrolling the Aegean Sea, which was normally controlled and surrounded by Ottoman positions. Keeping that waterway safely navigable was indispensable for the empire to make its military shipments to the marshalship headquarters in Crete. Along with Venice's patrolling of the Aegean, its occasional blockades of the Dardanelles were seriously disrupting Ottoman operations. This disruption left Deli Hüseyin Pasha in dire straits while fighting against the Venetian garrison at Candia and the regularly arriving fresh reinforcements sent from the Republic's allies. Kara Murad Pasha, admiral-in-chief during 1654-1655, had run the blockade and heavily defeated the Venetian fleet commanded by Guiseppe Delfino. However, the Venetian fleet commanded by admiral Marco Bembo in turn routed the Ottoman navy that set sail in 1656 with admiral-in-chief Sarı Kenan Pasha. This resulted in the Venetian occupation of Bozcaada, the full-scale blockade of the Dardanelles, and even the imperial capital's insecurity. This crisis was the single most important reason, among many others, that led to Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's appointment as grand-vizier with dictatorial powers in 1656.⁴²¹

⁴²¹ Kenneth M. Setton, *Venice, Austria and the Turks*, 163-185; Halil İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 2, 326-328, 338.

CHAPTER IV. 1656-1682: CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUS QUO OF ZUHAB

The Safavids had recognized the Zuhab status quo from the outset, but they had potentially been thinking to alter it if possible, especially at the southern flank of the frontier, if not at a hierarchical level. This chapter sets forth how the Safavids came to terms for good with the stipulations of the post-1639 status quo. Apparently, after a brief interlude of second thoughts, the shahdom re-embraced the basic maxim in its post-1639 foreign policy that it should avoid antagonizing the Ottomans at all costs. The mission exchange of 1656-1657 ensured that the parties did not recognize whatever had come to pass in the Persian Gulf region during the early 1650s as hostility. This twenty-seven-year period also show the accord between the two sides regarding defections from one state to the other via several cases. Personal asylums, even by relatively high-ranking subjects, could be accepted and would not constitute an unfriendly act on the part of the receiving court towards the deserted one. On the other hand, large-scale defections that would cost one side territory and revenue were met with categorical rejection by the other side. Neither side wanted to venture a confrontation for the sake of marginal gains. Against the altered regime in Basra, three rebellions occurred in the 1660s, which were considerably reinforced with recruitment from Iranian territory across the border, though the Safavids do not seem to have permitted such recruitment. It took the Ottomans three Imperial Army campaigns led by marshals to crush the Basran establishment's insubordination for good: Basra was fully annexed and converted into a regular province. In 1666, by means of exchanging letters via a grand-vizierial unaccredited agent, the Ottomans and the Safavids assured each other of their mutual friendly stance notwithstanding the ongoing operations at the frontier in Iraq. These rebellions once again show that the Iranian and the empire's sides of the Gulf region remained each other's demographic and political hinterlands. Yet, in each case, the Safavid court denied

asylum to the rebel leaders of the Basran establishment. All in all, the empire eliminated a potential Safavid fifth column at this frontier zone. Concurrently, Constantinople, by virtue of having fielded Imperial Armies in the Gulf region, made major tours de force to the Iranian side. Even after the Basran case was closed, the Sublime Porte made a point asserting itself before the Safavid court via the 1669 letter-of-conquest sent on the occasion of the definitive victory against Venice in Crete. Again in 1660s, while the Cretan war was still going on, Iran rejected another round of Venetian offers of anti-Ottoman alliance. This consistent stance was also confirmed in the next decade with the shahdom's rejection of a similar offer, this time from Poland and Russia. In the 1670s, bilateral relations were marked by a series of false alarms of mobilization made by each of the parties. In the event thereof, the other party would organize hurried actual mobilizations in response and declare states of emergency at the affected frontier zones. By the beginning of the 1680s, tranquility reigned both at the frontier and between the courts.

IV.1. Repairing the Damage Done Since 1645

Soon after the Basran crises of 1654-1655 was put to rest with the return of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin, Abbas II decided to dispatch Kelb-Ali Sûltan/Xan Silsüpür-Afşar⁴²² as ambassador to

⁴²² I could not identify whether the Kelb-Ali Xan Afşar, the governor or Urûmiye in 1633 who was a participant on the Van front of the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid War [see Özer Küpeli, "Osmanlı-Safevi Münasebetleri (1612-1639)" (PhD Diss., Ege Üniversitesi, 2009), 139] is the same person with the ambassador in question. The twenty-two-year gap between the two references does not necessarily rule out this possibility. Unat mistakenly provides the name of the Safavid ambassador to Ottoman court in 1656 (Kelb-Ali Silsüpür-Afşar) as Pîr Ali (see Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameleri*, 244), without citing the source. In Mehdevî, *Târih-i Revâbit-ı Hâricî-yi İran*, 68, Abbas II's sending in 1666 to the Ottoman court an emissary named Pîr Ali Beyg with the agenda of consolidating the peace is mentioned, though without citation of the source. Presumably, Unat's and Mehdevî's source is Hammer-Purgstall, who in turn uses *Târih-i Naîmâ* as primary source: Joseph Hammer von Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* vol. 6 (Pest: C. A. Hartleben's Verlag, 1830), 9-10. Mustafa Naîmâ's chronicle, written about half a century after the embassy in question, is the only source providing the name "Pîr Ali", as opposed the chronicles of Vahîd Kazvînî, Vâlih Kazvînî, and Nazmizâde Murtazâ that consistently name the ambassador "Kelb-Ali", which should

Mehmed IV. The Shah intended to repair bilateral relations by sending notification that he had refused Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's offer to transfer allegiance to the Safavids and was determined to honor the accord that had resulted from the Peace of Zuhab.⁴²³ It seems that this extraordinary embassy was dispatched concurrently with the Yâr-Ali Xan mission to Basra. The news that a new ambassador from Iran was on his way had reached Constantinople several months in advance. Kelb-Ali Afşar, after travelling in a manner even more ceremonial and “coy⁴²⁴” than was the norm, himself arrived in Constantinople on 22 November 1656. On the 28th, he was received in audience by the Padishah following a feast at the Imperial Council session and his being invested with a robe of honor. At the audience, he handed over Abbas II's presents and epistle to Mehmed IV.⁴²⁵

In his epistle,⁴²⁶ the Shah once again expressed his condolences for İbrâhim and his congratulations on the enthronement of the “unrivalled⁴²⁷” Padishah. Most probably, this is due to the Mehmed IV's being too young in 1648 to personally appreciate the previous epistle. Emphasizing the “unity-of-hearts⁴²⁸”, “concord”, “unity⁴²⁹”, and “amity⁴³⁰” between the two monarchs, Abbas then justified his war against India with reference to the defection of some “ungrateful ones⁴³¹”, who had delivered his “patrimony⁴³²”, Kandahar, to the hands of the

be taken as the correct designation. In addition, Mehdevî not only reproduces Mustafa Naîmâ's error, probably via Hammer, but also misdates the mission to 1666.

⁴²³ Vahîd Kazvîni, *Abbasnâme*, 222; Vâlih Kazvîni, *Huld-i Berîn*, 585.

⁴²⁴ “hezâr . . . nâz ile”

⁴²⁵ Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1719; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 262. Karaçelebizâde notes that the news reporting the embassy's dispatch also spoke of the Shah's “unreasonable proposals”, *Zeyl*, 292. However, all other sources speak of the letters and assurances exchanged to preserve the current peace. Also see Vecîhî, *Târih*, ff. 70b-71a.

⁴²⁶ *Esnâd u Mükâtebât*, 1038-1105, 206-208.

⁴²⁷ “adîmü'l-himâl”

⁴²⁸ “yektâ-dilî”

⁴²⁹ “yegânegî”

⁴³⁰ “musâfât”

⁴³¹ “nemek be-harâmân”

⁴³² “mülk-i mevrûs

“viceroy of India.⁴³³” He also put the blame for the prolongation of hostilities on the shoulders of his enemy, who undertook successive campaigns to recover Kandahar, which was by then back under Safavid control. Announcing the reestablished peace with India, the Shah added:

it was certain that [the mutual] obtaining of favor by those in concordance is the origin of rejoicing for friends; out of the firmness of affection and honesty, and in order to fortify the pedestals of recovery and cohesion, [the Shah] saw it necessary . . . to dispatch a reliable one to the Sublime Banquet [i.e. Imperial Court] and the Exalted Majesty [i.e. Padishah], and because the sending of specimens from [a] conquered country was necessary, one elephant . . . has been dispatched as souvenir to the Paradise-Resembling Gathering [i.e. Imperial Court]⁴³⁴

On 31 December 1656, grand-vizier Köprülü Mehmed Pasha hosted Kelb-Ali Silsüpür-Afşar at a feast in the Yusufpaşa Garden of Eyüp. On 2 January 1657, the ambassador was received by the Padishah in the customary farewell audience during which he was invested with another robe of honor. This time he attended together with Köse İsmâil Agha, the incumbent chief-court-notable⁴³⁵ of Mehmed IV and the former lieutenant-at-court⁴³⁶ of late Kara Murad Pasha, who was now created envoy to Abbas II to deliver the imperial reply epistle and gifts. Köse İsmâil Agha took these over on January 9, and departed for Iran shortly thereafter. He traveled to Isfahan “with great pomp⁴³⁷” over the Baghdad route.^{438 439}

⁴³³ “vâlf-yi Hindustân”

⁴³⁴ “çûn müteyakkin bûd ki ihrâz-ı tevfkât-ı yek-cihetân menşe’-i ibtihâc-ı dûstân mî gerded, ve ez âlem-i rüsûh-ı muhabbet u sadâkat va istihkâm-ı kavâid-i iltiyâm u muvâlefet lâzım dîd ki . . . mu’temedi revâne-i bezm-i vâlâ ve cenâb-ı muallâ nümâyed, ve çûn firistâden-i enmuzecî ez emtiâ-i kişver-i fütûhat lâzım bûd, yek . . . fil . . . be resp-i armağân irsâl-i mahfil-i huld-müşâkil gerdide”

⁴³⁵ *müteferrika-başı* (Ottoman)

⁴³⁶ *kapı kethüdâsı*

⁴³⁷ “tantana-i azîme ile”

⁴³⁸ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 262. For İsmâil Agha’s nickname “Köse”, see Ralamb, *İstanbul’a Bir Yolculuk*, 92. Köse İsmâil and Kelb-Ali Afşar entered Tokat with a day’s distance between each other; Zakaria of Auglis, the Iranian-Armenian merchant trading in Iran and the Ottoman Empire, reports the date of their arrival in Tokat as February 14 and 15, respectively. However, en route to Diyarbekir, they departed together. *The Journal of Zak’aria of Auglis*, 59. See also Vecîhî, *Târih*, f. 71a.

⁴³⁹ Later, in the spring of 1663, Kelb-Ali Afşar reappears as a military officer in the Shah’s army gathered at Esterâbâd. His rank seems to be below that of a governor and above that of a major, thus corresponding to his title sultan.

At the conventional behest of the Shah, the Köse İsmâil legation was lavishly accommodated and feasted during its stay in Isfahan. After a reception by the Prime-Minister, the Shah received the envoy in audience at Çehel-Sütûn pavilion, and organized an entrance ceremony on Nakş-ı Cihân square with artillery, musketeers, and archers surrounding the square while elephants and lions were exhibited. The royal feast followed the audience, during which Abbas II inquired after Mehmed IV's health. Then, on specified days, the chief of the Royal Guard and the chief of the Royal Squires⁴⁴⁰ hosted Köse İsmâil Ağa at separate feasts, the protocol of which were prescribed by the Prime-Minister to these dignitaries. When the envoy, who suffered from syphilis, became bedridden, the Shah sent his privy physician, Savcı Mehmed Şerîf to exclusively attend to his guest. The physician was successful in treating Köse İsmâil Ağa enough to enable him to get up from his sickbed. At all of these instances, conferrals of gifts and robes of honor accompanied the events.⁴⁴¹

Such lavish receptions cannot be attributed solely to ceremonial concerns on the part of the Safavid side. Köse İsmâil Ağa's mission consisted of around one thousand personnel, an unusually high number for an Ottoman legation to Iran. After the reception, feast, gift-giving, and the delivery of the royal reply epistle addressed to the Padishah at the farewell audience, the envoy received permission to leave. On his way back, he passed away in Baghdad (1657).⁴⁴²

In his counter-reply,⁴⁴³ Abbas II confirmed receipt of the “cohesion-titled letter, that is the anthology of the spring-land of unity . . . [and] selection of the collection of friendship,⁴⁴⁴” of “His Most-Sublime Majesty . . . the second bi-corneus Alexander [the Padishah]⁴⁴⁵” via the

⁴⁴⁰ *Kullar-ağası*

⁴⁴¹ Vahîd Kazvînî, *Abbasnâme*, 222-223; Vâlih Kazvînî, *Huld-i Berîn*, 587.

⁴⁴² Abdurrahman Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 100-101; Naimâ, *Târih*, 1721; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 262.

⁴⁴³ *Esnâd u Mükâtebât*, 1038-1105, 209-210.

⁴⁴⁴ “güldeste-yi bahâristân-ı yegânegî . . . müntehab-ı mecmûa-ı düstî, . . . a'ni nâme-i müvâlefet-ünvân”

⁴⁴⁵ “a'lâ-hazret . . . sâni-yi İskender-i Zül-Karneyn”

“linguist of the signs of affinity, cup-bearer of the noblest wine of unity-of-hearts and union [Köse İsmâil Agha].⁴⁴⁶” In addition to the formalities, the Shah also informed the Padishah of the “viceroy of India”[Şahcihan]’s death [the falsity of this news was yet unknown to the Safavid court] and of his sending military aid to royal-prince Murâdbahş in support of his quest for the throne.

In the 1656 epistle, Abbas II took great care to make sure that bilateral relations had not been damaged because of the Basran affair; the language he used accordingly leaves no room for doubt. He apparently expected that his belittlement of India and its monarch would not cause any disturbances for the Padishah. By sending Indian “souvenirs”, on the other hand, he had aimed at making a demonstration of Iran’s might, as these items had come into the Shah’s grasp by way of military victory. In the 1657 epistle, Abbas II even went further in emphasizing to Mehmed IV the soundness of the peace between their states, along with the hierarchical superiority of the latter by using repeated, clear references to his rank as supreme-monarch, thus acknowledging the Ottoman claim to universal and imperial mandate. This smoothed over the potentially unpleasant consequences of the first Basran crisis for the empire and Iran before these outcomes could escalate to a point that could threaten the peace.

Shortly after the departure of the Köse İsmâil legation from Isfahan, a delegation from the tribe of Erdelân (the dynasty governing the vassal-principality of Kurdistân) paid Abbas II a visit at the capital. Some of their tribesmen informed the Shah of viceroy Süleyman Xan’s plan to defect to the Ottoman Empire and take the property and assests he had accumulated throughout his years in office with him. Tribesmen, however, had so far managed to forestall the materialization of this plan. The Shah confirmed this intelligence via Sheikh Ali Xan Zengene,

⁴⁴⁶ “zebân-dân-ı rumûz-ı vedâd, sâkî-yi rahîk-i yektâ-dilî ve ittihâd”

then a governor in the vicinity of the Erdelân/Kurdistan. As a measure, Süleyman Xan was immediately deposed and sentenced to resignation from politics with mandatory residence in Meşhed. Kurdistan governorships were redistributed to several office holders, and Süleyman Xan's sons and brothers were among them.⁴⁴⁷ That Süleyman Xan was exiled to the farthest possible provincial capital from the Ottoman Empire under stable Safavid control instead of being executed hints at the probable scenario that the Shah was not sure about the authenticity of the intelligence. He apparently wanted to remove the risk of defection while still leaving room for a later revocation of the sentence. By doing so, he managed to preempt a potential defection crisis between the Ottoman and the Safavid courts.

In 1657, the Tigris and the Euphrates had flooded at an unprecedented rate. In Baghdad, water filled the entire moat and brought down the Tower of Conquest⁴⁴⁸, located in the vicinity of the White Gate, in ruins. It also razed 300 *arşins* of the walls and towers. Governor-general Haseki Mehmed Pasha oversaw the repair of the ruined parts of the fortress to their former condition. For as long as the flood damage made the fortress of Baghdad vulnerable, the governors of Diyarbekir, Şehrîzor, and Mosul were mobilized to stand guard in the region with their timariots.⁴⁴⁹ There were no prospects of attack from Iran, but in keeping with other measures of defense since the Pacification of Zuhab, the garrison and military works at Baghdad were maintained as if war might break out anytime.

⁴⁴⁷ Vahîd Kazvîni, *Abbasnâme*, 227; Vâlih Kazvîni, *Huld-i Berîn*, 593.

⁴⁴⁸ *Fetih Kulesi*

⁴⁴⁹ The two rivers met on the plain of Baghdad, making the fortress of Baghdad look like an island. After the repairs of the ruined parts of the fortress, Haseki Mehmed Pasha set up camp along with a crowded group of inhabitants at the site named Mıntıka, which was located just outside the walls of Baghdad and where the Tigris and the Euphrates had met after the flood. Because of the flood, the ships had begun to navigate through the site, and overland traffic was facilitated via two bridges. To prevent from repeating such a disruption, the governor-general had two large floodgates built and supported them with several dams at other spots. Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 262-263; Naîmâ, *Târih*, 1765.

In the meantime, Köprülü Mehmed Pasha (as commander-in-chief) restored political order and military discipline with harsh methods immediately after coming to power. He defeated the main Venetian fleet on the Aegean, broke the blockade at Dardanelles, and recovered Bozcaada, following which admiral-in-chief Topal Mehmed Pasha recovered the island Lemnos. Thus, the empire regained the upper hand in the Cretan War in 1657.⁴⁵⁰

In 1658, the Commander-in-Chief went on a campaign to punish the unruly prince⁴⁵¹ of Transylvania, George II Rakoczi. Disobeying Constantinople's directives, the prince had entered the Northern War (1655-1660) as ally of the King of Sweden in his quest to win the Polish throne. For this cause, George II Rakoczi had received support from the princes⁴⁵² of Wallachia and Moldavia, which were autonomous provinces under Ottoman sovereignty and whose princes were appointed and deposed from Constantinople. The Ottoman Empire sent Crimean troops to the war zone as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's ally. In 1657, George II Rakoczi was defeated and forced into a peace with the Commonwealth, after which the Crimeans, commanded by Khan Mehmed IV Giray, captured the entire Transylvanian army apart from the prince himself and his 300-man guard. By commissioning the Crimean troops, the Porte deposed the rebel princes of Wallachia (Constantine Beğ II Şerban) and of Moldavia (George Beğ II Stefan), both of whom in turn sought refuge in Transylvania. The new princes, Mihnea Beğ III

⁴⁵⁰ Kenneth Setton, *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, 185-189; Halil İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar III: Köprülüler Devri* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 28-34; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 375-381.

⁴⁵¹ *hâkim, voyvoda.*

⁴⁵² *Voivode.* Additionally titled beğ, voivodes were Ottoman-appointed princes of these autonomous principalities, which were provinces under imperial sovereignty with certain conceded privileges. The voivode's rank within Ottoman hierarchy corresponded to that of a two-horsetail-ensign pasha, i.e. a governor. See Panait, *The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers*, 34. Their additional title *beğ* was not an equivalent to that of one-horsetail-ensign sancak-beyi: the latter reflected the altered use in provincial administrative hierarchy, which had evolved during the rise of the Ottoman State, however, the Ottomans had not forgotten the original use of this term, which corresponded to *prince*. This use in original meaning survived in Ottoman terminology employed for entitling the governor-princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, when referring to the age of principalities in post-Seljuk Anatolia, for denoting contemporary independent European principalities or duchies, and also in proverbs.

and George Beğ III Ghica, were installed respectively to Wallachia and Moldavia. Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, again as commander-in-chief, undertook the Transylvanian campaign in 1658. After a series of operations that lasted for two years, during which George II Rakoczi was defeated and the Ottoman armies entered the principality's capital Weissenburg, order was reestablished with the fortresses of Tanova, Şebeş, and Lügoş annexed from the tributary principality to the empire.⁴⁵³

While Köprülü Mehmed Pasha was on campaign, Abaza Hasan Pasha, from the household of former grand vizier İpşir Mustafa Pasha, rebelled and demanded Köprülü's deposition in 1658. In particular, the Sublime Court Cavalry who were scared of Köprülü's disciplinary methods gathered around him. Then, several governor-pashas joined the rebellion. Moving through central Asia Minor between Bursa and Konya, they demanded the Grand Vizier's execution. In reply, Mehmed IV ordered the rebels to be crushed and massacred. Loyal officials and troops in Asia Minor were subordinated to Kara Murtazâ Pasha; however the 30,000-strong rebel army defeated them. This caused Köprülü Mehmed Pasha to leave the command at Transylvania and return to court (first to Adrianople then to Constantinople) in order to personally deal with the situation. In the end, Kara Murtazâ Pasha managed to make many rebels defect, and inviting the rest to initiate reconciliatory talks while wintering in Aleppo, executed every rebel leader on 16 February 1659. The remaining rebels were persecuted or killed subsequently.⁴⁵⁴ In 1661, the fortresses Kumkale and Seddülbahir were built onto the

⁴⁵³ Hammer, *Geschichte* vol. 6, 30-34, 67-77, 95-98; Gaspar Katko, "The Redemption of the Transylvanian Army Captured by the Crimean Tatars in 1657," in *The Crimean Khanate between East and West (15th-18th Century)*, ed. Denis Klein (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012), 91-106; İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 44-49; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 382-387.

⁴⁵⁴ İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 49-55; Uzunçarşılı *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 386-394.

Asian- and European-side entrances of the Dardanelles from the Aegean Sea as strongholds against Venetian naval pressure.⁴⁵⁵

In 1658-1659, during the Transylvanian campaign and the Abaza Hasan rebellion, dynastic politics of Georgia threatened the status-quo between the Ottoman- and Safavid-tributary principalities there. Şahnevaz Xan (Vakhtang V Bagration) of Kartli wanted to unite the rest of the principalities of Georgia, including those under Ottoman sovereignty, by conquering them and installing his sons as viceroys. Laying a claim to the throne of Imereti by hailing from the same ruling house, and to Guria by designing an occupation, he began to stage his plans with a 15,000-strong army. With the power that would stem from controlling a united Georgia, he planned to cast down Ottoman and Safavid suzerainties. Atabeğli Rüstem Pasha, governor-general of Çıldır, reported Şahnevaz Xan's designs to the imperial court in 1659 and immediately entered Imereti at the head of his troops to prevent any attempt of annexation. However, when Şahnevaz Xan's early attack made him return empty-handed, he reported again to the capital what had come to pass.⁴⁵⁶

The Ottoman government would not to be able to focus its attention on the unrest in Georgia until 1662/1663, when it eventually ordered the governors of the provinces of Erzurum (Pamuk Mustafa Pasha, as commander-general⁴⁵⁷), Kars (Seyyid Yusuf Pasha), and Çıldır (Atabeğli Rüstem Pasha) to undertake a campaign “in order to capture the domain and discipline the Georgians.⁴⁵⁸” They were to be aided by the vassal-seigneurs of Georgia and Kurdistan. This Ottoman army of 40,000 entered Imereti and expelled Archil Bagration, Şahvenaz Xan's son,

⁴⁵⁵ Uzunçarşılı *Osmanlı Târîhi*, vol. 3/1, 395-400; İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 59-60.

⁴⁵⁶ Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 262-263.

⁴⁵⁷ *serasker* or *başbuğ* (Ottoman) [roughly corresponding Safavid *serdâr*], commander of a front in a larger war or of a large-scale regional operation.

⁴⁵⁸ “teshîr-i memleket ve te'dîb-i Gürciyân için”

from the principality.⁴⁵⁹ However, a hot pursuit and a punitive campaign into the Safavid-tributary Georgia did not materialize due to the ongoing war with the Habsburg monarchy and the empire's unwillingness to incite a war with Iran.⁴⁶⁰ Seizing the opportunity, Archil soon reentered Imereti. Atabeğli Arslan Mehmed Pasha, the new governor-general of Çıldır, in the letters he sent to the prince⁴⁶¹ and the notables of Imereti, threatened with overrunning the entire country in the case of disobedience. Archil, in reply, had the notables convey the governor-general the message that nothing could take place in Imereti without the padishah's full consent. The government withheld recognition from Archil, who in turn did not obey the summons to the imperial court, returning instead to his father's realm, Kartli. Based on his unrestrained behavior in Safavid and Ottoman Georgia, the Shah also expelled him from his dominions. Archil took refuge in Russia.⁴⁶²

The unrest at the Georgian frontier between the empire and Iran that lasted roughly from 1658 to 1663 does not seem to have held much importance for bilateral relations. Neither side sought to further its territory to the detriment of the other side at the expense of disrupting the peace. Both sides were aware that the source of the problem was the dynastic politics among Georgian princely houses. Thus, both sides followed a policy of non-intervention towards the other's sovereign territory and punishment of their own vassals when these vassals were present on their suzerain's territory. The status quo between Constantinople and Isfahan was too precious to be left to the mercy of ambitious vassals.

⁴⁵⁹ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyli Fezleke*, 263-265.

⁴⁶⁰ Bilge, *Osmanlı Çağı'nda Kafkasya*, 509.

⁴⁶¹ *melik*

⁴⁶² Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyli Fezleke*, 265-266. Later returning to Iran, he converted to Islam, entered Safavid service, and was renamed Şahnazar Xan in 1678. He seized the throne of Imereti again in 1679 but had to eschew to Russia once more due to the Georgian nobility's withholding allegiance from him. His claims on Mingrelia, for which he was cooperating with Atabeğli Arslan Pasha, governor-general of Çıldır, also failed. In 1680, Mehmed IV ordered Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha, governor-general of Erzurum, to reestablish authority with a campaign, during which Atabeğli Arslan Pasha was beheaded and Mingrelia was overrun. İbrâhim Pasha returned to Erzurum on September 20. Bilge, *Osmanlı Çağı'nda Kafkasya*, 508-509; *The Journal of Zakaria of Agulis*, 156.

IV.2. Proxy Showdown at the Persian Gulf Region and the Ottoman Annexation of Basra

Back in the Persian Gulf region, during the immediate years following the first Basran affair, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha maintained good relations with the imperial government, taking care not to violate the new settlement, as observed from the manner he received the Shah's envoy. While securing the cooperation of the bedoins in his province in order to ally himself with them if necessary, he regularly sent the specified tributes⁴⁶³ to Baghdad and Constantinople, and the imperial government respected the province's autonomy. In just several years, however, a new sequence of events obliged the empire to allocate even more resources to deal with Basra, a process that would also directly involve Iran.

As the first visible step towards the ultimate confrontation he was envisaging, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin sent a mission to the new ruler of Mughal India, Evrengzîb (accession: 1658, coronation: 1659). Emissary Kâsım Agha arrived at the subcontinent in January 1661 and was hosted by the port-warden of Surat until he reached the court. The audience took place in May, during which Kâsım Agha presented his credentials and Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's offering of five Arabian horses. The official agenda was to open the Indian market for Basra's Arabian horses and benefit from diplomatic privileges for buying Indian goods without paying customs fees. The mission departed in October; Evrengzîb sent a return mission and gave a diamond-adorned sword to the governor.⁴⁶⁴ However, this exchange was probably commissioned with establishing the first direct contact between Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin and Evrengzîb, an asset that the former was planning to eventually use when it would no longer be an option for him to stay within the empire or take refuge in Iran.

⁴⁶³ Mathee, "Basra," 67.

⁴⁶⁴ Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations", 98, 103.

Also in 1661, the Venetian Senate sent to the Safavid court a diplomatic courier carrying a letter, in which Iran was once again invited to join the anti-Ottoman alliance in the ongoing Cretan War. Arakel, Venice's emissary to Iran in 1663, orally repeated the same request during his audience with the Shah.⁴⁶⁵ Neither attempt produced the desired result for the Republic; the royal government refrained from taking any hostile step against its western neighbor.

In 1663/64, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha somehow managed to make Mehmed Pasha of Benî Hâlid, viceroy of el-Hasa, fall from Constantinople's favor which led to the latter's deposition. Then, securing the viceroyship of this province with a mandate, he sent troops to el-Hasa to expel the deposed viceroy and to seize his new dominion. When the Sharif of Mecca, Zeyd, informed the imperial government of the transgressions committed by occupation forces, decrees were issued to reinstall Mehmed Pasha as the viceroy of el-Hasa. Not unexpectedly, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin disobeyed Constantinople's orders. To restore order and execute the decrees by force, another decree was issued for undertaking a campaign against Basra with an army commanded by governor-general of Baghdad, Banyalukalı Uzun İbrâhim Pasha, as marshal.⁴⁶⁶ The governors of the provinces of Diyarbekir (Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha), Aleppo (Sarı Hüseyin Pasha), Şehrızor (Gürcü Kenan Pasha), Mosul (Gürcü İbrâhim Pasha), and Rakka (Sarı Mehmed Pasha) would be subordinated with troops under their command to this marshal.⁴⁶⁷ The second Basran affair, like the first one, would soon spread to Iran.

⁴⁶⁵ Rota, "Safavid Persia and its Diplomatic Relations with Venice," 151.

⁴⁶⁶ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 236; Râşid, *Târih*, 80; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 277.

⁴⁶⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 422-423. In his exposition to the imperial government dated 21 March 1667, Gürcü Kenan Pasha wrote of the hereditary seigneur of the tribe Zengene (İsmâil)'s not participating in the Basran campaign in violation of the decree ordering him to do so, not sending troops to the siege of Kurna in violation of the law specifying one of his terms of governorate as serving as patrol force during mobilizations, not keeping his tribe under discipline, helping bandits, and oppressing the poor. His lieutenant and the elders of the tribe had also filed a complaint about him. Gürcü Kenan Pasha voted in support of Ömer's (İsmâil's son) appointment as the new hereditary seigneur, for he enjoyed the support of the tribe members. See the BOA, İE. AS. 1656. Also See İE. AS. 608.

Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's insubordination caught the imperial government in an uneasy situation. In 1663, in response to the reports coming from the frontier stating the Habsburg encroachments with the pretext of intervening in the disorder in Transylvania, an imperial campaign was declared with commander-in-chief Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha at the head of it. When the negotiations at Belgrade remained inconclusive, the Ottoman army proceeded and besieged the fortress of Ujvar (in north-western Royal Hungary, modern Slovakia) on August 15, which capitulated on September 13. In the winter of 1664, Habsburg troops advanced towards Szigetvar but returned without a major achievement. Neither the Ottoman successes in Nagykanizsa during the first phase of the "German campaign" nor the Habsburg victory at Saint Gotthard (August 1) changed the result: the Peace of Vasvar signed on August 10 registered the Ottoman gains of 1663.⁴⁶⁸ Therefore, it is no surprise that Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin chose to openly disobey orders when the empire was preoccupied with a full-blown war in northwestern Hungary and southeastern Germany, the remotest possible areas (along with the Ukraine) from Basra that the Grand-Vizier and the Imperial Army could be in.

The surfacing of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's persistence in his previous dealings had also coincided with an unexpected development at the Iranian frontier. In 27 May 1665, a report from Seyyid Yusuf Pasha, governor of Van, reached the government when the imperial court was encamping at the village Vakıf in the vicinity of Feres⁴⁶⁹. It spoke of yet another earthquake of massive scale, which had ruined a tower and a portion of the walls in the fortress of Van. A gatekeeper-captain, Karakaş Ali Agha, was sent to the site as commissary to oversee the

⁴⁶⁸ Thomas Winkelbauer, *Österreichische Geschichte 1522-1699: Ständefreiheit und Fürstenmacht. Länder und Untertanen des Hauses Habsburg im konfessionellen Zeitalter Teil 1* (Wien: Ueberreuter, 2003), 151-157; Hammer, *Geschichte* vol. 6, 106-125, 128-146; İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 75-102; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 402-413.

⁴⁶⁹ Turkish *Ferecik*, in the Thrace region of contemporary Greece.

repairs.⁴⁷⁰ At a time when a necessity to intervene in Basra seemed probable, the government must have wanted to make sure by appointing a commissary that this fortress of key military importance overseeing Safavid Azerbaijan would be restored to full strength.

Again in 1665, not as a matter of coincidence, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin sent another emissary to Evrengzîb of India. This time, the Basran mission not only brought gifts but also a petition, the content of which I could not ascertain. The governor was surely well aware of the empire's non-recognition of Evrengzîb's accession.⁴⁷¹ Now that the Habsburg-Ottoman war, which had given him a temporary freedom of action, was over, he was concerned with the consequences of his insubordination in 1663/64 and apparently trying to secure a reliable protector.

Immediately following the signing of the Peace of Vasvar, in 1665, the army summoned to Iraq gathered outside the walls of Baghdad, to which el-Hasa's viceroy Mehmed Pasha of Benî Hâlid was also made to join from Mecca. When Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin gave a negative and bold reply to the marshal's letter inviting him to obedience, the campaign began. Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin immediately transported his movable property across the border to Iranian territory and shut himself along with his military chief Hacı Agha and a 4,000-strong force to Kurna, seizing the control of the fortress in the meantime. The 12,000-strong Ottoman army left Baghdad in November 1665. Soon, a second letter was sent to Kurna from the encampment, but no answer other than "come what may"⁴⁷² was received. A battle took place at the site Mansûriye, after which Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's 20,000-strong mercenary-Bedouin force fled in defeat, and the

⁴⁷⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 403; Râşid, *Târih*, 66.

⁴⁷¹ Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations", 101-104.

⁴⁷² "her-çi bâdâ bâd"

imperials encamped at Cezâyîr, building a pontoon bridge to cross the Shatt-el-Arab and besiege Kurna.⁴⁷³

The investment began rather ineffectively due to the lack of heavy siege artillery, whose arrival from Baghdad had to be waited. This in turn allowed Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin to receive reinforcements and supplies. Only after the arrival of the siege equipment did the army enter into trenches and the bombardment began. Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's garrison troops were composed of Turkish mercenaries, Bedouins, and Iranian musketeers enlisted by his son. Meanwhile, weary of the governor's appropriations and arbitrary government, and suffering from İbrâhim Agha's (the governor's nephew and deputy) alienating course of action, the notables of the city of Basra approached the marshal by sending him a collective letter. In return, Uzun İbrâhim Pasha made the Turkish merchant Solak Hüseyin (a.k.a. Hacı Müsellem) proxy-governor with a decree until a permanent appointment would be made. Budakzâde, from Hüseyin's household, conspired against this initiation, but the notables' coalition violently crushed this attempt, causing İbrâhim Agha to flee the city on 31 December 1665. Solak Hüseyin's proxy-governorship was initiated on 12 January 1666. The notable-clergy coalition in Basra then declared the city unconditionally Ottoman. Hüseyin, however, had already sent a contingent, in accordance with Budakzâde's guidance, to regain the control of the city of Basra. This strong force terrified the resisters. After entering the city, plundering and killings began. Those notables who could escape the massacre joined the marshal's encampment. In the clash that took place at Kût, pro-Efrâsiyaboğlu chieftain of the Müntefik tribe defeated the pro-Ottoman Emîr Reşid (a.k.a. Ali-yi Şedîd)'s 300-strong reinforcement. At the same time, the siege of Kurna continued, albeit against stiff resistance, with fresh reinforcements from Baghdad. During this protracted investment of sixty days, the

⁴⁷³ Râşid, *Târih*, 80; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 277-279. For the sizes of armies and contingents, see Mathee, "Basra," 68.

defenders continued to receive supplies from outside by the Bedouins, while scarcity of provisions caused weariness in the Ottoman encampment.⁴⁷⁴

Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin Pasha's resistance in Kurna held out despite heavy bombardment, while the imperials' front line could not advance beyond the middle of the moat. Still, the Ottoman investment was too strong to let the governor get away with a good deal via negotiation. In the end, taking advantage of the coming of Ramadan, Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha entered into correspondence with Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin, and mediated a deal on 7 March 1666. According to this deal, Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin would make an immediate and one-time payment of 250,000 thaler⁴⁷⁵ to the Central Treasury, commit the province of Basra to annually paying a lumpsum-tax⁴⁷⁶ of 100,000 thaler to the Privy Purse, return to their owners the appropriated goods from merchant ships with which he had paid his troops, withdraw from el-Hasa, and go into retirement by abdicating from the governorate in favor of his son, Efrâsiyab Beđ. Uzun İbrâhim Pasha accepted the deal and raised the siege. The center approved the settlement whose conditions were submitted by the marshal.⁴⁷⁷ Yahyâ Agha, Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin's lieutenant, was to be kept as hostage at the imperial court as surety to the deal. Uzun İbrâhim Pasha's letter to Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha reporting the conduct of the campaign and the nature of the settlement reached the Imperial Army at Timurtaş by Adrianople, on 6 April 1666.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁴ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 279-280; Matthee, "Basra," 68.

⁴⁷⁵ 500 purses. One purse *akçe*: 500 *kuruş* (thaler). Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, *Osmanlı Târih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü* vol. 2 (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1983), 248.

⁴⁷⁶ *irsâliye*

⁴⁷⁷ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 236; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 281-282; Râşid, *Târih*, 80. In 1666 and 1667, Hüseyin Pasha and Efrâsiyab Beđ had to heavily tax the inhabitants of Basra to pay the promised tribute and to maintain their 18,000-strong military. Matthee, "Basra," 69.

⁴⁷⁸ Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 305; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 423.

When the Shah's government expected an attack to Kandahar and was about to initiate preemptive raids into India,⁴⁷⁹ this Basran campaign of 1665-1666 was about to begin. During that time, the news that the empire was assembling an army at Baghdad under a marshal caused anxiety in Iran. Grand-vizier Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha explained in a letter to prime-minister Mirza Muhammed Mehdi Kerekî the background of the campaign in order to prevent any reaction from the Iranian side that would constitute a breach of peace. Declaring Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin a rebel and the objective of the campaign to be the annihilation of the rebels, Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha assured his counterpart that the involved Ottoman officials at the frontier had been warned not to take any action in violation of peace, but he also explicitly requested that the Safavid side refrain from giving shelter to or aiding Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin, as this would violate the peace. The letter was sent in January 1666 with [unaccredited agent] Abdünnebî Çavuş, an Imperial Council bailiff.⁴⁸⁰

Muhammed Mehdi Kerekî's reply to Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha conveyed via the same Abdünnebî Çavuş reached the Imperial Army encamping at Adrianople on 2 May 1666. This letter reconfirmed the current peace, related the Shah's recreational trip to Mâzenderân, and emphasized that the royal government had no reason to feel anxious from the campaign in Iraq so long as the target territory of operations was under Ottoman sovereignty, as Basra was. The Grand-Vizier's warning was received, but only in the sense that no support should be given to Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin. Iranian frontier officials were warned with rescripts; no one could dare to act in violation of peace, said the Prime-Minister. Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin would continue to be denied support, as had been the case until then. Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha informed Mehmed IV of the reply he had received. Apart from the letter's content, the Grand-Vizier also conveyed to his

⁴⁷⁹ Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 126.

⁴⁸⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 423; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 294. According to the second source, the name of the bailiff is Abdülganî Agha.

master the statement by Abdünnebî Çavuş speaking of Abbas II's "renown for gullibility and excessive overwhelmedness"⁴⁸¹, and that during the German campaign, the Shah had prayed for Ottoman victory along with the entire people of Iran.⁴⁸² The unaccredited agent's description of Abbas II's physical condition must have stemmed from his deteriorating health. Because of this, a change of air from Isfahan to Mâzenderân was deemed necessary⁴⁸³. Also contracting syphilis, which was treated insufficiently,⁴⁸⁴ the Shah would die shortly after Abdünnebî's visit, and be succeeded by royal-prince⁴⁸⁵ Safî [II, the regnal name used after the second coronation was Shah Süleyman]. Apparently not informed of the Shah's severe condition, the Grand-Vizier's unaccredited agent attributed his observations to a general state of weakness on the Shah's part.

The accuracy of the wording of Abdünnebî Çavuş's or the chroniclers' reports aside, one can infer that Iran did not pose a real threat in the eyes of Ottoman dignitaries from the way Muhammed Mehdi Kerekî's reply was received and interpreted at the imperial court. The status quo was perceived as advantageous, and Iran did not feature as a power that had the capacity to undo it by its own initiative. Immediately after handling the correspondence with the Safavids regarding the second Efrâsiyaboğlu affair, Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha was again created commander-in-chief on 14 May 1666 to assume personal command at the siege of Candia on Crete. He would uninterruptedly and actively serve there until the Venetian garrison's capitulation on 27 September 1669.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸¹ "hiffet-i akl ile şöhretin ve ziyâde mağlubiyetin"

⁴⁸² Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 227; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 423-424; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 295.

⁴⁸³ Veli Kulu Şamlu, *Kıyasü'l-Hâkânî* vol. 2 (hs.1373), 16-22.

⁴⁸⁴ Engelbert Kaempfer, *Am Hofe der persischen Großkönigs (1684-1685), das erste Buch der Amoenitates Exoticae*, ed. & trans. Walther Hinz (Leipzig: K. F. Koehler Verlag, 1940), 35-37.

⁴⁸⁵ *mîrzâ*

⁴⁸⁶ İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 103-104; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 414-415, 419.

This 1666 compromise reached between the empire and the autonomous province of Basra, in which the Safavids did not try to interfere, proved temporary. Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin Pasha's son Efrâsiyab Beđ's governorship remained only in name, while the former continued to govern as if he had not abdicated. Armed conflict had ended, but the grudge that he had against Uzun İbrâhim Pasha continued to shape Basran policies vis-à-vis the empire, whose embodiment for Basra was the province of Baghdad. At the same time, Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin also did not refrain from meddling in the affairs of el-Hasa and destabilizing it. Because of his former atrocities in Basra against the notables and the merchants, there was an influx of complaint petitions to Constantinople demanding legal remedies from him even after the new settlement. Moreover, he did not deliver the lumpsum-tax of the province in full. In the end, his lieutenant Yahyâ Agha, who was made reside at the imperial court as surety, sought to replace his former master, claiming that he had sufficient local influence to have the urban dwellers and the Bedouins rally around him. He was soon appointed governor with a decree and he pledged to lay waste to the house and the household of Efrâsiyabođlu. On 22 May 1667, vice-grand-vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha escorted Yahyâ to audience with the Padishah, where he was invested with a robe of honor. Mehmed IV addressed him: "hereby I have deigned to grant the province of Basra upon you. If you do not act uprightly upon to my august will, you cannot find salvation in the world from my sword and in the hereafter from the wrath and torment of God His Sublimity." To execute the decree, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha was made governor-general of Baghdad and created marshal. The vassal Kurdish seigneurs, the governors of Diyarbekir (Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha), Şehrîzor (Gürcü Kenan Pasha), Mosul (Mûsâ Pasha), and Rakka (Deli Dilâver Pasha), plus the janissaries and the Locals at Baghdad would all campaign under the marshal.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁷ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 257; Râşid, *Târih*, 92; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 283-284; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 456, 495-496; Matthee, "Basra," 69. The quoted speech: "işte sana Basra beylerbeyliğini inâyet buyurdum,

These governors were ordered to report for duty with their household and provincial troops. From the inventory of Baghdad, an artillery of four bombards⁴⁸⁸ and twenty large field-guns⁴⁸⁹ supported the campaigning army.⁴⁹⁰ The Imperial Armory lent out material from its stocks and also manufactured new ones, while additional purchases and production were made for the inventory of the fortress of Baghdad.⁴⁹¹

In a letter⁴⁹² he sent to Firârî Mustafa Pasha before the start of the campaign, Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha said that the marshal was expected to “put in order the affairs of the province of Basra,”⁴⁹³ a statement from which one can infer that the campaign did not just aim at intervening in the disobedience. The reference was rather to the command to depose the Efrâsiyaboğlu

eğer murâd-ı hümâyunum üzere hareket ve istikâmet etmezsen dünyada benim kılıcımdan ve âhirette Allah-ı Teala hazretlerinin gazab u azâbından halâs olmazsın” See Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 257.

⁴⁸⁸ *balyemez*

⁴⁸⁹ *şâhî darb-zen*

⁴⁹⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke* 496; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 390, 397.

⁴⁹¹ For a detailed list of the war materials used as debit from the Imperial Armory and the Baghdad armory during this campaign, see the register compiled by Abdi, fortress-keeper of Baghdad: D.BŞM.CBH.d. 18367.

⁴⁹² A.MKT. 1/61. Carrying no date on it, the letter was classified by the archivist as to belong to the year h.1073 (1662-1663). However, it is most likely that the actual date is late summer of 1667. The letter is signed “from the affectionate and candid Mustafa (min el-muhibb-i muhlis Mustafa)”, and the address is to the “felicitous, esteemed, and high excellency, my brother the Pasha of solemn glory (saadetlü ve izzetlü ve ref’etlü karındaşım paşa-yı celîlü’ş-şân hazretleri)”. This signature and address are reserved for letters written from a superior to an inferior in Ottoman internal hierarchy. M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 223, 227. There were only two statesmen superior in rank to a military marshal: the grand-vizier, and his substitute – in case one was appointed when the grand-vizier himself was on campaign as commander-in-chief. So, this Mustafa should be no one other than vice-grand-vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha. His first term in this office was in 1663-1664 and the second in 1666-1669. While Pamuk Mustafa Pasha and Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha (second term) respectively governed Baghdad for short terms in 1664, they led no campaigns to Basra that would have made sense with this letter. Merzifonlu’s second term as grand-vizier Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha’s substitute, however, perfectly corresponds to the date of the 1667 campaign that Firârî Mustafa Pasha undertook in his third term at Baghdad. Another bit of evidence supporting this is found in the letter (A.MKT. 1/62) classified next to the one above, carrying no date but marked with the year h.1073 by the archivist. In this letter, governor-general of Baghdad Mustafa asked an inferior carrying the title *efendi* (again apparent from the words used in the signature and the address) to intercede on his behalf in order to disassociate him from the arranged marriage with imperial-princess Fatma, Ahmed I’s daughter, on the grounds that he did not have the financial means with which to make the implied payments and expenditure. This Mustafa should be no one other than our Firârî Mustafa Pasha who had been serving his third term at Baghdad since 9 April 1667. Because Fatma Sultan was actually married off to vizier Yusuf Pasha, the governor of Silistra, on 3 September 1667 and that the imperial government must not have lost time in finding this next suitable candidate, it would not be wrong to assume that this letter and the preceding one were written shortly before this marriage took place.

⁴⁹³ “Basra Eyâleti’nin tanzîm-i umûrunda” BOA. A.MKT. 1/61. In yet another letter which must have been sent around the same time (the archival dating h.1087 is inaccurate), Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha asked Firârî Mustafa Pasha to postpone the debt claims of the merchants from whom Yahyâ had borrowed until Yahyâ Pasha was actually installed in Basra A.MKT. 2/11.

dynasty and to install non-dynastic governors by the imperial government, as was the case for regular provinces: Basra's hereditary-fiefdom status was abolished and it became a regular province of the *salyâneli* type, an office of appointment. The marshal was to oversee the implementation and deal with the implications this would have for relations with Iran, especially for the frontier contacts at the Persian Gulf region.

To provide fast communication with the center, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha had empowered two commissaries with his decree to shuttle between Baghdad and Constantinople, seemingly not only to update the imperial court but also to consult with it about which course of action to take in certain issues; complications with Iran could necessitate close coordination with the center, in particular. A decree issued in mid-August 1667 in Adrianople to all the judges on the highway between Baghdad and Constantinople commanded that “until the the turmoil of the Basran campaign is eliminated,”⁴⁹⁴ they treat these two commissaries as imperial agents and provide them with couriers' mounts⁴⁹⁵, shortening the travel time.⁴⁹⁶

After hearing the news, Efrâsiyabođlu Hüseyin Pasha terrorized the city of Basra by making private property available to plundering as a means to compensate for the wages of the hired Bedouin force. After his offer to bring Basra under Safavid sovereignty was rejected, he ordered the complete evacuation of the city by forcing the inhabitants to go to Iran on 18 November 1667. As in the previous case, he also transferred his movable wealth and family to Iranian territory. Setting the city on fire, even razing his own palace to the ground, he went to Kurna to strengthen defenses. Then, he left the fortress at the head of a contingent of troops and

⁴⁹⁴ “Basra seferi gâilesi ber- taraf oluncaya deđin”

⁴⁹⁵ *ulak bargiri*

⁴⁹⁶ A.DVN. 50/68.

encamped at the site Sahab.⁴⁹⁷ As much as the shahs' unbending adherence to the consistent policy in this direction since 1639, the royal government's becoming intimidated by the Ottoman mobilization in Iraq, which some rumors claimed to be directed against Iran,⁴⁹⁸ must have also contributed to the Safavids' opting to maintain good relations with the Sublime Porte instead of undertaking a quick but in the long run unsustainable occupation.⁴⁹⁹

Up north, the Ottoman campaign had actually begun with the gathering of a relatively well-equipped army and the marshal's processional entry to his marquee by Fort Kuşlar outside Baghdad on 24 November 1667. Apparently to eliminate the risk that they join the rebels, the Basran irregular-cavalry⁵⁰⁰, which had been under prosecution, were pardoned with an imperial-writ. The decree issued to the marshal in late October commanded that he permit these irregular-cavalry to raise their banners and serve the empire by joining the campaign in a way that he saw fit.⁵⁰¹ Camp was set up in Arca on December 12 for a stop of seven days, and on 5 January 1668, after meeting with the awaited navy, the army processionaly entered Kût, i.e. the province of Basra, where Osman Bey [es-Sa'dûn], chieftain of the Müntefik, also joined the Ottoman army with his troops numbering around 1,000. At Mansûriye, where the Tigris and the Euphrates form the Shatt-el-Arab, the fleet carrying ammunition and heavy weaponry arrived.⁵⁰² Here, Yahyâ Pasha departed from the army to invite the tribes of Cezâyîr to pay allegiance to the padishah, to submit to his governorship, and to join the campaign. However, the tribes did not recognize Yahyâ's governorship, supposing that the army would not take the trouble of proceeding further. Apparently unaware that this campaign was a serious imperial investment, they disobeyed the

⁴⁹⁷ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 284-285; Matthee, "Basra," 69.

⁴⁹⁸ Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 45.

⁴⁹⁹ Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 57.

⁵⁰⁰ *sarica*

⁵⁰¹ BOA. AE. IV.MHMD. 11910.

⁵⁰² Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 391; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 285.

summons, laid waste to the fortifications, and razed the habitations in Cezâyîr as a part of their scorched earth tactic.⁵⁰³

At Mansûriye, the army was divided into three departments. Deli Dilâver Pasha (with his troops) and the Baghdad Local Right-flank Volunteers⁵⁰⁴ proceeded through the plain. Mûsâ Pasha and the janissaries set sail on the ships laden with ammunition and provisions. Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha, Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha, and the remaining units entered Cezâyîr. As punishment to the tribes' disobedience, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha had the jungles of Cezâyîr cut down as the army crossed through. On 16 January, camp was set up at Dâr-ı Benî Esed, where the 5,000-strong mercenary-Bedouin contingent of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin commanded by Mîr Mahmud waited in the riverside trenches to ambush the approaching enemy. Firârî Mustafa Pasha was already informed of Hüseyin's plan thanks to the interrogation of a prisoner captured in Cezâyîr. Thus, he deployed his forces and positioned his field artillery in expectation of the ambush. In the battle that ensued on January 17, during which Deli Dilâver Pasha's detachment also reached to hit the enemy from behind, the Efrâsiyaboğlu forces were heavily defeated with 1,500 killed, 400 drowned, and the rest put to flight. On January 28, at the site Hershesh, the first battery was set up. It was to be protected by troops under Gürcü Kenan Pasha and Deli Dilâver Pasha, while Firârî Mustafa Pasha and the rest of the army built a pontoon bridge, crossed the Shatt-el-Arab, and besieged the fortress.⁵⁰⁵

The Ottoman army conducted the subsequent chase with tremendous rigor in order to make an example of the insubordinates. The march continued until 17 February 1668, when it reached the fortress Süveyb, two hour's distance from Kurna. Proceeding to Kurna, one janissary

⁵⁰³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 496.

⁵⁰⁴ *sağ gönüllüler*

⁵⁰⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 496-497; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 392; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 286-287.

company along with the troops brought by Gürcü Kenan and Deli Dilâver Pashas, the Baghdad Local Right-flank Volunteers, and five companies from the marshal's household infantry⁵⁰⁶ entered into trenches facing the citadel and to the right side of the fortress. On River Zekiye, a pontoon bridge was set up to help the rest of the army cross. The army then encamped, protected by Mûsâ Pasha's troops. The rest of the janissary companies, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha's remaining household infantry and cavalry⁵⁰⁷, and the Baghdad Locals entered into trenches facing the moat and the fortress gate. Setting up batteries over the trenches and in the encampment, the bombardment of Kurna began from all four sides. The relief force with Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha at its head wanted to hit the besieging army, but a detachment commanded by Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha crossed River Zekiye and routed it, after which Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin fled to Iranian territory (February 23). When this clash was happening, the besiegers' trenches advanced and reached the moat. Afterwards, the marshal gathered the officers from the Sublime Court, Local Corps, and his private household to notify his orders of a general assault on February 24. After the assault and heavy bombardment began, most of the defenders in Kurna lost all hopes of success. On March 1, they deserted the garrison, en route to the plain of Huveyze (in Iran) heading in the footsteps of their master. Several thousand died during the assault, 1,500 were drowned in the river, and over 1,000 were taken in as prisoners, while those forcibly brought to Kurna by Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin were set free. Firârî Mustafa Pasha entered the fortress triumphantly.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁶ *sekban*

⁵⁰⁷ *sarıca*

⁵⁰⁸ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 498-499; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 394-395; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 287-288.

After the taking of Kurna, a judicial-deed⁵⁰⁹ drafted by Hasan Efendi, judge of the Imperial Army⁵¹⁰, and attested by eleven elders of Basra, registered the following session: Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha, Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha, Gürcü Kenan Pasha, Deli Dilâver Pasha, Mûsâ Pasha, gatekeeper-captain Ömer Bey, the janissary officers, and the Local Corps officers present in the army that captured Kurna testified “in the presence of esteemed Yahyâ Pasha, who is installed as governor to the country of Basra⁵¹¹” as such:

the country of Basra was conferred upon you by the Sublime Padishah and we were commissioned with making you seize it. . . . After the conquest and capture of Cezâyîr, Kurna, and other fortresses realized by the stroke of blade [i.e. by military force], we have handed over to Yahyâ Pasha and made him seize the entirety of the mentioned province that had been possessed by . . . transgressor Hüseyin⁵¹²

Yahyâ Pasha affirmed the testimony and declared that his authority stemmed from the imperial-writ empowering him.⁵¹³ Following Kurna, also the city of Basra surrendered to the marshal’s forces in early 1668 after a siege. Installing Yahyâ as governor, a restoration process began in which former inhabitants were invited to return.⁵¹⁴

Before the initiation of the campaign, however, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin had already transferred his movable wealth to the custody of Nevruz Xan, Iranian governor of Devrak, upon being informed of the content of the decree occasioning the campaign. Fleeing after the defeat, he directly went to Devrak, but Firârî Mustafa Pasha’s separate messengers followed him to Devrak, Huveyze, and Behbehân, demanding extradition and restoration of property. The viceroy of Huveyze responded to the marshal’s letter, confirming that Hüseyin, his small entourage, and

⁵⁰⁹ *hüccet*

⁵¹⁰ *ordu-yı hümâyün kadısı*

⁵¹¹ “Basra vilâyetine vâli nasb olunan Yahyâ Paşa hazretlerinin muvâcehesinde”

⁵¹² “vilâyet-i Basra taraf-ı aliyye-i Pâdişâhi’den sana tevcih olunup zaptettirilmesi için bizler memur olduğumuz ecilden vilâyet-i mezbûrenin üzerine gelip Cezâyîr ve Kurna ve sair kılâ’ ve bukâ’ın darb-ı tığ ile fethi ve teshîri müyesser oldukda Hüseyin bagînin bi’l-cümle zaptyletiği eyâlet-i merkum[u] Yahyâ Paşa’ya teslim ve zaptettirmişiz”

⁵¹³ AE. IV.MHMD. 3981.

⁵¹⁴ Mathee, “Basra,” 70.

some Basran inhabitants were lodging at Devrak. He also said that he had reported the situation to the Shah and was waiting for his orders in order to communicate further updates. Firârî Mustafa Pasha had Yahyâ Pasha issue an official pardon to enable those who had deserted Basra to return. In a letter to the Grand-Vizier, he also proposed himself as candidate in case the Padishah wanted to send an extraordinary ambassador to the Shah for the extradition of Efrâsiyaboğlu and his property. In the face of the marshal's threat that the Ottoman army would cross the border to punish anyone giving Efrâsiyaboğlu shelter, Iranian governors did not offer asylum. Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin then went to Shiraz with his 2,000 followers in order to convince Shah Süleyman to support him. The marshal, however, in his capacity as the Padishah's absolute-deputy, had already sent an emissary to the Shah to officially demand extradition.⁵¹⁵ This Ottoman mission caused controversy among Safavid statesmen: one camp supported the extradition while another lobbied for granting asylum, and maybe even providing military support. The Shah sent troops to Huveyze just in case, but denied Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin the right to stay in Iran⁵¹⁶, who then fled to India.

As mentioned above, Basra lost its hereditary-fiefdom privileges: it became a *salyâneli* province and its governorate an office of appointment.⁵¹⁷ At the fortress of Kurna, the marshal left 1,500 janissaries for garrison duty, with an additional enlistment of a 3,000-strong Local Corps⁵¹⁸ accompanied by sufficient amount of artillery, ammunition and supplies. Specific revenue items of the province were allocated to pay for the salaries of the Locals. The marshal

⁵¹⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 499-501; Mühürdar Hasan Ağa, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*, 396.

⁵¹⁶ Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*, 132. Hüseyin first made promises in order to seek support from the Portuguese for winning back Basra, but he did so in vain. He reappeared in India in 1669. Being titled Islam Xan Rûmî at the Mughal court, where he also had his son Efrâsiyab Beğ admitted, he stayed there until his death in 1676. Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 499-501; Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations", 106-108; 400.

⁵¹⁷ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 328; Râşid, *Târih*, 102.

⁵¹⁸ The Basran Local Corps consisted of the following departments: a fortress-keeper, local janissaries, right-flank volunteers, left-flank volunteers, *azeb*s, local munitioners, local artillerymen, the *müstahfiz*s. See the signers of the collective-petition in İE. ŞKRT 47.

disbanded the army and sent a courier to the imperial court⁵¹⁹ carrying the victory-letters⁵²⁰ along with the report of the campaign which talked of the necessity of appointing a comptroller and a surveyor to the province. These two officials along with the new judge and the port-warden soon arrived in Basra to take over the administration, finances, trade, but most urgently, to undertake the land and revenue survey.⁵²¹ Also, the register showing the newly established garrison forces of the province was forwarded to the government.⁵²² The Padishah's congratulatory imperial-writ accompanied by a *serâser*-type sable fur, one bejeweled sword, and three palanquins from the Privy Treasury, was sent to the marshal with Musâhip Halil Agha.⁵²³

Basra's annexation was directly relevant for relations with the Safavids: from that point onward, there would be no princely dynasty at the head of a government in Basra with which the Safavids could potentially negotiate, interact, or under favorable circumstances, cooperate with to the detriment of the Ottomans. The once-*tributary-dominion*, after an interim of fiefdom, was now reduced to a province, annexed, and subordinated to Baghdad in its dealings with any Ottoman and non-Ottoman addressee. The Safavids' loss of a provincial actor within the empire who could be of substantial use and who received considerable indirect military support as a manifestation of this possibility was a serious blow dealt by the Ottomans. Likewise, the degradation of frontier interaction at the Persian Gulf region to the level of cross-border Bedouin contacts negatively impacted the Safavid's level of influence in the region that could be deployed during a potential facedown between Constantinople and Isfahan. A major destabilizing factor in Ottoman Iraq, on which the Safavids could and did plan at almost every contention with the

⁵¹⁹ *Rikâb-ı Hümâyün*

⁵²⁰ *fetihnâme*

⁵²¹ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 288-289; Matthee, "Basra," 71.

⁵²² A.DVN. 53/3. Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha's dispatches to the center must have arrived in June or July 1668; the decree written onto this exposition and prescribing travel license for the return of the three commissaries to Baghdad was issued on 3 June 1668.

⁵²³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 500.

empire since 1638, was now gone. This constituted the first alteration, in favor of the empire, of the Zuhab status quo, by which the Ottomans had already been enjoying primacy over the Safavids.

In a decree sent to the governors of Baghdad and Basra and to the judge of Basra in late July 1668, Mehmed IV now declared the province of Basra his “patrimony”⁵²⁴, and the Efrâsiyaboğlu affair as the latter’s “deviating from obedience and submission, and heading towards rebellion and riot.”⁵²⁵ With this, the Sublime Porte must have wanted to bring further emphasis on the abolition of Basra’s privileges. As necessitated by this reorganization, the villages, farms, ports, customs, tithe tax, non-canonical taxes, and other revenue items of the province were to be surveyed and registered anew. From this survey, the revenue items were to be allocated to the Central Treasury, the Privy Purse, land-tenures, and the provincial treasury. The provincial councils of Basra and Baghdad, and the Imperial Registry, would each receive a copy of the resultant survey.⁵²⁶ In another decree issued together with the one above, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha’s proposal to establish and enlist men for the Basran Local Corps was approved. The total strength of the Corps was 2,750, and future appointments to vacancies were subject to the approval of the governors-general of Baghdad.⁵²⁷ Then, a letter from Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha to Firârî Mustafa Pasha informed him of the imminent arrival of the decrees ordering the survey of the province. This task was commissioned to Hacı Ebubekir Bey, former Jidda-based governor of Ethiopia, as surveyor, and to Ahmed Efendi, former comptroller of

⁵²⁴ “mülk-i mevrus

⁵²⁵ “itaat u inkiyaddan inhiraf ve be-râh-ı isyân u tuğyâna in’itaf”

⁵²⁶ A.DVN. 53/21.

⁵²⁷ A.DVN. 53/21. The fortress of Basra: 500 local janissaries –seven aspers each daily, 500 right wing volunteers – sixteen aspers each daily, 300 *azeb*s –seven aspers each daily, one hundred *müstahfiz*s –seven aspers each daily, fifty governor[-general] bailiffs –fifteen aspers each daily. The fortress of Kurna and the fortified positions at Mansûriye and Cezâyîr: 500 local janissaries, 500 left-flank volunteers, 200 *azeb*s, and one hundred *müstahfiz*s with salaries equal to those of their counterparts at Basra. Three copies of the corps registers were to be kept respectively in Constantinople, Baghdad, and Basra. Salaries were to be paid from the provincial treasury of Basra. A later copy of a decree issued on 18 August 1668 gives the total strength of the Local Corps as 2,100. Ibid.

Nagykanizsa (in Hungary), as scribe.⁵²⁸ In mid-August, another imperial-writ lowered the total number of the Basran Local Corps to 2,100 while at the same time reorganizing their deployment locations.⁵²⁹

Yahyâ Pasha, however, did not prove to be an obedient governor more than ready to execute the center's will in the province. In a letter probably dispatched in late 1668 immediately following an earlier correspondence, vice-grand-vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha openly referred to [a prospective] "Basran campaign", if not to Yahyâ Pasha's deposition. He urged Firârî Mustafa Pasha to inform the center about the latest developments, because rumors had spread though no reliable source had confirmed them. Seemingly, the decision to undertake a campaign was taken in response to Firârî Mustafa Pasha's report of the unrest.⁵³⁰ At the beginning of 1669, claiming that the province's revenues were sufficient to maintain the Local Corps, Yahyâ Pasha undermined the financial and the survey departments' activities, adding that accepting centrally-appointed comptrollers and surveyors were not among the prerequisites that had been stipulated to him by the imperial government. The Locals, from whom pay was withheld, in cooperation with the janissaries, pressured Yahyâ Pasha and expelled him from the city in March 1669.⁵³¹

The collective-petition submitted by all administrative and military office holders in Basra⁵³² and drafted by judge Abdülhalim Efendi, recorded the flight as such: on 8 March 1669,

⁵²⁸ A.MKT. 2/13.

⁵²⁹ A.DVN. 53/24. The fortresses of Basra and Kapan: 300 local janissaries, 350 volunteers, 200 *azebs*, one hundred *müstahfizs*, forty local munitioners, fifty local artillerymen, and fifty local bailiffs. The fortress of Kurna: 300 local janissaries, 350 volunteers, 200 *azebs*, 100 *müstahfizs*, thirty Local munitioners, and thirty Local artillerymen. The new corps register was also requested to be sent to the Grand Vizier's headquarters, the encampment of the Imperial Army in Crete.

⁵³⁰ A.MKT. 1/68.

⁵³¹ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 289.

⁵³² Hacı Ebubekir (surveyor), Hüseyin (comptroller), Mehmed (janissary commanding-officer), Mahmud (janissary chief-major), Mustafa, Hüseyin, Hasan, Murtazâ, Mehmed, Mustafa, Hasan, Yusuf, Receb, Ahmed, Hacı Bekir,

Yahyâ Pasha went to the feast given by his lieutenant Abdülkâdir Agha. At night, the governor, his lieutenant, his treasurer, and his cousin Osman crossed the Shatt-el-Arab. He stopped at Gûridilân, where he massacred around 150 inhabitants and more allies joined him. Thereafter, he crossed the border into Iranian territory, repeating the very course of action his former master, Efrâsiyaboğlu, had taken. The petitioners claimed that they were not responsible for his escape because the province was obedient and that they had not intervened in Yahyâ Pasha's manner of governance. Until a new governor was appointed with a decree, surveyor Hacı Ebubekir Bey was elected proxy-governor to avoid having a power vacuum and disorderliness.⁵³³ A later judicial-deed penned by Abdülhalim Efendi recorded the date of escape as March 9 and noted that Yahyâ Pasha was also accompanied by Ali b. Abdan (chieftain of the tribe Khalt) and around fifty horsemen at the initial moment of his fleeing en route to Iran.⁵³⁴

In Iran (at Huveyze and Devrak), Yahyâ Pasha raised further troops from Bedouins and Iranians, reaching a total of 15,000 to 20,000.⁵³⁵ On 20 March 1669, he reappeared in the Basran countryside, nestling in the fortress of Süveyb.⁵³⁶ Following Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's footsteps, after raising troops in Iran and finding allies among the Bedouins, he reappeared in the vicinity of the city of Basra. Upon observing this, the officials of Basra wrote him a letter asking "what made it necessary to abandon the government, the province, and the affairs of the domain in disarray and in disconcertment, and opt for flight when you were the esteemed and respected

Ahmed, Şâban, Osman, Abdüllatif, Hüseyin, es-Seyyid Ahmed, Arnavut Abdurrahman Abdi, Süleyman, Hasan, Ali, İbrâhim, Sefer (Locals Corps and garrison officers of various ranks, specified in the document), Mustafa (senior bailiff of the council of Basra), Hacı Yasin (port-warden), Sheikh Osman (of the Müntefik).

⁵³³ İE. ŞKRT. 47; BOA. İE. AS. 733.

⁵³⁴ A.DVN. 57/15.

⁵³⁵ Mathee, "Basra," 71.

⁵³⁶ A.DVN. 57/15.

governor of the great Padishah his imperial, mighty, stupendus majesty, Shadow of God?⁵³⁷”. In response to this, Yahyâ Pasha intercepted the navigation between Basra and Kurna, appropriating the goods from the passing ships. He killed two janissaries and one Basran Local, and he captured three Locals. The officials accused him of having prevented the execution of the land and revenue survey with the aim of ruling in Basra as if it had not been converted into a regular province after the ousting of the Efrâsiyabođlu. After this, Yahyâ Pasha, now at the head of an army of recruits from Iran, declared with a letter that unless the surveyor, the comptroller, the Sublime Court Corps, and the Local Corps evacuated the city, he would not enter Basra. This collective-petition, which was penned on March 24, was sent to the imperial court to report the situation and ask for directives.⁵³⁸

During the days that immediately followed, Hacı Ebubekir Bey (surveyor) and Hüseyin Efendi (comptroller) wrote a separate exposition⁵³⁹ to the Grand-Vizier, reporting Yahyâ Pasha’s blockade of Basra and producing the ruling⁵⁴⁰ that had legitimized the course of action the office holders at Basra had followed against him.⁵⁴¹ Upon request by eleven notables, Yahyâ Pasha’s banditry outside Basra, killing of janissary Fethi Beşe alongside his servant, and wounding Mûsâ Bey b. Abdullah were recorded in yet another judicial-deed penned by judge Abdülhalim Efendi on 26 March 1669. The court process was initiated by the testimony of witnesses Seyyid Mehmed b. Seyyid Mûsâ, Seyyid Îsâ b. Seyyid Hasan, Hasan b. Mehmed (a council bailiff), Halil b. Abdullah (a council bailiff), Mustafa Reis (Local Corps), and the abovementioned Mûsâ Bey. This judicial-deed indeed officially registered Yahyâ Pasha’s rebellion against the empire.

⁵³⁷ “azametlü ve şevketlü ve kudretlü ve mehâbetlü Pâdişâh-ı zıllullah hazretlerinin muazzez ve muhterem beylerbeyisi iken ne iktizâ eyledi ki terk-i hükûmet ü eyâlet ve umûr-ı memleketi muhtel ü müşevveş bırakıp firârî ihtiyâr idesin”

⁵³⁸ İE. ŞKRT. 47.

⁵³⁹ *arz*

⁵⁴⁰ *fatwa*

⁵⁴¹ A.MKT. 1/72.

A ruling that sentenced Yahyâ Pasha to death was also secured from the mufti of Basra, Abdullah b. Ahmed.⁵⁴² On 2 April 1669, an officer from the Kurna garrison, Mustafa Agha, sent a letter to grand-vizier Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha, in which he confirmed Yahyâ Pasha's committing a rebellion, raising an army, and imposing a blockade of Basra and Kurna. The letter also produced the names of several governmental officials detained by the rebels.⁵⁴³ Another letter between the same correspondence partners confirmed the presence of Basran and Huveyzan beduions in Yahyâ's army, and reported the garrison's firm stance against several assault attempts. However, they had run out of food supplies, and neither Basra nor Baghdad had dispatched aid in response to letters from Kurna asking for provisions. That the garrison of Kurna was asking for aid⁵⁴⁴ with a letter to the Grand-Vizier, who was himself commanding over the siege of Candia on Crete, demonstrates that Yahyâ's blockade had nevertheless really taken its toll.

On 18 April 1669, Yahyâ Pasha also besieged Basra, which was not so well fortified, and entered it rather easily on April 29. When he initiated a massacre of both the non-Basran Ottomans and the pro-Ottoman Basrans, the surveyor, the comptroller, the Locals' officers, and other officials escaped to Baghdad without even taking their movable property with them.⁵⁴⁵

Next, Yahyâ Pasha laid siege to Kurna. The garrison, however, offered strong resistance, and wrote to Baghdad asking for reinforcements while carrying on with the defense. In a letter

⁵⁴² İE. DH. 630. Fethi Beşe was from the 26. *cemaat*-company of the Janissary Corps. Mûsâ Bey b. Abdullah came from the Right-flank Volunteers of the Basran Locals. Mustafa Reis came from the *Azeb* department of the Locals. Ibid.

⁵⁴³ A.MKT. 1/73.

⁵⁴⁴ A.MKT. 2/58.

⁵⁴⁵ The comptroller, the Locals' chief, and another Local officer were accused of inappropriate conduct, and imprisoned in the fortress of Baghdad with grand-vizierial orders. Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 289; Matthee, "Basra," 71.

dated 30 April 1669, which Kurna's garrison officers⁵⁴⁶ probably sent to the governor-general of Baghdad two months after the beginning of hostilities, the officers reported that they had run out of provisions, but a certain chieftain Osman⁵⁴⁷ had managed to deliver some. The army besieging Kurna from all four sides numbered 10,000 and had four pieces of artillery. Meanwhile, the defenders, who proudly mentioned their firmness, sat in trenches from the first day on; however, no news came of the expected reinforcements. The besiegers heavily defended their back at Zekiye, where they had blockaded the river traffic. They had acquired provisions from seven incoming ships, and from three additional ships sent to Kurna from Baghdad. The viceroy of Huveyze, Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin's long-time comrade across the border, had also aided Yahyâ Pasha by sending 400 additional musketeers along with sufficient provisions to an army already made up mostly of Iranian recruits. Several janissaries who had escaped from the detainment of the besiegers and Abdülhalim Efendi's post-campaign judicial-deed dispatched to the imperial court also testified the support coming from Huveyze to Yahyâ. Previous papers coming from Basra had been intercepted by Yahyâ's mounted patrol, killing two and capturing five captains⁵⁴⁸, while the provision train destined for the janissaries was ambushed by a mounted group of defectors.⁵⁴⁹

To relieve Kurna, Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha immediately sent the Locals together with the Beyat and Bâcılan tribal troops and several of his household infantry companies. Defeating the Bedouin musketeers defending the besieging army's back between River Zekiye and the fortress, the relief force entered Kurna by breaking through the siege. Yahyâ Pasha, probably fearing that more reinforcements might be on the way, ordered a general assault to his army

⁵⁴⁶ Chief-artillerymen Hasan Agha, chief of the *Azebs* Mehmed, captain Şaban on the left, captain Murad on the right, Local Corps garrison chief at Kurna Mehmed Agha, Sublime Court Corps garrison chief at Kurna Mustafa.

⁵⁴⁷ Might he be chieftain Osman Bey es-Sa'dûn of the Müntefik?

⁵⁴⁸ *bölükbaşı*

⁵⁴⁹ İE.AS. 733; A.DVN. 57/16.

which amounted to 10,000 combatants. The garrison of Kurna and the auxiliary cavalry waiting outside the fortress responded with a counter offensive, and at the ensuing battle, Yahyâ Pasha's side was decisively defeated. Soon after this, the reports of the rebellion reached the imperial court on 6 August 1669 at Kartalkayası highlands⁵⁵⁰, after which gatekeeper-captain Mustafa Agha [now Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa Pasha] was appointed on 16 August 1669 as the new governor of Basra. Firârî Mustafa Pasha, still governing at Baghdad, was again created marshal to install Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa in his post and suppress any disobedience. This time, the rebels could again attempt at an assault on Kurna, so without waiting for the subordinated governors to arrive, Firârî Mustafa Pasha and Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa Pasha led their private troops and the Baghdad Locals to another campaign in July. When they reached Kurna in August, Yahyâ Pasha considered his cause lost. On September 5, he crossed River Zekiye and headed towards Basra with his remaining forces. However, Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa Pasha sent a 2,000-strong detachment under his proxy's command to pursue the fleeing enemy. Intimidated by this, Yahyâ abandoned his plan of retrenching himself in Basra, and instead crossed the border into Iranian territory.⁵⁵¹

After crossing into Iran, Yahyâ first lodged at the fortress of Devrak but would soon be forced to leave Iranian territory and escape to India.⁵⁵² Some of the fleeing enemy forces headed towards Basra and looted the city. Before leaving Kurna, the marshal replenished the garrison to full troop strength, paid their salaries for the next three months, stored provisions sufficient for six months, and left abundant artillery and ammunition.⁵⁵³

⁵⁵⁰ In the vicinity of Larissa.

⁵⁵¹ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 328; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 288-290; Râşid, *Târih*, 102; Matthee, "Basra," 71; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 574.

⁵⁵² In 1671, Yahyâ Pasha ended up in India like Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha and Efrâsiyab Beğ. Received cordially, he was admitted into Mughal service nobility and proved to be a successful military commander. Farooqi, "Mughal-Ottoman Relations", 109, 400.

⁵⁵³ A.DVN. 57/15, 57/16.

The Iranian-reinforced Yahyâ's final defeat and escape coincided with a similar attempt by a Safavid rebel who sought the padishah's protection. A certain Mehmed Beyg, who came from the shahdom's military class and who was the chieftain of an unnamed [and probably Kızılbaş] tribe, escaped from Iran and sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire together with his tribesmen. In response to his request to enter the padishah's service, he was appointed governor of Trebizond. This was quite a high position that must have surpassed his rank in Safavid hierarchy. On 20 July 1669, Mehmed IV received him in audience, and investing him with a robe of honor for his new post, addressed: "if you act uprightly, you will enjoy even more of my august grace."⁵⁵⁴ Mehmed Beyg, now [Ajam] Mehmed Pasha, would continue to serve at various governorates.⁵⁵⁵

On the day the marshal entered Basra, session was assembled at his behest, and presided over by Abdülhalim Efendi and officially attended by Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa Pasha along with the campaigning dignitaries. In this session, the official handover of the province from the marshal to the governor was registered with a judicial-deed by the judge. Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa Pasha, in cooperation with the forces garrisoning the province, pledged to prosecute any remaining pro-Yahyâ – and by extension pro-Efrâsiyaboğlu – cliques that were to be found.⁵⁵⁶ The remaining officials on campaign and the notables of Basra attested to the proceedings⁵⁵⁷, while this judicial-

⁵⁵⁴ "İstikâmet üzere hareket edersen dahi ziyâde inâyet-i hümâyunuma mazhar olursun" Karaçelebizâde, *Ravza Zeyli*, 325-327; Râşid, *Târih*, 101.

⁵⁵⁵ Ajam Mehmed Pasha, who was transferred from the subgovernorship of Çirmen to that of Karahisâr-ı Şarkî on 3 March 1683, one day after the departure of the Imperial Army with Mehmed IV at its head from the field of Adrianople (see Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyli Fezleke*, 795), is probably the same Mehmed Pasha.

⁵⁵⁶ A.DVN. 57/16; A.DVN. 74/48.

⁵⁵⁷ Abdullah (subgovernor of Harir), Mehmed (subgovernor of Köy), Hızır (subgovernor of Uril? [Erbil?]), Hüseyin (lieutenant of the governor of Mosul), Üveys (subgovernor of Karadağ), Ebubekir Bey (surveyor of Basra), Osman Efendi (preacher of Baghdad), İsmâil Efendi (treasury-chancellor of Baghdad), Hüseyin (lieutenant of the governor of Basra), Hüseyin Agha (chief-summoner), Mehmed (chief of the Right Wing Local Volunteers of Baghdad), Ali (chief of the Left Wing Local Volunteers of Baghdad), el-Sheikh Maruf el-Sheikh Abdüllam, el-Sheikh Abdullah b. el-Sheikh Habibullah, el-Sheikh Ali b. el-Sheikh Abdülhadi, el-Sheikh Ahmed b. el-Sheikh Abdüsselam, el-Sheikh Ahmed b. el-Sheikh Hüseyin, el-Sheikh Abdullah b. el-Sheikh Abdürrahim, el-Sheikh Ishak? b. el-Sheikh bû-Yusuf,

deed, which also contained the full campaign report, was given to marshal as the formal registering of the completion of his assignment.⁵⁵⁸ On October 14, Hasan Efendi, judge of the Imperial Army [on the Basran campaign], registered the same judicial-deed with the same parties.⁵⁵⁹ Soon afterwards, Ramazan Efendi, former comptroller of Baghdad, was appointed with a mandate to the comptrollership of Basra.⁵⁶⁰ Thus, via the purge of the last remnants of the Efrâsiyaboğlu regime, Basra's annexation as a regular province was consummated, with direct implications for Ottoman-Safavid relations

Mehmed IV congratulated Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha with an imperial-writ. Besides his generosity with words of blessing and benediction⁵⁶¹, the Padishah “deigned to honor⁵⁶²” the former marshal (after the completion of the campaign, he was relieved of his marshalship) with a “victory-affecting bejeweled sword of invincibility” which had been previously girded on in an expedition by the padishah⁵⁶³ and an “imperial sable fur covered with ceremonial robe of honor” from his privy collection⁵⁶⁴. The governor-general was now expected to attend to his business in his province “Baghdad . . . which is the prohibitive barrier of the frontier of Arabian Iraq and Persian [Iraq].⁵⁶⁵” He was to watch over the Local and the Sublime Court Corps so that they would not neglect the garrison duty, keep a close eye on “Basra, a newly-conquered domain,⁵⁶⁶”

el-Sheikh Ömer b. el-Sheikh Abdülğani, el-Sheikh Selman b. el-Sheikh Ahmed Abdüsselam, el-Sheikh Abdülhak b. el-Sheikh Abdülhadî, el-Sheikh Yunus b. el-Sheikh Yahyâ, el-Sheikh İbrâhim b. el-Sheikh Ali-el-Hatib, el-Sheikh Halil b. el-Sheikh İbrâhim, el-Sheikh Ahmed b. el-Sheikh Abdülbaki, el-Sheikh Abdülkadir b. el-Sheikh Yahyâ, el-Sheikh Abdullah b. el-Sheikh Ali, el-Sheikh Ahmed, and others. Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ A.DVN. 57/16.

⁵⁵⁹ A.MKT. 1/80; A.DVN. 74/48.

⁵⁶⁰ A.DVN. 57/72.

⁵⁶¹ İE.HH. 342 “berhudar olasin . . . ırz-ı saltanatıma lâyıık ve rızâ-yı şerifime muvâfik hizmet eyledin, yüzün ak olsun, eğer sen ve eğer seninle bile olan kullarım cümleliz duâ-yı hayr-ı icâbet-âsâr-ı mülûkâneme mazhar olmuşsunuzdur, nân u nîmetim cümleliz helâl olsun”

⁵⁶² “seni teşrif buyurup”

⁵⁶³ “esyâf-ı gazâ-ittisâf-ı şâhânemden bir kabza şemşîr-i zafer-tesîr-i sâhib-kirânî”

⁵⁶⁴ “hassa kürklerimizden hil’at-ı fâhire kaplı semmûr-i fâyizü’s-sürûr-ı hüsrevânî”

⁵⁶⁵ “Bağdad . . . ki sedd-i sedîd-i serhadd-i Irâk-ı Arab u [Irâk-ı] Acem’dir”

⁵⁶⁶ “ve Basra dahi yeni açılmış memlekettir”

“constantly maintain useful, trustworthy spies over in Ajam, and not lie down on informing the court about the authentic news that come to pass.”^{567,568}

The role that Iran played as a country from 1665 to 1669 throughout the deals made with and the eliminations of Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin Pasha, Efrâsiyab Beğ, and Yahyâ Pasha demonstrated that the Efrâsiyaboğlu establishment at Basra, which must have continued to a certain extent under Yahyâ, had a hinterland extending over the Iranian border. In all instances, the first measure that each of the rebels took in the face of the approaching imperials was to transfer their movable property and family to Iranian territory in order for them to stay under the protection of their confederates. The most prominent of these confederates were the viceroys of Huveyze, but other governors in the Gulf region were also involved. The second point is that Basran recruitment on Iranian territory to be directed against the Ottomans was not necessarily undertaken with the shah’s permission. These cases, unlike in the first affair of 1655, suggest that the Basran establishment had immediate access to recruitment pool across the Iranian border, first as *tributary-dominion* and then as *autonomous-fiefdom*. Asking the shah’s permission for this was only a diplomatic move, which, in the case of an acceptance, could make the Efrâsiyaboğlu expect more than reinforcements – probably Safavid protection – against the Ottomans.

Yet, aside from the fact that the rebels could recruit mercenaries on the spot from Iran, there is no clue hinting at the shah’s permission or acquiescence thereto. The conversion of Basra in 1655 from *tributary-dominion* to *autonomous-fiefdom* must have been enough for Safavid statesmen to understand that Basra was now a more integral part of the empire, the interference

⁵⁶⁷ “ve Acem etrâfinda dâima yarar ve mutemet câsusların[ı] eksik etmeyip vukûa gelen ahbâr-ı sahîhayı rikâbıma bildirmekten hâli olmayasın”

⁵⁶⁸ İE.HH. 342.

in which could trigger an interstate crisis with a much higher probability than before 1655. That the shahs denied Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin and Yahyâ the right of asylum and forced them to leave Iranian territory further attest to this awareness on the part of the royal government. Conversion from an *autonomous-fiefdom* to a regular province in 1667, on the other hand, and its consummation in 1669 must have removed any remaining doubts about this issue. The Safavid court's course of action throughout the 1660s testifies to its adoption of a policy of no longer supporting rebels from Basra in order maintain peaceful relations with the Ottomans.

IV.3. New Anti-Ottoman Alliance Offers to the Safavids and False Alarms at the Frontier

The last round of the Efrâsiyaboğlu and Yahyâ affairs coincided with the final and possibly the severest phase of the siege of Candia. Undertaken as an imperial campaign and reinforced each year with fresh troops, the siege continued, characterized by mutual trench ambushes, mine detonations, assaults, and concurrent negotiations. It attracted the full attention of the empire; Mehmed IV wintered in Larissa to oversee military shipments while the Grand-Vizier remained at the head of the army in Crete for three years. Immediately before Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha's entry to Basra, Candia capitulated; the Ottoman conquest of the island Crete from Venice was completed on 27 September 1669.⁵⁶⁹

On this occasion, Mehmed IV dispatched a victory-letter⁵⁷⁰ to “his sublime majesty Shah Süleyman, the sovereign of the realm of Ajam⁵⁷¹”, with the declared purpose of “observing the pacts of amity, . . . although the purity-receiving shahly disposition is [already] at affection and

⁵⁶⁹ Kenneth Setton, *Venice, Austria, and the Turks*, 193-235; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 415-421; İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 104.

⁵⁷⁰ *Esnâd u Mükâtebât, 1038-1105*, 250-257.

⁵⁷¹ “âlî-hazret . . . fermân-fermâ-yı mülk-i Acem . . . Süleyman Şah”

affinity, and the justice-taking padishahly constitution is [already] at fondness and union.⁵⁷²” “After affirming and stressing the foundations of friendship,⁵⁷³” Mehmed IV gave an overview of the Cretan War in the rest of the epistle, placing the blame of its outbreak on Venetian shoulders. Throughout the epistle, descriptions of Ottoman investments, the strength of Venetian fortifications, the fortitude of the defenders, the sustained support from Venetian allies, and the severeness of actual clashes preceded narrations of Ottoman conquests in order to emphasize the scale of their accomplishments. Special emphasis was put on the empire’s ability to concentrate troops redeployed from various far away provinces onto a front, the firepower of the sophisticated Ottoman artillery, the effectiveness of sappers-miners, and the expertise of the military personnel undertaking the operations. Thus implicitly, the overview highlights the vastness of available resources with which the empire could sustain protracted full-scale wars.

Following the example of his master, Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha, who had brought a victorious end to the war by personally leading the three-year siege of Candia, sent a victory-letter⁵⁷⁴ to Sheikh Ali Xan Zengene “his vizierial excellency, recourse of regency, of deputial affiliation.⁵⁷⁵” The references to courtesy and titlature aside, this letter also recounted the history of the war, with the conquests of the “unattainable . . . and prestigious⁵⁷⁶” fortresses of Chania, Rethymno, and the “impregnable⁵⁷⁷” Candia occupying the central scene. By referring to the German Campaign (the 1663-1664 war with the Habsburg monarchy) to justify why the empire had waited so long to deal the deathblow to the Venetian presence in Crete, the Grand-

⁵⁷² “her-çend ki fitrat-ı safvet-pezîr-i şâhâne hubb ü vedâd ve tıynet-ı nısfet-gîr-i pâdişâhâne vedd ü ittihâd üzeredir . . . mürâât-ı uhûd-ı musafât”

⁵⁷³ “esâs-ı müvâlât teşyid ve tekid olunduktan sonra”

⁵⁷⁴ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, H.O. 179, ff. 19a-21a; *Esnâd u Mükâtebât*, 1038-1105, 258-264.

⁵⁷⁵ “cenâb-ı vezâret-meab, niyâbet-iyab, vekâlet-intisab”

⁵⁷⁶ “menî’a . . . muteber”

⁵⁷⁷ “düşvâr-gîr”

Vizier also implicitly demonstrated the empire's capacity to wage and win simultaneous wars with two great powers. The references made in-passing to material shipments, troop [re]deployments, and maneuvers were also included to demonstrate Ottoman military capabilities, and to accentuate the administrative organization and the resource base on which they depended. Narrations of various assaults, entrenchment operations, artillery bombardments, and mine blastings, on the other hand, vouched for the effectiveness with which this potential could be realized on site. The last part of the letter, which diverges from that of Mehmed IV's pattern, tells us why the Grand-Vizier sent a separate victory-letter in the first place:

As required by unity, honesty, concord, and candour, which are necessary and mandatory to statesmen and the regulators of affairs of the domain for reforming the conditions of the regnum and the nation, an attachment-styled and good-news-accompanying letter has also been written from the side of [this] Pure-of-Heart [i.e. the Grand-Vizier] to His Deputial Excellency the recourse of princeps hood [i.e. the Prime-Minister]. . . . It is appropriate to the requirements of forthrightness and pacification that that side [i.e. the Safavids] also avoid situations inconsistent with the conditions of attachment and treaty. It has been heard that erstwhile, [Efrâsiyaboğlu] Hüseyin Pasha and Yahyâ Pasha, who are the banner-bearers of rebellion and banditry in Basra, as a resort, so-to-say took refuge in that side [i.e. Iran] from the dominion of the subduing-wrath of the padishah and, in the vicinity of protection, received admission to comfort and security. This unfitting affair is in disagreement with the steady friendship and attachment between us. Previously, when the hell-blazing flames of the [padishah's] Potentately Wrath had willed to melt down the evil and exhausted existence of [Efrâsiyaboğlu] Hüseyin Pasha, who had embarked upon banditry, and the amassing of the [Ottoman] Triumphal Legions at that frontier had been necessary and required, and when correspondence had taken place for the benefit that no development inconsistent with peace and attachment be considered [by the Safavids] from this move [by the Ottomans], it had been correctly replied [by the Prime-Minister], properly and in accordance with the ceremonies of unfaltering attachment, in the musk-masked writing that in no way a favor or help, which would be in violation of the pacification and candour, would be perpetrated to the mentioned bandit.

As matters stand, it is apparent that those bandits', who took refuge in that side, entering into the grasp of protection is this very help and aid to those bed-charactered ones; it is evident and obvious that consenting to those in opposition with this side [i.e. the empire] is [itself] in opposition with the conditions of cohesion and affinity – may this undesirable affair not cause turbidness in the source of affinity! It is appropriate of the situation and in agreement of the purport of what is mentioned that They [i.e. the Prime-Minister] affirm the pillars of affection and affinity by delivering – seized and bound – the bandits, who are the pacers of the valley of banditry, to the governor of

Baghdad, the revered vizier, his esteemed and high excellency, Our brother [Firârî Kara] Mustafa Pasha⁵⁷⁸

Notifying the Safavid court of the definitive Ottoman victory against the Republic of Venice and its allies via letters made a perfect excuse for intimidating the addressee without threatening it. The implicitly forwarded subtext was that the Ottoman Empire could organize, fight, sustain, and win simultaneous, separate full-scale wars against two great powers. Iran had to continuously remind itself of the fact that this had occurred even when the empire's arms were preoccupied in the farthest European battlefields and disobedience destabilized its authority at a frontier province, which is not to speak of what the empire could undertake at a given eastern campaign when not preoccupied on any other front. Conveying this message in a non-hostile manner by rubbing it into the account of victory against Venice was a golden opportunity to remind the Safavids which side had the upper hand in the current balance of power, and the Sublime Porte did not let this opportunity go by the board. Apart from the message's content, the *inscriptio* used by the grand vizier for the prime-minister also makes this point apparent as it lacked any booster grade beyond princely rank stemming naturally from his position as the shah's chief-minister. In contrast, the grand-vizier enjoyed the rank of an autarch (grand-duke) with sultanic (kingly) grade, which positioned him two degrees above his Iranian counterpart.

⁵⁷⁸ “Evliyâ-yı devlet ve nâzımân-ı umûr-ı memlekete ıslâh-ı ahvâl-i mülk ü millette lâzım u lâbüd olan yegâneğî ve musâdakat ve yek-cihetî ve muhâlasat muktezâsınca taraf-ı muhlisîden dahi cenâb-ı vekâlet-meab u iyâlet-iyâblarına mektûb-ı meveddet-üslûb u beşâret-mashûb tahrîr olundu. . . . Muktezâ-yı musâfât u musâlahaya münâsîp olan ol cânîp dahi münâfi-yi şerâyit-i meveddet ve muâhede vaz’ u hâletten mücânîp olmaktır. Sâbıkan ve lâhikan Basra’da alem-efrâz-ı isyân u şakâ Hüseyin Paşa ve Yahyâ Paşa satvet-i kâhire-i kahr-ı Pâdişâhi’den eyne’l-meferr gûyâ ol tarafa ilticâ edip havme-i himâyette ruhsat-yâfte-i asâyış ve emniyet oldukları mesmûdur. Bu emr-i gayr-ı lâyıq mâbeynimizde sâbit olan dûstî ve meveddete nâ-muvâfık olup mukaddemâ ızhâr-ı şekâvete mübâderet eden Hüseyin Paşa’nın vücûd-ı bed-bûd-ı bî-tâbını nâire-i düzeh-tâb-ı hışm-ı Şehriyârî irâde-i izâbe edip ol serhadd u sugûrda cemiyet-i asker-i mansur iktizâ ve îcâp eyledikde bu hareketten münâfi-yi sulh u meveddet bir hâlet mülâhaza olunmamak maslahatı için mükâtebe olundukda şakî-yi mezbûra müsaade ve muâvenet ki mugâyir-i musâlahaya ve muhâlasattır bir vecihle irtikâb olunmaz diye zımn-ı kitâb-ı mişkîn-nikâbda merâsim-i meveddet-i bi-irtiyâba münâsîp cevâb-ı bâ-sevâb olmuş idi. El-hâletu hâzihi ol tarafa ilticâ eden eşkıyâ dâhil-i hayta-ı himâyet olmak ol bed-hasletlere ayn-ı muâvenet ve müzâheret olduğu zâhir ve bu tarafa muhâlefet üzere olanlara muvâfakatın şerâyit-i ülfet ve vedâda muhâlefeti beyyin ve bâhirdir. Bu emr-i gayr-ı marzî mebdââ tekeddür-i ser-çeşme-i vedâda mufzî ola. Layık-ı hâl u muvâfık-ı zikr-i meal budur ki ol gâm-zen-i vâdi-yi şakâvet olan eşkıyâyı mazbut ve mukayyed vâli-yi Bağdad olan vezîr-i mükerrerrem izzetlü ve rif’atlu karındaşımız Mustafa Paşa hazretlerine îsâl u teslim etmekle erkân-ı muhabbet ve vedâdı müşeyyed eyleyeler”

Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha's demands about the runaway Basran governors on Iranian territory explain the real motive behind why the Sublime Porte deemed it necessary to dispatch two victory-letters to the royal court. However, a cross-reading of the chronologies of the Yahyâ Pasha affair and the conquest of Candia reveals that by the time that the Safavid court received these letters, it had already forced these rebels to leave Iranian territory, after which they took refuge in India and became incorporated to the Mughal service nobility. With reference to this, the Safavid court could safely argue that it had provided neither aid nor asylum to the rebels. This must have been actually what indeed happened, because one does not come across any further protest from the Sublime Porte to the royal government regarding suspicions of harboring those who escaped from the padishah's retribution. The victory-letters of 1669 were probably conveyed with an unaccredited agent whose name did not make it into the records.

In a letter to the Doge of Venice, Domenico II Contarini, in late 1669/early 1670, Shah Süleyman referred to the Doge's mention of the "protraction of their [i.e. Venice's] war with the legion[s] of the House of Osman on island Crete," and stated that he had now learned of the Ottoman-Venetian peace which came with the complete Venetian evacuation of the island.⁵⁷⁹ Again in February/March 1670, Shah Süleyman received in audience the Polish ambassador, Bogdan Gurdziecki, and the Archbishop of Nahçıvan, Mateos Avanic. The former, dispatched back in 1668 with the main agenda of regulating trade, had also been given the secondary task of offering the Shah an anti-Ottoman alliance at the side of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Russia. The Archbishop, as the official representative of Louis XIV of France, Pope Clemens IX, the Duke of Tuscany, and the Doge of Venice, also invited the Shah to join the

⁵⁷⁹ See the Shah's letter in Fekete, *Einführung in die persische Paläographie*, 535-538, tables 225-226.

present anti-Ottoman coalition at the Cretan War⁵⁸⁰, which by the time of audience had been dissolved, however. Shah Süleyman rejected both offers. All available information suggests that the Shah would reject the offers to enter into a war against the Ottoman Empire regardless of their timing or circumstances. The ending of the Cretan War must have only strengthened his hand by providing him with a sound justification. Also, the rejection of anti-Ottoman alliances with the Poles and the Russians conforms to the fate of similar attempts that predate and follow the 1668-1670 ones.

After the satisfactory completion of a resurvey commission at Basra, on 5 April 1671, the imperial government transferred Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha from Baghdad to Basra.⁵⁸¹ The actual handover was carried out on May 9,⁵⁸² with [Silahdar] Kız Hüseyin Pasha replacing him at Baghdad. As a result, the province of Basra now received a governor-general,⁵⁸³ marking an increase in the immediately deployable Ottoman sanction power along the southern flank of the frontier with Iran and thus indicating the consequences which the empire's annexation of Basra had for Ottoman-Safavid relations due to the reshaping of the power balance at the Persian Gulf region. It was also during Firârî Mustafa Pasha's terms in Baghdad and Basra that Bayburtlu Kara İbrâhim, who had been a mercenary at Abaza Hasan's rebel army and escaped persecution

⁵⁸⁰ Rota, "Safavid Persia and its Diplomatic Relations with Venice," 151; Matthee, "Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy," 154-155.

⁵⁸¹ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, p 347.

⁵⁸² Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 292-293. A copy of the survey register was sent to the government and another copy was kept at Basra. After the survey and before his next appointment, Firârî Mustafa Pasha had returned to Baghdad in late April 1671.

⁵⁸³ I understand this from the correspondence between Firârî Kara Mustafa Pasha (as governor-general of Basra) and his successor at Baghdad, Silahdar Kız Hüseyin Pasha. The latter was a vizier, both as indicated by his title and by the definition of his office. Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 293, 297; Râşid, *Târih*, 149. Under normal conditions, by virtue of his having vizierial grade and being given Baghdad's watch over Basra as prescribed by the state, the governor-general of Baghdad would be expected to have precedence over that of Basra. However, the titulature Firârî Mustafa Pasha used in his correspondence with Silahdar Hüseyin Pasha is that used in Ottoman diplomatics when a superior addressed an inferior. This could not have been the case if Firârî Mustafa Pasha had not kept his vizierial grade. The correspondence related to Silahdar Hüseyin Pasha's collecting the payments due to Firârî Mustafa Pasha from the latter's former term at Baghdad, registering his still uncollected claims, and sending him the money and registers. BOA. A.MKT. 1/75.

by disappearing from sight – without seeking asylum – in Iran after the suppression of the rebellion, was readmitted into Ottoman service through recruitment into Firârî Kara Mustafa's household shortly before this governor-general had been transferred to Iraq from Egypt. After his master's death, the former fugitive-in-Iran would find admittance to other pasha households at the capital, and rising through state service, he would eventually become grand-vizier in 1683-1685.⁵⁸⁴

In January 1673, a commissary reconfirmed Çelebi Hasan Pasha, who had previously been appointed governor-general of Basra, in office.⁵⁸⁵ Çelebi Hasan's mission to the Safavid court led by his bailiff of the ceremonies⁵⁸⁶ reached Isfahan on 16 August 1673. This emissary conveyed his master's reconfirmation in office and wishes of maintaining good relations, while also engaging in talks regarding some issues on pilgrimage.⁵⁸⁷

Away from the frontier at the Persian Gulf, in March 1672, war had broken out between the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth on the suzerainty of the Right-Bank Ukraine and Cossacks. The Ottoman army led in person by Mehmed IV, which was later joined by Petro Doroschenko's Cossack and Selim I Giray's Crimean troops, took the fortress of Kamianets-Podilskyi on August 27. After further advances in Poland led to King Michael Wisniowiecki's appeal for peace, the Pacification of Buchach signed on October 17 transferred the entire province of Podolia from the Commonwealth to the empire, confirmed the Right-Bank

⁵⁸⁴ Abdülkadir Özcan, "İbrâhim Paşa, Kara," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 21 (2000): 329-330; İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/2, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 3th ed. 1982), 423-424.

⁵⁸⁵ The commissary who brought the diploma (*menşur*; or *berat* (*charter*) for appointments below that of two-horsetail-ensign pashas) also took over the estate of the deceased Firârî Mustafa Pasha. Matthee, "Basra," 72.

⁵⁸⁶ *selam çavuşu*

⁵⁸⁷ Chardin, *Seyahatnâme*, 413.

Ukraine as Ottoman tributary under the hetmanship of Peter Doroshenko, and imposed a yearly cash “present⁵⁸⁸” to be paid by the king of Poland to the padishah.⁵⁸⁹

In September 1673, Russian ambassador Constantin Christoforov arrived in Isfahan, following up on A. Priklonskii’s 1672 mission. Lodged at a royal quarter and invited by prime-minister Sheikh Ali Xan Zengene to negotiate secretly, Constantin Christoforov announced his master Alexis’s intention to wage war against the empire in coalition with the Commonwealth, which was already fighting the war. Iran was officially invited to join. Turning down the offer, Shah Süleyman communicated that he could attack the empire from Baghdad only after Russia and the Commonwealth would launch and further the war. This disappointed the ambassador, who was expecting a more definite reply. By means of evoking past experiences in which Christian partners had left Iran alone by signing early peace treaties with the Sublime Porte, the Prime-Minister also spoke against Iran’s entering such a coalition.⁵⁹⁰

Likewise, the Safavid court did not seem to react to the news that an Iranian xan had requested asylum in the Ottoman Empire after he had fallen out of Shah Süleyman’s favor and became lodged in Scutari on 1 June 1672.⁵⁹¹ By way of rejection, the royal government warded off another wave of Polish and Russian attempts to draw Iran into war against the empire.

Parallel to these diplomatic contacts, in 1673, Safavid commanders regarded it possible that the Ottomans would declare war on Iran, so they were reviewing troops, provisions, ordnance, and the general state of the military at the provinces bordering the empire. Having begun in 1672, the royal project of building of a rampart at the eastern side of the fortress of

⁵⁸⁸ *pişkeş*

⁵⁸⁹ Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 144-148.

⁵⁹⁰ Chardin, *Seyahatnâmesi*, 447.

⁵⁹¹ Antonie Galland, *İstanbul’a Ait Günlük Hâturat (1672-1673)* vol. 1, ed. and trans. Nahid Sırrı Ödik (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 150.

Erivan under the governorship-general of Safi-kulu Xan continued in 1673 (and would be completed in 1674). Even the tightest mobilization measures were taken, such as recruiting villagers to support the garrison of Erivan. Shah Süleyman's departing for Kazvin in the fall of 1673 was interpreted as a preparatory measure for a potential war, though no concrete action to support this interpretation followed. Again in Kazvin, in the fall of 1674, Shah Süleyman received Spanish cleric Perdo Cubero Sebastian in audience. He was carrying the letter that John Sobieski, Grand Hetman of the [Polish] Crown, had written to the Shah in June 1673, in which the Grand Hetman offered a military coalition against the empire. This was but declined like all the previous cases. The Shah's plan of going to Sultâniye to inspect the army – his reason for his spending the summer in Kazvin – was also called off.⁵⁹²

In 1673, nothing traceable at the frontier provinces of the Ottoman side could have caused the alarm at the Iranian side of the border. Most probably, these were the results of a case of false intelligence whose repercussions must have disappeared once the falsity was discovered. Yet, a similar case of false intelligence with real consequences took place the very next year, which occurred simultanously with the submission of John Sobieski's letter to Shah Süleyman, though this time, the roles were reversed.

On 29 June 1674, at the way station of İsakçı (in Silistra⁵⁹³) as the Imperial Army was heading towards Poland with Mehmed IV and Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha at its head, reports from eastern “frontier governors on some malicious and hostile movements from the Iranian side contrary to the pact and covenant⁵⁹⁴” came in.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹² *The Journal of Zakaria of Agulis*, 117-118, 124; Matthee, “Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy,” 152, 156-157.

⁵⁹³ To the east of Wallachia and Moldavia, on the west coast of the Black Sea.

⁵⁹⁴ “Acem tarafından hilâf-ı ahd ü peymân bazı âsâr-ı mel'anet ü udvân serhad beylerbeyileri arzıyla”

⁵⁹⁵ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 426; Râşid, *Târih*, 181.

Verifying this information, we have several pieces of correspondence between Iraqi provinces and the center. The first one is an undated letter from Mehmed Molla Çelebi, judge of Baghdad, to the Grand-Vizier. After presenting his devotedness and request of continued patronage, Mehmed Molla Çelebi confirmed an earlier report of his that several Iranian xans and a several-thousand-strong Iranian contingent had gathered, currently awaiting at Huveyze. The reason for their gathering was unknown to Ottoman officials, but there were no disturbances yet at the Ottoman side of the border.⁵⁹⁶

The second letter is by Çelebi Hasan Pasha from Basra to a certain agha who was seemingly very close to the Grand-Vizier, presumably his lieutenant. The lumpsum-tax, Çelebi Hasan Pasha said, was made ready and would be dispatched to Baghdad with an escort of Baghdad Locals⁵⁹⁷ and [obedient] Bedouins (Ebruşoğlu emîr Dindin, Mahzaoğlu emîr Nâsır) led personally by Çelebi Hasan Pasha himself. On the eve of departure, his spies from Huveyze arrived and reported that a certain Nâmübârek had risen in disobedience. Having assembled the [Safavid-subject] tribes in the region and having written to those located farther, he promised them the entire lumpsum-tax as booty. That is why, Çelebi Hasan Pasha said, he had halted the transportation until troops had arrived from Baghdad. Nâmübârek's misdeeds were not only limited to this plot: he had also allied himself with power holders of Cezâyîr in Basran countryside by bribing them, and was keeping their sons as surety of their honoring the pact. According to the governor-general, this potential revolt, if left unattended, could cost them not only the lumpsum-tax but also the entire province of Basra. Pledging himself to fight to death but worried that "refuge be to God, if the [Ottoman] Triumphal Frontier receives harm, injury will surely be brought to the honor of the Monarchy and the reputation of the [grand-]vizier his

⁵⁹⁶ TSMA. E.243.

⁵⁹⁷ the *azebes*.

excellency⁵⁹⁸” in the case of responding with insufficient force, Çelebi Hasan Pasha wanted his addressee to personally convey Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha his request of aid.⁵⁹⁹

In an undated letter from Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha addressed to a governor-general of Basra, probably the reply to Çelebi Hasan Pasha’s letter (as inferred from the content), the Grand-Vizier, most probably having in mind relations with Iran, expressly prescribed his addressee (by Mehmed IV’s decree) to wait for the right time to take action. In the meantime, it went on, the governor-general should complete all preparations in strict secrecy, without disclosing them to any individual or declaring his real intent until the time of execution by producing separate pretexts if need be. Those in the service of the padishah, said the Grand-Vizier, “should think ahead and favor the reputation of the Sublime State,⁶⁰⁰” and not repeat the famous mistake of a certain predecessor who had caused serious troubles.⁶⁰¹ From this letter, it can be concluded that the center did not want the governor-general of Basra to take independent action that might create an uneasy situation at the Iranian frontier before reinforcements arrived.

At first, this news must have hinted at the emergence of a very delicate situation in Iraq at a time when the empire’s forces were in the western Black Sea region en route to Poland. Successive imperial campaigns were undertaken in 1673, 1674, and 1675: the first two led personally by Mehmed IV and the last by marshal Şişman İbrâhim Pasha, all attended by the Khan of the Crimea. The Commonwealth would ultimately be defeated and forced into a peace. Concluded in 1676, the Pacification of Zurawno would confirm the previous Ottoman territorial

⁵⁹⁸ “İâkin el-iyâzen billah serhadd-i mansûreye bir vecihle zarar . . . erişirse ırz-ı saltanata ve nâmus-ı . . . cenâb-ı vezârete halel erişmek lâzım gelmez mi”

⁵⁹⁹ BOA. A.DVN. 72/98 (h. 1085).

⁶⁰⁰ “âkıbet-endişlik ve nâmus-ı Devlet-i Aliyye’yi kayırmak lâzımdır”

⁶⁰¹ *Mecmua-i Mükâtebât*, 21b-22a. Apart from the content, the only information we have is provided in the title given by the compiler of the present correspondence volume: “is gone from Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha to the governor of Basra.” No development recorded by the sources other than this title helps date this letter.

gains and abolish the yearly cash-present to be paid by the king to the padishah.⁶⁰² A clash with Iran at this time could be quite costly; the Sublime Porte would not allow any unconfirmed intelligence or a hasty measure to open an unplanned second front in the east.

Concrete preemptive measures were taken for a development perceived as the “most important of the important affairs of the state.”⁶⁰³ Even when on imperial campaign in eastern Europe, chief of the Janissary Corps Arnavut Abdurrahman Abdi Pasha, a distinguished veteran of the Candian war, was immediately made governor-general of Baghdad and ordered to travel at courier speed, while Kız Hüseyin Pasha was transferred to Basra. In line with this sense of urgency, vast amounts of equipment and ammunition were shipped from Constantinople to Van via Trebizond and to Baghdad via Alexandretta over Birecik. The governors of Rakka, Mosul, and Şehrizor were ordered to guard the province of Baghdad. On 8 July 1674, at the way to the station of Zerniş, more incoming papers reporting Iranian military activity in the vicinity of Baghdad caused further unrest. In response, governor-general of Aleppo Kaplan Mustafa Pasha, who was serving on the campaign as commander-general of the forces gathered at Jassy⁶⁰⁴, was by necessity made governor-general of Diyarbekir, and ordered to travel with courier speed along with his household and provincial troops.⁶⁰⁵ While on the road to Baghdad, as inferred from the date of his entry to the city (August 26), Arnavut Abruddahman Abdi Pasha wrote a letter to the Imperial Army headquarters requesting additional Sublime Court artillerymen, expressing the “utmost necessity.”⁶⁰⁶ His request was readily granted; on August 29, 100

⁶⁰² Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 148-149.

⁶⁰³ “ehemm-i mühimmât-ı . . . devletten olmağın”

⁶⁰⁴ Capital of Moldavia, an autonomous Ottoman province governed by a Christian prince (*voyvoda*) installed by the imperial government.

⁶⁰⁵ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyinâme*, 426-427; Râşid, *Târih*, 181; Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât: Tahlil ve Metin (1066-1116 / 1656-1704)*, pub. Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), 48; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 659.

⁶⁰⁶ “eşedd-i ihtiyâc”

artillerymen were first tenured to the Sublime Court Corps and then dispatched to Baghdad to join the Sublime Court and Local artillerymen already garrisoning the fortress.⁶⁰⁷

Only after Arnavut Abdurrahman Abdi Pasha's arrival to his seat of governorate did it become clear that reports of Iranian military activity across the border were false rumors, though the news had even spread in Baghdad. Despite the falsity of the rumors, in order to appease the public opinion and increase the sense of security against the perceived threat, Arnavut Abdurrahman Abdi Pasha undertook repair works on fortifications. Retaining the above-mentioned shipments, he increased the fortress's stock of supplies and ammunition.⁶⁰⁸ Following a clash involving death between Iranian and Ottoman officials at a border crossing between Baghdad and Basra, which had broken out due to a strife about which side was to collect the customs toll, the governor-general declared state of emergency. Many were accused of providing intelligence to Iran and conspiring to seize the governor-general's family and property. Extraordinary taxes were imposed as an emergency measure.⁶⁰⁹ In this regard, military personnel who had proven ties with Iran were also disenfranchised, as we see in Arnavut Abdurrahman Abdi Pasha's exposition asking the center to give a certain Ali the land-tenure previously held by the timariot Hüseyin who had fled to Iran six or seven years before.⁶¹⁰ The previous reports of Iranian military activity across the border were most probably the results of Ottoman officials' observing the Iranian mobilization following the previous case of false intelligence, according to which the Iranians had feared a surprise attack. The mention in the Ottoman reports that the objective of the Iranian mobilization was unknown and that there were yet no violations from the other side of the border strengthens this interpretation. The Ottoman reports produced after

⁶⁰⁷ CV. AS. 43935.

⁶⁰⁸ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 298-299; Râşid, *Târih*, 133, 148.

⁶⁰⁹ Chardin, *Voyages* vol. 9, 232-233.

⁶¹⁰ İE. AS. 1297. The request was granted on 8 February 1676.

monitoring the alarm in Iran caused by a false intelligence also served in turn as false intelligence for the Sublime Porte and its border provinces in the sense that suspicions arose regarding the intentions of the Iranian side.

Following mutual military mobilizations in reaction to a series of false intelligence and a brawl at the border customs which caused alarm but did not affect relations, an emissary from the Ottoman-vassal seigneur of Hoşab brought the Safavid court a letter on 4 June 1675. With the reason declared to be that the padishah wanted to abolish the subprovince's fiefdom privileges, the seigneur offered to become the Shah's vassal in order to preserve his and his subprovince's status. Shah Süleyman, after discussing the issue with his ministers, replied that he would not violate the peace, and advised the seigneur to accommodate himself with the Padishah as best as he could.⁶¹¹ On July 20, yet another Russian mission led again by A. Priklonskii and Constantin Christoforov arrived. It secretly conveyed Alexis's request that the Shah dispatch a 20,000-strong army against the empire. After the past few years' negotiations, the Tsar wanted a definitive answer and said that he would take delays in answering as formal rejection. After a deliberation council on August 5 attended by the Shah and his chief officers, the mission received a negative reply with the justification that it was in Iran's interest to preserve the peace with the empire, even at the expense of dishonoring a previous agreement with the Russians.⁶¹²

Once the false-alarm mobilizations of 1673 and 1674 were left behind, business at the frontier returned to its normal state. In 1677, when Peter Doroshenko defied Ottoman suzerainty by delivering Chyhyryn, the hetmanate's capital until 1669, to Russia, an Ottoman-Russian war

⁶¹¹ Chardin, *Voyages* vol. 9, 243

⁶¹² Chardin, *Voyages* vol. 9, 337-338; Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 131. Mathee deems it probable that "the decision to defuse mounting tension may have been informed by the reaction of the Ottomans who, meanwhile, had moved artillery and other military equipment from Alexandretta to Baghdad. Ottoman intimidation similarly may have determined the outcome." *Ibid.*, 157. While this possibility cannot be ruled out, successive rejections by Safavid shahs of each offer of making Iran a part of an anti-Ottoman alliance hints at a longer-term state policy rather than at isolated reasons for rejection in each case. *Ibid.*

broke out. Marshal Şeytan İbrâhim Pasha and Khan Selim I Giray (of the Crimea) were deposed for their failures in the campaign of 1677 by Mehmed IV, who created grand-vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha commander-in-chief in 1678 and sent the newly appointed khan Murad Giray to support him. Chyhyryn was taken by the empire on August 12 and razed to the ground. George Khmelnytsky was installed as the new Ottoman-vassal hetman of the Right-Bank Ukraine. The Peace of Bahçesaray signed on 13 February 1681 between Russia and the Ottoman Empire confirmed the latter's dominance over the hetmanate and the right to preserve the newly fortified positions along the Dnieper.⁶¹³

During this war, yet another false rumor of mobilization at the Ottoman-Safavid border spread, according to which the Ottomans had been marching towards Erivan with an army of 50,000. Shah Süleyman immediately created a commander-general and commissioned him with raising an army of 50,000 to 60,000, however, the realm's condition was not so promising as to allow for enlisting or maintaining this many troops.⁶¹⁴ Thus, the falsification of the rumors saved the Safavids from potentially revealing weakness.

⁶¹³ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 429-433.

⁶¹⁴ Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 135-136.

CHAPTER V. 1683-1701: THE DIPLOMATIC REVOLUTION

This chapter establishes the history of probably the most intensive episode of the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations. During the next fifteen years after 1683, the Safavids unbendingly rejected a spate of offers from the Holy League inviting them to declare war against the hard-pressed empire and claim their own share of conquests. This period is defined by the consistent manifestations of the royal government's pro-Ottoman alignment. When the Great Turkish War caused the Ottomans to redeploy troops from the eastern frontier to the western fronts, rebellions for independence led by countryside princes broke out in Şehrizer and Basra, costing the empire entire provinces throughout the 1690s. The rebel leaderships soon found collaborators among their kinsmen across the border in Iran, and expanded their anti-state movement to Safavid territory as well. Yet, the Sublime Porte overcame these concurrent and unprecedented difficulties of great scale with a skillful employment of diplomacy. Via unconventional channels such as an indirect contact via the Crimean khan in 1688-9 and by more conventional means such as the inter-court correspondence and mission exchanges of 1689, 1691-2, 1696, 1698, 1698-9, and 1700 as well as the complementary diplomacy conducted between Baghdad and the shah's court, the Sublime Porte secured not only non-aggression but also critically valuable cooperation from the Safavids. Just for the sake of not committing violations, the royal government did not intervene to stop the great harm it was receiving from rebellions originating in the empire. In addition to this, it also returned the entire province of Basra it had captured from the rebels to the empire. In return for the Safavids' pro-Ottoman stance, the Sublime Porte agreed to have the shah's rank promoted from sultan/king to august-sultan/high-king and to initiate of the concepts of *brotherhood*, *alliance*, and *perpetual peace* in bilateral relations, which together constitute what I call the *diplomatic revolution*. Nevertheless, the 1701 campaign of a

marshal-led Imperial Army in Iraq staged a major tour de force against Iran by displaying might, expertise, industry, and capability. A look at this episode makes it apparent that preserving and furthering the peace with the empire was *the* maxim of the Safavids' foreign policy, and that even unequal, great sacrifices could be made if they would serve this end. Though they never planned on it, the Safavids might have entertained the idea of scoring advantages vis-à-vis the empire that could cost them the peace and that they acknowledged the Ottomans could eventually reserve. Gaining assurance that the empire, which Iran saw superior to itself, would not launch an offensive was the ultimate long-term advantage Iran thought it could enjoy. To this end, it strictly followed policies that would perpetuate this condition. Yet, as a display of gratitude to the extraordinariness of the already-greater burden the Safavids had been shouldering since 1639, this time the Ottomans chose to show appreciation via symbolic but meaningful gestures in diplomacy. Parallel to the diplomatic revolution, this episode also testifies to the nature of the relative weights of the center and the periphery throughout 1639-1722 period of bilateral relations. The frontier could present the courts with content to negotiate, agree, or disagree on, but could not set the course of relations. The courts dealt mostly with frontier-related agenda, but at the end of the day, the courts, and not the frontier, set the direction. That the steering was essentially in the hands of the central state is demonstrated by the fact that major upheavals at the frontier led to the closest rapprochement ever in the history of the relations between the two dynastic states. This rapprochement defied the detriments of these upheavals for which the empire was to blame and because of which both sides experienced great harm from each other's elements.

V.1. Iran and the Anti-Ottoman Holy League

The year 1683 marked the beginning of a protracted war for the Ottomans. The “years of disaster⁶¹⁵” would last until 1699 and claim the full mobilization of the empire’s available material and human resources for the theaters of war in Hungary, the Adriatic, the Balkans, the Peloponnese, eastern Mediterranean, and the southern Ukraine. Grand-vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha managed to transform his anti-Habsburg policy into an imperial campaign to Royal Hungary. However, while marching westwards, he drew the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth into the war as enemy by threatening it and violating its borders. Likewise, he drew in the German states as a whole by extending the campaign objectives from Royal Hungary to Austria, i.e. Habsburg Germany. This thereby triggered the sole clause which could make the otherwise independent German states of the Holy Roman Empire to fight together against a common enemy: defense of the German realm. Following the rout before the gates of Vienna on 12 September 1683, the Ottomans found themselves fighting full-fledged wars at multiple fronts against Germany in Hungary; against Poland-Lithuania in Podolia, the Ukraine, and Moldavia; and against Venice in Dalmatia, southern Greece, and the Adriatic. As of 1686, Russia would also ally itself with the Holy League and fight the empire’s armies on the Ukrainian-Crimean front. Esztergom fell shortly after the Battle of Kahlenberg.⁶¹⁶ Early reports of the Ottoman route before Vienna that reached Iran exaggerated the already disastrous result to the point of stating the fall of Constantinople. These reports seem to have occasioned celebrations in Iran and an

⁶¹⁵ *felâket seneleri*

⁶¹⁶ See John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965); Halil İnalcık, *Devlet-i Aliyye* vol. 3, 182-198.

initiative to send out agents to incite rebellions with a plan to conquer Iraq.⁶¹⁷ However, this initial reaction would soon be reversed.

In 1683, the new archbishop of Nahçıvan, Sebastian Knab, stopped in Vienna to spend the winter while traveling to his post from Rome. There, he declared his willingness to also serve Leopold I, German emperor. When the Ottoman attack against Habsburg realms seemed certain, Emperor Leopold commissioned Knab in the spring, in addition to his ecclesiastical mission, with convincing Shah Süleyman to attack the empire from behind. As the Ottomans' main Imperial Army was marching westwards, Pope Innocent XI also addressed a letter to Shah Süleyman on July 19 in support of the German Emperor's initiative. Knab was to forward this letter too.⁶¹⁸ On his way, Knab also met John III Sobieski, king of Poland, who made him the envoy of Poland to the Safavid court with the mission to inform the Shah about the Ottoman offensive and the formation of the Holy League that was to counteract with a multi-front war, to which Iran was invited to join.⁶¹⁹ The offer was that the Safavids wrest Iraq from the empire.⁶²⁰

Arriving in Isfahan on 7 October 1684, Sebastian Knab could only meet the Shah at the audience held on 20 March 1685, in which he forwarded the letters from the Pope, the German Emperor, and the Polish King. The audience was dissolved without the Shah issuing a reply. Knab had to wait for one more year to receive a reply as did Count Constantin Salomon Zgurski, the second joint envoy of Leopold I and John III to Shah Süleyman who had arrived earlier than Knab. His time spent waiting for a reply would last approximately two years.⁶²¹ This Armenian-Polish nobleman had indeed taken over the mission of the joint ambassador of the Holy League,

⁶¹⁷ Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 133-134.

⁶¹⁸ Eszer, "Sebastianus Knab," 266; Thomas M. Barker, *Double Eagle and Crescent: Vienna's Second Turkish Siege and its Historical Setting* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1967), 160.

⁶¹⁹ Eszer, "Sebastianus Knab," 266, 268.

⁶²⁰ Nicolae Jorga, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches: nach der Quellen dargestellt*, vol. 4 bis 1774 (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Verlag, 1990 [rep. from 1911]), 202.

⁶²¹ Eszer, "Sebastianus Knab," 270-271, 273.

Petrus Bedik, who was nominated in 1683 but who could never reach his destination. Moreover, these emissaries were joined by separate Polish missions led by Bogdan Gurdziecki, dispatched in February 1684, Adam Kantecki, and Teodor Miranowicz, dispatched in the second half of 1684. Via successive letters and emissaries, the Shah had several invitations to enter the war with the objective of capturing Baghdad, Basra, and Erzurum.⁶²² By dispatching envoys, Russia was also quick in joining the diplomatic initiative to involve Iran in the alliance that it itself had just joined. Most significantly, Shah Süleyman turned down the offer of allegiance which came via a delegation sent to Isfahan by an Ottoman-subject Bedouin tribe in the countryside of Baghdad with reference to the current pacification, despite the Ottomans' paralyzing preoccupation in the west.⁶²³ This response was the harbinger of his ultimate reply to the Holy League's successive missions.

In the meantime, the Porte had indeed secured its eastern borders. Via agents sent probably in 1684-1685, Mehmed IV won Shah Süleyman's neutrality, which would soon even turn into a form of passive support. Lavish gifts, bribes, and a promise to revise pilgrimage regulations in a manner that would please the Safavid side paid off.⁶²⁴ Despite bearing concrete results, this diplomatic contact was informal in nature: it did not involve trackable official correspondence or detectable missions. Rather, the initiative, negotiations, and the final deal materialized via informal channels that I could not trace; the involved activities did not even make their way into the otherwise quite detailed Ottoman records. This must have been the result of the necessity felt by the Sublime Porte after 1683 to secure the east as soon as possible by striking a deal with the Safavids. Exchange of correspondence involving monarchs and their chief ministers, formation of delegations, and observation of the diplomatic customs of sending

⁶²² Mehdevî, *Târîh-i Revâbit-i Hâricî-yi İran*, 77; Mathee, "Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy," 158-159.

⁶²³ Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 57-58.

⁶²⁴ Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*, 134.

and hosting missions would each result in the waste of very precious time. Instead of carrying out these activities, an informal diplomatic contact was initiated after those of the Holy League yielded the expected result before the latter received replies, which the Ottomans made sure would be negative. Thus, the Sublime Porte preempted the Holy League's plan to draw Iran into the alliance.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the 1684-1685 initiative prevented an otherwise certain war. As had been the case since the 1640s and as would be even more express after the late 1680s, the royal government essentially did not see its interests in opening hostilities with its western neighbor. In order to perpetuate the peace, it had already made and would continue to make concessions disproportionate to those made by the other party in its diplomacy with the Porte, because it saw its ultimate interest in preserving the peace, for which it deemed the costs of an unequal relationship worth shouldering.

Shah Süleyman issued his definitive replies in 1686 and rejected all offers of alliance with the Holy League. To Innocent XI, he wrote that for the moment, war with the empire would not be a possibility. To Leopold I, he justified his refusal by referring to the "long and permanent peace" between he and the padishah.⁶²⁵ The Shah received in audience Ludvig Fabritius, envoy of Charles XI (king of Sweden)⁶²⁶ who also was in Iran since 1683. Among his primary objectives was to have the Safavids join the alliance against the "Grand-Signor of the Turks, the hereditary enemy."⁶²⁷ He had already informed the Swedish chancellery in a letter dated 26 April 1685 that an Iranian "rupture" with the Ottoman Empire was not to be expected "in the lifetime

⁶²⁵ Eszer, "Sebastianus Knab," 275: "der lange und dauerhafte Frieden"

⁶²⁶ Kaempfer, *am Hofe der persischen Großkönigs*, 2.

⁶²⁷ Kaempfer, *am Hofe der persischen Großkönigs*, 69; see the reference thereto in the Swedish royal letter to the Shah, *Ibid.*, 208, and in the oral negotiations on the Swedish requests, which the ambassador subsequently submitted in writing, clause-by-clause, and signed, *Ibid.*, 209-210 ("Der Großherr der Türken sei der Erbfeind Europas wie auch Irans").

of this rather too fond-of-quiet king, who by far prefers it to glory.”⁶²⁸ In his address, the Shah told the following to Ludvig Fabritius with regards to the German, Polish, and Venetian offers:

That I initiate hostilities with the Turks is impossible, for my ancestors have made peace and I have formally confirmed it in perpetuity. Accursed is the one who first draws the saber. I do not want to be an accursed one, as it [i.e. the reconfirmation of the Ottoman-Safavid peace] is still fresh in memories. We [previously] had ourselves be moved by the Christian potentates, caused a big diversion to the Turk, [and] despite this, the Christian potentates made peace [with the Ottomans], and did not mention our name once. Thereupon, the Turk jumped down our throat with all his might: if it were not for God’s grace and the valiant chests of the Persians, they [i.e. the Ottomans] would have inflicted us a [more] major [rout]^{629 630}.

Prime-minister Sheikh Ali Xan Zengene justified the rejection on his part as follows:

“neither the inviolability of the peace concluded with the Supreme-Lord . . . nor the circumstances of our times allows the granting of Your request . . . The age of Shah Abbas the Great taught us that such an alliance is dangerous. . . . As the Christians had concluded peace with the Turk without his [i.e. Shah Abbas I’s] forknowledge and consent, he had to carry the entire burden of the war alone.”⁶³¹ In the same vein, neither the Pope’s second letter (dated 20 July 1686) inviting the Shah to join the anti-Ottoman coalition⁶³² nor the third consecutive letter from John III Sobieski of Poland, who had given an account of the allied victories, renewed the

⁶²⁸ [Engelbert Kaempfer,] *Die Briefe Engelbert Kaempfers* abridged in Karl Meier-Lemgo, “Die Briefe Engelbert Kaempfers” *Akademie der Wissenschaft und der Literatur. Abhandlungen der Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftlichen Klasse*, nr. 6 (1965): 279: “Ruptur . . . bei Lebzeiten dieses gar zu ruheliiebenden Königs, welcher dieselbe der gloir weit vorzieht”

⁶²⁹ Fabritius quotes Shah Süleyman in German: “das Ich solte mit den Turcken was feindtliges anfangen ist nicht müglig, den meine vorfahren haben friede gemacht und Ich habe denselben vor ewig gekonformieret mitt die Vormalien. Beflucht ist, der am ehrsen den sebell zihen solte. Ich will kein verfluchter sein so ist es noch in frischen gedächtnis. Wier haben uns lassen bewegen von den Christligen Potentaten, haben dem Türcken eine grose Diversion zu gebracht, da mitt machten die Christlige Potentaten friede undt nenten uns nicht ein mal. Dar auff kam der Türck mitt seine gantse macht uns auf dem halse: wen nicht godtes gnade undt die Perser taffere bruste wehren gewehsen, hetten sie uns was houbt sagliches können bei bringen.”

⁶³⁰ “Ludvig Fabritius’s MS. entitled Kurze Relation von meine drei gethane Reisen,” appendix to S. Kononov, “Ludvig Fabritius’s Account of the Razin Rebellion,” *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 6 (1955-1956): 99-100.

⁶³¹ “Eurer Bitte stattzugeben . . . , verstaten weder die Unantastbarkeit des mit dem Chondkar . . . geschlossenen Friedens noch die Umstaende unsrer Zeit. . . . Die Zeit Schah ‘Abbas des Großen lehrt uns, daß ein derartiges Bündnis gefaehrlich ist. . . . da die Christen ohne sein Vorwissen und seine Zustimmung mit dem Türken Frieden geschlossen hatten, mußte er die ganze Last des Krieges allein tragen.” Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 69-70.

⁶³² Eszer, “Sebastianus Knab,” 277.

invitation, offered Iraq as Iran's share of the conquests, and reminded that such an opportunity was never to be found again,⁶³³ produced any results.

To the Russians, the Shah expressed his interest in having a relatively weakened but standing Ottoman Empire as neighbor in appreciation of its function as a barrier to Christian states. To complement his master's reply to the Russians, the Prime-Minister drew attention to the unpredictability of the consequences of opening hostilities with the Ottoman Empire. He highlighted that this way not only because of the latter's inherent position of strength vis-à-vis Iran but also with reference to the potential counter-alliance it could form with India and the Uzbeks, in reaction to Iran's becoming the fifth great power opening a full front in the Great Turkish War. In a final audience to all emissaries from the Holy League members, the Shah, after repeating the above-enumerated justifications for his rejection, also said that he would "not poke a stick to the beehive⁶³⁴", with reference to the eventual disaster Iran could face if it attacked the empire.⁶³⁵

Apparently, the joint diplomatic initiative from the Holy League was not expected to bear fruit immediately; as early as Sebastian Knab's departure for Isfahan, the Papal nuncio in Poland had referred to sums paid and pilgrimage facilitations granted by the Porte to the Safavids, which tells us that the outcome of the 1684 initiative had already become known. In his post-mission evaluation that explained why the plan of drawing Iran into the coalition had failed, Knab named the plague that had been ravaging Iranian provinces for the last two years, the proliferation of counterfeit coins that had almost triggered a rebellion, the decrease in the volume of trade, and

⁶³³ Kaempfer, *am Hofe der persischen Großkönigs*, 210-212. The emissaries of two unnamed tribes from Ottoman Iraq, who declared their chieftains' readiness to recognize the shah as suzerain, apparently returned empty-handed, *Ibid.*, 214.

⁶³⁴ quoted by Mehdevî in Persian: "mâ çûb der lâne-i zenbûr nemî kunîm"

⁶³⁵ Mehdevî, *Târîh-i Revâbit-ı Hâricî-yi İran*, 77; Mathee, "Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy," 161. Mehdevî, not citing his source, might have apparently confused the chronology. That is why I am using only the raw information he provides.

famine – apart from some biased judgments. Moreover, raids from the north of the Caspian Sea and disputes with vassal Georgian princes had compelled the Shah to keep an army in Karabağ, and even this army was in bad shape. Apart from all of these causes, claimed Knab, the Prime-Minister, whose estates were located in the vicinity of the border along Iraq, “gave precedence to his private welfare over that of the state.”⁶³⁶ The marshal of the Royal Court and the royal secretary⁶³⁷ (Mirza Muhammed Rıza Ordubâdî Nâsiri⁶³⁸) were reported to be on the payroll of and spying for the padishah. Knab saw the cause of the failure in the collective weight of these factors.⁶³⁹ According to the observations of Engelbert Kaempfer, the Swedish legation’s secretary, “the assured peace with the Porte was more important for [Shah] Süleyman than the prospect of a possible victory.”⁶⁴⁰ Since 1639, especially in the later seventeenth-century, independent of specific developments that might be introduced into the equation determining the balance power, the overall inferiority of Iran vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire in terms of strength and that the latter in no way saw the former as a threat were also widely acknowledged among non-aligned European observers.⁶⁴¹

The heaviest spate of anti-Ottoman alliance offers brought to Isfahan by missions since 1639, however, must not have been perceived as predestined to certain failure by their masterminds. If the Papal nuncio’s statement was a real reflection of the atmosphere in Germany and Poland-Lithuania in 1683 and 1684, then we should not have seen repeated, successive correspondence and missions, which indeed indicate that the two principal founders of the Holy League really planned on having Iran open a fifth front in Iraq, which would dramatically

⁶³⁶ “<<weil . . . er das private Wohl dem des Staates voranstellt>>“

⁶³⁷ *meclis-nüvîs*

⁶³⁸ Willem Floor, *Safavid Government Institutions*, (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2001), 57.

⁶³⁹ Eszer, “Sebastianus Knab,” 267, 273-274.

⁶⁴⁰ “Der sichere Frieden mit der Pforte war Soleiman wichtiger als die Aussicht auf einen möglichen Sieg.” Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 2, 58.

⁶⁴¹ See Paul Ricaut’s comment in his *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 177.

improve the League's already advantageous position. The contribution that the calamities befalling Iran, as listed by Sebastian Knab, made to the Safavids' ultimate decision of honoring the current peace cannot be denied; they might well have presented the dignitaries with concrete justifications to continue friendly relations with their western neighbor. No Ottoman record, on the other hand, hints at the payments made to the marshal of the Royal Court and the royal secretary, or at their cooperation with the Porte which could be interpreted as conspiracy by means of exceeding the limits of merely promoting an Ottoman-friendly policy.

That the missions sent in 1683 were made to wait for long intervals until receiving their first audiences and for year(s) until receiving replies shows that the royal government was determined to reject the alliance offers from the outset. While it is true that the royal government had a tradition of waiting until the next Persian new year (March 21) to receive incoming emissaries in audience and that these missions could be made stay at court for years before receiving a definitive reply including permission to leave, it could well have acted more rapidly in a situation as critical as the formation of the Holy League if it had wanted to take advantage of this unprecedented development.

However, this time, the Safavid court did not do so, because apparently it did not envisage itself profiting from an opportunist capture of territory, an acquisition that could eventually cost Iran dearly. It made decisions, rightly or wrongly, by taking into consideration the long-term trends in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy rather than by seizing this opportunity that outwardly seemed extraordinarily attractive. Experience had shown that given the comparative strengths and capabilities of the two realms, Iran could not make lasting conquests to the territory currently under the empire's control. While conquest could never have been easier than in the later 1680s as the empire was fighting concurrently against Germany, Venice, Poland-Lithuania,

and Russia, the Safavid dignitaries must have calculated that once the Great Turkish War was over, the Ottomans would recover whatever losses they would have suffered in the east, and Iran would bear the consequences of having broken the peace. The Safavids' full awareness of this point and central concern for it are revealed by the Shah's and the Prime-Minister's references to their ruling out any conduct that would make Iran have to face the empire.

Accordingly, the royal government chose to continue the post-1639 trend in its relations with the Sublime Porte by ruling out any possibility of war. Not just for consolidating the achievements of peaceful relations with the Porte, the Shah's reference to the "long and permanent peace" signaled the initiation of the next stage of peacetime interactions since the Pacification of Zuhab: the peace had become so stable that it was now considered to be "long". With this word, Knab must have referred to "ancient,"⁶⁴² which was used in Safavid and Ottoman diplomacies as the adjective denoting any well-established, stable, rooted phenomenon. Going even further, the Shah declared the peace "permanent", even though the text of the original border-protocol and the peace-epistles ratifying it had not. The Ottomans' abstinence from entertaining ideas of expanding the empire further at the expense of Iran and the Safavids' consistent policy of maintaining friendly relations since 1639 had paid off; the era of Ottoman-Safavid relations in which the current peace was seen as established, stable, and enduring began. In this respect, the Shah's diplomatic move of 1686 was no less revolutionary regarding the nature of Iran's peacetime relations with the Ottoman Empire than the initiation of the peace itself in 1639.

The ultimate rejection by the royal government to the offers to ally with the Holy League contributed outright to the Ottoman war effort which was already failing in the multi-front war.

⁶⁴² *kadīm*

Although the Polish offensives were successfully held, the allied German armies commanded by Charles of Lorraine took Ujvar 1685 and Buda in 1686, which then occasioned the occupation of fortresses in tributary Transylvania.⁶⁴³ Thus, in Hungary, the empire lost its footholds in the west and the core province in the center. Again, by the end of 1686, as a result of a three-year successful warfare, Venice was in control of the Peloponnese. During these first phase of the Great Turkish War, the worst one for the Ottomans, that a fifth great power did not declare full-scale war probably saved the empire from yet worse disasters.

Mehmed IV's unreserved and continued commitment to excessive hunting, which had taken the form of a lifestyle rather than excursions or occasional trips, and his complete disregard of the counsel to live, at least outwardly, in a manner appropriate to the crisis situation of financial straits which followed the traumatic losses in Hungary and southern Greece, led to the questioning of his legitimacy as ruler. The campaigning army in Hungary resolved to depose him, while the already estranged clergy gave legal support to the cause. A neatly concerted coup dethroned Mehmed IV and enthroned imperial-prince Süleyman (II) on 8 November 1687. However, upon entering the capital, the troops committed serious lawlessness, a state that lasted for about four months. During this turmoil, the empire lost its last major position in northern Hungary (Eger) along with other fortresses. The prince of Transylvania, Michael Apafi, then had to strike the deal that transferred his domain from Ottoman to Habsburg suzerainty.⁶⁴⁴

Meanwhile, after the possibility of Iran's entering the war had been ruled out, the new governor-general of Baghdad, Kethüdâ Sarhoş Ahmed Pasha, formerly marshal of Hungary and inspector-general of Asia Minor in the Great Turkish War, arrived in September 1687 at his seat of office. Despite the empire-wide financial pressure caused by the mobilization, he managed to

⁶⁴³ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 470-480.

⁶⁴⁴ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 486-509.

allocate a budget to the defenses of a frontier which seemed more secure than ever in terms of threat from outside. He commissioned the rebuilding of the Bailiff's Tower⁶⁴⁵ and *Sabuncu* Tower as strongholds on the fortress of Baghdad, whose walls he also renovated throughout 1687-1688.

Its relief that the Holy League would not expand further to involve a fifth great power must have made the Ottomans even more careful not to present the Safavids with a reason to protest. In early November 1688, an imperial decree addressed to the governor and the judge of Kars ordered them take action against Mahmud (chief of the right-flank Locals⁶⁴⁶) Ömer (former chief of the left-flank Locals⁶⁴⁷), Veli (former fortres-keeper), and the incumbent mufti, all of whom the governor had reported to the Imperial Council for continuously committing acts in violation of the peace [with Iran] at the frontier. They were to be tried, and if found guilty, to be imprisoned until further instructions arrived from the center.⁶⁴⁸ Though the Caucas scene was far from the main theater of Iranian-Ottoman frontier interactions, the state apparently wanted to be in control of the situation, which even the governor himself had found too important to handle without explicit instructions.

Back at the front, in the campaigning season of 1688, rebel and usurper-marshal Yeğen Osman Pasha subverte the empire's military and administrative conduct first in Anatolia and then in Europe, which resulted in further Habsburg advances: Belgrade, key to the Balkans from central Europe, fell to the German armies commanded by Prince-Elector Maximilian II Emanuel of Bavaria, along with the rest of Hungary except its south (Temesvar).⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁵ *Çavuş Kulesi*

⁶⁴⁶ *sağkol ağası*

⁶⁴⁷ *solkol ağası*

⁶⁴⁸ MHM.d. 98, ent. 37.

⁶⁴⁹ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 511-517.

V.2. Turmoil at the Frontier, Ottoman-Safavid Convergence, and the Elevation of the Shah's Rank

In 1688, Padishah Süleyman II sent his Iranian counterpart and namesake an extraordinary legation declaring his accession and reconfirming the peace. For this occasion, Osman Agha, superintendent of the bailiffs⁶⁵⁰, was chosen as envoy. En route to Iran, he died after arriving in Baghdad. Governor-general Koca Öküz Ömer Pasha immediately wrote to the court, where deliberations were made. In order not to prolong the delay, it was deemed more suitable that the governor-general entrust the conveying of the imperial epistle to an eligible man of his own rather than dispatching a new envoy. After receiving the decree with these instructions in 1689, he commissioned Dal Ahmed Agha for the completion of this mission. Probably in 1690, the substitute-envoy arrived in Isfahan, where he delivered the Padishah's epistle in the Shah's audience. During his stay at the Safavid court, he was hosted lavishly like his predecessors. With the completion of the legation's activities, Kelb-Ali Xan-Beyg Ziyâdođlu-Kacar was appointed as the return ambassador to the Porte.⁶⁵¹

In his epistle⁶⁵² dated 27 September 1688 to "Shah Süleyman his sublime majesty, . . . potentate of the orient, . . . chief-positied of the seat of world-keeping . . . asylum of brotherhood, of alexander-magnificence, . . . glorious world-possessor,⁶⁵³" the Padishah referred to the "ancient union⁶⁵⁴" between the houses of Osman and Safi. With reference to his war against the Holy League, declared with the "august epistle [written] to adorn the wreath of friendship and

⁶⁵⁰ *Çavuşlar Emîni*

⁶⁵¹ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1406.

⁶⁵² NMH.d. 5, ent. 29.

⁶⁵³ "Âli-hazret . . . şehriyâr-ı hâver-zemîn . . . mutasaddır-ı mesned-i cihan-bânî . . . uhuvvet-meab . . . Sikender-şükûh . . . cihan-dâr-ı zî-şân Süleyman Şah"

⁶⁵⁴ "ittihâd-ı kadîm"

union⁶⁵⁵, his “triumph-designated chosroes-like departure⁶⁵⁶” from Constantinople to lead the campaign. Then, the Padishah turned his focus to the long frontier shared with Iran: “may Our domains that are adjacent shoulder-to-shoulder to Their extensive domains be God’s entrust to Their brotherhood-marked person! Observing the ceremonies of sure-footedness and caution has already been prescribed to our seigneurs and governors who are wardens of the frontier at that side.⁶⁵⁷” The Padishah’s request that the Shah “elaborates on . . . the good conduct of friendship and concord⁶⁵⁸” is emphasized with the quadrant:

*For as long as the potentate of the radiant sun is
on the world-covering throne of exalted skies,
May the frontiers of pact and quarter be safe from seditions!
May the borders of peace, o God, be immune from breach!*⁶⁵⁹

As farewell, Süleyman II wished: “may the khakanly grandeur . . . and the world-keeping solemnity [of Shah Süleyman] ever shine!⁶⁶⁰” The Padishah’s signature authenticating the epistle read: “the Confirmed [One] with the confirmations of God the Aid-Sought Monarch / Sultan Süleyman Khan son of Sultan İbrâhim Khan.⁶⁶¹”⁶⁶²

Rejecting repeated alliance offers from Germany, Poland-Lithuania, and Russia had paid off for Shah Süleyman. Though it had already been heralded with the way the Shah had issued his rejections in 1686, this imperial epistle he received, both in content and form, confirms the commencement of the new path in Ottoman-Safavid relations. Even the very formation of this mission was extraordinary: a dethronement-occasioned change of ruler would require the

⁶⁵⁵ “tezyîn-i iklîl-i dûstî ve ittihâd için nâme-i hümâyün”

⁶⁵⁶ “nuhzet-i nusret-meâsir-i hüsrevâne”

⁶⁵⁷ “memâlik-i vasî’alarıyla hem-düş-ı ittisâl olan memleketlerimiz zât-ı uhuvvet-simâtlarına Allah emâneti olsun! Ol taraflarda nîgeh-bân-ı sugûr olan hükkâm ü vülâtımıza merâsim-i hazm u ihtiyâta mürâat olunmak üzere tenbîh ü enderz olunmuşdur”

⁶⁵⁸ “hüsni muâmele-i dûstî ve yek-cihetî . . . ye ihtimam”

⁶⁵⁹ “hemîşe tâ ki buved şehriyâr-ı mihr-i münir / be-taht-gâh-ı sipîhr-i berîn-i âlem-gîr / sugûr-ı ahd u emân bâd ez fiten memûn / hudûd-ı sulh hudâ-yâ şevved zi rahne masûn”

⁶⁶⁰ “hemîşe . . . şevket-i hâkânî rahşân . . . u iclâl-i cihân-bâni lâmi’ ve dirahşân bâd”

⁶⁶¹ “el-Müeyyed be-teyidât-ullah el-Melikü’l-müste’ân / Sultan Süleyman Han bin Sultan İbrâhim Han”

⁶⁶² *Mecmua-i Mekâtîb*, f. 2b.

sending of an unaccredited agent, not an envoy and an official imperial letter. Yet, the necessity perceived by the Ottomans to fuel the unfolding diplomatic revolution with the Safavids resulted in this remarkable exception.

Safavid rulers had never been officially designated so close in rank to the Ottoman counterparts from 1639 to 1688. The shahs had already been addressed as monarchs and sovereigns of Iran without any reservations and with full, consistent sultanic/kingly titulature, but in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy, being addressed as “potentate of the Orient” makes them superior to any other monarch of below-imperial dignity, symbolizing a clear elevation of the shah’s rank. Denoting Shah Süleyman as “world-possessor” was obviously meant to register his elevation to the rank of august-sultan, i.e. a high-king. To this end, the highlighted designations in the epistle, hitherto employed within the larger set of the terminology of descriptors denoting imperial dignity, were now employed to express this inter-position of august-sultan. The identifier-terminology denoting imperial dignity was reserved for the padishah to mark the difference between emperor and august-sultan. In short, elevated one degree upwards, the shah came closer to the padishah, while the emperor-padishah still remained supreme.

In addition to this reorganization in the hierarchy of rulers, we see that the uninterrupted peace between the Ottoman Empire and Iran starting in 1639 became so consolidated and brotherly with Shah Süleyman’s refusal of the spate of Holy League offers that now one spoke of the “ancient union”, meaning that there were no expectations for the termination of peace, which now seemed more solid than ever. This usage thus confirmed the statement Shah Süleyman had made in 1686 about the stableness and durability of the pax. Padishah Süleyman II could not indeed express this in a better way than he did when he openly stated that he relied on the Shah for not attacking the empire’s eastern provinces from behind when its armies were fighting

against the Holy League on an overextended line of fronts. This represents unarguably the highest level of trust – on the part of the Sublime Porte – formally displayed to the House of Safi since this dynasty's coming to power in 1501. While the urgency created by circumstances certainly pushed the Porte to take this unprecedented step, successive shahs' consistent rejections of anti-Ottoman alliance offers, which peaked during the first years of the Great Turkish War, played an at least equally decisive role in bringing about of this rapprochement by creating a favorable environment and paving the way for the formal perpetuation of the peace.

It should also be noted that apparently, the Sublime Porte, just like the royal government (as already formulated by Shah Süleyman in his reply to Russian offers), preferred to have an intact neighbor, though under fire. In the imperial epistle to the Uzbek Khan of Bukhara (October 1688), Padishah Süleyman II encouraged his addressee to attack Iran. By coincidence, Bukharan troops would march into Khorasan in 1690 and take the fortress of Bâlâ-Murghâb, and Sübhan-kulu Khan would write back to the Padishah to offer an anti-Safavid alliance, and offer which produced no action though. Likewise, several tactics were used to keep the common neighbor preoccupied on a front far away: each party would have the other one engage the Safavids further. These included Ahmed II's subsequent praise of the Bukharans' 1690 Khorasan campaign in the imperial epistle addressed to Sübhan-kulu Khan (August 1691), his excuse for not yet having initiated the war against the Safavids, his request of military coordination, promise to notify the arrival of Ottoman forces at the intended Iranian front, and even Sübhan-kulu Khan's return embassy led by Mümin Bî-Yâbü⁶⁶³ were tactics by each party to have the other one further keep the Safavids preoccupied on a front far away. Shah Süleyman's establishing diplomatic contacts with Sübhan-kulu Khan would soon lead to the cessation of

⁶⁶³ Burton, "Relations between Bukhara and Turkey," 102-103.

hostilities in Khorasan. The nature of the Ottomans' approach to the Uzbeks at this particular time did not differ from that of the Safavids to the Holy League: the Porte did not even give any consideration to the idea of opening an Iranian front as long as the Safavids did not cooperate with the Holy League. The content of the 1688-1691 Ottoman-Uzbek diplomacy should be understood only as a precaution taken by the Porte to subdue the by-then very low possibility that Iran joins the Holy League as the fifth great power fighting against the empire. Otherwise, the post-1686 Ottoman-Safavid convergence was unfolding at full speed.

The recorded content of Shah Süleyman's reply epistle to Khan Selim I Giray of the Crimea, a fortuitously preserved record, sheds more light on the real extent of the diplomatic revolution of 1688 and also provides information of the Khan's preceding epistle. Selim I Giray communicated to the Shah that Russians had joined the Holy League and opened a new front against the Ottoman Empire over the Crimean Khanate, while the Khanate troops were actively taking part in the Hungarian, Polish, and Russian fronts. If we are to believe the Shah, the Khan even asked for a counter coalition and dispatch of aid troops. In his reply, with reference to the Great Turkish War, Shah Süleyman wrote that it was indeed a golden opportunity to see who was really foe and who was really friend, and that he cherished friendship with the empire and would not let this friendship see any harm as the consolidated peace already necessitated aid and comradeship. With the expectation that Russia would cease hostilities, Shah Süleyman deemed it necessary to declare to the Russians the Khan's faithfulness, and he highlighted especially the incessantly incoming letters from Russia with attractive offers. For this matter, the Shah appointed a "language-knower" subject of his to act as intermediary; the agent was to travel to Kazan and to the Muscovite court, declare the Crimean Khan's long-time candor towards the Safavids, and dissuade the Russians, with advice and promises, from joining the Ottomans'

enemies. In the case that the Russians would not be convinced, wrote the Shah, the military aid the Crimeans had requested was contingent upon fate: if it were destined to be, it would materialize – otherwise, not.⁶⁶⁴

This correspondence is from Selim I Giray's second term as khan (1684-1691) and the period when Moscovite missions were still shuttling between Russia and Isfahan shortly after Shah Süleyman had issued his definitive replies in 1686 but before the Hüseyin Xan-Beyg mission of 1690 to Moscow was launched⁶⁶⁵ – the latter was referred to in the epistle as a prospective initiative. Accordingly, the Khan must have received instructions from the Sublime Porte in 1688, dispatched his epistle to the Shah in 1689. Likewise, the Shah's reply epistle, with its reference to the prospective mission which would indeed materialize in 1690, must also have been sent in 1689 or in early 1690 at the latest. Now, let us situate this contact within Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. The Crimean Khanate, after its incorporation into the Ottoman Empire, had survived as a legal entity, with transfer of sovereignty in certain matters to the padishah and retention thereof in certain matters by the khan. Apart from matters concerning the realm(s), the padishah enjoyed full sovereignty in appointing, deposing, and decreeing to Giray khans. Thus, the Crimean Khanate was not a partner but a part of the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁶⁶ At interstate level, the padishahs conceded the khans the right to conduct diplomacy with northern states that did not have formal contacts with the Porte, such as Sweden and Denmark, and the right to maintain Ottoman-coordinated diplomacy with those neighboring states with which the Porte had formal

⁶⁶⁴ *Mecmua-i Mekâtib*, ff. 3b-4a.

⁶⁶⁵ The mission was to congratulate Peter [the Great]'s accession to tsardom. Arriving in Moscow on 20 March 1692, it also repeated the official Safavid rejection of anti-Ottoman alliance offers. Matthee, "Iran's Ottoman Diplomacy," 165.

⁶⁶⁶ see Sandor Papp, "Die Inaugurationen der Krimkhane durch die Hohe Pforte (16.-18. Jahrhundert)," in *The Crimean Khanate between East and West (15th-18th Century)*, ed. Denise Klein (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012); İnalçık, "Kırım Hanlığının Osmanlı Tabiliğine Girmesi".

relations but whose tributary or contractual commitments to the Ottoman-subject Khanate had continued, such as Poland-Lithuania, Moscovy, and occasionally Germany.⁶⁶⁷

Within the empire, the Crimean khan ranked as autarch with sultanic/kingly grade,⁶⁶⁸ second only to the padishah and on an equal footing with the grand-vizier. At interstate level, in their correspondence with foreign, non-Ottoman monarchs, the Giray khans were ranking as full sultans/kings exactly like in the case of the grand vizier.⁶⁶⁹ Plus, Crimean diplomacy was not parallel with but complementary to the Ottoman one. When engaged in a full-fledged war, the Crimean cavalry performed useful auxiliary services to the imperial armies. When necessary, the Crimean khans could well be employed, formally but indirectly, to achieve Ottoman diplomatic objectives. This was by virtue of their having preserved in a limited manner their sovereign status, which continued to be reflected externally as a construct. It is impossible to conceive of a Giray-Safavid correspondence the initiation and content of which were not regulated in advance by the Porte – in general because the padishah had not conceded any regular area of freedom to the Crimean khans in diplomacy with the Safavids and in particular because of the overtly pro-empire stance of Selim I Giray. It is quite probable that at these early stages of the Russians' entry into the Holy League, the Ottomans might have wanted to put them out of action via such an indirect but formal initiative.

⁶⁶⁷ see Matuz, *Krimitatarische Urkunden im Reichsarchiv zu Kopenhagen*; Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*; Christoph Augustynowicz, "Tatarische Gesandtschaften am Kaiserhof des 17. Jahrhunderts – Protokoll und Alltag," in *Das Osmanische Reich und die Habsburgermonarchie. Akten des internationalen Kongresses zum 150-jährigen Bestehen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Wien, 22.-25. September 2004*, ed. Marlene Kurz, Martin Scheutz, Karl Vocelka, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Wien: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2005).

⁶⁶⁸ see the *inscriptio* used in the padishah's epistles and grand-vizierial letters for the Crimean khan in the documents compiled in *Münşeat-ı Divan-ı Hümayun* and in Feridun Bey's *Münşeatü's-Selâtin*.

⁶⁶⁹ See the sultanic *inscriptio* and *intitulatio* employed for the Crimean khans in Crimean-Polish diplomacy in the documents published by Kołodziejczyk in his *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*.

The copy of the translated content of Shah Süleyman's letter does not hint at an Ottoman request for Safavid intermediacy with the Moscovites, without which we have no choice but to accept that this was Shah Süleyman's alternative offer in substitution for providing military aid. Despite not providing military aid, which would bring Iran into a state of war with Russia, it is still remarkable that the Shah felt himself free to offer intermediacy between the Russians on one side and the Khan, hence indirectly the Padishah, on the other without running the risk of being taken as having overstepped his limit by the latter two. This atmosphere of intensified cordial relations was the direct consequence of the 1688 convergence, in which the Shah's offer to act as intermediary between Russia and the Sublime Porte via the Crimea constituted the next step. One can also easily interpret this envisagement of Safavid intermediacy for the benefit of the Porte also as the precursor to the prospective consummation of the shah's elevation in rank and to the concept of *perpetual peace in alliance*, which in the course of the early 1690s would be officially introduced into Ottoman-Safavid relations. Having taken the first step in 1688, both parties were now so-to-say putting out feelers for furthering this newly emerged convergence. Accordingly, employing the Crimean Khan was the safest possible way for the Sublime Porte to test the waters indirectly. If successful, the Giray-Safavid correspondence of 1689 could be regarded as a fully official medium registering the second step of Ottoman-Safavid convergence, and in the case of failure, this indirect diplomacy could be passed over, as the Porte would have not technically played a part in it.

As the Great Turkish War intensified, the transfer of resources from the Iranian frontier to the western fronts for sustaining the Ottoman war effort did not remain limited to the financial realm. As of 1689, Baghdad, Basra, the Ottoman Georgia, Erzurum, and Kars began to contribute janissary companies and mercenaries, in addition to which governors-general of

Erzurum and Kars, together with their household troops, became ongoing participants in the annual imperial campaigns in Hungary.⁶⁷⁰

The redeployment was initiated despite new regional disturbances to the frontier. In autumn 1689, it was once again proven how crucial strong Ottoman military presence was at the Iranian frontier. In the vicinity of Ahıska, a contingent sent by the governor-general of Erzurum, Dursun Mehmed Pasha, intercepted and put a group of twenty fugitives who were from the entourage of mercenary-rebel Gedik Mehmed Pasha to the sword. After his mercenary-turned-rebel army was defeated and many of his troops were executed, these men attempted to flee to Iran with hopes of hiding or finding safe haven. Only the ringleaders and a captain were left alive and sent to the imperial court, which was encamping en route from Sofia to Adrianople then. There, they were executed on 16 October 1689.⁶⁷¹ Their plan to escape to Iranian territory does not seem to have had any connection with the Safavid court, though. This is suggested by the absence of any follow-up diplomatic initiative. Notwithstanding this incident, which demonstrated that the conventional amount of forces stationed in eastern provinces was actually needed there, the succeeding governor-general of Erzurum was ordered to participate in the mobilization for the European front. This meant the absence of a vizierial household contingent from Erzurum, and any security deficit that could arise from it.

Thus, the scope of the military redeployment to the theater of war had reached the farthest provinces that were not only neighboring but also regulating peacetime relations with

⁶⁷⁰ For 1689 and 1690: MHM.d. 98, ent. 732; MHM.d. 99, ent. 241; A.DVN.d. ent. 466; MHM.d. 99, ent. 470.; MHM.d. 99, ent. 112, 127. For 1691: MHM.d. 102, ent. 26, 97; MHM.d. 101, ent. 320(314) in Tuba Meryem Karacan, "101 No'lu Mühimme Defteri'nin Transkripsiyonu ve Değerlendirilmesi" (MA thesis, Akdeniz University, 2010); MHM.d. 102, ent. 104. For 1692: MHM.d. 104, ent. 516. For 1693: MHM.d. 104, ent. 622; MHM.d. 105, ent. 144, 200, 382 in Bekir Gökbnar "105 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" (MA thesis, Sakarya University, 1996); MHM.d. 105, ent. 306, 382; MHM.d. 104, ent. 986, 1108.

⁶⁷¹ The named captain was Zırhlı Bölükbaşı. Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1244, 1273; MHM.d. 99, ent. 117-118. In 1690-1691, Dursun Mehmed Pasha would serve as marshal of the Danube while also holding office as governor-general of Karaman in the ongoing war, and then as that of Van. *Ibid.*, 1307, 1330, 1342.

Iran. The security deficit arising therefrom immediately began to be filled by rival entities, which started a destabilization trend. This trend would continue aggravatedly for around a decade and soon lead to open abuses of the situation. The continuing drain of soldiery from the easternmost provinces would further contribute to the accumulation of the security deficit problems, which in turn would lead to the outbreak of movements aiming at overthrowing Ottoman authority.

While the Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic revolution unfolded and the empire redeployed sizable military personnel from the east to the west, the Great Turkish War had acquired its gravest dimension for the Ottoman side. In 1689, Serbia was practically lost with the fall of Nish and Vidin. The borders of Rumelia, the core of the Ottoman Europe – and in many respects *the* primary province of the empire, were thus breached, and its northwestern part was occupied. In 1690, the last Ottoman foothold in southwest Hungary, Nagykanizsa, capitulated.⁶⁷² However, to everyone's surprise, a resurgent Ottoman war effort in 1690 managed to recover the entirety of Serbia including the key fortresses of Nish and Belgrade.⁶⁷³ Rumelia remained intact and Serbia stayed safely in Ottoman hands. The war with the Germans would continue to be fought not on the empire's core European territory but in Hungary.

In late summer / early autumn 1689, Süleyman Kirmac, seigneur of Bebe, rose in disobedience and went so far as to take over the provincial capital Kerkük after killing the governor of Şehrizer, Alaybeyioğlu Dilâver Pasha. Responding to the call by the inhabitants of Kerkük, governor-general of Baghdad Baltacı Hasan Pasha appointed a proxy-governor to

⁶⁷² Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 518-524.

⁶⁷³ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 524-528.

Şehrîzor and issued a mandate calling upon Süleyman Kirmac to perform unconditional obedience. The centrally appointed governor, however, was denied entry to his province.⁶⁷⁴

While Süleyman Kirmac had opened a breach in state authority in Kurdistan, the plague-ridden countryside of Iraq offered a vacuum, which the Bedouins did not hesitate to fill. In 1691, the Bedouins of Cezâyîr and the tribe Müntefik allied themselves, and marched onto the city of Basra. When governor-general Çiftelerli Osmanpaşazâde Ahmed Pasha went out to hunt down their 2,000 to 3,000-strong force with only a 500-strong contingent supported by his household troops, he was killed in action. Mâni' b. Şebîb es-Sa'dûn, chieftain of the Müntefik, entered the provincial capital, only to be expelled by the notables, who then nominated Hasan Cemâl from among themselves as proxy-governor. He would also die in action against the Bedouin rebels by the summer of 1692.⁶⁷⁵

It must have at last become evident to the government that the continuous redeployment of Sublime Court troops from the east to the western theater of war was undermining the security along the Iranian frontier. By 1692, this policy was seemingly reversed at least for the Iraqi provinces.⁶⁷⁶ By then, the news of rebellion at Basra had already reached the imperial court. As an initial measure, the military deduction from Baghdad, *the* province which was to reinstate state authority in Basra, was aborted. The redeployment from the Caucasian frontier, however, did not halt.⁶⁷⁷

Padishah Süleyman II, whose health had been deteriorating, passed away in Adrianople on 22 June 1691, and was succeeded swiftly by his brother, imperial-prince Ahmed (II). Two

⁶⁷⁴ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 327-328; MHM.d. 104, ent. 236. For the earlier development of this rebellion, see Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 126-127.

⁶⁷⁵ MHM.d. 104, ent. 197. Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 329-331.

⁶⁷⁶ MHM.d. 102, ent. 773.

⁶⁷⁷ MHM.d. 104, ent. 60; MHM.d. 104, ent. 92.

months later, the recent Ottoman resurgence became terminated with the defeat in the Battle of Slankamen against the Germans, which ensued when the architect of this resurgence, commander-in-chief Köprülüzâde Fâzıl Mustafa Pasha, was shot dead in combat. Recoveries in Serbia, however, proved to be permanent.⁶⁷⁸ In the meantime, other imperial sub-armies on the Venetian, Polish, and Russian fronts continued to successfully hold their positions against successive offensives.

Back in the east, Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar⁶⁷⁹, the ambassador leading Shah Süleyman's conventional congratulatory embassy to Süleyman II, had heard of Süleyman II's death and Ahmed II's accession when lodged in Erivan en route to the imperial court in 1691. His trip was halted in the field of Kars; nevertheless, the governor-general of Erzurum communicated his arrival in the empire's territory to the imperial court. Having received permission from the Sublime Porte to proceed as the Shah's ambassador to Ahmed II while carrying credentials addressed to the now-deceased Süleyman II, Kelb-Ali Kacar continued his journey⁶⁸⁰ to "declare [the Shah's] candor and affection,⁶⁸¹" as the imperial decree regulating his lodging on the way stations shows.⁶⁸²

The 200-to-300-men embassy⁶⁸³ first arrived in Scutari, where the ambassador, his entourage, and gifts were transported to Eminönü in Constantinople with a galiot⁶⁸⁴, to which the

⁶⁷⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 531-535.

⁶⁷⁹ The sources do not agree as to the official Safavid title of Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar: Ottoman Imperial Council decree registers and the copy of the subsequent imperial reply epistle call him beyg, all Ottoman chronicles call him xan and governor[-general] of Ganja [Karabađ], while the royal epistle, which could have been the overriding reference and contains his credentials, fails to record his title. Fındıklılı Mehmed Agha, with his minuteness for recording titles and cognomens, titles him xan. The royal epistle and Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar's subsequent diplomatic activities indicate beyond doubt that his rank was that of ambassador, according to which he must have been either sultan or xan. If he was the governor[-general] of Ganja, then he must have been xan.

⁶⁸⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1406.

⁶⁸¹ "ızhâr-ı hulûs u muhabbet için"

⁶⁸² Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, o. 418; MHM.d. 103, ent. 2.

⁶⁸³ Muhammed Hasan Sanî'ü'd-Devle İtimâdü's-Saltana, *Târih-i Muntazam-ı Nâsirî* vol. 2, ed. Muhammed İsmâil Rıdvânî (Tahran: Dünyâ-yı Kitâb, h.1299 – rep. hs.1363-1367), 994; *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 33. The author of this

pinnacle⁶⁸⁵ carrying the elephant he had brought was tied. At the pier, the deputy-marshal and bailiffs of the Imperial Council welcomed the guests as instructed by the vice-grand-vizier Yeğen Hüseyin Pasha, who was overseeing governmental business at the capital during the absence of the court. Accommodated at Fâzilahmedpaşa Palace for a week, Kelb-Ali Kacar set off again and reached Adrianople, where the imperial court then resided, on 27 January 1692. In Karabayır, a welcome ceremony was held by Şehrî Mehmed Agha (marshal of the Imperial Council) and Kürd Ahmed Agha (arms-bearer) with an escort of one hundred comprised of bailiffs and court-notables. This procession brought the ambassador to his residence, Katırhanı Palace. On February 11, grand-vizier Bahadırzâde Arabacı Ali Pasha hosted him at his own palace with a feast and invested him with a robe of honor. At this reception, prime-minister Muhammed Tâhir Vahîd Kazvînî-Sa'dlu's letter and gifts to the Grand-Vizier were also delivered.⁶⁸⁶

Soon afterwards, Imre Thököly, Ottoman-vassal king of Upper Hungary who was trying to [re]capture his domain from the Habsburgs, arrived in Adrianople to deliberate with his suzerain and the Grand-Vizier on the conduct of the ongoing war. Using the presence of such high-profile guests at court as an opportunity, the Porte invited the vassal-King and the Safavid ambassador to residences overlooking the main road and made them watch the extraordinarily-grand Friday procession performed from the Palace of Adrianople to the Selîmiye Mosque, attended by the Padishah himself along with his Inner and Outer Courts. The ceremonial outfit and aigrettes worn by the Padishah and his entourage were especially designed to amplify the

chronicle seems to have confused Kelb-Ali Ziyâdoğlu-Kacar with the later ambassadors Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu and Rüstem Xan Zengene in some respects.

⁶⁸⁴ *çektiri / çektirme*

⁶⁸⁵ *palaşkerme*

⁶⁸⁶ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1384, 1404, 1406-1407. The marshal and the arms-bearer wore *selîmî destâr*, while their escorts wore *mücevvezes*.

guests' impressions of the grandeur. Indicating that this was a conscious policy, it was ordered that Friday processions to various mosques be held in this extraordinary manner as long as Kelb-Ali Kacar and Imre Thököly stayed in Adrianople.⁶⁸⁷

During this stay, the former Ottoman substitute-envoy to the Safavid court, Dal Ahmed Agha, served as host-officer to the ambassador. On 26 February 1692, Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar was invited to the Palace first to customarily witness the distribution of the Sublime Court Corps's salaries at the Triumphal Council and then to join the subsequent feast at the Imperial Council session. Afterwards, he and his fifty-men entourage were invested with robes of honor by the Middle Gate.⁶⁸⁸ In the Audience Chamber⁶⁸⁹, he delivered the royal epistle and gifts to Ahmed II.⁶⁹⁰

Shah Süleyman's epistle⁶⁹¹ to "his most-sublime majesty, world-possessor, overlord, premier- and supreme-sultan, possessor of the supervision of nations, shelter of the two-oriens, refuge of the two-horizons [i.e. east and west]"⁶⁹² Ahmed II was thoroughly imbued with the discourse of solidarity, with regards to the padishah's ongoing war against the Holy League. It not only reconfirmed the current "peace, friendship, pacification, amity, fidelity, and concord"⁶⁹³ but also consummated the elevation of bilateral relations to the level of "brotherhood, ancient attachment, and coalition."⁶⁹⁴ Thus, in titulature and coverage, the royal epistle conveyed with ambassador Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar in 1691/1692 represents the peak of the first phase of the

⁶⁸⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1408.

⁶⁸⁸ *Babüsselâm* or *Orta Kapı* (Middle Gate)

⁶⁸⁹ *Arz Odası*

⁶⁹⁰ Dal Ahmed Agha was admitted to the Outer Court as gatekeeper-captain in return for his services as emissary. *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 33-34; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1408-1409, 1423; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 418.

⁶⁹¹ NMH.d. 5, ent. 63; *Münşeat-ı Divân-ı Hümayun*, 126-128.

⁶⁹² "a'lâ-hazret . . . cihân-dâr . . . hidîv . . . sultânü'l-a'zam ve'l-ekrem, mâlik-i rıkkâbü'l-ümem . . . kehfü'l-maşrıkeyn ve melâzü'l-hâfikeyn"

⁶⁹³ "sulh . . . düstî . . . musâlaha . . . musâfât . . . sadâkat . . . yek-cihetî"

⁶⁹⁴ "uhuvvet . . . meveddet-i kadîm . . . itilâf"

Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic revolution. It fully honored the padishah's primacy and exclusive imperial dignity unaffected by the promotion of the shah's rank. Furthermore, the *ancient brotherhood* level now came to describe the relations, which had never been faring this well. The Safavids also assured the Ottomans that Iranian frontier governors and viceroys would adhere fully to the pacification conditions; i.e. while fighting against Germany, Poland, Russia, and Venice, the empire did not need to calculate in the possibility of an attack from its eastern borders. The royal epistle also registered that ambassador Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar was to orally submit additional matters.

In confirmation of this commission, Kelb-Ali Kacar notified the Sublime Porte of a political asylum incident: prince Gûrgîn of Kartli and his brother Archil / Şahnazar Xan (formerly prince of Imereti and Kartli), who had both converted to Islam in Safavid service, converted back to Christianity and escaped from their seats of government. Both brothers were now found to be hiding at Atabeđli Salih Pasha (governor-general of Çıldır)'s court. As giving asylum to Safavid fugitives was in violation of the peace, a position further supported by the illegality in Islamic canon of giving asylum to apostates, the Porte decreed their imprisonment and delivery to the ambassador in mid-May 1692. Governor of Erzurum Bînamaz Halil Pasha was entrusted with overseeing punctual implementation of this order and installing Alexander, the newly nominated prince of Imereti, to his seat of government.⁶⁹⁵ At the end of the month, when the ambassador was granted permission to depart, a follow-up decree was issued to the same addressees to inform them of the ambassador's return and that they should arrange the delivery formalities.⁶⁹⁶ This was followed by yet another decree in early June forewarning the

⁶⁹⁵ MHM.d. 104, ent. 62.

⁶⁹⁶ MHM.d. 104, ent. 114-115.

addressees to refrain from any possible default in the implementation of the order, which was reissued again in the same week for the new governor of Erzurum.⁶⁹⁷

It soon turned out that only prince Gûrgîn was at Atabeğli Salih Pasha's court. Upon the receipt of the abovementioned decrees, he was imprisoned in Ahıska but soon managed to escape. Without any doubt, the center held Atabeğli Salih Pasha responsible for what had happened; he had been hiding a renegade who had rebelled against the shah and invaded the padishah's protectorate (Imereti), whom he now helped escape from imprisonment. In mid-September 1692, the new governor of Erzurum, in addition to arresting and handing over the fugitives and then installing Alexander to the government of Imereti, was now also commissioned with prosecuting Gûrgîn's escape in Çıldır.⁶⁹⁸ With help from Atabeğli Salih Pasha, Archil would also escape arrest⁶⁹⁹ and reappear in 1693 in Imereti to seize control. The governors of Erzurum, Çıldır, and Kars would be commanded to jointly reinstate Ottoman sovereignty in the principality⁷⁰⁰ when the bulk of the forces normally subordinated to them were in Europe.

Contrary to ordinary, these internally communicated imperial decrees contained a concise version of the Safavid monarch's titulature, which was normally omitted in such documents, where the Safavid ruler was otherwise simply referred to as "Shah of Iran." Here, for the first time in the period of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy taken up by this study, the Safavid monarch

⁶⁹⁷ MHM.d. 104, ent. 144, 154. Bînamaz Halil Pasha was sentenced to death for oppressing the inhabitants. The implementation of the sentence was to be overseen by the judge and the military officers in the garrison. For this, second-master-of-the-horse Abdi Agha was dispatched as commissary. Ibid., ent. 183-184; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyli Fezleke*, 1436.

⁶⁹⁸ MHM.d. 104, ent. 254-256.

⁶⁹⁹ MHM.d. 106, ent. 1258.

⁷⁰⁰ A.DNV.MHM.d. 104, ent., 701, 959. Succeeding governors of Erzurum were also to inspect Atabeğli Salih Pasha's governorate, as the center had been receiving complaints. MHM.d. 150, ent. 376. The investigation must have also included his conduct with Archil.

was styled as “his most-sublime majesty,”⁷⁰¹ consummating his promotion to the rank of august-sultan/high-king. Apart from repeated references suggesting that harboring these fugitive Bagrationi brothers was contrary to the peace, their “rebellion against the Shah”⁷⁰² was also used as an additional argument to legitimize the prosecution. In a sense, this goes beyond the extradition of fugitives to a friendly state, as any petty offender could be extradited on these grounds. Hereby, however, rebellion against a friendly monarch is additionally introduced as a rationale for taking action, which is no doubt a direct consequence of the recent convergence in Ottoman-Safavid relations.

One must consider the inclusion of titulature (though concise) in an imperial decree, in general, as the continuation of the diplomatic revolution in Ottoman-Safavid relations that had ensued after 1686, and “most-sublime majesty,” in particular, as the forerunner of the eventual insertion of this title into the *inscriptio*. The purpose must be to inform the addressee, who could potentially correspond with the Safavid side, of the elevation of the shah’s titulature to ensure he use the updated formulas. By consistently rejecting all anti-Ottoman alliance offers, the shah, now ranking not two but one level below the padishah, had saved the empire from a potential disaster. The extradition of a fugitive prince was not an issue over which the Sublime Porte would jeopardize this golden era of relations.

Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar’s stay in Adrianople lasted around four months. During this period, “by virtue of being literate, learned, and well-versed in history, he met and conversed with the elegants of the Sublime [Ottoman] State.”⁷⁰³ After completing his mission, which also included commercial matters, and receiving permission to leave, he was invited to the farewell

⁷⁰¹ MHM.d. 104 ent. 62, 67, 75, 101.

⁷⁰² MHM.d. 104, ent. 255.

⁷⁰³ *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 33. “okur-yazar ve maarif-âşinâ ve târih-şinâs kimesne olmađla Devlet-i Aliyye’nin zurefâsıyla görüşüp sohbetler eyledi”

audience held on 29 May 1692. This event was held in the canopied area refurbished as audience hall by Su-Terâzisi Pavilion, located at the banks of River Tunca across the bridge outside of the Iron Gate⁷⁰⁴, in the Privy Garden⁷⁰⁵ of the Palace of Adrianople. Kelb-Ali Kacar came to the audience with a procession from his residence. The Padishah, seated on the throne, first received Grand-Vizier Çalık Hacı Ali Pasha along with his Inner and Outer Court officials, and then the Safavid ambassador once the others had taken their positions. Ahmed II addressed the ambassador: “say my greetings to the Shah, I was delighted by his letter-of-servitude and gifts, his veracious friendship has become acknowledged and accepted by my August [Person]. The more he carries fidelity to excess, the more he shall also consider Our friendship.⁷⁰⁶” The ambassador said in reply: “the Shah is your genuine, faithful, true friend, and does not turn back from true friendship⁷⁰⁷”. Then the ambassador, his treasurer/second-ambassador, and the seven select members of the embassy were invested with robes of honor together with the Grand Vizier, following which the Padishah’s reply epistle was delivered. The embassy was also granted a total of 25,000 thaler for its return expenses. From Saraçhane Pavillion, Ahmed II watched the farewell procession cross Saraçhane Bridge. On June 3, the ambassador was permitted to depart the court and bailiff Kara Hasan was appointed to act as host-officer until the embassy left Ottoman territory.⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ *Demir Kapı*

⁷⁰⁵ *Has Bahçe*

⁷⁰⁶ “Şâh’a benden selâm eyle, gönderdiği ubûdiyet-nâmesiyle hediye hazzeyledim, hulûs üzere dostluğu malum-ı! [u] makbûl-ı hümayunum oldu. Ne denli sadâkate ifrât ederse bizden dostluğu dahi ziyâde bilsin”

⁷⁰⁷ “Şâh, hâlis muhlis sâdik yahşî dostundur, yahşî dostluktan dönmez”

⁷⁰⁸ In addition to those admitted inside, fourty embassy personnel waiting outside were also invested with simpler robes. The ambassador was given a heavily decorated horse with a silver, bejeweled saddle and stirrups of *divân* type as gift, while the second-ambassador (Kelb Ali Kacar’s treasurer) received a horse saddled with military drill equipment. Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1432-1433. See also Ibid. for the set-up of the audience. See Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 427 for a breakdown of the 25,000-thaler travel-allowance. For the rations of foodstuff the embassy was allocated during residence at Adrianople, whose daily cost for the empire was 125 thaler (20,000 debased aspers – *çürük akçe*), see the breakdown authenticated by the proxy-judge of Mahmudpaşa court at Constantinople, Sunullah Efendi: AE.SAMD.II. 917. For another breakdown of the same items in the pay order

In the Padishah’s reply epistle, the Shah was addressed as “his most-sublime majesty” among other august-sultanic/high-kingly titles put together from supreme-monarchical descriptors, while literal and direct references to imperial dignity in the form of identifiers were reserved only for the Padishah. Likewise, the current peace was defined as the culmination of the “ancient pacts,⁷⁰⁹” and the recently achieved mode of relations as “harmony and union, . . . two-party concurrence and friendship, . . . mutual cohesion and fraternization.⁷¹⁰” The Padishah wished for the frontiers to remain so safe and the current relations “so consolidated that they do not become corrupt [even] with the cycling of the ages and passing of centuries and eras.⁷¹¹” Ahmed II excused himself for not having immediately initiated the accession correspondence following his enthronement, and justified this with his desire to announce news of his victory. The Padishah asked the Shah’s moral support in his war against his enemies.⁷¹² Ahmed II must have signed the epistle as “the Confiding [One] in the Grace of God the Bountiful Monarch / the Father of the Victorious, Sultan Ahmed Khan son of Mehemmed Khan.”⁷¹³

The Porte had paid special attention to the wording of this epistle. The visible eloquence in the final composition did not go unrewarded: as an unprecedented act in Ottoman history – though later repealed, an imperial-writ reconfirmed Ajam Kara Ebubekir Efendi, state-

given to the Palace Kitchen superintendent, see C.HR. 4402. As documented by a decree, apart from the handsome travel-allowance, the embassy was also allocated a daily amount of 125 thaler – 20,000 debased aspers as subvention to be disbursed by provincial authorities on behalf of the Central Treasury during the return journey. CV. MF. 5390; CV .HR. 6749, doc. 3

⁷⁰⁹ “uhûd-ı kadîme”

⁷¹⁰ “tevâfuk u ittihâd . . . muvâfakat u müvâlât-ı cânibeyn . . . müvâlefet u müvâhât-ı tarafeyn”

⁷¹¹ “bir nev’ile müekked ü mümehhed ola ki kürûr-ı dühûr ve mürûr-ı kurûn u usûr ile halel-pezîr olmaya”

⁷¹² NMH..d. 5, ent. 70; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 11b-14b; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât 1038-1105*, 271-277. In the *Register (5) of Imperial Letters*, the letter is dated late November 1691. In light of the consistent dating of Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar’s arrival and departure dates by chroniclers, however, this dating must be a mistake made by the copier who later registered the letter. That the copy preserved in the compilation in Iran does not provide any date strengthens the possibility that this problematic date is a mistake made later by a copier. The date of Kara Ebubekir Efendi’s promotion as a reward for composing this letter, 2 April 1692, also supports this interpretation. See below.

⁷¹³ *Mecmua-i Mekâtîb*, f. 1b: “el-Vâsık be-inâyet’ullah el-Melik-ü’l-Mennân / Ebu’l-Muzaffer Sultan Ahmed Han ibn-i Mehemmed Han”

secretary⁷¹⁴ and the composer of this epistle (who was by the way a born-Iranian from Şirvan) in his office for life on 2 April 1692.⁷¹⁵ This should not be surprising in light of the significance attached to this correspondence. Ahmed II thereby reconfirmed the diplomatic revolution of 1688 in Ottoman-Safavid relations consummating the elevation of the Shah's rank to that of august-sultan and uttering the novel concept of *ancient brotherhood*, which now defined the relations.⁷¹⁶

Until the 1680s, peaceful relations had been slowly consolidated by each occasion, however no structural change to their nature had taken place. Reconfirmation had stayed essential to the continuation of the status quo. After the gradual introduction of unprecedented concept in since 1686, it was now time to consolidate this new accord not only in writing but also in deed by means of not presenting each other with any reason to doubt the well-wishing intentions of the other side. The Ottoman-Safavid peace was no longer perceived as bound by renegotiation and reconfirmation upon accession of rulers, or as subordinated to the changing policies of succeeding power-holders. Now, it carried all attributes and even the description of an eternal peace, as testified by Ahmed II's wish to perpetuate it, lacking only the official designation "eternal". Both sides seemed determined to observe the new rules of the game which helped bring the relations to this level: the shah was to assure the padishah in word and deed that the latter not need to have second thoughts about Iran's neutrality even when he was fighting a

⁷¹⁴ *reisü'l-küttab*

⁷¹⁵ He had gone on pilgrimage with his father to Hejaz, whence he did not return to Iran. First recruited into the household of the governor-general of Egypt, Şişman İbrâhim Pasha, in Cairo and then into that of Köprülü Amcazâde Hüseyin Bey [later Pasha] in Constantinople, he was eventually admitted into the master (*hâcegân*) class of the Imperial Council scribes. This epistle does indeed stand out among its kind in style and wording, which can provide a hint about the exceptional gratification he enjoyed in return. Ajam Kara Ebubekir Efendi would later become deposed and appointed to other governorate and chancellery posts. Ahmed Resmî Efendi, *Halikatü'r-Rüesâ*, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Laleli no. 2092m, ff. 31a-32b; Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill-i Osmânî* vol. 2 (İstanbul: Târih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 430-431 [ent. "Ebubekir Efendi (Kara), Şirvanlı"]; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 422; Anonim Osmanlı Târihi, 40.

⁷¹⁶

multi-front war against a grand coalition in the west, which was causing him to redeploy troops from the Iranian frontier to Hungary. In return, the shah was to be elevated in rank, friendly inter-state relations were to become consolidated, and the Safavid requests regarding some religious and commercial issues were to be granted.

During the activities of Kelb-Ali Ziyâdođlu-Kacar’s conventional embassy in Adrianople, the turmoil in Iraq continued to escalate. In early July 1692, a petition, which spoke of the Bebe rebels’ killing and plundering in villages across the border on Iranian territory, reached the government from the inhabitants of Kerkük. In early July, Ahıskalı Ahmed Pasha, the new governor-general of Baghdad, was given full authority to determine the best course of action in this “most important of the important affairs⁷¹⁷”, and the remaining provincial dignitaries mentioned above were immediately summoned to report under his command. After restoring order and the judicial process, injured parties [including Safavid subjects] were to be recompensed, while death and imprisonment sentences were to be executed.⁷¹⁸

Due to successive deaths of governors, an interregnum ensued in Basra during the Bedouin rebellion,⁷¹⁹ leaving the province defenseless and without leadership during this very critical time. In turn, this let the rebellion expand.⁷²⁰ While on the road from Adrinople to Baghdad, Ahıskalı Ahmed Pasha received the news that the Bedouin gathering would soon target the principal cities of the province, namely Basra and Kurna. The state then sent decrees to the involved parties subordinating them to the governor-general of Baghdad, who was created commander-general.⁷²¹

⁷¹⁷ “ehemm-i mühimmeden”

⁷¹⁸ MHM.d. 104, ent. 235-239.

⁷¹⁹ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 436; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1454.

⁷²⁰ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 454; Râşid, *Târih*, 444-445.

⁷²¹ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1476-1477.

V.3. Chaos in Kurdistan, Upheaval at the Gulf Region, and the Ottoman-Safavid Perpetual Peace in Alliance

From the next decree sent to Ahıskalı Ahmed Pasha, we learn that the Bedouin of Cezâyır, Ma'dân, Müntefik, and Âl-i Serrâc among others were involved in the movement. In August 1692, they besieged the city of Basra, blocking the traffic between it and Kurna, while continuing plundering and killing throughout the countryside. Now, from the center's point of view, dealing with this problem had become an "issue of Religion and the Sublime State,"⁷²² i.e., a public matter of top priority.⁷²³ The riots in Basra were no longer seen as repercussions of a struggle for supremacy among provincial power-holders: the Bedouin coalition had attained the character of a rebellion directed against the very presence of the Ottoman State in the province. The threat had direct implications for Ottoman-Safavid relations. Despite all, the campaign of 1693 was undersized and ended in disaster. Yet, running the blockade, the new governor-general (Bezîrgân Kapıcı Halil Pasha) could be installed to the city of Basra, much awaited by the inhabitants who had beforehand recognized him *in absentia*, declaring with a collective petition "the country is the padishah's."^{724,725}

At the same time, Süleyman Kirmac had in a way come to terms with the new governor of Şehrîzor. His destructive incursions were now rather directed towards Iranian territory. In late February 1693, Ahıskalı Ahmed Pasha was also commissioned with restoring order at this section of the Iranian border, by which occasion the Padishah's decree stressed: "satisfying the fragrant thoughts of the Shah, reconfirming and imposing in their former state the borders which

⁷²² "umûr-ı Dîn u Devlet-i Aliyye'mden"

⁷²³ MHM.d. 104, ent. 473-497, 768.

⁷²⁴ "vilâyet pâdişâhındır"

⁷²⁵ A.MKT. 4/5; C.AS. 37480; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1493; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 454-455; Râşid, *Târih*, 445.

were previously demarcated and determined, and observing and implementing the conditions of peace and righteousness are the greatest of the benefits to My Sublime State.^{726,727} Yet, the planned punitive operation of 1693 against the Bebe could not be undertaken, as the contingents that were ordered to undertake the operations in Şehrizer were the same as those mobilized in the same year for the disastrous Basran campaign, a paradox born out of the decrees issued by the same court. This is one of the most obvious demonstrations of how grave the consequences of the redeployment of troops from the Iranian frontier to European fronts had become.

The Sublime Porte took Süleyman Kirmac's transgressions in Iran no less seriously than his lawlessness and killings in Ottoman territory. This is due to the fact that he was operating from his base under Ottoman sovereignty and that he was an Ottoman vassal. Still, it is quite extraordinary for Ottoman diplomatics that in a decree issued by the Imperial Council to a governor-general, which was not foreign correspondence and hence was not to be viewed by the Safavids, appeasing the anxiety of the Shah, who is referred to with honorary titlature unconventional for the genre, was formulated as the principle rationale. The royal government's fully adhering to the pacification and preserving its positive neutrality at a time when the empire presumably could not give an immediate response to a potential offensive at the eastern borders must have been greatly appreciated by the Sublime Porte. Accordingly, these expressions of good will were not to be abused in such times of dire need.

At the turn of the year, an interregnum caused by death of governor befell this time Baghdad. Soon after, in April 1694, the fortress of Baghdad underwent repair works.⁷²⁸ Not

⁷²⁶ “Şah . . . hazretlerinin ıstırzâ-yı hâtır-ı âtırları ve mukaddemen kat' u tahdîd ve tayin olunan hudûd u sınırların kemâ-fi'l-evvel ibkâ ve takrîri ve şerâyit-i sulh u salâhın müraat u icrâsı a'zam-ı mesâlih-i Devlet-i Aliyye'mden olmağla”

⁷²⁷ MHM.d. 104, ent. 686-688.

⁷²⁸ See D.BKL.d. 32246 for the register of wages paid to the craftsmen commissioned with the repair of the fortress of Baghdad, April 1694.

much later, on July 29, Shah Süleyman died, apparently due to a health failure originating from heavy drinking and debauchery for decades.⁷²⁹ With the active support of the deceased shah's sister and wife of the chief-judge⁷³⁰ (royal-princess⁷³¹ Meryem) royal-prince Sultan-Hüseyin (eldest son) smoothly acceded to the throne.⁷³²

Like in the case of the Bedouin uprising in Basra, the Bebe insubordination in the Ottoman and the Safavid Kurdistans was also recognized by 1694 as an independence movement⁷³³ and thus a direct rebellion against state sovereignty rather than one aiming at attaining a better share of power in provincial affairs. A further support for this perception is that Süleyman Kirmac did not content himself with undertaking raids and returning to his base, but instead, rather directly seized the control of the Safavid forts Mekri, Mesbuş, Orman, and their adjunct countryside with the justification that these once had been adjunct to Şehrızor, which he now possessed. From these new footholds, he also began encroaching into Urûmiye. Upon these developments that had coincided with his father's last days, the new shah Sultan-Hüseyin decided to send an army against the Bebe invaders and had his frontier governors write to the new governor-general of Baghdad, Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha, that the Safavid expeditionary force had to inevitably cross from territory belonging to the provinces of Baghdad and Şehrızor, and that the Ottoman side should in no way take this as a violation.⁷³⁴

A royal rescript created governor of Urûmiye Cânı Xan commander-general at the head of the mobilized forces. However, in the first encounter, Süleyman Kirmac routed a detachment thereof and expanded his zone occupation to Kirmanşah. In response, another rescript

⁷²⁹ Roemer, "The Safavid Period," 309-310.

⁷³⁰ Saf. *sadr*; Ott. *kazasker*

⁷³¹ *begüm*

⁷³² Newman, *Safavid Iran*, 104.

⁷³³ *huruç*

⁷³⁴ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 128; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1592.

commissioned an army under the command of Murtazâ-kulu Beyg Zengene, son of chief of the royal guard Şah-kulu Xan Zengene, who managed to recover fort Şemiran. But soon, Süleyman Kirmac also defeated this second army.⁷³⁵

Next, presumably instructed by the royal court, governor of Kirmanşah Süleyman Murtazâ-Kulu Xan sent a letter, along with the Shah's emissary, to Baghdad, in order to share updates and ensure communication. He stated that that because the Ottomans had not undertaken the necessary military operations against the Bebe in due time, they had fallen short of observing the peace conditions, and that the Safavids would now give Süleyman Kirmac, condemned by both sides, his due retribution. The pursuing army's path would cross from Ottoman territory out of necessity, but neither the Ottoman side nor any informed party could or should interpret this move by the Safavid side as a violation; Süleyman Kirmac's removal was rather to be regarded as the fulfillment of the union. Upon hearing of the Shah's intention, the imperial government issued orders to Baghdad that they intervene before the Safavid side would.⁷³⁶

In reply, Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha sent a letter⁷³⁷ accompanied by an emissary agha directly to Sultan-Hüseyin, whom he styled as the "ornamenter of the crown and throne of august-fortune⁷³⁸" and "adorner of the throne of world-possession⁷³⁹" among other more conventional titles. He expressed his condolences for Shah Süleyman's death and congratulated

⁷³⁵ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 128-131.

⁷³⁶ Hüseyin Murtazâ b. Seyyid Ali el-Bağdadi Nazmizâde, *Münşeat-ı Nazmizâde*, Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi no. 3322, f. 32b; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1593; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, f. 133a-133b.

⁷³⁷ Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, ff. 30b-33b. The copied text of the letter in this compilation contains a factual mistake: the Ottoman padishah is named Süleyman instead of Ahmed. However, Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Agha's first chronicle recounts each event and name that one comes across in this letter in more detail, thus leaving no doubt as to its sender, dating, and occasion. Also, unlike what is suggested in this probably miscopied version of Nazmizâde's compilation, Murtazâ-kulu Xan was actually not the royal envoy but the governor of Kirmanşah. See Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 133a-133b

⁷³⁸ pîrâye-bahş-ı tâc u taht-ı hümâyun-baht"

⁷³⁹ "ziynet-dih-i serîr-i cihân-dâri"

Sultan-Hüseyin on his “august accession⁷⁴⁰” to the “eternity-joining monarchy,⁷⁴¹” after which he stressed: “between the Two Eternal States, the bond of friendship and concord is durable, its foundations obliteration-proof, and the attachment and alliance firm.⁷⁴²”

The Padishah had heard of Süleyman Kirmac’s misdeeds, which Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha had the composer of his letter, Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi, formulate as “encroachment to Both Sides at that frontier whose borders are well-known,⁷⁴³” probably to give the impression that the Sublime Porte was no less disturbed from the Bebe rebellion than the royal government was. As it was indispensable to uphold whatever the conditions of peace necessitated, wrote the governor-general, the padishah had sent an imperial-writ with one of his privy men-at-arms⁷⁴⁴, [Sarı⁷⁴⁵] Muslu Agha, creating Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha marshal and subordinating to him the Baghdad Locals and the governors-general of Van (Beyzâde Ali Pasha) and Mosul, along with their provincial and Kurdish-tribal troops. At the time of this decree’s arrival, the royal emissary was already in Baghdad, and thus had first-hand knowledge of the center’s attending closely to this problem. To give further assurance, the marshal had not deemed it sufficient that the emissary personally observe the developments but rather decided to write this letter directly to the shah himself. He had officially inaugurated the campaign on 25 October 1694, and would move to the operation zone concurrently with the rest of the assigned contingents in order to “give, with the augustness of the Monarchical Subduing [Ottoman] State, [Süleyman Kirmac] his deserved punishment.⁷⁴⁶” Whichever territories he might have seized from the Safavids would be

⁷⁴⁰ “cülûs-ı hümâyun”

⁷⁴¹ “saltanat-ı ebed-peyvend”

⁷⁴² “Devleteyn-i Müebbedeyn miyanında râbita-ı dûstî ve vifâk pâyidâr ve esâs[1] masûnü’l-indirâs, meveddet ü ittifâk üstüvâr olmağla”

⁷⁴³ “ol serhadd-i mâlumü’l-hudûdda tarafeyne itâle-i dest”

⁷⁴⁴ *hassa silahşor / silahşor-i şehriyâri*

⁷⁴⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1384, 1389, 1393, 1405, 1435.

⁷⁴⁶ “yümn-i Devlet-i kâhire-i sultâniye ile cezâ-yı sezâsın verip”

restored to the shah's officials in accordance with the current border protocol. It was "not necessary that the most-honorable shah attend to the expulsion and removal of the mentioned bandit, or bother himself with anything else."⁷⁴⁷

Süleyman Murtazâ-kulu Xan's statement that the impending Safavid pursuit of Süleyman Kirmac would be legitimate action without a violation of peace must have alarmed Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha beyond the degree suggested by his letter to the Shah. As he might have wanted more precise instructions in the face of such a development, he immediately forwarded Murtazâ-kulu Xan's letter to the grand-vizierate (seemingly along with the shah's emissary⁷⁴⁸). The Grand-Vizier, in an unprecedented, isolated, and exceptional case, had state-secretary Râmi Mehmed Efendi compose a letter directly to Süleyman Murtazâ-kulu Xan and said that he had submitted to the "Padishah . . . Supreme-Shah . . . Sultan of the Sultans of the Earth"⁷⁴⁹ the incoming letter concerning the crimes Süleyman Kirmac had committed in the realms of the "Shah . . . his most-sublime majesty."⁷⁵⁰ In addition to repeating the measures already mentioned in Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha's letter, the Grand-Vizier also communicated that Süleyman Kirmac was currently in check, and a gatekeeper-captain was sent as commissary carrying decrees to the neighboring governors to make sure that he stay in check. If he would not remain tame, he would meet his due punishment with the troops to be dispatched. The Grand-Vizier declared that the "time-honored . . . pact's . . . becoming rust-stained by [negative] alteration and transformation in consequence of such minuscule incidents was impossible."⁷⁵¹ However, especially while

⁷⁴⁷ "taraf-ı bâhirü'ş-sefer-i şâhîden şakî-i mezkûrun def ü ref'ine takayyüd ve zahmet-i âhire muhtaç olmaz"

⁷⁴⁸ See AE. SAMD.II. 917 for the treasury note dated 24 June 1694. It is the payment order for the plain oil, meat, bread, and other items that were allocated as bouche to an unnamed emissary from [the shah of] Iran and his retinue, who were to stay in Adrianople from June 24 to July 23.

⁷⁴⁹ "Pâdişah . . . Şehinşah . . . Sultân-ı Selâtîn-i Rûy-i Zemîn"

⁷⁵⁰ "a'lâ-hazret . . . Şah"

⁷⁵¹ "ahd-i ba'îdden beri . . . mîsâk . . . bu misilli bâzı avâriz-ı cüz'îye hasebiyle jeng-alûd-i tagayyür ve tahavvül olmak müstehîlü'l-ihhtimaldır"

Ottoman armies were preoccupied on the western and northern fronts, a “violation of the border [by the Safavids], as it was unprecedented⁷⁵²”, might not ruin the cordial relations but still distract the Ottoman armies fighting the enemy. Dealing with this matter was to be left exclusively to the empire, and the Safavid side was to give up the intention of pursuit.⁷⁵³

Ottoman authorities’ inability to prevent Süleyman Kirmac in 1693 from killing and pillaging the properties of Safavid subjects, and seizing control of Safavid territory involving forts and villages justified – with regard to interstate conventions – the Safavid claim to the right to undertake an operation to stop these encroachments committed by Ottoman vassals from their feudal homestead in the empire’s territory. By virtue of involving damage done to Iran, the Bebe rebellion now carried implications beyond a security deficit and the Ottomans’ current impotence to implement state authority in parts of Şehrizer.

That the Sublime Porte could not impose order against atrocities in Ottoman and Safavid Kurdistan made it directly responsible for the damage received by the Safavid side. Arguably, an intervention by the Safavids to protect their own sovereign territory and even a hot pursuit extending to Şehrizer were justified in consideration of the facts that Ottoman vassals were attacking Iran and that until then, the empire could not prevent this from happening. Remarkably, the Safavid side made no attempt to turn this development into an advantage; otherwise it could have justifiably accused the Sublime Porte of not taking the necessary measures to prevent Iran from being attacked from Ottoman territory by Ottoman vassals. However, the Safavids knew that almost all of the empire’s available resources were employed in the ongoing war against Venice, Germany, Poland-Lithuania, and Russia, and that this was the reason behind the empire’s inability to intervene with sufficient military force. Therefore, they tried to negotiate an

⁷⁵² “tecâvüz-i hudûd mesbûk fi’l-misl olmamakla”

⁷⁵³ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 133a-134b.

agreed-upon pursuit of the Bebe in a way that the Porte would not interpret as a violation of the concord.

That the Safavids did not attempt to draw more benefits from this situation indicates how crucial they deemed the perpetuation of the current cordial relations with the Ottomans. Iran's friendly stance since the outbreak of the Great Turkish War had already bore fruit by bringing about an elevation of the shah's position in hierarchy and by taking concrete steps towards eternal peace. All these had materialized with the Sublime Porte's consent. Now, if the Safavid side would seize the opportunity to make advances against Ottoman interest, this would clearly bring an end to the recent convergence in relations, which was unprecedented in terms of the harmony that had come about. Moreover, the Ottoman Empire had the capacity to reverse the situation once the war with the Holy League was over and could therefore do so. Probably in view of all these, the royal government only planned to defend its sovereign territory and subjects, and did not strategize to score gains at the expense of Ottoman interests, despite being in the right. The advantages of such acquisitions would be temporary, but the disadvantages that would ensue from politically alienating the Sublime Porte would have long-term effects.

On the other hand, the Ottoman side was well aware that the Safavids had every right to intervene. In the replies given to the forewarning that the Iranians were about to conduct an operation, the Ottomans remarkably declared that though unsanctioned, a crossing of the border by the Safavids would not constitute a violation of peace. This means that the Ottomans – also implicitly – admitted that such a move was justifiable. The Empire did not legally have the right to protest when it was not in a position to impose authority along a border stretch over which Iran was receiving harm. This awareness was reflected also in the hurried decrees sent to Baghdad and its neighboring provinces that they intervene before the Iranians would, as only this

would remove the legal base of the otherwise justified course of action declared by the Safavids. Additionally, apart from respective justifications and positions, the shah's crushing of a rebellion by the padishah's vassals in Ottoman territory would indeed cost the latter more than land, tax, lives, and superstructure. It would have serious consequences regarding the legitimacy of Ottoman rule in Şehrizer, the effect of which could also spread to neighboring provinces in the case of the outbreak of an interstate contention along the frontier.

Finally, the composition of letters by Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha to the Shah (1694) and by the Grand-Vizier to the governor of Kirmanşah (1695) shows that, just as in the case of the Caucasian frontier in 1692, the Ottoman authorities along the Kurdistan and Iraqi frontier were instructed to adapt in their correspondence the revised status quo. Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha, explicitly and more than once, emphasized the Shah's recently elevated rank. The steps taken towards the eternalization of the peace also left clear marks on the wording. As precursor to an eternal peace, both parties had to recognize one another's justified existence as unbound by time, which the Safavids had been conceding to the Ottoman Empire since the establishment of bilateral relations. Now, in this letter, we find clear references to the permanence of the peace and to the Ottoman recognition of the Safavids' qualification as an equivalent eternal state. Thus, "perpetual peace", which had begun to be uttered in 1686, now entered into diplomatic correspondence between the Ottoman establishment in Baghdad and the royal government. In addition to this, the next path towards an eternal Ottoman-Safavid peace was paved by mentioning both parties as eternal states in dual grammatical case, i.e. in full equality. Also, the Grand-Vizier's reference to "time-honored pact" was a milestone on the road to the perpetuation of the peace, which had until then been indefinite in terms of time but subject to renewal at each occasion.

Such convergence also brought about the first mention of “alliance” in official correspondence between the two states. One should take this new level in relations as a rather passive alliance which prescribed not taking advantage of the other party’s difficult situation during an ongoing war with a third party, and even indirectly aiding the other party by ensuring the safety of its borders so that it would not have to invest militarily to the common frontier concurrently during an ongoing mobilization for another front. This novelty in Ottoman-Safavid relations would continue to receive reference, showing that such wording by the governor-general of Baghdad in his letter to the shah was not coincidental. Rather it was the very first occasion featuring the newly reached accord by virtue of preceding the next inter-monarch correspondence,.

Again in confirmation of the post-1686 accord, the emperor-padishah’s hierarchical primacy vis-à-vis the shah, despite the latter’s having become elevated to the dignity of august-sultan/high-king, was strictly observed in both letters. Lastly, the Grand-Vizier’s letter to the governor of Kirmanşah was more of a friendly warning from above to below than part of interstate correspondence that could be taken as a novelty of diplomatic convention in terms of correspondence partners.

While various sections of the Iranian-Ottoman frontier were being hit by a range of problems, an attempt at espionage was revealed in Constantinople. Mehmed Takî of Baghdad, a merchant active in the trading house Vezir-Hanı located in Çemberlitaş district, sent written messages to the Bedouin chieftains of the Basran countryside and to the Safavid court. Emphasizing that the empire was completely occupied with the enemy offensive in Hungary, he urged the chieftains to seize Basra, and for the Safavids to occupy Baghdad. The Ottoman government intercepted these papers. Upon grand-vizier Sürmeli Ali Pasha’s submitting the case

to Ahmed II and the subsequent imperial-writ, Mehmed Takî was summoned to Adrianople and, charged with high treason, executed before the Imperial Gate⁷⁵⁴ on 29 January 1695.⁷⁵⁵

Neither the intercepted papers nor any other intelligence report suggested that Mehmed Takî of Baghdad was spying on behalf of the Safavid State. Thus, this must be a case of personal grudge against the Ottoman State or, more probably, an initiative undertaken with an expectation of reward, or a combination of both. His being transported from Constantinople to Adrianople before execution hints at further interrogations by the imperial government to extract more information. Seemingly void of a Safavid connection, this failed espionage attempt did not affect bilateral relations, yet it stands out as an isolated incident which was nevertheless not to be underestimated. It also makes one propound the question whether there were also other attempts by third parties to spy in the Ottoman Empire on behalf of Iran or vice-versa.

On 6 February 1695, after several years of minor advances and setbacks on all four fronts in the ongoing war against the Holy League and the transformation of the turmoils in Iraq into anti-state coalitions, Ahmed II passed away. His nephew, imperial-prince Mustafa (II), succeeded him and immediately resolved to assume personal command on the Hungarian front against the Germans.⁷⁵⁶ Again in the same year, the Republic of Venice sent a letter to the Shah and repeated the invitation that Iran join with the Ottomans' foes.⁷⁵⁷ In a parallel attempt, Pope Innocent XII wrote to Sultan-Hüseyin in a brief dated 30 April 1695: "joining with the arms of the Christian princes against the most savage race of the Turks Your awe-inspiring might, you will with one accord unite and combine together to destroy it altogether and also vigorously oblige it to restore provinces which . . . it has appropriated up till now." Nevertheless, even this

⁷⁵⁴ *Bâb-ı Hümâyün*

⁷⁵⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1589; *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 106.

⁷⁵⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol.3/1, 555-557.

⁷⁵⁷ Rota, "Safavid Persia and its Diplomatic Relations with Venice," 152.

new wave of anti-Ottoman alliance offers to Iran could not prompt the Safavids to consider the offer. As of 5 October 1696, a missionary would report from Isfahan: “there is not a word, nothing mentioned, of any war against the Turks.”⁷⁵⁸ Unlike in 1684-1685, the Ottomans were not alarmed at the possibility of a positive reply by the royal government either. The manner in which the Holy League’s 1695 attempt to draw Iran into the war failed shows how firm the post-1686 Ottoman-Safavid convergence was.

The decree dated 13 June 1695 appointing Firârî-yeğeni Beyzâde Ali Pasha governor-general of Baghdad with full authority in all security- and frontier-related decisions also charged him with strictly upholding the conditions of peace with the shah.⁷⁵⁹ In October, the process of redeploying troops from Basra and Baghdad to Europe showed the first concrete signs of reversal.⁷⁶⁰ By then, the center understood through bitter experience what disastrous consequences could result from decreasing its military presence at the Iraqi frontier with Iran to a level lower than the peacetime norm.

By 1695, contrary to the earlier promises given to the Safavids, the Ottomans could not undertake an effective operation against the Bebe; Süleyman Kirmac continued his destructive war of independence against both states.⁷⁶¹ On the other hand, as of 1695, the Safavid side also began to no longer perceive the Bebe rebellion as one stemming solely from the lack of authority on the Ottoman side of the border. Encroachments to Erdelân/Kurdistan and Urûmiye had reached such a degree that the rebel chieftain was no less influential there than he was in his base in Şehrîzor. Having similarly attained the quality of an independence movement in 1694-1695⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁸ *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia. The Safavids and the Papal Mission of the 17th and the 18th Centuries*, 2 vols, ed. & trans. H. Chick (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, new ed. 2012), 494-495.

⁷⁵⁹ MHM.d. 106, ent. 563-566.

⁷⁶⁰ MHM.d. 160, ent. 1229-1231.

⁷⁶¹ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1593.

⁷⁶² *Nasîrî, Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 125.

in parts of Safavid Kurdistan, the Bebe movement also grew stronger due to the Safavids' inability to crush it. This situation required closer coordination between Adrianople and Isfahan than there had been, and avoidance from any sort of mutual accusations of non-fulfillment of contractual responsibilities.

Upon the worsening of the situation, the royal government deemed it necessary to organize measures against the Bebe rebellion in coordination with its new "ally". The upholding of the peace conditions was given precedence, causing further operations against the Bebe to be temporarily halted, as these would require military activity on both sides of the border. Diplomatic initiatives began in order to have the Sublime Porte issue an official permission authorizing the Safavid side to undertake cross-border operations against the Bebe. Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu, former governor of Khorasan and now the head of Sultan-Hüseyin's embassy formed to congratulate Mustafa II's accession, was also commissioned with relating details of Süleyman Kirmac's occupation in the Safavid Kurdistan and notification that the central army had not been sent to crush him due to his being the padishah's vassal. If the Ottoman side honored the peace as much as the Safavids did, it was then the padishah's responsibility to deal with the issue. Otherwise, the Shah would order his troops to march and crush the Bebe.⁷⁶³

Concurrently, Basra surrendered to the rebels in July/August 1695 following a brief siege because the Ottomans had not capitalized on a setback inflicted upon the Bedouin coalition. Mâni es-Sa'dûn had Bezirgan Halil Pasha along with his 700-men household shipped off to Safavid territory across the Shatt-el-Arab to Bûşehr, and massacred the 500-strong Sublime Court contingent within the fortress.⁷⁶⁴ Fearing punishment for having surrendered and implicitly

⁷⁶³ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 132-133; İE.HR. 424; Râşid, *Târih*, 533.

⁷⁶⁴ Silâhdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Nusretnâme*, published in Mehmet Topal, "Silâhdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Nusretnâme*, Tahlil ve Metin (1106-1133 / 1695-1721)" (PhD diss., Marmara Üniversitesi, 2001), 131. The Carmelite chronicler dates Shaikh Mâni's taking of Basra to 1694. It is inaccurate, as documented by the consistent

acquiesced to the massacre of the padishah's household garrison, Bezirgan Halil Pasha remained in Iran in order to convince the Shah that he intercede for Mustafa II's granting a pardon via the outgoing embassy.⁷⁶⁵

As Basra was falling, Mustafa II pushed the main theater of war with the German armies back to Hungary in the summer of 1695. After entrenching the empire's position in the principal fortress of southern Hungary (Temesvar), he took the surrounding forts back and defeated the German Emperor's army in the Battle of Lugos.⁷⁶⁶ Soon after Mustafa II's triumphal entry to Constantinople in November, a letter-of-conquest was sent to the Shah of Iran, among other Muslim rulers, via an unaccredited agent.⁷⁶⁷

In late December 1695, Beyzâde Ali Pasha was created the commander-general⁷⁶⁸ of the campaign for liberating Basra, for which troops were mobilized and funds were released. In the meantime, Mâni es-Sa'dûn further expanded the support base of the rebellion among the Bedouin.⁷⁶⁹ However, the operations in 1696 could not be undertaken as planned. Only a quarter of the mobilized forces could gather, and the rebels defeated them in battle. The result was the loss of Ottoman control in the entire province of Basra, which would have direct consequences at interstate level with Iran. In confirmation of this, Mâni es-Sa'dûn initiated attempts to expand his influence to the Bedouin across the border with an attempt to also rally under his banner Safavid

chronology of events as presented in *Nusretnâme*, and in more detail than this, Fındıklılı Mehmed Agha's entries note the dates of occurrence and of news' reaching the imperial court. The Carmelite chronicler also cannot date the event exactly, providing instead a tentative period, from March to September. This testifies to my interpretation that he confused the chronology in this specific entry. See *Chronicle of Events Between the Years 1623 and 1733 Relating to the Settlement of the Order of Carmelites in Mesopotamia (Bassora)*, ed. Hermann Gollanz (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 412; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1170.

⁷⁶⁵ Matthee, "Basra," 74. Apparently, he was later granted the pardon, as he reappeared in state service. Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill-i Osmânî* vol. 2, 584 [entry: "Halil Paşa (Bezirgan)"].

⁷⁶⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi* vol. 3/1, 555-560.

⁷⁶⁷ Hammer, *Geschichte* vol 6, 615.

⁷⁶⁸ *başbuğ*, a comparatively less used term in the same meaning as *serasker*.

⁷⁶⁹ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 575; Râşid, *Târîh*, 516; MHM.d. 108, ent. 2-43, 281-294, 393-394, 841-843, 846-848; 1344-1349.

vassals. Concurrently, with letters dispatched via emissaries to the royal government, he offered to recognize the shah as suzerain. Sultan-Hüseyin did not issue an acceptance and instead instructed Seyyid Ferecullah Xan, viceroy of Huveyze, not to engage militarily with the Basran rebels.

As the abortive Basran campaign was still underway, Shah Sultan-Hüseyin's conventional congratulatory embassy to Mustafa II, en route to the empire, arrived in Erivan in mid-1696. The personnel was recruited from among royal court officials, royal guards, the household of the governor-general of Çukursa'd, the clans/tribes of Afşar, Kengerlu, and Kacar, and self-evidently the Şamlu. Here, with the Shah's orders, an agent of the governor-general of Çukursa'd, a certain Mehemmed Beyg, was made join the embassy with instructions to gather intelligence, independently from the ambassador, about the state of affairs in the empire. Upon return to court, this agent was to inform the Shah of his observations and also of the conduct of the Safavid mission before Ebulmasum Şamlu himself would be received in audience. After entering Ottoman territory over Erivan, the embassy began to receive its daily subventions and was welcomed by the host-officer who accompanied them for the next twelve days until Erzurum, where another host-officer appointed by the Sublime Porte took over. Another change of host-officers took place in Tokat. However, this last one deserted the convoy for some reason several days after departure. In the capital, the officer of the ceremonies⁷⁷⁰ of vice-grand-vizier-at-Constantinople Çerkes Osman Pasha officially welcomed the ambassador. The people had also gathered to behold the entry. During the welcome, a minor diplomatic crisis occurred. Çerkes Osman Pasha had sent a fully equipped horse with his ceremonies-officer as gift. But, getting off the ship, the ambassador chose to mount his own horse. In reaction to this insult in the

⁷⁷⁰ *selam ağası*

presence of the gathered public, the vice-grand-vizier refused to meet or welcome the ambassador in person during the embassy's twelve-day stay in the capital.⁷⁷¹ However, we are not in a position to know what really caused Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu to reject a gift by Çerkes Osman Pasha, who was officially deputizing for the Grand-Vizier. As an indicator of this strife's being of personal rather than of official nature, the ambassador would not reject in Adrianople the same gifts from dignitaries ranking both lower and higher than the vice-grand-vizier.

As the embassy approached the court, Mustafa II, again on campaign in 1696, was relieving Temesvar in Hungary, then besieged by Prince-Elector Frederick August I of Saxony (also King of Poland as August II after 1697) at the head of the German armies. The padishah's army repelled the offensive. The court-on-campaign departed for Adrianople after reinforcing the garrison of Temesvar.⁷⁷²

When Mustafa II received word of Ebulmasum Şamlu's arrival in Constantinople, he ordered the Grand-Vizier to host the ambassador in an extraordinarily generous manner. Accordingly, the accommodation arrangements in Constantinople were "monarchical."^{773,774} Hacı Seyfî Agha, formerly steward of Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha and currently in Elmas Mehmed Pasha's retinue, was appointed as host-officer at court and during the return journey. As was the convention, a janissary company led by a *çorbacı*-captain and three to four Imperial Council bailiffs were attached to the embassy in order to prohibit its contact with unwanted inhabitants, which was in turn a measure taken to prevent the embassy from keeping its finger on the pulse of the affairs of the imperial court and matters of state.⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷¹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 165.

⁷⁷² Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi* vol. 3/1, 561-563.

⁷⁷³ "mülûkâne"

⁷⁷⁴ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 106b-107a.

⁷⁷⁵ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 101a, 107a-b.

On 1 December 1696, the embassy arrived in Adrianople.⁷⁷⁶ This had coincided to Mustafa II's triumphal return from Hungary. Outside the city, a committee led by marshal of the Imperial Council Küçük İbrâhim Agha welcomed the guests and escorted them to their residences. Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu was quartered in Defterdarahmedpaşa Palace in the vicinity of Selimiye Mosque, and his retinue at Ayşehatun Hanı.⁷⁷⁷ After several days, chief of the Janissary Corps Delibaltazâde Mahmud Pasha sent gifts to the ambassador's residence, which was followed by official visits from various dignitaries. Lastly, grand-vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha invited Ebulmasul Şamlu with gifts and gave a feast in his honor.⁷⁷⁸ At this event, the grand-vizierial household, high-ranking janissary officers, other Court Corps majors, and various Outer Court personnel welcomed the ambassador in ceremonial outfit. At the entrance to the palace, the marshal of the grand-vizierial court and officer of ceremonies took over. Crossing the council chamber under the guidance of the grand-vizierial secretary⁷⁷⁹ and after greeting the present aghas, the ambassador was conducted into the audience chamber by the grand-vizierial lieutenant and the state-secretary who were waiting in front of the entrance. Greeting there the present Inner and Outer Court personnel, the guests entered the room in which the actual hosting was organized. The Grand-Vizier, who was waiting seated, exchanged words of courtesy with the entering ambassador in this position, and only then stood up and took several steps towards Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu. As both dignitaries stood, Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu delivered the prime-ministerial letter, which the Grand-Vizier passed on to the state-secretary standing by. Only the

⁷⁷⁶ Date calculation made based on the data given in CV. HR. 6698. Teşrifâtizâde Mehmed provides the day of arrival in Adrianople as 12 December 1696 in his *Defter-i Teşrifât*, f. 108a.

⁷⁷⁷ İE. HR. 424: the innkeeper's petition to refund his expenditure, the chief-accounting bureau's calculation, and the grand-vizier's mandate that the chief-comptroller attends to the remittance. Also see Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 243

⁷⁷⁸ The chief of the Janissaries and the Grand-Vizier each presented the ambassador with a fully equipped and gold-interwoven-saddled horse. The Padishah's summons was made via a dispatch of thirty fully equipped horses. Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 165-166; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 604; Râşid, *Târih*, 533; NMH.d. 5, ent. 100.

⁷⁷⁹ *sadrizam tezkirecisi*

ambassador and his bursar⁷⁸⁰ were admitted to the grand-vizierial presence; the rest of the embassy personnel were entertained in various rooms of the palace according to their ranks.⁷⁸¹

After another period of several days, Mustafa II summoned the ambassador to the imperial welcome audience on December 18.⁷⁸² Following the customary Imperial Council session participated by the viziers, both chief-judges, both comptrollers, the chancellor, council-masters, and presided by the Grand-Vizier, the participants went inside the palace after dismounting. The ambassador, with the marshal of the Imperial Council to his left and an embassy member carrying the royal epistle over the head to his right, saluted the present janissaries and shared their ceremonial soup. In observance of the ambassador's dignity, the Grand-Vizier seated him in the subsequent feast below vice-grand-vizier-at-Adrianople Moralı Damad Hasan Pasha. The master of ceremonies⁷⁸³ registered the royal gifts and the master of presents⁷⁸⁴ exhibited them before taking them away. After the feast sent from the palace kitchen, the vice-grand-vizier, the chief of the Janissary Corps, and the ninety-one of the embassy personnel were invested with customary robes of honor in front of the treasury. The ambassador was led to the audience hall after the viziers. First Moralı Hasan Pasha and then the chief of the Janissaries separately attempted to take over the royal epistle, but Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu abstained therefrom, and instead delivered it to the Grand-Vizier, who submitted it to the Padishah. After the delivery of the Shah's gifts, conventional ceremonies, and small

⁷⁸⁰ *tahvil-dâr*

⁷⁸¹ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 108a-110b. See Ibid. for the description of the ceremonies.

⁷⁸² Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretname*, 243. Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed provides the date as 21 December 1696, however, provides the day itself as a Tuesday, conforming to December 18. *Defter-i Teşrifât*, f. 111a-b.

⁷⁸³ *teşrifatçıbaşı*

⁷⁸⁴ *pişkeşçibaşı*

conversations in which the ambassador orally conveyed the Shah's greetings with affection and friendship, the session was dissolved.⁷⁸⁵

The Shah, in his epistle⁷⁸⁶ to the Padishah "his most-sublime majesty . . . the conqueror-caesar . . . elegance-enhancer of the currency of splendor and supreme-shahship, supreme-shah of the world . . . sovereign of the earth and the age . . . foundation-layer of the supreme-sultanate,⁷⁸⁷" offered his condolences for Ahmed II's passing away and congratulations on Mustafa II's accession. Requesting a continuous exchange of missions and correspondence, which he deemed a contribution to maintaining the current convergence, he announced that the dispatch of this embassy was "out of the immenseness of friendship and cohesion, and the extremity of affection and honesty."⁷⁸⁸ The Shah both requested and acknowledged the new padishah's "expending his sun-adopted efforts for the firmness of the obliteration-proof foundations of the pact, and commanding the border-wardens of that territory with a due-to-destiny-decree . . . that they not hold permissible the transgressions against the contracts [signed] by the justice-accustomed predecessor monarchs⁷⁸⁹" and that they function towards consolidating the "alliance" therebetween. The ambassador would communicate the rest of the matters orally.

The empire attempted in the winter of 1695-1696 to coopt Süleyman of Bebe by inviting him to join the forces being assembled for the intended Basran campaign,⁷⁹⁰ which was no doubt

⁷⁸⁵ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 111a-113b; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretname*, 243; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 604; Râşid, *Târih*, 533. Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed relates that the royal epistle was taken over by the present viziers, who then passed it onto the Grand-Vizier. See the cited sources for more details on the ceremonies. The robes of honor were products of Bursa. Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 166.

⁷⁸⁶ NMH.d. 5, ent. 99; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 14b-16a; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât-ı Siyâsi-yi İrân ez Sâl-i 1105 ta 1135*, ed. Abdülhüseyin Nevâî (Tahran: Müessese-i Mutâlaât u Tahkikât-ı Ferhengî, hs.1363), 117-120.

⁷⁸⁷ "a'lâ-hazret . . . kişver-gîr kayser . . . zîb-efzâ-yî revâc-ı ferreî ve şehinşâhî, şehinşâh-ı cihân . . . fermân-fermâ-yî zemîn u zamân . . . mümehhid-i bünyân-ı saltanatü'l-uzmâ"

⁷⁸⁸ "ez gâyet-i vedd ü ülfet ve nihâyet-i muhabbet u sadâkat"

⁷⁸⁹ "der rüsûh-ı esâs-ı adîmü'l-indirâs-ı mîsâk bezl-i himmet-i hürşid-iktibâs ve merzbânân-ı ân merz-u-bûm râ inzâr ve fermân-ı kazâ-rüsûm . . . fermâyend ke tecâvüz ez karâr-dâd-ı selâtin-i dâd-itiyâd-ı selef . . . câiz nedâşte"

⁷⁹⁰ see MHM.d. 106, ent. 1281; MHM.d. 108, ent. 392.

a move to temporarily keep this second rebellion in check until more resources could be directed to the east. Despite this, Shah Sultan-Hüseyin did not refer to the Bebe rebellion, which had otherwise become a bleeding wound for both states. While the affected territory and the necessary measures concerned both states, the political responsibility was billable to the Sublime Porte. By inserting just an additional line about border officials into the part emphasizing his assurance of the new padishah's unconditional support for the preservation of the current convergence, the Shah managed to draw attention to the ongoing Bebe transgressions without formally raising the complaint that the Padishah could not so far reestablish authority in Şehrizer.

This is a clear indication that the royal government would in no way let the Bebe rebellion harm relations, which were now faring better than ever. Having the empire step into action and settle the problem was the ultimate objective. That the ambassador would orally communicate more must have meant nothing other than his abovementioned mission objective concerning the Bebe issue: to convince the Sublime Porte to undertake a definitive campaign and issue official approval for a Safavid intervention. Though we are not informed of whether these negotiations were conducted only orally or whether writing down the clauses was also involved via exchanges of diplomatic notes.⁷⁹¹ The reference in the royal epistle to the existence – but not to the content – of this matter meant that it had to stay limited to the inter-audience diplomacy without making its way into the inter-monarch correspondence, as the latter consolidated the current accord over which nothing could take precedence. The Bedouin overthrow of Ottoman authority in Basra was not even implicitly referred to, which suggests that the Shah would have

⁷⁹¹ *tezkiye*

nothing to say on an internal affair of the padishah's directly governed domains, doubling the gesture of good will.

On 29 December 1696, Mustafa II told the Grand-Vizier: “as We have observed in illustrated books the polo game played in the clime of Ajam, seeing it exactly is my august will. It shall be asked to the emissary of Ajam, if he has men of expertise, he shall send them to my august presence.⁷⁹²” To the Grand-Vizier's message, the ambassador replied: “even though [men skilled enough to be] worthy of the sublime square and of acclaim are unavailable, [they] will be provided as well as possible.⁷⁹³” On 2 January 1697, the square facing the Hunt Gate⁷⁹⁴ by the banks of River Tunca was prepared as a playing ground. After the ambassador's thirty men arrived and stood at attention, Mustafa II, with an outfit and cortege emphasizing his distinction as victorious war veteran, rode out, saluted them, and seated himself on the throne under the erected canopy. First, the Padishah's Inner Court and the present pashas' households competed in javelin- and spear-games, marksmanship, and wrestling.⁷⁹⁵ The Iranian team(s) composed of the Kacar, Kengerlu, and Afşar Kızılbaş⁷⁹⁶ could not stage a satisfactory polo game but attributed this to the snow sitting on the square. After the games, four outstanding Iranian participants were awarded in gold and robes of honor. As the participants were once more standing in attention, Mustafa II rode out of the grounds.⁷⁹⁷ The chief of the Janissary Corps, the vice-grand-vizier, and

⁷⁹² “Acem diyârında oynanan çevgan oyunu musavver kitaplarda müşâhedemiz olup aynen görmek murâd-ı hümâyundur. Acem elçisinden sorulsun, adamlarından bilir var ise huzûr-ı hümâyunuma gönder. . .sin”

⁷⁹³ “Gerçi meydân-ı âliye lâyük ve tahsin edecek kadar bulunmaz ise dahi alâ-kadri'l-îmkân tedârik olunur”

⁷⁹⁴ *Şikar-kapısı*

⁷⁹⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 254-255. Refer to this source for a more exact description of Mustafa II's ceremony of arrival.

⁷⁹⁶ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 166.

⁷⁹⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 255.

Ebulmasum Şamlu himself later separately feasted the top two participants who had been awarded by Mustafa II.⁷⁹⁸

At the behest of the Grand-Vizier, various dignitaries hosted and entertained the ambassador during his stay in Adrianople with utmost hospitality and diligence, as he was deemed to be more “preeminent⁷⁹⁹” than other emissaries who had recently appeared at the imperial court. Among these events, apart from the Grand-Vizier’s entertaining the ambassador several times, the noteworthy ones include the night event held by vice-grand-vizier-at-Adrianople Moralı Hasan Pasha (organized by the state), the feast by chief of the Janissaries Delibaltazâde Mahmud Pasha, the ambassador’s counter-feast to the chief of the Janissaries with grand-vizierial approbation, and several feasts by the grand-mufti. As Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu, apart from his governorship and ambassadorship, was indeed a distinguished litterateur, his company pleased his hosts, especially the Grand-Vizier. Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed Efendi, in his register of protocols, noted that in comparison to previous missions from the shahs, none of the ambassadors were gratified and treated as such, and that the case of Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu set a new precedent and a higher standard for future Safavid ambassadors to be satisfied with their hosts.⁸⁰⁰

During this inter-audience period, Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu also submitted to the Ottoman State the matters referred to in passing in the royal epistle, which turned out to be the Shah’s asking for permission to “renovate⁸⁰¹” Imam Ali el-Hadi’s and Hasan el-Askeri’s “sarcophagi⁸⁰²,”

⁷⁹⁸ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 166. The Padishah’s reward to the two top players amounted to twenty *eşrefî* gold pieces.

⁷⁹⁹ “mümtâz”

⁸⁰⁰ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 110b, 114a-115a.

⁸⁰¹ “tecdîd”

⁸⁰² “sanduka”

in the shrines located in Sâmerâ.⁸⁰³ This shows how stable and firm the post-1686 Ottoman-Safavid accord was perceived to be, at least from Isfahan. If this request had been submitted in an atmosphere other than that of absolute assuredness of mutual good-intentions, the Ottomans could have sensed behind this initiative an attempt to make inroads into their legitimacy and sovereign rights. That no available information hints at the formation of such an unpalatable situation, it can be assumed that the request was rather the result of the newly achieved level in relations, i.e. alliance.

Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu's stay in Adrianople lasted two months and twenty-seven days, during which he was extraordinarily well attended. The farewell audience was held on 17 January 1697 in the Privy-Chamber Pavillion⁸⁰⁴ furnished with stately Audience Hall regalia. The participants, most notably the Grand-Vizier, entered the site in separate processions. Also the Empress-Mother watched the event. The Padishah's Inner Court entourage was dressed even more ceremoniously than was prescribed by their respective ranks, while the conventional ceremonies attached to such audiences were performed in an elaborate manner. After being admitted to the padishah's presence, seemingly "charmed and speechless"⁸⁰⁵ presumably in adherence to the oriental diplomatic etiquette of an emissary's paying homage to a host monarch superior in rank to the sender of the mission, the ambassador said prayers, and Mustafa II addressed him: "say my greetings to the felicitous Shah his majesty. The epistle and gift[s] he sent have arrived, and have been accepted by my August [Person]. You also shall prosper, for you have mediated [this] by way of emissaryship, and served well."⁸⁰⁶ Mustafa II handed over his imperial epistle to the present chief-eunuch, the chief-eunuch to the Grand-Vizier, and the

⁸⁰³ MHM. d. 111, ent. 1694.

⁸⁰⁴ *Hasoda Köşkü*

⁸⁰⁵ "gözleri kamaştı . . . nutku tutuldu"

⁸⁰⁶ "Saadetlü Şah hazretlerine benden selâm eyle. Gönderdiği nâme ve hediyesi gelip makbûl-i hümâyunum olmuştur. Sen dahi risâlet tarîkıyla ara yerde bulunup güzel hizmet ettiğinden berhudâr olasın"

Grand-Vizier to the ambassador.⁸⁰⁷ Following this, the session was dissolved and gifts were delivered. Special attention was paid to pleasing the ambassador via gifts of extraordinary value for this occasion.⁸⁰⁸

After the imperial farewell audience, that of the grand-vizierial marked the end of the embassy's activities at court. The Grand-Viziers' reply letters to the Shah and the Prime-Minister, signed and sealed as indicators that the conventional embassy's formal business was completed, were handed over to Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu at this session.⁸⁰⁹ As was the convention, a host-officer was appointed to accompany him during his return journey on Ottoman territory. Apart from the lavish gifts given from the Privy Treasury, the embassy's accommodation, subvention, and allowance costs amounted to a total of 130,750 thaler covered by the Central Treasury, which the contemporaries found too extravagant.⁸¹⁰ The breakdown of each expenditure item was entered to the Chief-Accounting Bureau registers kept at the Central Treasury.⁸¹¹ After the completion of diplomatic business, the last public appearance of the Safavid embassy in Adrianople was on 31 January 1697. On this day, on the Pole Square⁸¹² outside the Procession Pavillion⁸¹³, public games were held. In addition to the main attraction of a marksmanship contest between janissaries, various pasha-household soldiers, and privy guard, the Kızılbaş from the embassy once again played polo, though reportedly without distinguishing

⁸⁰⁷ See Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretname*, 255-257 and Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 115b-119b for an exact description of how the place of audience was furnished to impress and how the ceremonies attached to the audience were organized to boost the image of the empire in terms of its might. The second source provides the date of audience as 22 January 1697. According to Fındıklılı Silahdar Mehmed, Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu took over the imperial epistle from Mustafa II's own hands.

⁸⁰⁸ Râşid, *Târih*, 534; Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 167.

⁸⁰⁹ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, f. 120a.

⁸¹⁰ Before departure from Adrianople, the embassy was given a total of 25,000 thaler as allowance (15,000 to the person of the ambassador, 5,000 to his entourage, and another 5,000 to his [or the Shah's?] chief-equerry "serzendâr"). Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 605. Thus, the remaining 105,750 thaler was spent for billeting the embassy throughout its presence in Ottoman territory. Râşid, *Târih*, 534.

⁸¹¹ Teşrifâtîzâde Mehmed, *Defter-i Teşrifât*, ff. 121a-121b.

⁸¹² *Sırık Meydanı*

⁸¹³ *Alay Köşkü*

themselves.⁸¹⁴ The embassy departed from the imperial court on February 15⁸¹⁵.⁸¹⁶ The Porte prescribed it to return over Erzurum,⁸¹⁷ as a journey over Baghdad would necessitate the crossing of regions close to Süleyman Kirmac's sphere of influence, which posed danger. Receiving a subvention of almost the double amount of what the previous (Kelb-Ali Kacar) embassy had been allocated, it returned home by the way of Van.⁸¹⁸

Even a cursory comparison of the total cost of the Ebulmasum Şamlu conventional embassy to the Ottoman State with the former cases of the same kind reflects the current trend in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. This is understood by the fact that the state itself chose to make this extraordinary expenditure in the form of allowances. Despite the empire's inability to intervene with full force in frontier encroachments, the royal government had not questioned the Sublime Porte's continued commitment to the pacification, and instead cooperated with its ally in furthering it. With extravagant gifts, extraordinarily gratifying hosting, and lavish expenditure, the Ottomans both thanked the Safavids for their cooperativeness and at the same time displayed generosity in a manner that would befit an emperor, to whose primacy the shah's court paid unconditional homage.

⁸¹⁴ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 266.

⁸¹⁵ See C.HR. 6698, which is a breakdown of the state provisioning of the embassy during the first two months of its stay at court and the estimation made for the remaining 16 days until its planned departure, involving correspondence between the chief-accounting bureau (*başmuhasebe*) and the grand-vizierate.

⁸¹⁶ For the transactions involving grain and straw allocations and their transportation from state warehouses to the ambassador's residence, which involved correspondence between the barley-superintendent (*arpa emîni*), the deputy-comptroller, and the grand-vizier, see C.HR. 6821. For transactions involving the bread-makers' guild, the chief-comptroller, and the grand-vizier concerning the embassy's daily bread allocation while residing at court, see AE. SMST.II. 1550. For meat allocation, see the treasury-note (*tezkire*) involving the chief-butcher (*kasapbaşı*).

⁸¹⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 257

⁸¹⁸ See in CV. HR 6749 and İE. HR. 425 the decrees to and correspondence with magistrates on the road from Scutari to Van regarding the disbursement to the embassy, on behalf of the Central Treasury, a daily amount of 200 thaler as subvention, which in practice was found insufficient and increased to 241,66 thaler (29,000 non-debased aspers – *sağ akçe*). Compare this with the daily 125 thaler (20,000 debased aspers) which had been allocated as subvention to the Kelb-Ali Ziyâdoğlu-Kacar embassy. Indeed, the Ebulmasum Şamlu embassy had been receiving a daily subvention of 240 thaler since its entry to Ottoman territory and this was raised to 540 thaler as long as it resided at court. Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 165-166. Also see AE. SMST.II. 2753. See İE. HR. 479 for the bill dated 20 April 1698, issued by superintendent of the Palace Kitchen Hacı Mehmed Efendi for the daily amounts he spent on the Ebulmasum Şamlu embassy during its stay at court.

While the amounts spent as allowances and gifts demonstrate the mentioned policy on the Ottoman Empire's part, that the subvention received by this embassy was almost the double of what had been paid to the previous one gives a clue to the comparative sizes of personnel. This, on the other hand, sheds light on yet another trend in the Safavids' Ottoman policy. Because of the Basran upheaval, the Bebe rebellion, the promotion of the shah's rank, and the initiation of the *perpetual peace in alliance* in bilateral relations, this occasion must have been regarded by the Safavid court as more than just an accession, necessitating the dispatch of an embassy which would extraordinarily impress the receiver. As almost all Safavid missions to the Ottoman court since 1639 were embassies, a further promotion of the mission's rank was technically not possible. Thus, the desired effect was to be created by remarkably expanding its size, thus forming a grand embassy.

Once back at court, first the agent of the governor-general of Çukursa'd who had gathered intelligence in the Ottoman Empire under the disguise of an embassy member informed the Shah. After him, Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu concisely reported the course of the Great Turkish War in 1695 and 1696. Separate from and concurrently with the ambassador, the governor of Kirmanşah also submitted a report of the state of the Ottoman Empire in 1695 via the intelligence gathered by the spies he had sent out to the Imperial Army. In addition to relating the ineffective measures taken against the Bedouin in Iraq, the latter report also included information concerning the Hungarian front.⁸¹⁹

In general, by marginalizing the importance of the Ottoman resurgence of 1695-1696 against the Holy League under Mustafa II and exaggerating the consequences of the already-

⁸¹⁹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 163-164. Nasîrî, or the later copier, wrote down the events with a one to two year shift between the real dates and the date given in chapter titles. When using this chronicle as source, I reconstructed the chronology with the help of other literary and archival sources which are consistent and precise in both dating and sequence of events.

crucial Russian conquest of Azow (1696), these reports on the course of the Great Turkish War painted an even darker image than was already the reality. In any case, the intelligence-gathering activities by the Iranians in 1695-1697 demonstrate the utmost relevance of the state of affairs in the empire for this realm. The royal government did not deem simple updates via embassy activities sufficient. Surprisingly, even the manipulated reports did not initiate a revision of the Safavids' Ottoman policy. The policies that were based on the internalized conviction that the empire was essentially too strong for Iran to take on would be continued with increased intensity. This makes it very probable that the actual reports themselves were not manipulated at all, but the chronicler, from whom we learn about these reports, chose to write them down as such in order to please his patron, adhering to the conventions of his genre.

Following the spy reports, the time had come for the official correspondence. Mustafa II's reply epistle⁸²⁰ to Sultan-Hüseyin conveyed with Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu spoke of the all-out land and naval offensives against Ottoman domains by the Holy League. The Padishah attributed the protraction of the war and the empire's inability to oust all of its enemies to the overwhelming numbers of the allies' fielded troops. Then, he thoroughly related the victories won in 1695 and 1696 on the Hungarian front against Germany with the Imperial Army under his personal command. The contribution of Ebulmasum Şamlu's conventional embassy and Sultan-Hüseyin's epistle to the existing "alliance"⁸²¹ between the houses of Osman and Safi was emphasized, following which the Padishah expressed his wish that the state of relations see no harm and that neighborhood rights continue to be observed. For the second matter, the Padishah had strictly instructed his frontier officials, a precaution that he also expected of the Shah. The ambassador was praised for having performed his duties in the best way, and his discharge with

⁸²⁰ NMH.d. 5, ent. 100; *Münşeat Mecmuası*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, OH., A.F. 166 (425), ff. 9a-15b.

⁸²¹ "ittifak"

full honors was communicated. In titulature, the Ottoman chancery observed the existing arrangement of ranking the padishah as supreme-monarch/emperor and the shah as august-sultan/high-king.

The upheaval in Basra and the ongoing encroachments in Kurdistan by Süleyman Kirmac were mentioned by neither side in these letters. Nevertheless, Mustafa II, through reporting his victories in Hungary and mentioning his strict instructions to border officials, must have wanted to implicitly assure Sultan-Hüseyin that he was determined and capable to reinstate order. In other words, the chaos in Kurdistan and the Persian Gulf region that had been bringing harm to both sides was soon to be dealt with. Mustafa II must have been delighted to see that Sultan-Hüseyin had not even directly referred to these troubles that had caused major disturbances, hence, the positive tone dominating the reply epistle. Seeing that Iran did not attempt to take advantage of the unprecedented difficulties that the Ottoman Empire had to shoulder throughout the Great Turkish War, Mustafa II happily emphasized the recently introduced concept of alliance. This was no coincidence; the Safavids' observance of the integrity of the Ottoman borders despite receiving serious harm from attacks coming from Ottoman-vassal rebels with bases on Ottoman territory was something that was beyond what could be expected from a state which only had *non-hostile* or *friendly* relations with the empire. Rather, this was a passive *alliance*.

In addition to Mustafa II, Elmas Mehmed Pasha also handed over Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu his letter⁸²² addressed to Sultan-Hüseyin, keeping up with the convention of the grand-vizier's right to correspond with the Iranian monarch. Its composition was entrusted to Hâşim[î]zâde Mehmed Efendi. In terms of content, this letter does not divert substantially from the imperial

⁸²² NMH. d. 5, ent. 112; *Münşeat Mecmuası*, ff. 20b-25b; Râmi Mehmed, *Müneşat*, ff. 9a-11b (misdated).

epistle. After congratulating Sultan-Hüseyin's accession, Elmas Mehmed Pasha committed his side and expected from the other side the observance of the "conditions of the ancient pact and friendship which are fixed and stable therebetween . . . and the concord . . . of Both Sides."⁸²³ The underlying message was boosted with the description of Ebulmasum Şamlu's mission as the "statement of Their [i.e. Sultan-Hüseyin's] hereditary, God-given affection and special, congenital attachment."⁸²⁴ As a separate feature of this letter, the Grand-Vizier asked for Iran's moral support in the ongoing struggle against the Holy League. As far as the titulature is concerned, the composition conformed to the new accord. August-sultanic titles such as "world-keeping"⁸²⁵ and "Chosroes-like"⁸²⁶ were used at various instances for both monarchs. The Padishah, on the other hand, preserved his superiority via more explicit imperial styles such as "Earth-conqueror"⁸²⁷ and a rich set of other titles referring to his universal mandate as supreme-caliph.⁸²⁸

Thus, the Grand-Vizier's letter added emphasis to the concept of *ancient peace* which had already been established in the previous correspondences between monarchs. It is of critical importance that Elmas Mehmed Pasha had the composer highlight not only the ancient but also the hereditary character of this peace. Since 1686, this peace had no longer been bound to re-negotiation each time a succession in one of the states took place. It is true that each Ottoman accession still triggered a reconfirmation process, yet explicit references marked the peace between the houses of Osman and Safi as ancient and hereditary. According to the new accord,

⁸²³ "mâbeynde sâbit ü ber-karâr olan şerâit-i misâk u müvâlât-ı kadîme . . . yek-cihetî. . .-yi tarafeyn"

⁸²⁴ "muhabbet-i mevrûse-i hüdâ-dâdî ve meveddet-i mahsûse-i mâder-zâdîlerin ızhâr"

⁸²⁵ "cihân-bânî"

⁸²⁶ "hüsrevânî / hüsrevâne"

⁸²⁷ "gîfî-sitân"

⁸²⁸ Note the title "his sublime majesty (âlî-hazret)" in the shah's *inscriptio*.

reconfirmations, which had involved serious renegotiation until 1686, were now being made just as a matter of form.

In late 1696, the rebel chieftain Mâni es-Sa'dûn's brother and lieutenant Cafer assembled the Bedouins that supported their movement, which coincidentally concurred with the Ebulmasum Şamlu embassy. After having brought the entire province of Basra under his control, Mâni es-Sa'dûn wanted to further expand his zone of control, this time into Iran, and ended his coalition with the viceroy of Huveyze. A group of around 5,000 under the command of Seyyid Mahmud (Seyyid Ferecullah's nephew) from the Mushasha tribe, the Safavid vassals ruling over Huveyze, had already joined the Müntefik's movement prior to Mâni's taking of Basra. Crossing the Iranian border, the army led by Cafer es-Sa'dûn attacked Huveyze, but suffered a heavy defeat. Having lost considerable prestige, the Bedouin coalition began to gradually lose its support base. Seeing Mâni es-Sa'dûn lose power, the inhabitants of Basra and the province's notables forwarded a collective-petition to Baghdad asking for the nominated governor-general (Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha)'s installment.⁸²⁹

Beyzâde Ali Pasha, however, did not find the incoming news reliable. To inquire into the situation, he sent the chief of the Baghdad Local janissaries, Derviş Agha, formally as emissary to Seyyid Ferecullah Xan, but Derviş Agha secretly undertook intelligence-gathering activities in Huveyze, which was his real commission. When back in Baghdad, he reported that the Basran inhabitants had invited Beyzâde Ali Pasha to send a delegation to take over the control of Kurna, which would remove any potential doubts as to the accuracy of the news. The 300-strong contingent of Basran Locals, whom Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha had recruited from Huveyze (Iranian territory) and sent out in accordance with Derviş Agha's intelligence report, soon arrived in

⁸²⁹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 144; Râşid, *Târih*, 549; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 628-629; Matthee, "Basra," 74.

Kurna under the command of Rûmî Abdi Agha. There, the chieftain of the Sabihoğlu Bedouin welcomed this contingent, and then together with his followers, ousted Mâni's Müntefik forces. In doing so, he handed over the fortress to the contingent representing Ottoman authority.⁸³⁰

The news of Kurna's recovery reached Baghdad the next day via carrier pigeons. Thirteen days later, notables and the Rufâiye chieftains residing in Basra forwarded letters to Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha, inviting him to march at the head of a 1,000-strong contingent and enter the provincial capital. Long deprived of his province and the revenues attached to it, Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha lacked the financial resources to raise such a force, and surprisingly enough, Beyzâde Ali Pasha displayed disinterest and refrained from financing the enterprise. This meant that after the effortless recovery of Kurna, the governor-general of Baghdad relinquished the opportunity to reinstate imperial authority in the city of Basra without fighting a battle. Monitoring the inactivity despite the circumstances that were favorable for an Ottoman intervention, viceroy of Huveyze Seyyid Ferecullah Xan sent an emissary to Baghdad and made Beyzâde Ali Pasha an unprecedented offer: "let us [i.e. Huveyzens] seize Basra for You in accordance with [our] friendship."⁸³¹ Even more surprisingly, Beyzâde Ali Pasha, despite not having mobilized Baghdad's resources to seize the opportunity of recovering the city of Basra, apparently sent papers to Seyyid Ferecullah in approval of this novel offer.⁸³²

In the meantime, the involvement of Ottoman- and Safavid-vassal elements in encroachments on both sides of the border at the Persian Gulf region peaked. Seyyid Ferecullah Xan's son Seyyid Abdullah captured the fortresses of Süveyb and Kurna, ousting the Ottoman Local contingent. Instead of fleeing, the Ottoman chief of the Locals at Kurna, Rûmî Abdi Agha,

⁸³⁰ Râşid, *Târih*, 549; Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 145. A comparison of these two sources reveals that Seyyid Ferecullah presented this development to the government as his own feat of taking of Kurna, rather than as an action taken by Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha's Basran Locals.

⁸³¹ "dostluğa binâen sizin için Basra'yı zabtediverelim"

⁸³² Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 628; Râşid, *Târih*, 549.

took refuge at the Huveyzan Mushasha camp. Soon, the viceroy presented his capture of Kurna to the Safavid court as operations undertaken against Mâni es-Sa'dûn. Supposing that the viceroy had expelled Müntefik confederates from two major fortresses, thus contributing to the peace with the Ottomans by helping them against rebels, Sultan-Hüseyin even praised Seyyid Ferecullah. Rûmî Abdi Agha was no less influential in presenting the course of events as such; he officially appealed Seyyid Ferecullah for military aid against Mâni es-Sadûn. Manipulating his suzerain's praise, which was based on false information, Seyyid Ferecullah raised a large army and fielded it on the empire's territory. First, he intercepted Mâni es-Sa'dûn's supply lines along Shatt-el-Arab. Fearing annihilation, Mâni shut himself to the fortress of Basra and began preparations to stand against a siege. But Seyyid Ferecullah's army proved too strong for the Müntefik chieftain, who since the previous year had lost most of his confederates and was now defending the fortress of Basra with only several hundred men of his. Once the general assault began, Mâni fled and Seyyid Ferecullah entered the city on 26 March 1697.⁸³³

Thus, the Ottoman governor-general of Baghdad had refused to take initiative in a relatively effortless recovery of Basra. As a result, and seemingly without protest from him, the Iranian viceroy of Huvezye was now in full control of this Ottoman province which had been in rebel hands throughout the last several years. More interestingly, the Huveyzen takeover of Basra took place without orders from the Safavid court in this direction. During the post-1639 process, Ottoman and Safavid subjects had come across each other several times, but in each case, one group had rebelled against its sovereign/suzerain. In this respect, one could not speak

⁸³³ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 145-150; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 628; Râşid, *Târih*, 549; *Chronicle of Events*, 413; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 496-497; Muhammad Ali Rencber, *Muşaşaiyân. Mâhiyet-i Fikrî-İctimâî ve Ferâyend-i Tahavvülât-ı Târihî* (Tehran: Müessesese-i İntişârât-ı Âgâh, 2nd ed. hs.1387), 330-331. Some of the information found in Nasîrî's *Destûr-i Şehriyârân* is contradictory with the rest of the sources. What I report here is the result of a comparative weeding and filtering. The same chronicle also reports events after 1696 mistakenly as belonging to the previous year(s).

of an Ottoman-Safavid confrontation. Yet, as long as Seyyid Ferecullah Xan was in Basra and not openly disobeying his suzerain, as the viceroy had misinformed the Shah, it could be assumed that Iran was now in indirect, yet de facto control of an Ottoman province. At a time when bilateral relations were experiencing a golden age, this development had remarkably taken place without a confrontation or planning in advance.

Soon, Mâni es-Sa'dûn raised a contingent from his former Bedouin allies – with promises of share in government – and besieged Basra. However, Seyyid Ferecullah Xan's 7,200-strong garrison supported by governor of Devrak İbrâhim Xan successfully repelled the assault. On the eve of definitive failure, a rebel supporter from within the fortress informed Mâni of a weak point by the southern walls. Mâni ordered a feigned siege: concentrating the enemy's attention to another spot, he entered the city from this gap. Yet, Seyyid Ferecullah's garrison responded swiftly and expelled the intruders. In order to touch on the raw in retaliation, Mâni regrouped his Bedouin supporters and besieged the fortress of Huveyze, the very heart of the campaigning Mushasha. When Seyyid Ferecullah sent a relief force under the command of his son, Seyyid Abdullah, Mâni quickly returned and seized the fortress of Süveyb at Basra. İbrâhim Xan repelled Mâni's next assault, directed at Kurna.⁸³⁴ Probably as news arrived from Iraq, the Ottoman court sent out a series of decrees to make sure that at least the province of Baghdad, the primary center of concentration of state authority in Iraq, remain safe and stable.⁸³⁵ By 1697, the

⁸³⁴ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 179-180.

⁸³⁵ see in MHM.d. 110, ent. 699-700 the decrees issued in early November 1697 to the governors of Mosul and Şehrîzor to be on the watch for Baghdad's security and respond to any calls from Beyzâde Ali Pasha; MHM.d. 110, ent. 693 - the decree issued in early November 1697 to a chieftain to perform military duty for Baghdad's security. MHM.d. 110, ent. 741 – the decree, issued in late November 1697, communicating Beyzâde Ali Pasha that his services in Baghdad were praiseworthy and that a robe of honor (of sable fur) was dispatched with Yusuf [Agha], a gatekeeper-captain. The governor-general had full authority in taking decisions regarding his duty of keeping the province of Baghdad secure. MHM.d.110 ent. 782-794 – decrees in the same direction to various seigneurs. MHM.d.110 ent. 1257 – decree to Beyzâde Ali Pasha issued in early February 1698, requesting updates regarding whether the assigned military forces, dispatched provisions, and the governmental commissary, Maraşlı Ahmed (a gatekeeper-captain), arrived.

Gulf insurrection had reach its climax: Safavid-vassals, by way of misinforming Isfahan, were in control of an Ottoman province, while Ottoman-vassals who had rebelled against the padishah besieged the capital of the shah's tributary.

Simultaneously on the Hungarian front, in Mustafa II's third campaign (1697), the German army led by Prince Eugene of Savoy routed the Ottomans. The Grand-Vizier was killed in a tumult when trying to stop his own fleeing troops. Thus, the Ottomans' plan to reconquer the lost Hungarian provinces failed. Nevertheless, control in the Balkans and southeastern Hungary remained intact, and until 1698, contingents in the north conducted by state generals and Khan Selim I Giray of the Crimea successfully held against Polish offensives, even reacting with effective counter-raids. However, the Venetians managed to breach the borders in Dalmatia/Bosnia and preoccupy the Imperial Navy with sea battles and sieges, while continuing to hold the Peloponnese, from where it fought with the empire over the control of central Greece. After defeating the attacking Russian army in 1695 and resisting it again in 1696, provincial and Crimean contingents, also fighting against Poland-Lithuania, this time failed to prevent the fall of the fortress of Azow to the Muscovites in 1697, which was the first serious, permanent loss in the extended Russian front.⁸³⁶ The news of Basra's capture by the Huveyzans reached the imperial court in September/October 1697 at Belgrade, when Mustafa II was there on his way from Hungary to Adrianople.⁸³⁷

With each new development concerning the Gulf insurrection, Seyyid Ferecullah Xan lost no time in reporting to the royal government what had come to pass, most probably continuing to manipulate the reality. Praised and rewarded, he was left in charge of the affairs in Basra. However, it should be noted that his presence in the padishah's territory as a Safavid

⁸³⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 563-583.

⁸³⁷ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 626-629.

agent was officialized not before but after his capturing Basra and subsequently submitting what had come to pass to the royal court.⁸³⁸ Sultan-Hüseyin's immediate move after finding Basra under Huveyzan control shows that the Safavids had no intention of keeping it for themselves. They did not want a confrontation with the Ottomans even for the sake of a complete province. Thus, the Shah lost no time in offering it back to the padishah. In observance of the "peace, friendship, and alliance,⁸³⁹" and apprehensive that the recent events might be retold to the Sublime Porte via third parties with a negative, manipulated narrative,⁸⁴⁰ Sultan-Hüseyin's consultation with his ministers brought forth the decision of offering Basra back to the padishah with the maxim "this is the ultimate [expression of] friendship to the House of Osman."⁸⁴¹ Additionally, a 45-carat diamond symbolizing Basra's keys and what the Ottoman court named an "epistle-of-servitude"⁸⁴² were dispatched to Mustafa II via extraordinary ambassador Rüstem Xan Zengene.⁸⁴³ Expanding the Safavid domains with a *fait accompli* by seizing the opportunity to appropriate Basra, which had fallen on his lap, could lead to a war with the empire. The Shah must have judged he could not triumph in such a face-off. Instead, he chose to consolidate the newly reached accord with his utmost gesture of good will. Indeed, the maxim above leaves no need for the situation to be further described.

After entering Ottoman territory, Rüstem Xan Zengene dispatched to the Grand-Vizier the letter-of-introduction announcing his mission, notifying his rank, and presenting his credentials, as was the convention. In this case, the ambassador wrote to the imperial court after arriving in Tokat. Upon receipt, the Grand-Vizier replied back with the letter-of-welcome

⁸³⁸ *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 496-497; Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 150, 180.

⁸³⁹ "sulh . . . dûstî . . . ittîfak"

⁸⁴⁰ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 213; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 496-497.

⁸⁴¹ "Osmanlı'ya bundan özge dostluk olmaz"

⁸⁴² "ubûdiyet-name"

⁸⁴³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretname*, 368; also see Râşid, *Târih*, 554.

officially recognizing the ambassador. Şeyhî Mehmed Agha, superintendent of the Imperial Council bailiffs, was appointed host-officer.⁸⁴⁴ The extraordinarily high rank of the host-officer, who normally would be a bailiff, or at most a gatekeeper-captain, indicated the importance the Ottomans attributed to this extraordinary embassy.

The ambassador reached Constantinople on 5 March 1698, where bailiffs welcomed him. He was given accommodations at Fazlıpaşa Palace and the superintendent of the bailiffs continued to serve as host-officer during his stop at the capital. On March 15, the embassy set out for Adrianople with an escort of twelve bailiffs,⁸⁴⁵ and reached its destination on March 23. Officially welcomed in Adrianople with a procession headed by marshal of the Imperial Council [Gedikli] Mustafa Agha and the chiefs of the Sublime Court Cavalry, Rüstem Xan Zengene was lodged at Defterdarahmedpaşa Palace. He first met grand-vizier Köprülü Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha and then grand-mufti Seyyid Feyzullah Efendi, in both occasions to discuss official business and to present gifts. On March 29, Mustafa II sent him confectionaries, auguring the positive mood of the upcoming negotiations. The welcome audience took place on April 20 in the Audience Hall following the Triumphal Council. There, the ambassador delivered to the Padishah the 45-carat diamond symbolizing the keys of Basra, the royal epistle accompanying it, and the gifts. Uncustomarily for the imperial audience, he orally conveyed Sultan-Hüseyin's complaints about Süleyman of Bebe and again the shah's request of Süleyman Bebe's extermination, in reply to which Mustafa II commanded: "it shall be discussed with my

⁸⁴⁴ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 136a-136b.

⁸⁴⁵ İE. HR. 522. All dates are calculated or estimated, and all names are taken from this internal correspondence series for each separate expense item accrued during the embassy's stop in Constantinople and travel from there to Adrianople, such as: a mandate to deputy-comptroller Hacı Hüseyin Agha on 18 February to attend to the preparations for the expected arrival of the embassy, a breakdown petition and reimbursement mandate of expenses during accommodation at Fazlıpaşa Palace, a petition of reimbursement from and affirmative mandate to the bread-makers at Tavukpazarı, a breakdown of provisioned items during the trip from Constantinople to Adrianople, a reimbursement of the expenses made by horse and beasts-of-burder suppliers, travel-allowance allocations to the bailiffs escorting the embassy from the capital to the court, etc.

ministers; whatever its [i.e. the situations's] remedy is, shall be seen to.⁸⁴⁶ The audience ended with the customary investment of robes of honor.⁸⁴⁷

In the accompanying epistle⁸⁴⁸ to the “Caesar⁸⁴⁹ . . . Supreme-Shah⁸⁵⁰ . . . Supreme-Khan⁸⁵¹ . . . Sultan of the Sultans of the world⁸⁵² . . . Khakan of the Khakans of the age,⁸⁵³” the Shah wrote:

As the contract of the penetrating mind of fairness-foundation is always conforming to the precious tradition of our heaven-bedded fathers and forefathers in consolidating the steady structure of fidelity, union, and friendship with the friends of that affection-accustomed monarch [i.e. padishah] and hostility with the foes of that [i.e. Ottoman] Dynasty of equity and justice, the commission by the paradise-residing monarch, conqueror of domains, . . . Süleyman [II], . . . that he had requested the paradise-abiding khakan, . . . my Shah-Father [i.e. Shah Süleyman] . . . that the borders be guarded and the provinces adjoining the Protected Domains [of Iran] be in entrustment during [Süleyman II's] preoccupation with the holy war against the unbelievers, has been taken into account . . . and supreme diligence . . . is devoted to it.⁸⁵⁴

. . . This Indigent of the Celestial Court [i.e. Sultan-Hüseyin], since the day that the accession to the potentately and shahly throne [had] happened with the grace of the Unfading Realm-Bestower [i.e. God], has strived to consolidate more than ever the predecessor, heaven-abiding monarchs' pedestals of peace and righteousness, which have remained preserved and immune from the gaze of corruption of the passing of ages . . . In this three to four years, during which that seditionist [i.e. Mâni es-Sa'dûn] repeatedly sent petitions of trickery with his ill-starred son to the Justice-Nourishing [Safavid] Court stating the commitment that he hands over the province of Basra and [performs] other services, . . . [these solicitations] have not been taken into consideration by the grace-spreading eye [i.e. Sultan-Hüseyin].⁸⁵⁵

⁸⁴⁶ “vükelâm ile söyleşilsin, ilacı ne ise görülsün”

⁸⁴⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 368; also see Râşid, *Târih*, 554.

⁸⁴⁸ NMH.d. 5, ent. 120; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebâ 1105-1135*, 127-130.

⁸⁴⁹ *kayserî*

⁸⁵⁰ *şehinşah*

⁸⁵¹ *kağan*

⁸⁵² *sultânu 's-selâtîn-i cihân*

⁸⁵³ *hâkânü 'l-hâvâkîn-i zamân*

⁸⁵⁴ “Çûn hemvâre karâr-dâd-ı hâtır-ı hafır-i hakkâniyet-bünyâd ıktifâ be-sünnet-i seniyye-i ebâ ve ecdâd-ı cennet-mihâd der teşyid-i binâ-yı dîr-pâ-yı sadâkat u ittihâd ve düstî bâ düstân-ı ân pâdişâh-ı muhabbet-mutâd ve muadat bâ a'dâ-yı ân hânedân-ı adl u dâd est, sıfârîş-i sultân-ı firdevs-nişîn-i memâlik-sitân . . . Süleymân . . . râ ki der heyn-i iştigâl be-gazâ-yı küffâr hâhiş-i hıfz-ı sugûr ve emânet-dârî-yi vilâyât-ı muttasîle be-memâlik-i mahrûse ez nevvâb-ı hâkân-ı tûbâ-âşiyân . . . Şâh Babam . . . nümûde bûdend manzûr-ı nazar-ı itibâr dâste eâli-i himmet . . . be-dân maksûr est . . .”

⁸⁵⁵ “În niyâzmend-i dergâh-ı ilâhî ez rûzî ki be-inâyet-i mülk-bahş-ı lâ-yezâl cülûs ber evreng-i şehriyârî ve şâhî rûy dâde bîşter ez pîşter istihkâm-ı kavâid-i sulh u salâh-ı selâtîn-i cennet-âşiyân-ı selef ki be-mürûr-ı dühûr u kurûn ez nazar-ı halel mahfûz u masûn mânde kûşide . . . Der ân se çehâr sâl ki mükerrer ez ân fitne-engîz arâiz-i hîle-âmîz

. . . Now, this Friend who is faithful to the concord [i.e. Sultan-Hüseyin], by virtue of the world of unity and alliance, deemed it necessary to make manifest to the presence of the bounty-aided knowledge [i.e. Mustafa II] each truth about what have come to pass, as it is . . . This plan [i.e. Seyyid Ferecullah's capturing Basra from Mâni es-Sa'dûn] was not executed by way of taking possessions in the domains belonging to that most-sublime majesty [Mustafa II] . . . The mentioned country [i.e. the province of Basra] belongs, as in the past, to the attendants and officials of that high-posed overlord [i.e. Mustafa II]. With regards to restituting [to its owner] what is under the control of the viceroy of Arabistan [i.e. Huveyze] by way of entrustment, it has been prescribed to him [i.e. Seyyid Ferecullah] that he acts in whatever way required by [Mustafa II's] decree of destiny-power.⁸⁵⁶

By way of this epistle, Sultan-Hüseyin also kindly asked that a definitive decree be issued to Ottoman officials in Iraq to deal with the Bebe rebellion. Additionally, “further friendly words⁸⁵⁷” would be submitted orally by the ambassador.

The royal epistle was in line with the general policy the royal government had been adhering to since 1639 and with the revisions introduced since 1686. First and foremost, it gives an explicit definition of the *consolidated* and *perpetual peace* reigning between the houses of Osman and Safi. In recognition of this, Sultan-Hüseyin had no choice but to designate Iranian presence in Basra as entrustment; the province was standing by for the padishah to take over. Looking at the chronology and calendar of the latest developments, it can be safely said that Sultan-Hüseyin had not entertained another thought about the province since he had happened to find it under his indirect control via a vassal of his. In an alternative setup, the Safavid court could have well argued that because Mâni es-Sa'dûn had already overthrown Ottoman rule in Basra and that Seyyid Ferecullah had taken the province from rebels and not from the empire, the Shah, as the viceroy's suzerain, could have a claim for legitimately expanding his domains.

müş'ir ber taahhüdât-ı teslîm-i vilâyet-i Basra ve hidemât-ı dîger bâ veled-i bed-ahter-i hud be-derbâr-ı adl-perver firistâd, . . . melhûz-ı ayn-ı inâyet-güster negerdîd . . .

⁸⁵⁶ “Eknûn, in dûst-i sâdikü'l-vifâk ez âlem-i yegânegî ve ittifâk lâzım dânest ki ber pişgâh-ı hâtır-ı feyz-müzâhir her hakikat-ı vâkıf-i mukaddime . . . râ hasbü'l-vâkı zâhir sâhte . . . encâm-ı in meram ne ez râh-ı tasarruf der memâlik-i müteallike be-ân a'la-cenâb . . . bûde . . . ülke-i mezbûr kemâkân nisbet be mülâzımân u kâr-künân-ı ân hıdîv-i bülend-mekân dâred. Der bâb-ı sipurden-i ân ki ber sebîl-i emânet der zabt-ı vâlf-yi Arabistân est be-müşârun ileyh mukarrer şüde ki her nahv ki be-muktezâ-yı fermân-ı kadr-tüvân bâşed be-amel âvered

⁸⁵⁷ “ba'z-ı suhenân-ı dûstâne”

The nature of the Ottoman-Safavid interaction from 1639 to 1686, defined respectively by *non-hostile* and *friendly* relations, would probably not have prescribed restitution. In that setup, Iran could well have justified a potential retention of Basra.

The first inhibitory principle, which ruled out this possibility, was that Basra, once *tributary-dominion*, had been converted first to *autonomous-fiefdom* and finally to regular province. Based on this, the Padishah could justifiably assert that he did not seek to reinstitute a lost suzerainty, which would be a weak argument, but rather to reclaim his own possession. Secondly, the recent convergence in Ottoman-Safavid relations left no room for the possibility of non-restitution, unless the Safavids ventured a war. In proof of its commitment to the maxims of the post-1686 accord, the move by the Safavid court to reconstitute Basra to the Ottomans so-to-say had crowned its previous unbending rejections of offers by the Holy League and the dedicated cooperation with the Ottomans throughout the Bebe rebellion. And, with the first official Safavid reference to alliance, which the Ottoman official correspondence had begun to feature as of late 1694, the initiation of this new level in the current convergence was sealed. Thus, in word and deed, it was once again proved that after 1686, Ottoman-Safavid relations had left behind the levels of peace and friendliness, and rose first to that of *brotherhood* and then to *perpetual peace in alliance*.

While Rüstem Xan Zengene was still traveling towards the Ottoman court, the parties to the Great Turkish War had agreed in early 1698 to initiate peace talks after sixteen years of full-scale warfare. When Mustafa II accepted the Grand-Vizier's inculcations for peace, the urgent need for dealing with the Gulf insurrection played a role among the secondary set of

justifications.⁸⁵⁸ When the Safavid ambassador was in Adrianople, the definitive negotiations for peace with the Holy League were about to begin.

Notwithstanding the Shah's gesture of friendship, the Ottoman State blamed Beyzâde Ali Pasha and Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha for having to owe a debt of gratitude to the Safavids by having to formally receive Basra from them. Displeased with the current running of affairs in Iraq,⁸⁵⁹ Mustafa II conferred the province of Baghdad to Çelebi Hacı İsmâil Pasha with an imperial-writ in mid-April 1698. This occurred in concert with repeated mobilization orders sent out to Diyarbekir, Şehrîzor, Mosul, Rakka, and Van. The objective was to completely expell the rebels and reinstate order in the affected parts. The new governor-general was also briefed about the latest formal status of Basra and the state of affairs in Kurdistan, as these had been notified by Rüstem Xan Zengene. The nominated governor-general of Basra, Kethüdâ Hasan Pasha, was reconfirmed in office. As much as 1,000 Janissaries in seven companies were assigned to Basra as the post-recovery Sublime Court garrison.⁸⁶⁰ As the ambassador was still in Adrianople when preparations for the Padishah's reply epistle were still in progress as of April 30,⁸⁶¹ these moves must have been planned to give the Safavids the impression that the empire was actually taking the necessary measures.

The Ottomans rejoiced over the Shah's gesture of extraordinary good will, which meant that Basra was ready for takeover. The Sublime Porte knew well that Sultan-Hüseyin's offering Basra was not just a simple move that could be taken for granted. Iran's capability to retain Basra aside, the Shah might also not so willingly have renounced his claims from a province that his

⁸⁵⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 3/1, 588-589.

⁸⁵⁹ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 638; Râşid, *Târih*, 555.

⁸⁶⁰ MHM.d. 110, ent. 1570-1590, 1599-1601, 1607-1609, 1620; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 371.

⁸⁶¹ İE. HR. 426, the expenditure petition for, and the affirmative mandate to, purchasing and crafting the silver-thread (white and yellow), satin, purse, and the mounting of the imperial epistle. The total cost for these items was 129 thaler and 3 *para*.

vassal had captured from a usurper. Thus, the Ottomans deemed it suitable “to recompense and respond with the courtesy and comity worthy of the glory of the Sublime State in accordance with such pureness and candor displayed to the side of the Sublime State by the Shah of Ajam.^{862,863}

This appreciation soon translated into action. In compliance with Mustafa II’s orders that ministers convene to discuss Sultan-Hüseyin’s complaints regarding the Bebe issue, a consultative session convened at the grand-vizirial residence following April 20 and dissolved with the following resolutions: firstly, Süleyman Kirmac was to be exterminated and a new seigneur was to be appointed in his place. Secondly, an army was to be assembled under the marshalship of Çelebi İsmâil Pasha to enforce these decisions. Thirdly, cleansed of opposition, Iraqi provinces were to be re-organized. Fourthly, instead of conveying the replies to the Safavids with Rüstem Xan Zengene, an extraordinary embassy was to be sent, for which Ebukavuk Yeğen Hacı Mehmed Bey-Efendi⁸⁶⁴, former state-secretary and current superintendent of the Imperial Registry⁸⁶⁵, was created ambassador as pasha with the temporary grade of governor of Rumelia. Submitted to the imperial court, these decisions were enacted⁸⁶⁶ as decrees on 1 May 1698 at the latest.⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶² “<şâh-ı Acem’den cânib-i Devlet-i Aliyye’ye bu güne temahhuz ve ihlâs zuhûra geldiğine binâen şân-ı Devlet-i Aliyye’ye lâyük olan mülâtafet ü mücâmele ile mükâfât ve mukâbele olunmaktadır>”

⁸⁶³ Râşid, *Târih*, 555.

⁸⁶⁴ Rising in the ranks of chancellery service (*kalemiye*), he respectively became grand-vizierial chancellor (1684) under his uncle Kara İbrâhim Pasha, and then state-secretary (1685). After a period of falling out of favor, he became chief-treasury-chancellor (1689) and then subgovernor of Rethymo (1692). He was the superintendent of the imperial registry at the time of being appointed ambassador. Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill-i Osmânî* vol. 4, 1077-1078 [entry: “Mehmed Paşa (Yeğen) (Ebu Kavuk)"]; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 1023; Ahmed Resmî, *Hadîkatü’r-Rüesâ*, ff. 29b-31a.

⁸⁶⁵ *defter emîni*

⁸⁶⁶ See Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 370-371 also for the list of the provincial dignitaries who received mobilization orders for this campaign.

⁸⁶⁷ AE. SMST.II. 1866 – the petition by the fifteen Imperial Council bailiffs who were to escort the Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy until the Iranian border, to-be-allocated travel-expenses, and its approval by the grand-vizierate on 2 May 1698 with referral to the financial departments. See also AE. SMST.II. 4570. AE. SMST.II. 1867, 4609 –

Apart from the official mission, it is understood that Rüstem Zengene brought also letters and gifts from former ambassador Ebulmasum Şamlu, now governor-general of Azerbaijan. One addressee was the Grand-Vizier, and the other one apparently the state-secretary, Râmi Mehmed Efendi. As it seems, both dignitaries replied to Ebulmasum Şamlu's letters and gifts with the outgoing Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy. Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha, who probably had not met Ebulmasum Şamlu during the latter's embassy but had received gifts and a letter as courtesy, named the exchange an "ancient tradition"⁸⁶⁸. In conformity with the relevance of his office rather than his personal relations in this correspondence, he emphasized the "hereditary and traditional"⁸⁶⁹ character of the "ancient friendship and the continuous amity."⁸⁷⁰ Apart from the receipt of the dispatch, the successful completion of the Rüstem Zengene embassy and its return journey in company of Ottoman ambassador Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha sent to consolidate the "concord, union, and alliance"⁸⁷¹ and facilitate cooperation against the rebels also found themselves a place in the reply letter of courtesy.⁸⁷² State-secretary Rami Mehmed Efendi's reply letter was more intimate and less formal than the Grand-Vizier's, lacking the references to interstate relations and instead focusing on the personal friendship between the correspondents, which must have developed during Ebulmasum Şamlu's ambassadorship at Adrianople.⁸⁷³

decrees issued on 9 May 1698 to provincial magistrates for the providing of treasury subventions to the embassy from Adrianople until the Iranian border.

⁸⁶⁸ "deydene-i kadîme"

⁸⁶⁹ "mütevâris ve mu'an'an"

⁸⁷⁰ "müvâlât-ı kadîme . . . ve musâfât-ı . . . müstedîme"

⁸⁷¹ "vifâk, ittihad, . . . ittifak"

⁸⁷² Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 21b-22a. The Grand-Vizier's gift to the governor-general of Tabriz was a jewelled clock.

⁸⁷³ *Münşeat 1050-1140*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, OA, Hs. or. oct. 893 (part II), ff.149b-151a; *Râmi Mehmed, Münşeat*, ff. 22b-23a. Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu's gift of one sealed bottle of perfume to Râmi Mehmed Efendi had been brought along with the letter by a certain Ebulhasan Agha.

Without delay, Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha's household and ceremonial equipment was accordingly set up with state resources,⁸⁷⁴ and regalia lent out from the [Privy] Treasury,⁸⁷⁵ probably from its emissarial-treasury⁸⁷⁶ department, where items set aside specifically for the purpose of equipping ambassadors and envoys were kept.⁸⁷⁷ The farewell audience was held on 26 May 1698 in the Imperial Marquee furnished with Throne-Tent⁸⁷⁸ and Audience Hall regalia, as the Padishah was then formally on campaign. The Grand-Vizier presented Rüstem Xan Zengene to Mustafa II and prescribed the two ambassadors to travel together via Erzurum. Mustafa II said: "say greetings to Our friend the Shah. The more he displays fidelity, a thousand times [of it] shall he consider from Us [Our fidelity], and also you have served well, may you prosper!"⁸⁷⁹ Having received a 25,000-thaler travel-allowance/largesse,⁸⁸⁰ Rüstem Xan Zengene set out for Iran on June 2.⁸⁸¹ Senior⁸⁸² bailiff Hacı Seyfi was attached to the returning embassy as host-officer.⁸⁸³ Entrusted with the reply correspondence and gifts on May 30 during a separate audience in the Throne-Tent⁸⁸⁴, Ebukavuk Mehmed followed Rüstem Zengene after June 3⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁷⁴ Râşid, *Târih*, 555.

⁸⁷⁵ *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 132. The ambassador's regalia consisted of a bejewelled sword, dagger, and quiver. The chronicler notes that the ambassador's household lacked a military-band. Again, the chronicler confuses the Safavid ambassador present in Adrianople, Rüstem Xan Zengene, with the previous one, Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu.

⁸⁷⁶ *elçi hazînesi*

⁸⁷⁷ Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri*, 24-25.

⁸⁷⁸ *Başçadır*. Separate from the Imperial Marquee and the Grand-Vizier's marquee, the *başçadır* was where the Imperial Council, war councils, and state audiences were held when the padishah was personally leading a campaign or when the grand-vizier was representing his monarch as commander-in-chief possessing unrestricted padishahly powers.

⁸⁷⁹ "Şah Dostumuza selâm eyle. Dostluğunda ne denli ızhâr-ı sadâkat eder ise bizden bin kat ziyâde bilsin ve sen dahi güzel hizmet eyledin, berhudâr ol"

⁸⁸⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 371; *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 133. See both sources also for the setup of the farewell audience.

⁸⁸¹ CV. HR. 4506 – the judicial-deed issued by Ahmed Efendi, judge of Adrianople, on 2 June 1698 to vouch for the payment of amounts due by the state straw superintendent, Seyyid Osman Agha, to the porters who had supplied straw to Rüstem Xan Zengene, whose seventy-day residence had come to an end. See in İE. HR. 440 the bill issued on 24 February 1699 concerning the subsidies and other costs the Central Treasury covered for the returning Rüstem Zengene embassy from Scutari until the Iranian border. Also see İE. HR. 532, 555, 628, and 683 for other Central Treasury expenditures made during the Rüstem Zengene embassy's stay at court and travel within the empire.

⁸⁸² *gedikli*

⁸⁸³ MHM.d. 110, ent. 1916, 1932.

⁸⁸⁴ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 637; MHM.d. 110, ent. 1917.

with his 400-men embassy.⁸⁸⁶ A comparison between the daily subsidies given to the Rüstem Zengene embassy and those of the two previous ones leads to the estimation that its size was larger than Kelb-Ali Kacar's embassy and smaller than Ebulmasum Şamlu's [grand] embassy.⁸⁸⁷ Besides, that the Ebukavuk Mehmed mission was formed with the rank of embassy marks the cruciality of the occasion and the Ottomans' extraordinary display of gratitude to the Safavids.

V.4. The Ottomans' Return to Basra and Tour de Force at the Gulf Region

Now that the Shah had declared the Iranian presence in Basra to be in the form of entrustment and the province ready to revert to its owner, the Sublime Porte had no more reasons to question with what capacity the viceroy of Huveyze was governing the empire's territory. But just to make sure, it wanted to double-confirm Seyyid Ferecullah Xan's status in Basra as trustee until the actual Ottoman takeover. Sultan-Hüseyin had left no room for doubt that Basra was an Ottoman province and that Seyyid Ferecullah Xan was the viceroy of Huveyze, and not the governor of Basra. To that effect, the Shah had even stated in his epistle that Seyyid Ferecullah had been ordered to obey the Padishah's decrees concerning the coordination of Basra's

⁸⁸⁵ AE.SMST. 1868 – the ambassador's petition to the grand-vizier requesting extra funds and twenty pack-horses in addition to the fifty that he had already been given. The Grand-Vizier approved the request on 3 June 1698. Also see the decree issued to the ambassador in late May / early June 1698 charging him with keeping discipline in the mission and empowering him with full authority over the entire court personnel in the embassy, MHM.d. 110, ent. 1929, 1931. Sixty to seventy of those in the Ottoman embassy were guardsmen; Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 215. See also AE. SMST.II. 6459 and 6460; İE. HR 439, 531, and 559.

⁸⁸⁶ Matthee, "Basra," 75.

⁸⁸⁷ See in İE. HR. 521 the decree issued on 16 June 1698 to all provincial magistrates from Scutari until the Iranian border to provide a daily subsidy of 190,64 thaler (22,877 non-debased aspers) for the embassy, billable to the Central Treasury. This amount corresponds with the daily subsidy the embassy had been receiving since arriving in Constantinople, and is very close to the amount that had been paid from its point of entry to Ottoman territory to Constantinople, 179,44 thaler (21,533 non-debased aspers, see İE.HR 522 for the amount and the conversion rate of 120 non-debased aspers per [Dutch] thaler). This document series also includes judicial-deeds from several judges documenting the disbursement and deduction of this amount from the taxes due. There are also several documents of the same type concerning the Ebulmasum Şamlu embassy.

restitution to Ottoman officials. The Porte was more than eager to register this status with a specifically devised act.

In confirmation of the current status, the Ottoman court sent a robe of honor to Seyyid Ferecullah Xan in late June 1698 along with the ordinance⁸⁸⁸ in the form of a *yarlıq*-diploma instructing its investiture. The Padishah confirmed the information communicated in the Shah's "auspicial epistle⁸⁸⁹" that "in accordance with the strongly-tied, ancient friendship and the eternity-qualified continuous amity, [he] was commissioned by the most-honorable side of the Shah with guarding and protecting [Basra] until a governor arrived from the August [Ottoman] Side⁸⁹⁰." He was to understand that Çelebi İsmâil Pasha was to take all necessary steps towards nominating and installing a new Ottoman governor to Basra. As this favorable situation had come about with Seyyid Ferecullah's ousting of Mâni, "in gratitude of his services,⁸⁹¹" he was invested with the accompanying robe of honor. Upon the arrival of this ceremonial garment that had been sent to "promote [his] glory,⁸⁹²" Ferecullah Xan was to "wear [it] on his shoulders." Then, he was to communicate and coordinate with the governor-general of Baghdad concerning the installment of the prospective Ottoman governor to Basra.⁸⁹³

Not comparable with customary investitures of foreign representatives with robes of honor by the Sublime Porte, this occasion instead served the primary, non-diplomatic function of such conferrals: the padishah's reward to a servitor of his for good service. Sultan-Hüseyin had already defined the nature of Seyyid Ferecullah's presence in Basra as entrustment. Now, Mustafa II reminded the viceroy of Huveyze, also directly from his side, of who the sovereign of

⁸⁸⁸ *hil'at emri*

⁸⁸⁹ "nâme-i meymun"

⁸⁹⁰ "müvâlât-ı kadîme-i kaviyü'l-visâk ve musâfât-ı müstedîme-i ebediyü'l-ittisâfa binâen taraf-ı hümâyunumuzdan bir vâli varınca hıfz u hırâsete taraf-ı eşref-i şâhîlerinden memur olduğunuz"

⁸⁹¹ "hizmetiniz meşkûr olduğuna binâen"

⁸⁹² "terfî-i şân"

⁸⁹³ NMH.d. 5, ent. 117.

Basra was. As long as Seyyid Ferecullah held the entrustment, he was also formally a subordinate of the padishah by virtue of keeping his province. The document, both in content and in form, is the blend of a diploma, issuable to high-ranking Ottoman officials, and a *yarliq*-type decree evoking the padishah's universal mandate which theoretically covered also Iran[ians]. With this investiture, the Porte ratified the Safavid viceroy of Huveyze's entrustment in Ottoman Basra until the actual takeover.

During Rüstem Zengene's extraordinary embassy, further developments concerning Basra took place. Despite setbacks, his ally Abbas Umeyrî's support with an additional 20,000 men had sufficed to keep Mâni es-Sa'dûn's movement standing and on the field. As a counter-measure, Sultan-Hüseyn ordered Ali-Merdan Xan, governor of Kûhigiyûle, with a rescript to intervene at the head of the forces of Kûhigiyûle and Luristan. Upon their approach and Seyyid Ferecullah's move to protect his primary province (Huveyze), Abbas Umeyrî withdrew to the Baghdad-Huveyze border. Stopping, Seyyid Ferecullah wrote to the governor-general of Baghdad that a hot pursuit – crossing the border into the province of Baghdad – might be necessary, and that although it would outwardly appear as a violation of borders, it should not be taken as such. He also promised to wait until the arrival of a written permission from the padishah. As the Iranian military presence around Basra increased, as a political move, Mâni es-Sa'dûn declared his withdrawal from hostilities against Iran with letters to İbrâhim Xan, governor of Devrak, and the viceroy of Luristan. These two then forwarded Mâni's letters along with their own petitions to the royal court, blaming Seyyid Ferecullah for exploiting the Bedouin rebellion in order to keep Basra for himself and to eventually declare independence [against the Safavids in Huveyze and against the Ottomans in Basra]. The governors stated that the presence of the Shah's non-vassal, direct appointees in the region, as was the case now, could easily

subdue the rebels, as shown by Mâni's latest move. The rescript that was issued following deliberations at court entrusted Basra with Ali-Merdan Xan, who was to be supported with additional troops from Fârs. Mâni petitioned the government for cash subsidies and Ali-Merdan Xan supported the petition with positive references. After deliberations at the royal court, this request, which was indeed a bribe to prevent Mâni from rebelling again, was conceded along with an official pardon. This did not contain Mâni long enough, though. He soon clashed with Ali-Merdan Xan's appointees in Cezâyîr but had to flee in the face of his own weakened following.⁸⁹⁴ Ali-Merdan Xan's installment as entrustee-governor of Basra by the Shah took place in early 1698.^{895 896}

Yet, most importantly for the empire – apart from the balance of power among various state and non-state actors around the Persian Gulf – with the appointment of Ali-Merdan Xan, Basra's entrustment now passed from indirect Safavid suzerainty via Huveyzan vassals to direct

⁸⁹⁴ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 181-186.

⁸⁹⁵ The Carmelite chronicler dates Ali-Merdan Xan's appointment to the end of 1697, see *Chronicle of Events*, 415; *Chronicle of the Carmelites* pp. 496-497. However, throughout his activities as Safavid ambassador at Adrianople from March to June 1698, Rüstem Xan Zengene did not know about Seyyid Ferecullah's replacement with Ali-Merdan, and the Sublime Porte drafted all outgoing documents of response with the knowledge that Seyyid Ferecullah was still controlling Basra. As Safavid trusteeship in Ottoman Basra was the occasion of Rüstem Zengene's embassy, it is quite unlikely that the royal government would not notify him via an express messenger of a change of entrustee-governor that allegedly took place at the end of 1697. Thus, Ali-Merdan's replacing Seyyid Ferecullah as the Safavid entrustee of Ottoman Basra must have taken place sometime during the active phase the Rüstem Zengene embassy at the Ottoman court, approximately in the winter/spring of 1698. Additionally, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân* misleads the reader in chronology of events pertaining to Iranian presence at Basra at the turn of the century. This chronicle, based on a single surviving copy, suffers from editorial shortcomings. After 1696, it erroneously reports the events as if they belong to the previous year rather than the actual one, as is established after juxtaposing it with other sources narrating the same course of events. This comes on top of the extra potential for confusion created by the shifting lunar-Islamic calendar used for the day/month dating of individual occurrences as opposed to the solar-Turkic calendar used for titling/dating year-chapters under which they are narrated. Yet, neither a critical approach to the copyist's mistakes or the editor's oversight in the chronicle in question, nor a crosschecking with the Ottoman sources that provide unambiguous dates for the actual occurrences of events as well as for their news' reaching the imperial court, nor referring to the Carmelite accounts that provide more or less accurate dating is required in order for the problem to be diagnosed. The shah's epistle of 1698 shows that by late 1697, and probably even by the beginning of 1698, Basra was still under Seyyid Ferecullah's control, and that the successive Iranian xans in Basra were not appointed as Safavid "governors." They were governors and viceroys of Safavid provinces and tributaries. In Basra, they were officially "entrustee"s appointed by the shah in the name of the padishah, as is clearly stated in the mentioned royal epistle.

Safavid control by a court-appointed xan. This must have decreased the potential for future friction that could emerge during Ottoman takeover, as *tributary-dominions* around the Persian Gulf, just like the pre-1668 Basra of the Efrâsiyaboğlus and its Huveyzan counterpart, were prone to defying their suzerain's authority whenever feasible. Seyyid Ferecullah would soon confirm the validity of this argument.

While both courts were busy with coordinating the handover of Basra with exchanges of favors and intensifying the post-1686 accord, the Kurdistan frontier was not free from clashes. The newly appointed governor of Alişükr, Abbas-kulu Xan Ziyâdoğlu-Kacar, was created commander-general of the operations against Süleyman Kirmac. Royal and provincial troops gathered under his command, and in early July 1698, the army encamped at Erdelân/Kurdistan. Learning via spies that Süleyman Kirmac was currently in the fort of Kızılca (in the proximity of Tabriz), the roads leading to it were blocked and the army proceeded to Merivan (in Erdelân/Kurdistan), where the Bebe forces held two garrisons. As the viceroy of Erdelân and the governor of Nahçıvan besieged these forts, Süleyman Kirmac made a surprise assault with his main forces, putting the defeated Safavid contingent to flight. Later, the commander-general regrouped his army in disciplined battle order and appointed patrol detachments. Süleyman Kirmac divided his forces into four contingents and retreated in an orderly fashion to the valleys in Merivan. Against these contingents, the commander-general assigned respectively the Afşar troops of Azerbaijan, the Kul-beyi troops of Erivan, the Kul-beyi troops of Şirvan and Kengerlu, and those of Kurdistan, while he himself stayed at his headquarters with royal, Karabağ, and Karacadağ troops. The Bebe contingents defeated each of these disorderly Safavid detachments. However, the commander-general's counter-offensive proved effective: Süleyman Kirmac, wounded and defeated, fled the battlefield in disarray, leaving his entire encampment behind.

The Afşar patrol denied him entry to the fortresses under his occupation, and the core of the Bebe rebellion took refuge in the mountains. In the ensuing pursuit, around 1,300 rebels were captured, both dead and alive.⁸⁹⁷

In the meantime, following a twenty-five-day stop first in Constantinople then in Scutari,⁸⁹⁸ and travelling over Ankara (late August 1698),⁸⁹⁹ Rüstem Xan Zengene and Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha arrived at the border by river Arpaçayı, where two hundred Safavid cavalymen welcomed them.⁹⁰⁰ They then reached Erivan, whose governor-general immediately communicated the extraordinary ambassadors' arrival to the royal court. Governor-general Allah-kulu Xan [Kacar] was ordered to entertain the incoming ambassador with highest esteem and reverence while Muhammed Emin Beyg Zengene became host-officer. Rüstem Xan Zengene was ordered to ride to Isfahan at courier speed⁹⁰¹, so that the royal government could have a full report of his mission before establishing contact with the incoming ambassador.

After the departure of Rüstem Xan Zengene and Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha from Adrianople, parties to the Great Turkish War had determined the principles that were to serve as basis for the peace talks, while Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha waited in Belgrade with the fully mobilized Imperial Army, in order to engage the enemy in case the talks failed. Yet, the peace conference was inaugurated in Karlowitz on 13 November 1698.⁹⁰² The definitive protocols were signed on 26 January 1699, by which the empire formally ceded its entire previous holdings in Hungary – with the exception of the province of Temesvar – to the Habsburgs, Podolia and the

⁸⁹⁷ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 222-232.

⁸⁹⁸ CV. HR. 8969 – the provisioning transactions of the Palace Kitchen (*Matbah-ı Âmire*) for the Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy. CV. HR. 8968 – same transactions for the Rüstem Zengene embassy.

⁸⁹⁹ İE. HR. 550 – transactions of the Ankara court regarding the daily cash allocation to the Rüstem Zengene embassy. Also see İE. HR. 467 for the same transaction in a way station within Tokat.

⁹⁰⁰ *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 141.

⁹⁰¹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 214.

⁹⁰² Rifa'at A. Abou-el-Haj, "Ottoman Diplomacy at Karlowitz," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87, no.4 (1967): 498.

Right-Bank Ukraine to Poland-Lithuania, and the Peloponnese and Dalmatia to Venice, while an armistice was signed with Russia. In the following year, the Peace of Constantinople would cede Azov formally to Russia and release Russia from paying annual cash presents to the khans of the Crimea. In making these concessions to Russia, the empire's need to deploy a strong army for the intended Basra campaign would also play a major role.⁹⁰³ The successful conclusion of the negotiations and the signing of the definitive protocols were communicated immediately to Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha with a letter; he was reminded of the utmost necessity of performing his commission in a pleasing way for the Padishah and in line with the harmony between the two parties.⁹⁰⁴ It is beyond doubt that the courier carrying the letter also brought instructions that the ambassador emphasize the closing of the fronts with Germany, Venice, Poland-Lithuania, and Russia, which meant that the Ottoman State now had its hands free; if Iran wanted to cooperate, the empire could content itself just with reasserting its authority in Şehrîzor and Basra. If not, then this was to serve as a warning that the Safavids were no longer bargaining with an Ottoman State fighting against four great powers at the same time. This would give an edge to the Ottomans in the upcoming negotiations regarding how to execute the operations in Kurdistan and the Gulf region.

In Erivan, governor-general Allah-kulu Xan attended to the accommodation of Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha and then paid him a visit. As the latter departed, the governor-general's supervisor⁹⁰⁵ was attached to the convoy as acting host-officer until Muhammed Emin Beyg Zengene's arrival. Next, during a twelve-day stop at the former capital Tabriz, the deputy (Allahverdi Beyg) of the governor-general (Mehmed Tâlib Xan) hosted the guests in due manner. Muhammed Emin Beyg Zengene met with Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha on the road

⁹⁰³ Spuler, "Die Europäische Diplomatie in Konstantinopel," 63.

⁹⁰⁴ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 22a-22b.

⁹⁰⁵ *nâzir*

between between Tabriz and Kum. In Devletabad, aide-de-camp⁹⁰⁶ Mehmed Ali Beyg welcomed the ambassador at the head of a contingent of 500 made up of squires, royal guards, artillerymen, and musketeers. Together, they joined the procession attended by the officials and the people of Isfahan, conducting the ambassador into the city until his residence (December 1698). The Prime-Minister, the chief of the Royal Guard, the chief of the Squires, the marshal of the Royal Court, and the chief of the Musketeers all entertained Ebukavuk Mehmed Pash in succession.⁹⁰⁷

Finally, the royal audience took place, during which Sultan-Hüseyn took the imperial epistle with his own hands from those of the ambassador and placed it next to his throne. Following a brief conversation and the handover of gifts, the audience was completed.⁹⁰⁸ In the epistle⁹⁰⁹ to the Shah “his most-sublime majesty, . . . august-person⁹¹⁰, . . . the refuge of the Earth [and the] world,⁹¹¹” which Mustafa II wrote out of “excessive sincerity and unity⁹¹²” and in “brotherhood.⁹¹³” the following passages stand out after the conventional titulature as well as the subject-relevant ones of “substance of security and tranquility⁹¹⁴” and “fount of the regularity of the world⁹¹⁵”:

Above all, . . . as . . . this Pure-of-Design [i.e. Mustafa II] . . . was busy with . . . damming the gates of harm by [deeming it] the most important among the chiefly important issues and the most prioritized among the issues of utmost priority, the deferral of the exsection of the articles of malice of the Basran subject, the ungrateful and banditry-mingled one that they call Mâni, . . . who had been . . . rushing headlong . . . in

⁹⁰⁶ *yesâvul-ı sohbet*

⁹⁰⁷ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 214-215. For the dating of the arrival as December 1698, see Matthee, “Basra,” 75.

⁹⁰⁸ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 216.

⁹⁰⁹ NMH.d. 5, ent. 121.

⁹¹⁰ “hümâyun-zât”

⁹¹¹ “gîtî-penâh . . . cihân-penâhî”

⁹¹² “firt-ı musâdakat u yegânegi”

⁹¹³ “müvâhât”

⁹¹⁴ “madde-i emn ü amân”

⁹¹⁵ “mâye-i intizâm-ı cihân”

uprising, was deemed proper until the [end] of the busyness of Holy-War [i.e., the Great Turkish War]⁹¹⁶

. . . It has been deigned to be communicated [in Sultan-Hüseyin's epistle] that, . . . by observing the ancient, daily-increasing amity and the continuous, benefit-displaying friendship, which is inherited from our attachment-distinguished predecessors and is as steady and firm as the foundations of the pillars of the revolving celestial-globe, those sectors . . . became purified and purged of their [i.e. the Bedouin-rebels'] transgressions and obstinacy . . . and commissioned to xan of Huveyze Seyyid Ferecullah . . . to be handed over to the servants . . . of the Pure-of-Heart, the Attachment-Marked [i.e., Mustafa II]. . . As it . . . conforms . . . to the fine points of union, . . . it has occasioned the rejoicing of minds⁹¹⁷

. . . Süleyman of Bebe is anathemized by Both States; . . . that the fires of deceit and fraud which he had kindled at those borders with the tempest of the thought of independence become extinguished . . . with the drops of the clouds of the blade of extirpation . . . was one of the greatest issues, . . . however, . . . until this time, . . . getting rid of this affair via [just] advise and sermonizing had been resolved. . . [Now that] dealing with this affair has become commissioned . . . to the appointees of our Triumphant Frontiers, it is the expectation of this True-to-Affinity [i.e. Mustafa II] that the links of his [i.e. Süleyman of Bebe's] veins of evil be cut with the scythe of exemplary punishment and massacre . . . and that the conditions of the subjects be regulated and the breaches in the affairs of the localities and abodes adjoin [the state of] healing. . . El-Hac Mehmed Pasha . . . became . . . dispatched . . . to consolidate the seatings of union . . . and commissioned with [discussing] circumstances orally.⁹¹⁸

Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha's letter⁹¹⁹ to Sultan-Hüseyin follows the pattern set by that of

his master's in content and structure; it is no doubt that they were composed according to parallel instructions. The Grand-Vizier stated that the Rüstem Zengene embassy further elevated the level of the "union of the Two Parties,⁹²⁰" praised "his most-sublime majesty" the Shah for

⁹¹⁶ "lasiyyema . . . Basra reâyâsından Mâni dedikleri nâ-sipâs-ı şekâvet-istîfnâs . . . kıyâm . . . ile . . . ihtikâm üzere olmağın bu hâlistü't-taviyyetleri sedd-i ebvâb-ı mazarrat . . . ile meşgul . . . olmağla ber-kâide-i el-ehemm fal-ehemm, el-akdem fal-akdem kendinin hasm-ı mevadd-ı fesâdı pes-mande-i işgâl-i cihâd olmasını mülâhaza edip"

⁹¹⁷ "eslâf-ı meveddet-irtisâmdan mütevâres beynimizde bünyân-ı erkân-ı sipîhr-i devvar gibi muhkem ü üstüvâr . . . olan musâfât-ı kadîme-i rûz-efzûn ve müvâlât-ı müstedîme-i meziyyet-nümûn mûraatıyla ol nevâhiyi . . . bagy u inâdlarından tasfiye ve tahliye ve edip . . . hademe-i . . . muhlis-i meveddet-şîâriye teslim olunması bâbında . . . Huveyze Hâmî es-Seyyid Ferecullah . . . 'a . . . sipârîş olunduğu ifham buyurulmuş. . . dekayık-ı ittihâd. . . a karîn . . . olmağla . . . vesîle-i ibtihâc-ı havâtîr . . . olduğundan"

⁹¹⁸ "Bebe Süleyman merdûd-ı devleteyn . . . olmağla tund-bâd-ı endîşe-i istiklâl ile ol hudûda iş'âl eylediği nevâir-i mekr ü ihtiyâl, katarât-ı mîğ-i tîğ-i istîsâl ile itfâ . . . olunması a'zam-ı mesâlih. . . 'den olup lâkin . . . bu vakte dek . . . nush u pend ile bu emrin indifâ'. . . ina . . . azîmet . . . olunmuştu. . . tedârük-i emr . . . gûmaşteğân-ı serhadd-i mansûremize . . . sipârîş olunmuşdur. . . rişte-i urûk-ı mefsedet-i bürîde-i dâs-ı nekâl u nikâyet ve . . . ahvâl-i ibâd intizâm ve rahne-i umur-ı bukâ' u bilâd karîn-i iltiyâm olması çeşm-dâşt-ı sâdikü'l-vedâdlarıdır . . . teşyîd-i me'âkîd-ı ittihâd için . . . el-Hac Mehmed Paşa . . . firistâde . . . kılımp . . . lisânen sipârîş olunan ahval . . ."

⁹¹⁹ NMH.d. 5, ent. 125; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeât*, ff. 16a-17b.

⁹²⁰ "ittihâd-ı cânibeyn"

“cleansing . . . Basra . . . and [resolving] to return it to the most-honorable side of the Lord-Sovereign [Padishah]⁹²¹” and described the result of the diplomatic contacts in 1698 as the “affirmation of the ancient, daily-increasing amity which, between the Two Sublime States, has been immune from the penetration of corruption for many ages and eras.⁹²²” The other letter⁹²³ from the Grand-Vizier, addressed to his counterpart Muhammed Tâhir Vahîd Kazvînî “his sublime excellency, the gauge of state, refuge of viziership,⁹²⁴” follows a different structure, although generally agreeing in content with the ones sent by him and his master to Sultan-Hüseyin. “Intensified ties and concord . . . between this Ottoman House of great-glory and that Safavid dynasty of exalted-insignia,⁹²⁵” which was “manifesting itself . . . day by day,⁹²⁶” reached a now a new peak, declared the Grand-Vizier, when the Shah “deigned to make the foundations of . . . concord firm and level the pinnacle of . . . alliance to the revolving heaven⁹²⁷” with the Rüstem Zengene embassy to the padishah’s “supreme-monarchichal⁹²⁸” court. The due retribution to Süleyman of Bebe, “traitor to Both Parties,” was also confirmed to take place soon. The Grand-Vizier emphasized, more than the “Padishah of the Earth⁹²⁹” did, that there were further details concerning Mâni es-Sa’dûn and Süleyman of Bebe, in addition to other separate issues, which were not mentioned in writing but would be submitted orally by Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha. Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha, in accordance with the concord between the two sides, expected consent to and execution of these matters to be scheduled for submission, so that

⁹²¹ “ Basra[nın] . . . tathîr[i] ve . . . yine taraf-ı eşref-i hüdâvendigâriye iâde. . . si]”

⁹²² “nice dühûr u kurûndan beri iki Devlet-i Aliyye’nin beyninde tatarruk-ı halelden masûn olan musâfât-ı kadîme-i rûz-efzûnu tekid”

⁹²³ NMH.d. 5, ent. 126; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 21a-21b.

⁹²⁴ “cenâb-ı meâlî-meâb, devlet-nisâb, vezâret-penâh”

⁹²⁵ “bu dûdmân-ı azîmü’ş-şân-ı Osmâniye ile ol hânedân-ı muallâ-nişân-ı Safeviye beynlerinde . . . şedd-i visâk ü vifâk”

⁹²⁶ “rûz-be-rûz . . . bürûz edip”

⁹²⁷ “esâs-ı . . . vifâk-ı üstüvâr ve küngüre-i . . . ittifâk-ı müvâzi-i çarh-ı devvâr buyurmuşlar”

⁹²⁸ “şehinşâhî”

⁹²⁹ “pâdişâh-ı rûy-i zemîn”

the accrued damages (not to bilateral relations but to both states) would be repaired and the corrupters be dealt with.

While the vocabulary and the style of these three letters from the Sublime Porte to the royal government might be likened to the previous ones, they are by no means mere repetitions of the same concepts renarrated with reference to the latest developments. As prescribed by the political instructions which must have been used as guidelines in the composition, the expected positive reception of these letters meant the materialization of the following achievements for the Ottoman Empire, as these were the most emphasized points in all three texts. Firstly, the Bedouin rebellion which had broken out in Ottoman territory and was led by Mâni es-Sa'dûn, an Ottoman subject, had also spread to Huveyze which was under Safavid suzerainty. This had made the uprising an interstate problem that both states had to crush in cooperation. Thereby, the Padishah's debt of gratitude towards the Shah's offering back an entire province was to be relatively eased, for the Shah would also serve his own interest by cracking down on a potential movement for independence to the detriment of Iran. The same principle also applied for the Bebe rebellion, adding a second point. Süleyman Kirmac's occupation zone on Iranian territory had tended to result in a permanent advance with each next move. This, in turn, had made the Bebe rebellion no less of a Safavid problem than an Ottoman one. Thus, the Ottomans' debt of gratitude, which originated from the Safavids' patiently waiting for the war-paralyzed empire to crush this rebellion, would also be depleted.

Thirdly, by pronouncing the commissioning of various officials for receiving back Basra and definitively crushing the Bebe rebellion, the Sublime Porte announced the impending termination of the authority deficit in northern and southern Iraq. Fourthly, the Porte knew well that although it presented the matters as a common problem, these two rebellions had indeed

originated from Ottoman territory and Ottoman subjects, making the sovereign state primarily responsible for them. Thus, although the Safavids had also suffered from these uprisings, their strict adherence to the principles of peace could not go unmentioned. In this respect, the Safavids' cooperation befitting an ally in the face of an Ottoman Empire which, though unwillingly, had thitherto remained passive in these crises, was acknowledged in the correspondence by clearly stating that the principles which defined the current accord reached a new high via Sultan-Hüseyin's recent acts against Mâni es-Sa'dûn and inaction against Süleyman of Bebe. Thus, the grateful supreme-monarch thanked the august-sultan, now close partners in passive alliance. Also, the grand-vizierial letter to the Prime-Minister demonstrates that in line with the post-1688 accord, the diplomatic standing of the latter was boosted just like that of his master. The prime-minister, normally ranking as beğ/prince/duke, was now a high-prince, i.e. a prince with the grade of an autarch (grand-duke), as shown by the titlature.

During his stay in Isfahan, which lasted over three months, between the welcome and the farewell audiences, Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha was continuously feasted in various gardens by Safavid dignitaries and in a separate meeting with the Shah in Çeharbâğ. All of these events took place in a quite cordial atmosphere. The Safavids went to extremes in giving gifts to the Padishah's ambassador.⁹³⁰ During this inter-audience period, Ebukavuk Mehmed and the Safavid court must have held intensified negotiations and exchanged notes – seemingly nonextant – whose results would be reflected in the next set of replies that Sultan-Hüseyin and Muhammed Tâhir Kazvîni wrote. These were handed over to the ambassador in the royal farewell audience.⁹³¹ Aide-de-camp Mehmed Ali Beyg was appointed at the head of fifty senior

⁹³⁰ *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 141. The Ottoman ambassador was given more than enough allocation and cash subvention, various types of rugs and felt, various products, ambler-steeds, and saddled horses.

⁹³¹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 216.

officers⁹³² to escort⁹³³ the ambassador until he would leave Safavid territory. Thus ended Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha's mission in Iran (April 1699).⁹³⁴ However, it should be noted that the embassy's activities did not remain limited to official business. As the convoy traveled, the learned among the embassy personnel socialized with literary and scholarly circles in Erivan, Tabriz, Nahçıvan, Kazvin, Kum, Kâşân, and Isfahan. In the discussions and poetry slams that took place within the scope of these sessions, Süleyman Nahîfî, a scribe and a prominent poet whom ambassador Ebukavuk Mehmed had taken along "as a gift from the territory of Rûm to those sons of the clime of Iran that are students of learning,⁹³⁵" made a name for himself among his fellow Iranian co-sessionists, to whom he satisfactorily expounded many Persian couplets presented by them as enigmas, and gained their further appreciation by reciting numerous other Persian, Turkish, and Arabic couplets as part of his expositions.⁹³⁶ It must be noted that also the ambassador himself was from the chancellery-service class⁹³⁷ and renowned for his vast knowledge.⁹³⁸

During the inter-audience diplomacy of either the embassy of Ebukavuk Mehmed or that of Rüstem Zengene, the Shah's previous request for the Padishah's permission to renovate Imams Ali el-Hâdî and Hasan el-Askerî's sarcophagi, submitted via ambassador Ebulmasum Xan Şamlu during the inter-audience negotiations in 1696-1697, was eventually replied to in the

⁹³² *ağayân-ı 'izâm*

⁹³³ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 271.

⁹³⁴ Mathee, "Basra," 75.

⁹³⁵ "hitta-i Rûm'dan diyâr-ı Îrân'ın maarife tâlip olan ferzendlerine bir hediye olmak üzere"

⁹³⁶ Sâlim [Mehmed] Efendi, *Tezkiretü'ş-Şuarâ*, ent. "Nahîfî", published electronically by the Ministry of Culture of Turkey in ekitap.kulturturizm.gov.tr, accessed on 17 June 2016. See Ali Cânîp [Yöntem], "Süleyman Nahîfî," in *Hayat Mecmuası* no.22 (1927): 423-426 for a selection from the poetry Nahîfî composed while in Iran.

⁹³⁷ "küttab zümresinden"

⁹³⁸ *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 132.

affirmative, based on the “antecedents and the brotherhood therebetween.”⁹³⁹ The Ottoman State issued the Safavids an imperial decree⁹⁴⁰ registering the permission and entitling them to execute the renovation. The two-and-a-half-year suspension of the matter following its submission hints at concerns of legitimacy by the Sublime Porte regarding the shah’s meaning to make this symbolic renovation in the territory whose sovereignty lie exclusively with the padishah. The matter must have been thoroughly deliberated among Ottoman dignitaries. In the end, the Shah’s offering the province of Basra back to the padishah without reservations must have convinced the Ottomans that the Safavid side’s initiative was not an attempt at making inroads to the padishah’s legitimacy in Iraq. Moreover, in return for this unprecedented display of good will by the Shah, the Padishah must have seen no harm in issuing this one-time special permission.

The Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy returned to the capital in September 1699. The ambassador was transferred over the Bosphorus by state boats and welcomed ashore with a saddled horse by the grand-vizierial lieutenant. Via a procession during which two embassy personnel visibly carried the Shah’s and the Prime Minister’s letters, the ambassador entered the grand-vizierial residence and completed his mission.⁹⁴¹ In his epistle to Mustafa II,⁹⁴² Sultan-Hüseyn expressed his complete satisfaction with the assurances from the Ottoman side that the Bebe rebellion would soon be dealt with in a definitive manner. Communicating his provincials’ recent clashes with the Bebe invaders on Safavid territory, the Shah described how the governor of Alişükr had no longer been able to endure standing by as Süleyman Kirmac made progress and attributed the military’s resumed involvement to this. He also confirmed that the matters that

⁹³⁹ “mabeynde olan mukaddemât ve müvâhâta binâen”, MHM.d. 111, ent. 1694; [Nazmizâde Murtazâ,] “Nusret-nâme’nin Kaynaklarından Târih-i Seferü’l-Basra,” ed. Vahid Çubuk, *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 15 (1995): 331-332.

⁹⁴⁰ Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 334.

⁹⁴¹ *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 141.

⁹⁴² NMH.d. 5, ent. 155; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât, 1105-1135*, 122-126.

Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha had been commissioned to orally submit had been covered as anticipated. The epistle concluded with the Shah's request that from now on the Padishah's officials also participate in eliminating disorder at the frontier and obey the Padishah's orders as had been decreed to them.

In Sultan-Hüseyin's second epistle⁹⁴³, which he wrote to Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha "his sublime excellency, the refuge of viziership,⁹⁴⁴" the reference to the "unperishable cohesion of the Two Sides⁹⁴⁵" stands out. Muhammed Tahir Kazvîni stressed the importance of the union of the two sides and the alliance reigning between the two parties in his letter⁹⁴⁶ to Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha "his sublime majesty, the refuge of viziership, principeshood, and stately-fortune.⁹⁴⁷" Like his master, he also appreciated Ebukavuk Mehmed Pasha's praiseworthy activities as emissary.

In all three replies from the royal government to the Sublime Porte, the technical constituents, such as *invocatio*, *inscriptio*, and *salutatio*, surpass the informative constituents of *narratio* and *sanctio* in length even more than was conventional in Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic correspondence. Last but not least, this round of replies indicates that the grand vizier enjoyed the rank of an autarch (grand-duke) with sultanic (kingly) grade in diplomatic hierarchy. Given that the reply correspondence was preferred to be composed as such, and in view of the frontier developments concurrent with the diplomatic exchange of 1698-1699, it can be understood that

⁹⁴³ NMH.d. 5, ent. 157; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât, 1038-1105*, 278-279. In the latter, Nevâî's titling the letter as sent by Shah Süleyman to Grand-Vizier Hüseyin Pasha is incorrect.

⁹⁴⁴ "cenâb-ı vâlâ-nisâb . . . vezâret-meâb . . . veziriazam." (Here, *vâlâ* replaces *âlî* in the meaning *sublime*. For examples of the interchangeable use of *âlî*, *vâlâ*, and *yüce* for *sublime* in diplomatic correspondence, see Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 234-238, 269-274, 388-395, 448-453, 476-483; in denoting the Imperial Court, see Abdülkadir Özcan, "Dergâh-ı Âli," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 9 (1994): 174; in denoting God in theology, see Hatice Kelpetin Arpağuş, "Teâlâ," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 40 (2011): 206-207; in the case of the later-established Ottoman Supreme Court, see Ali Akyıldız, "Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 28 (2003): 250-251.

⁹⁴⁵ "ülfet-i bi-zevâl-i cânibeyn"

⁹⁴⁶ NMH.d. 5, ent. 156; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât, 1038-1105*, 280-281.

⁹⁴⁷ "âlî-hazret-i vezâret ü iyâlet ü ikbâl-penâh"

as long as the Sublime Porte actualize the commitments it made, the royal government would be perfectly satisfied.

The style employed in Sultan-Hüseyin's epistles particularly suggests that the expectation of the Safavid side for the Ottoman State to impose its authority in Kurdistan and the Persian Gulf region this time, was higher and more realistic than it had previously been. This must have been a direct consequence of the peace talks that had commenced between the empire and the Holy League. The Safavids had shown patience and dedication, seemingly more than even the Ottomans might expect of them. Now, the senior partner needed to show that the junior ally would not be left alone in shouldering the political and financial burden of having furthered bilateral relations from a state of bare peace, which meant non-aggression, to *alliance in perpetual peace*. In this remarkable furtherance of bilateral relations, the Ottoman Empire's part had only been through recognition and appreciation in word, since the inception of the new accord in 1686. On the other hand, the Safavids made it clear at every opportunity that they were aware that the Ottoman Empire had suffered from the concerned rebellions more seriously than Iran had, and that the empire would naturally want to suppress them at its first opportunity. Thus, just as seen in the previous two exchanges, the Ottoman assurances of 1698 were not regarded as circumlocutions but as sincere commitments. However, this time, the Safavid side sensed that there was a higher probability that the Ottomans might actualize these commitments.

This inference is based on the letter⁹⁴⁸ Muhammed Tâhir Kazvîni sent to the governor-general of Baghdad (Çelebi İsmâil Pasha), apparently around the same time as the last round of replies the royal government had conveyed with the returning Ebukavuk Mehmed embassy. The

⁹⁴⁸ NMH.d. 5, ent. 132.

Prime-Minister informed “his sublime excellency⁹⁴⁹” of the following matters, which had materialized in line with the “concord⁹⁵⁰” between the two monarchs. Firstly, a rescript was sent to the viceroy of Luristan to respond militarily to the Bedouin rebels. In addition to this, all Safavid frontier officials were sent rescripts to withhold support and asylum from the rebellious Bedouin in the event that the rebels enter territory subjected to the concerned officials’ jurisdiction.

Secondly, and more importantly, the Prime-Minister made the following suggestions regarding the coordination of the Ottomans’ expected Basra campaign:

(1) Although Safavid officials were in control of the city of Basra, how much of the currently- and formerly-rebel Bedouin were to be regarded as obedient or how much as rebellious was not determinable; (2) In the case that a large Ottoman army crossed from Iranian territory in order to enter [the city of] Basra, it was highly probable that the rebel Bedouin [on the vast countryside between the cities of Baghdad and Basra] disguise their designs and feign friendship. They would then resort to enmity in a manner that would cause alienation between the Ottomans and the Safavids. Such a split would in turn give the rebels the opportunity to re-manifest their veiled designs; (3) In the case that a small-size Ottoman force marched out to enter Basra, either the Bedouin would launch a general offensive to seize the opportunity of routing an Ottoman army or, even if the dispatched force managed to make its way to the destination, it would still not be sufficient for reinstating imperial authority to the same degree under Bezirgân Halil Pasha’s governorate-general; (4) In all of these cases, all the pains the Iranian military took and all the resources the Safavid State expended during the last several years for the sake of observing

⁹⁴⁹ “âli-cenâb”

⁹⁵⁰ “yek-ciheti”

“unity and union⁹⁵¹” with the Ottomans would be wasted, i.e., the Bedouin rebels would continue to dominate Basra; (5) In view of all these matters, it would be wise for the governor-general of Baghdad to first discipline the dissidents in his province to the degree that they no longer dare to oppose state authority. Only after having become assured of his own provinces’s security, he enter the province of Basra with a large army, and proceed southwards towards the garrisons by crushing each rebel concentration. In strict observation of Ottoman-Safavid “unity”, the Safavid garrisons in Basra would retribute the fortresses and return home.

Obviously, establishing an on-field application of the Ottoman recovery of Basra in a manner that would satisfy both sides was the main subject. After all of the efforts they had expended to please the Ottomans, the Safavids now had every right to itemize potential weaknesses of the impending Ottoman campaign along with the preferred methods for it. There should have been no room left for flaws, so that neither side would accuse the other of not having cooperated. The Ottomans would be satisfied with a complete reestablishment of sovereignty in the province of Basra, and the Safavids with a tangible appreciation of their efforts spent to this end. The Prime-Minister’s explicit statement about the Safavid troops’ decided departure upon the arrival of Ottoman forces must have assured the empire that there were no hidden agendas behind these suggestions, which could appear, *prima facie*, rather odd, as a foreign chief-minister was making recommendations to an Ottoman governor-general on how best to conduct operations. But this should be considered normal, because the subordinates of this foreign chief-minister were in control of the principal fortresses of the target zone of operations, and had acquired experience for dealing with the common enemy. Thus, the Safavid side was in a position to prepare suggestions.

⁹⁵¹ “yegânegî ve ittihad”

Çelebi İsmâil Pasha, who had already become mobilized against the Bebe in the meantime,⁹⁵² forwarded this letter to the Porte and wrote in his attached report that everything the Prime-Minister had said was deception. Receiving the dispatch in February 1699, the Sublime Porte found the letter's "purview outwardly well-wishing, purpose uncomprehensible, and . . . [content] irregular."⁹⁵³ Despite this impression, the Porte still regarded the Prime-Minister's suggestions as "in agreement with the reality and consistent with the essence of the affair," and concluded that "it was not the way of the wise not to elaborate on garrisoning and protecting [Basra], with imaginations and illusions that he [i.e., Muhammed Tahir Kazvîni] had a trickery in this word of his."⁹⁵⁴ The suggestion of assembling of a large army became approved. 2,000 janissaries who were to be recruited additionally (1,000 to the Baghdad garrison and 1,000 to the Basra campaign), and the governor-general of Aleppo together with his household troops were also assigned to join those already mobilized for the Basra campaign.⁹⁵⁵ In May, privy men-at-arms were sent from the imperial court to oversee the mobilization preparations with reminder decrees and imperial-writs.⁹⁵⁶

Probably in conjunction with the aftermath of Ebukavuk Mehmed's extraordinary embassy, Sultan-Hüseyin rewarded commander-general Abbas-kulu Xan Ziyâdođlu-Kacar's report of his operations against the Bebe with a robe of honor, and assigned him with the extermination of the rebels. The commander-general immediately wrote to the governor-general of Baghdad to inform him of the Bebe's defeat and to have him intervene militarily in the case

⁹⁵² See the decree MHM.d. 110, ent. 2535, issued in early January 1699 narrating the misconduct by the governmental agent Abdurrahman who had been dispatched to oversee the operations. He would be imprisoned but then pardoned and set free in early August 1699. MHM.d. 111, ent. 240.

⁹⁵³ "sûret-i hayır-hâhîden meâl ve maksûd anlanmaz . . . bî-nizâm"

⁹⁵⁴ "vâkı'a mutâbık ve nefsi'l-emre muvâfık iken bu sözde dahi bir hîlesi olmak gerektir diye hayâlât u evhâm ile muhâfaza ve muhâresesine ikdâm olunmamak kâr-ı âkıl değildir"

⁹⁵⁵ Râşid, *Târih*, 579; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 674-675, MHM.d. 110, ent. 2684-2688, 2697, 2701, 2706, 2724-2740, 3090, 3093-3094, 3115.

⁹⁵⁶ MHM.d. 110, ent. 2373-2376, 2418.

that the Bebe had resurfaced in his province. But instead, Süleyman Kirmac resurfaced as having garrisoned himself in the fort of Kızılca, but then he fled again shortly before the Safavid army captured it. While pursuing him on difficult terrain, the commander-general received a letter from the (Ottoman) seigneur of İmâdiye, speaking of Süleyman Kirmac's "remorse from [his] doings, wretched-state, prohibition, and complete remise from realm[s] and possessions." The seigneur of İmadiye also communicated that the "Supreme-Lord assigned the issue of dealing with that nefarious one [to him]."⁹⁵⁷ He requested that the commander-general not carry the pursuit to Ottoman territory so that the execution of the rest of the anti-Bebe measures would take place without further clashes. Soon afterwards, an Ottoman gatekeeper-captain arrived together with Süleyman Kirmac's agent, Molla İlyas. He orally reported that Çelebi İsmâil Pasha had set up camp as commander at the head of an army to crush the Bebe and announced his own commission by the Padishah that he oversee the retribution due against the rebels. Furthermore, he reported that the Safavid side should accordingly retire from further military operations.⁹⁵⁸

As Ottoman forces blocked his escape route back to the empire's territory, Süleyman Kirmac remained locked up at the border point. Nevertheless, the court would later blame Çelebi İsmâil Pasha directly for Süleyman Kirmac's escape from capture and also declare that this had led to intensified Iranian military activity along the Kurdistan border. All provincial, feudal, and governorate troops in Diyarbekir and Şehrîzor would become subordinated to him so that the deal would be closed for good. If a crisis were to break out, all other governors assigned for the Basran campaign could also be employed against the Bebe. Mustafa II stated with emphasis:

⁹⁵⁷ "nedâmet-i ef'âl, perîşân-hâl ve memnû' ve bi'l-küllîye nazar ez mülk ü mâl . . . Hândeğâr encâm-ı emr-i ân nâ-be-kâr râ be men vâ-güzâşte"

⁹⁵⁸ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 234-235.

“that the Süleyman Bebe matter stays incomplete as such is against my august consent,⁹⁵⁹” because the Bebe activities constituted a violation of the peace with the Shah.⁹⁶⁰

Abbas-kulu Xan Ziyâdođlu-Kacar’s languor in delivering the final blow led to the remaining rebels’ pillaging the countryside in Iran from their base in Kızılca. Upon royal inspector Kazak Beyg b. Dikenci Xan’s report, Abbas-kulu Kacar was deposed and Abdülgaffar Xan from the commanders on campaign became the deputy-commander-general. He besieged the Bebe’s base, but Süleyman Kirmac managed to escape again shortly before capture. Then, the new commander-general, Hüseyin Xan Fîlî, reached the encampment in July 1699. En route to Kızılca, the Safavid army looted the Bebe zone of occupation in both Iranian and Ottoman territory, and then sent a contingent to pursue the rebels on difficult terrain. Upon his sighting of the approaching enemy, Süleyman Kirmac fled again, leaving his entire encampment behind. As the soldiers indulged in looting the camp, the Safavids lost the likelihood of capturing him. The belated pursuit resulted in the Safavid contingent’s entrance into unfamiliar terrain, causing it to be ambushed in a valley by the regrouped Bebe, which cost the pursuers around 4,000 lives. Nevertheless, the presence of a large Safavid army in the vicinity led to the rebels’ evacuation from their zone of occupation in Iran and retreat to their bases in the empire. The commander-general petitioned the Shah for permission to a cross-border hot pursuit with the aim of exterminating the enemy. The Shah, in his rescript, ordered him instead to correspond with the governor-general of Diyarbekir to coordinate the rest of the operations with the Ottoman side. Even though a pursuit could bear definitive results, wrote the Shah, and even though friendly relations with the Ottomans would rule out the possibility of any friction between the two states in the case of a Safavid hot pursuit of the Bebe into Ottoman territory, seditionists could present

⁹⁵⁹ “Bebe Süleyman maddesinin böyle nâ-tamam kalması rızâ-yı hümâyunuma muhâlif olup”

⁹⁶⁰ MHM.d. 110, ent. 3145.

the case, via superficial reports, as enmity between the two parties. Sultan-Hüseyin hoped that Ottoman officials would not miss the opportunity of crushing the rebellion this time, and commanded the demobilization of the army.⁹⁶¹

Once the Bebe-led rebel army had been dissolved as a result of constant pursuits and battles, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha sent a letter to Sultan-Hüseyin. The governor-general communicated that as of that moment, Süleyman Kirmac should no longer violate the borders, and necessary decrees were sent out to meet potential challenges. In response to gatekeeper-captain Ahmed Agha's mission, of which we have no more information, Sultan-Hüseyin had sent centurion⁹⁶² Mehmed Sâlih as his emissary to Baghdad, and in cooperation with Ottoman officials, a committee executed the in-situ [re-]demarcation of the borders along Şehrîzor and Safavid Kurdistan, for they had been breached by the rebels throughout the last decade. After the completion of this task, Mehmed Sâlih had returned to Baghdad. Çelebi İsmâil Pasha had then sent him to cooperate with the [re-]demarcation commission for the contested borders along Derne and Derteng. However, the Shah's emissary had returned to Iran before the completion of this second mission. Emissary Ahmed Agha's arrival back in Baghdad from the Shah's court had soon followed. Çelebi İsmâil Pasha requested that the Shah send a commissary to complete the unfinished [re-]demarcation at Derne and Derteng. By virtue of these demarcations, wrote the governor-general, lesser border officials would no longer dispute territory against their counterparts across the border. He also filed a complaint against Seyyid Ferecullah Xan, viceroy of Huveyze, that he had been aiding Mâni es-Sa'dûn and that he had been taking part in the

⁹⁶¹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 235-240.

⁹⁶² *yüzbaşı*

banditry committed between the roads connecting Basra to Baghdad. The Shah was expected to bring his vassal into line.⁹⁶³

In the summer of 1699, the empire duly started the military build-up in Iraq that, if need be, would suffice to fight a full-scale war. The governors-general of Diyarbekir (Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha), Mosul (Beyzâde Ali Pasha), Şehrîzor (Arabgirli Topal Yusuf Pasha), and Ergenetli Süleyman Pasha were mobilized with their household and provincial troops.⁹⁶⁴ In mid-May, ten additional Janissary companies were assigned to Iraq to join those serving in the Baghdad garrison and those already assigned to Basra, all subordinated now to the fourth-general of the Janissary Corps⁹⁶⁵, Boşnak Mustafa Agha. 500 Sublime Court munitioners also joined this reinforcement.⁹⁶⁶ In mid-June, the provisioning organization with the provinces neighboring Iraq began.⁹⁶⁷ In late June, a senior janissary captain⁹⁶⁸, Küçük Mustafa, was appointed as commanding-officer to the mercenaries of the governor-general of Baghdad.⁹⁶⁹ Although this large-scale mobilization was not officially set against the Safavids, the Sublime Porte, as a manifestation of the fact that it calculated in the possibility of also using the assembling army against the Safavids if they defaulted in fulfilling their commitments regarding the handover of

⁹⁶³ This letter in Nazmizâde, *Münşeât*, ff. 35b-38b, is undated and lacks the names of the governor-general and the shah. The only reference to an Ottoman gatekeeper-captain as emissary is found in Nasîri, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*. Though not including the name of the Ottoman emissary, this reference is the only clue for situating this letter in the chronology, and the content makes sense in view of the preceding and following events. Note the *inscriptio* “his sublime majesty” used for the shah.

⁹⁶⁴ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 435-436.

⁹⁶⁵ *zağarcıbaşı* [literally, chief-houndkeeper]

⁹⁶⁶ 64th cemaat, 6th bölük, 22th [or 26th] bölük, 31th bölük, 40th bölük, 44th bölük, 50th bölük, 57th bölük, 58th bölük, 60th bölük. MHM.d. 110, ent. 2420-2422.

⁹⁶⁷ MHM.d. 111, ent. 15, 285-286.

⁹⁶⁸ “sekban ocağından bölükbaşı”

⁹⁶⁹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 127.

the fortresses, had no problem sharing with János Komáromi, Imre Thököly's secretary, that these post-Karlowitz military preparations were indeed intended for the Iranian campaign.⁹⁷⁰

Thus, direct central involvement began in the assembling army, whose command would soon be upgraded to marshalship as a distinctive mark of the imperial character of the investment. The appointment of the incumbent fourth-general of the Jannissary Corps to the command of all janissaries in Iraq evokes the post-war extraordinary measures the province of Baghdad was subjected to for a decade after its recovery from the Safavids in 1638. The same goes for the appointment of a Sublime Court Corps officer as the commander of a governor-general's mercenary contingent, which is a wartime measure. This may hint at how critical the center now regarded the state of affairs in Iraq, whose north was partially hit by the Bebe rebels and south completely out of control. That at the same time governmental documents began to call the measures against the Basran upheaval a "campaign"⁹⁷¹ also indicates the magnitude of the investment.

In late June 1699, the imperial government rebuked Çelebi İsmâil Pasha harshly for neglecting his duties by decree concerning Süleyman of Bebe. He was given one last opportunity to finish off the remains of this rebellion. If the governor-general of Baghdad would display neglect despite the subordination of additional forces to his command, Mustafa II pledged to execute him.⁹⁷² We can assume that by this date, the center had not yet heard of Süleyman Kirmac's definitive escape. In any case, it decided to further invest in the army whose assemblage in Iraq had already been decided upon.

⁹⁷⁰ [János Komáromi,] *Imre Thököly'nin Kâtibi János Komáromi'nin Türkiye Günlükleri*, ed. Hüseyin Şevket Çağatay Çapraz (Ankara: Gece Kitaplığı, 2016), 123.

⁹⁷¹ "sefer", see, for example, MHM.d. 111, ent. 284, 1198.

⁹⁷² MHM.d. 111, ent. 79-80, 223-226, 228.

In early August 1699, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha forwarded a collective-petition signed by the judge, clergy, Sublime Court officers, and notables of Baghdad to the imperial government. Pointing out Iranian troops' gathering in Kirmanşah and appearance in Şehrîzor, the petitioners presented the objective of the Safavid army led by Hüseyin Xan Filî, whose real target was indeed the Bebe, as to be the occupation of Baghdad at the behest of the Shah. To this end, the petitioners exaggerated the Iranian army's size as to be over 150,000. Accordingly, they and the governor-general requested substantial reinforcements in troops, ammunition, and provisions, so that they could stand against any potential aggression. Iraq, whose north and south had been hit by large-scale rebellions, was now reportedly threatened at its center, which was currently the sole Ottoman stronghold with a firm stance in this frontier country. This necessitated a major mobilization whose scope would suffice to fight a full-scale war. The government juxtaposed this with the governor-general's separate incoming reports since the spring and declared in mid-August that peace had been concluded with all of the belligerents in the Great Turkish War; now, the empire was turning its focus towards reinstating order in Iraq. The military buildup there would continue at an even higher rate. In addition to the ongoing preparations, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha was created marshal, thus officially declaring a state of war in Iraq, though Safavid intentions could not be ascertained yet. Even the news of Sultan-Hüseyin's having demobilized the Safavid forces sent against the Bebe would not lower the level of the Ottoman mobilization; this demobilization would be attributed by the imperial court to the Safavids' cowering in the face of the declared state of war in Iraq.⁹⁷³

However, it is very likely that this was Çelebi İsmâil Pasha's own presentation of the events rather than the imperial government's perception. The marshal was also decreed to

⁹⁷³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 435-436; MHM.d. 111, ent. 318.

prioritize the Bebe insurrection, the original cause of his transfer from the governorate-general of Egypt to that of Baghdad. It was declared that none of the mobilized forces would be demobilized unless Şehrizor and Basra were rid of all opposition to state authority.⁹⁷⁴

Second master-of-the-horse Kara Bayram Agha was dispatched to Diyarbekir to make sure that provincial and feudal power holders obey governor-general Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha's summons,⁹⁷⁵ the marshal's appointed commander-general⁹⁷⁶ upon the Bebe, who together with his subordinated officials received the imperial-writ decreeing the capture of Süleyman Kirmac and the finalization of the Bebe issue, even if it required them to winter and summer in Şehrizor.⁹⁷⁷ Parallel to this, additional recruitment for the Imperial Army in Iraq army continued.⁹⁷⁸ The mobilization base for the projected Basra campaign was also extended from northern Iraq, northern Syria, and Kurdistan to as far as Amasya and Çorum in northeast-central Asia Minor.⁹⁷⁹ In the case of the protraction of this clean-up operation, this decree would mean that the governors of Diyarbekir, Van, Mosul, Aleppo, together with their subgovernors⁹⁸⁰ and seigneurs, would remain in Şehrizor and not in their areas of jurisdiction for seasons, or even a year. This, together with the successive waves of military buildup in Baghdad intended for Basra, was the indicator of the court's having really turned its full attention to Iraq.

⁹⁷⁴ MHM.d. 111, ent. 318. See also ent. 320, 324.

⁹⁷⁵ MHM.d. 111, ent. 326.

⁹⁷⁶ *başbuğ*

⁹⁷⁷ MHM.d. 111, ent. 327, 336.

⁹⁷⁸ 5,000 additional Janissaries were ordered to be recruited as commandos (*serdengeçti*) in Iraq. See in MHM.d. 111, ent. 329 the decree for all magistrates on the road from Scutari to Van declaring the arrival of the chief-major Ebubekir Çavuş and forty senior janissaries for the projected forty commando companies. The recruitment base consisted of formerly dismissed janissaries and the *kuloğlu*, who were to be readmitted to the corps after they would perform service as commandos. Also see ent. 330 and 332. However, most of them would desert upon arrival in Baghdad and the state would initiate a prosecution, ent. 1063.

⁹⁷⁹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 335. They were soon employed for the Bebe campaign, ent. 403.

⁹⁸⁰ *sancakbeyi*

The Porte's persistent warnings and the close watch it kept on the Bebe campaign bore results. Towards the end of the summer, the Ottoman forces under Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha's commandership-general dissolved the rebel remnants who had regrouped. Süleyman Kirmac first escaped to İmâdiye with just several of his men,⁹⁸¹ and then in the direction of Hakkâri – Van, where they sought refuge from several Kurdish tribes. Yet in the face of these tribes' declaration of absolute allegiance to the padishah, the fugitives had to hide in caves in nearby mountains. The Ottoman vanguard captured the seventeen Bebe-ally Kurdish seigneurs and lieutenants who were among the leading personages in the rebellion. The commander-general had them beheaded.⁹⁸² The last report about Süleyman Kirmac, who now had lost his entire following, was that he had been escaping in the direction of the Crimea in order to save his life.⁹⁸³

During this final phase of the cleanup operations against the Bebe, Mâni es-Sa'dûn began to reassemble his former Bedouin coalition and Ali-Merdan Xan resigned from the entrusteeship of Basra, declaring the duty impossible to perform in the face of the Bedouin opposition. In his stead, in early 1699, İbrâhim Xan was given the entrusteeship along with the governorship of Kûhigiyûle. From there, he brought 6,000 additional soldiers to Basra, where he attended to the fortifications and the manning of the garrison. Before long, as a result of Mâni's propaganda to promote a common Bedouin identity, and more importantly because of a convergence of interests, Seyyid Ferecullah Xan joined forces with the Müntefik. He even managed to oust İbrâhim Xan from Basra, but later the Safavid forces retook it. Seizing the

⁹⁸¹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 445-446, decrees issued in early September 1699 to Çelebi İsmâil Pasha and Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha for following up on this success and capturing the rebel leader so that the post-defeat regrouping of the rebels would not recur. Also see ent. 447-449.

⁹⁸² Their severed heads, which had been then sent to the imperial court, reached Constantinople on 24 November 1699 and were exhibited for several days before the Imperial Gate to be made an example of: Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 683-684. Süleyman Kirmac's two sons had remained in the possession of Çelebi İsmâil Pasha. Later, his successor Daltaban Mustafa Pasha would be decreed to take possession of and imprison them. MHM.d. 111, ent. 971.

⁹⁸³ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 240.

opportunity, Mâni made a sharp turn and sent a letter to Sultan-Hüseyin, in which he claimed that Seyyid Ferecullah had the potential to unite all Bedouins, both in [Ottoman] Basra and [Safavid] Huveyze, and fight for independence unless he was dealt with. Sultan-Hüseyin's attempt of luring Seyyid Ferecullah into a trap for arrest also failed. Evacuating his entire household from his seat of government, the deposed viceroy threatened the Shah with enmity at any cost if he would not be pardoned. As an initial measure, the Safavid troops returning from chasing the Bebe were assigned to support the xans in Basra and Huveyze, a move to reinforce the center's sanction power around the Persian Gulf region. After a brief reconciliation with the court, Seyyid Ferecullah sent his sons to pillage the countryside now ruled by the new viceroy and his relative, Seyyid Hibetullah. Isfahan's policy of attracting Ferecullah-ally Bedouin tribes resulted in his retreat and his rejoining with Mâni es-Sa'dûn with whatever remaining following he had. Together, they set out towards Cezâyîr, the Basran countryside. Sultan-Hüseyin sent the xans of Şûşter and Bahtiyârî as mediators with official papers to secure obedience, or at least non-enmity, from the former viceroy. Correspondence and meetings led to a reconciliation, but a last-minute letter from Mâni es-Sa'dûn, which declared the negotiations a trap for arrest, had Seyyid Ferecullah break the deal with the excuse that the Shah had not sworn upon God and the Prophet in his letter-of-quarter⁹⁸⁴. In this round, he also lost his sons' support. Led by the eldest among them, Seyyid Tahmasb, they defected to the Shah's side.⁹⁸⁵

Returning to the wilderness, Seyyid Ferecullah struck a new coalition of the Bedouin together with Mâni es-Sa'dûn, and the two held Basra under a three-month land blockade, which began at the end of January 1700. At one stage, they even managed to breach the walls with a 2,000-strong cavalry, but eventually, they had to retreat leaving behind 200 dead after being

⁹⁸⁴ *aman-nâme*

⁹⁸⁵ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 249-255; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1170. For İbrâhim Xan's Kûhigiyûle troops numbering 6,000, see *A Chronicle of Events*, 418.

defeated by the reinforced Safavid garrison. Seyid Ferecullah and Mâni withdrew to Cezâyîr, the rebel Bedouin's base within the empire. In September 1700, the royal court replaced İbrâhim Xan with Davud Xan as entrustee-governor of Basra, to whom also the governor of Kûhigiyyûle and the viceroy of Huveyze were to provide military support. Davud Xan was previously the entrustee-guardian of Kurna. This post was now filled by Îsâ Xan, governor of Şûşter. This change of entrustees gave the rebels a chance to revocer: to the base coalition of Benî Mûntefik and Âl-i Serâh, the Mushasha (Huveyzan Seyyids), Benî Salih, and Âl-i Arûs joined, and together they besieged Huveyze. The combined forces of the government and viceroy Seyyid Hibetullah were about the defeat the besiegers, but Hibetullah's own Bedouin withdrew from further hostilities against their kinsmen at the opposing side. When the central forces also eventually withdrew, the rebel Bedouin entered Muhsiniye, capital of Huveyze. However, they soon withdrew to carry back their booty, and the shah's government appointed Seyyid Ali, then under Davud Xan's surveillance in Basra, as the new viceroy. As a countermove against this arrangement, Seyyid Ferecullah had Seyyid Yusuf persuade Abdüşşân, chieftain of the Benî Lâm, to join the rebel coalition.⁹⁸⁶

This was not the first case that the Benî Lam, Ottoman vassals registered in the province of Baghdad, got involved in the Iranian side of the border. Several years earlier, in a different setting, Abdüşşân and his tribe had been engaged in hostilities with Seyyid Ferecullah. The latter eventually had the chieftain and his brother captured and sent to the shah's court. They were set free only after the governor-general of Baghdad had written a letter to the shah and, acknowledging that they had erred, interceded for pardon with reference to the peace conditions

⁹⁸⁶ *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1170-1171; Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 256-259.

and also on behalf of the Benî Lâm tribesmen who had vouched for their chieftain's penitence.⁹⁸⁷ But in 1700, the Benî Lâm did not hesitate to join forces with the Benî Müntefik, and also with Seyyid Ferecullah, its former enemy. Abdüşşân and Seyyid Yusuf defeated viceroy Seyyid Ali, and with the arrival of Seyyid Ferecullah and Mâni es-Sa'dûn, the rebel coalition besieged Muhsiniye once again. But in a sudden move, taking advantage of his personal acquaintance with Mahmud Beyg, the armor-bearer⁹⁸⁸ of Sultan-Hüseyin who was passing through Basra, Seyyid Ferecullah had this royal confidant intercede on his behalf at the court. He forwarded a reconciliation letter to the Shah and, in return for sending his son to reside at the royal court, reattained the viceroyship.⁹⁸⁹

Despite Seyyid Ferecullah's return to Huveyze, the misdeeds he had committed since his deposition from the trusteeship of Basra display a consistent pattern in the politics of the Gulf region valid for both sides of the border. The house of Mushasha, native to the region and viceroys of the principality of Huveyze, could and did join the Bedouin rebellion despite having previously fought against it and even having expelled it from the city of Basra. The rebellion led by Mâni es-Sa'dûn had already gained an interstate dimension once it had also begun destabilizing the Iranian side of the border. The rebels' expulsion from the provincial capital by the Mushasha and retreat to the countryside in Basra had constituted the next steps of this interstateization, because the shah's vassal had ended up as the temporary trustee of the padishah's province.

Now, this vassal, who had expelled the rebels from the city of Basra, which led to the inception of this second phase, joined the very same rebels who raided Huveyze and were still

⁹⁸⁷ Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, 33b-35b, the letter from the governor-general of Baghdad to the shah of Iran. The address "his sublime excellency (âlfî-cenab)" to the shah is not one but two steps below and thus not in conformity with the post-1688 official address "his most-sublime majesty".

⁹⁸⁸ *cebâdârbâşı*

⁹⁸⁹ Nasîrî, *Destûr-i Şehriyârân*, 259-262.

active in the Basran countryside. Meanwhile, the Shah's own agents had taken over in the fortresses of Basra. Thus, in territories subject both to the padishah and the shah via sovereignty, vassalage, and entrustment, the Bedouin coalition from both sides actively cooperated against the two allied states in an alternating pattern of allegiance. Seyyid Ferecullah's political move to regain the viceroyship did not mean much in the face of ever-changing equations. Restoring order around the Persian Gulf region was a priority not only of the padishah but also the shah. The latter's having invested militarily to Basra and Kurna, which he was holding in entrustment until the arrival of Ottoman officials, and having requested a campaign with a large army in order to crush any remaining opposition are better understood when this convergence of interests is taken into consideration.

Once the Ottomans definitively crushed the Bebe rebellion, the pursuing Iranian forces that had entered Ottoman territory to hit the rebels in their strongholds handed over these positions to Ottoman officials, who in turn re-garrisoned them. The governor of Şehrizer, Arabgirli Topal Yusuf Pasha, confirmed the definitive restoration of the old border, though the cleanup of some leftover rebels would necessitate further correspondence between Iranian xans, Ottoman pashas, and the courts.⁹⁹⁰ This heralded the end of the Bebe rebellion, which had occupied sizable territory in Ottoman and Safavid Kurdistan throughout the last decade and tested the parties' dedication to the alliance. No sooner than this, in early November 1699, the empire fully concentrated its recent military investment in Iraq southwards in the direction of Basra, with the objectives of clearing it of rebels and installing its governor.⁹⁹¹ They had done

⁹⁹⁰ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1028-1032 – decrees to the governors of Şehrizer, Mosul, the seigneur of Köy, and the new subgovernor of Bebe (early May 1700). They were to act together under the command of the former in cleaning up the region of any rebel remnants.

⁹⁹¹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 532-540, decrees to various governors and officers involved in the mobilization in Iraq. A sizeable contingent was still assigned to Şehrizer for potential clashes. ent. 541, 543.

sone with an eye to launching the operations next spring, as it was almost the end of autumn.⁹⁹² The military buildup continued with a commission of casting new ammunition for the fortress of Baghdad in 17 December 1699,⁹⁹³ redeployment of mining-sapping masters⁹⁹⁴ and grenadiers,⁹⁹⁵ orders to recruit mercenaries,⁹⁹⁶ and directives in mid-February 1700 to mobilize 1,500 Sublime Court cavalymen stationed in various Asia Minor provinces.⁹⁹⁷

In mid-February 1700, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha was transferred to Van for having failed to perform as expected from him, as he was held personally responsible for the delay in the Basran campaign. His reluctance to coordinate with the Iranians must have been the main cause. Daltaban Mustafa Pasha duly replaced him, while in Baghdad the stockpiling of ammunition transferred from neighboring provinces continued throughout the spring. As yet another additional measure, the former admiral of the Danube, Aşçıoğlu Mehmed, was given the newly established Admiralship of the Shatt (as a department of the Imperial Navy) and assigned to the campaign along with Daltaban Mustafa Pasha.⁹⁹⁸ The 4,200-strong crew was enlisted from

⁹⁹² Nevertheless, the state was still expecting that the Basran affair be dealt with uninterruptedly. See the decrees MHM.d. 111, ent. 666-671.

⁹⁹³ See in AE. SMST.II. 3051 the treasury note (dated 17 December 1699) for the allocation of funds to pay the wages of the hired workers.

⁹⁹⁴ AE. SMST.II. 9171 – the grand-vizierial mandate to redeploy the master-miner-sappers Murtazâ from Sofia, Hasan from Sofia, and Arslan from Tırhala to Baghdad, and the deputy of the chief-miner-sapper's credentials to their mastery.

⁹⁹⁵ See the decree to Aşcızade Mehmed Pasha regarding the transportation of grenadier Osman, redeployed to Iraq for the campaign, MHM.d. 111, ent. 1343.

⁹⁹⁶ İE. AS. 4140; AE. SMST.II. 13795. Orders to recruit 1,500 mercenaries under the command of İkinci Ali *bölükbaşı*. Half of these mercenaries arrived in Baghdad as of mid-January 1700. By early March 1700, most of them had deserted, AE. SMST.II. 681. Also see the note below.

⁹⁹⁷ İE. DH. 1800; MHM.d. 111, ent. 799, 836. Also see ent. 838-848, 850, 858, 878, 887-888 for mobilization orders to office-holders assigned to Baghdad whose incumbents had changed. The decree regarding the Sublime Court Cavalry assignment was repeated in late June 1699, ent. 1163-1164.

⁹⁹⁸ İE. DH.1831; MHM.d. 111, ent. 1194; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 681, 698; Râşid, *Târih*, 584; MHM.d. 111, ent. 946, 1009, 1027, 1195. The dating of Daltaban Mustafa Pasha's appointment in the chronicles is incorrect. The decrees to the governor-general of Baghdad were issued until the spring of 1700 in the name of Çelebi İsmâil Pasha. See also ent. 1233-1235, 1308-1309, 1522, and 1526 for more information on food and ammunition provisioning. See ent. 1512 and 1739 for cash remittances from outside of Iraq to support the extra costs of the campaign.

among the seasoned seaman of the Imperial Navy.⁹⁹⁹ As of 20 February, the building of sixty frigates plus sixty assault-boats¹⁰⁰⁰ in Birecik (a ship-building subprovince by the Euphrates in the north of Rakka¹⁰⁰¹) by personnel sent from the capital¹⁰⁰² for this new admiralship was already in progress.¹⁰⁰³ This fleet was later furnished with naval artillery of 420 *koğuş*, 300 battering-guns¹⁰⁰⁴ of *yan-saçma* type, four mortars¹⁰⁰⁵,¹⁰⁰⁶ and additional ammunition sent from the capital.¹⁰⁰⁷

After being appointed to Van, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha, already feeling insecure from his political rival, grand-vizier Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha, feared for his life this time as a result of his fall from favor due to his unsatisfactory performance in settling the Basran affair. Riding out of the fortress at the head of roughly 150 of his men with the pretext of disciplining some Kurdish tribal rebels, he escaped to Iran. Having recourse to the governor-general of Çukursa'd, he sought refuge at the shah's court. Most probably due to the Safavids' not wanting to impair relations with the Ottomans over such an issue, he was not admitted into royal service. According to the first news that had reached the Ottoman court, the falsity of which would later

⁹⁹⁹ See the decree issued in late July / early August 1700 to Aşçıoğlu Mehmed Pasha regarding the remittance of salaries for the crew of the Shatt Admiralship in MHM.d. 111, ent. 1313.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *şayka*

¹⁰⁰¹ İdris Bostan, "Birecik," *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 6 (1992): 187-189. Having a navy-yard and piers, Birecik was the northernmost station in the river traffic on the Euphrates. It had an important place in the eyes of the Ottoman State regarding Iraq thanks to its function as a hub for military and commercial shipments to Baghdad.

¹⁰⁰² Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 444-445; Râşid, *Târih* I, 597. The caulkers, carpenters, and ship-builders along with their equipment were shipped from Constantinople with five galleons to Payas.

¹⁰⁰³ İE. BH. 908 – governmental correspondence regarding the determination of salary for the 1,300 sailors (seventy per frigate) by taking into account their Danubian counterparts and special arrangements. The annual salary per sailor was prescribed as 37.5 thaler. Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 331. See also TSMA.E. 430/56 for an undated summation on the procurement of lumber, carpenters, and caulkers, and the appointment of an admiral and captains to the fleet in Iraq, for which twenty additional ships were being built. The organization of this redirection of manpower and material involved different corners of the empire such as Galata, Rhodes, Tripoli, Trebizond, and Antioch.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *kale-kûb*

¹⁰⁰⁵ *havan*

¹⁰⁰⁶ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 331.

¹⁰⁰⁷ A.DVN. 279/20.

come to light, he received permission to reside in Isfahan and settled down there (the Sublime Porte would learn about his defection on 20 February 1701).¹⁰⁰⁸

In late April 1700, an imperial-writ nominated Beyzâde Ali Pasha as the new governor-general of Basra and instructed Daltaban Mustafa Pasha exactly how the land and naval forces should proceed southwards in a coordinated manner, with precise orders regarding when to encamp and communicate with the Iranian entrustee-xans. The restitution of the fortresses of Kurna and Basra was the primary objective. On the other hand, they had a secondary objective of subduing the rebels on the countryside. If the xans handed over the fortresses as “enunciated¹⁰⁰⁹” in the Shah’s epistle, the Ottoman forces were to garrison them. If, contrary to the Shah’s rescripts and commitments, the xans defaulted in restoring the fortresses, it was to be assumed that they would have been corrupted by the Bedouin bandits, in which case Daltaban Mustafa Pasha was to initiate the siege “without hesitation¹⁰¹⁰” and without asking for further instructions from the center. Kurna and Basra were to be “liberated¹⁰¹¹” at all costs, either via friendly handover or military engagement.¹⁰¹² Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha separately wrote to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha:

pull Yourself together. . . . The affairs with which You are commissioned are matters of utmost importance, an issue which cost this many treasuries, which necessitated the transport of this many troops from abodes afar, and had the Triumphant Legions undergo the hardships of campaign. God forbid, after all, if a discomforting situation arises from circumstances that bring about the missing of the purpose due to mis-taken measures and lack of insight, . . . there will be no means of tranquilization for Their [i.e. Mustafa II’s] chosroes-like wrath. . . . Now, You are in such a great affair. The Potentately August

¹⁰⁰⁸ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 462; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 753; Râşid, *Târih*, 625.

¹⁰⁰⁹ “tasrih”

¹⁰¹⁰ “bilâ tereddüd”

¹⁰¹¹ “istihlas”

¹⁰¹² MHM.d. 111, ent. 1194-1195: Beyzâde Ali Pasha was nominated with the *inzimâm* of the governorship-general of Aleppo. However, Aleppo would be conferred to another governor-general at the beginning of the Basra campaign: Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 460.

leaning [of Mustafa II's thoughts] is constantly cruising towards Baghdad and Basra; They [i.e. Mustafa II] are inquiring about news and developments every time.¹⁰¹³

In late May 1700, fourth-general of the Janissary Corps Boşnak Mustafa Agha, extraordinary janissary commanding-officer in Iraq, was promoted to the office of chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps while still keeping his extraordinary assignment.¹⁰¹⁴ At the same time, the sixth-general¹⁰¹⁵ of the corps was also in the Baghdad garrison,¹⁰¹⁶ to whom the two chiefs-of-staff of the Sublime Court Cavalry were also ordered to join at the head of a battalion.¹⁰¹⁷ Throughout the summer, mobilizations for Iraq, which had by then extended to central Asia Minor,¹⁰¹⁸ continued. A decree declared in mid-June that if Basra could not be restored until next year, Mustafa II would do it in person at the head of the army, and the dignitaries on campaign would be held directly responsible for the failure.¹⁰¹⁹ The imperial court expressly showed that it would not tolerate postponement: this decree was conveyed with the former vice-marshal of the Imperial Council, Çatrapatraoğlu Ahmed Bey, an unconventionally high-ranking official for such

¹⁰¹³ “kendinizi cem’ . . . eyleyesiz. Memur olduğunuz umur hatb-i azîmdir. Bu kadar hazâin harç u sarf olunup, bilvd-i ba’ideden asker nakline muhtâç olmuş ve bu kadar asâkir-i mansûre irtikâb-ı metâ’ib-i sefer eylemiş bir iştir. Allah hıfz eyleye, sû-i tedbir ve adem-i basîretten, velhâsıl fevvvt-ı maksûdu müstetbi’ olur keyfiyetlerden nâ-mülâyim hâlet zuhûr edecek olursa, . . . teskîn-i gazab-ı hüsrevânelerine bir tarikle vesâil ü esbâb bulunmaz. . . . Hâliyâ böyle bir emr-i azîm içindediniz. Tab’-ı hümâyun-ı şehriyâri dâimâ Bağdad ve Basra tarafına mütereddîd olup, her bâr istihbâr-ı ahvâl ü âsâr ederler.” This passage is indeed a part of the letter that was to serve as a last warning to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha for quitting oppression and misconduct, for which his governorship in Rakka came to be known at court. On the verge of fall from favor and an implied execution, satisfactory performance in Iraq would be his last chance, for which Amcazâde said he had spent great efforts to convince Mustafa II for one last time. *Anonim Osmanlı Târîhi*, 193-195.

¹⁰¹⁴ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1059.

¹⁰¹⁵ *turnacıbaşı* [literally, chief-cranekeeper]

¹⁰¹⁶ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1225.

¹⁰¹⁷ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1206-1207, decrees to Ali Agha and Receb Agha, the two chiefs-of staff of the Sublime Court Cavalry Corps (*Sipah Ocağı'nın başkethüdâsı*, *Silahdar Ocağı'nın başkethüdâsı*). Also see the decrees in ent. 1447-1448. Also see ent. 1242-1243 and 1445 for the organization of the assigned janissaries' transportation across Asia Minor.

¹⁰¹⁸ see the mobilization decree to Rişvanoğlu Halil, governor of Maraş, issued in early June 1699: MHM.d. 111, ent. 1106; the decree to the governor of Rum issued in late June 1700 ordering him to be in Baghdad by the beginning of September at the head of his troops: ent. 1212; the decree to the governor of Karaman issued in late June / early August 1700, ent. 1254-1255; the decree regarding the mobilization of the subgovernor of Amasya, ent. 1473. In November 1700, all provincial land troops from Rakka, Maraş, and their adjunct territories would be withdrawn from Iraq to join the other punitive army being assembled against rebel Hüseyin el-Abbas: MHM.d. 111, ent. 1529-1535, 1591-1597, 1599 and 1601.

¹⁰¹⁹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1198-1199.

a delivery. He would accompany the army throughout the campaign.¹⁰²⁰ Additionally, although he had already been mobilized and was on his way, the subgovernor¹⁰²¹ of Amasya (Rahtvan Mehmed Pasha) was executed by imperial decree with the accusation of having lingered in Mosul.¹⁰²² Following that, the court also prescribed that Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha (governor-general of Mosul), Boşnak Mustafa Agha (with certain janissary companies), and the mercenaries (to be enlisted with a 50,000-thaler extra allocation) stay in the garrison of Baghdad throughout the campaign.¹⁰²³ Upon Daltaban Mustafa Pasha's subsequent petition, Boşnak Mustafa Agha's reassignment to the campaigning army was opted for, though some additional janissary companies would still continue to garrison Baghdad during the operations.¹⁰²⁴ Apart from the assignment of extra Sublime Court troops, with still extra allocations, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha attended to the provisions and pooled together additional artillery of four bombards, nine culverins¹⁰²⁵, and various mortar pieces from his household. He perfected his household troops and set up bridges over possible river crossings.¹⁰²⁶ He also established the fleet of Baghdad¹⁰²⁷, apparently funded by the province's revenues but, in terms of command, subordinated to the Admiralty of the Shatt. For this, he had thirty frigates and several-hundred barges¹⁰²⁸ built, manned them with 500 to 600 seamen, and equipped them with field-guns. To command this new fleet, Cezâyirli İbrâhim was appointed admiral of Baghdad¹⁰²⁹.¹⁰³⁰

¹⁰²⁰ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 328, see the rest of the treatise for his participation, especially for making a name for himself with his skill in hunting.

¹⁰²¹ *mutasarrıf*

¹⁰²² Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 330.

¹⁰²³ A.DVN. 278/50; MHM.d. 111, ent. 1246. Also see ent. 1247-1280, 1282, 1284, 1333-1338, 1363, 1396, 1405, 1418, 1474-1475, 1690, 1706, and AE. SMST.II 1033 for the last round of mobilization orders that continued until November 1700.

¹⁰²⁴ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1457.

¹⁰²⁵ *kolonborna/kolunburna*

¹⁰²⁶ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 330.

¹⁰²⁷ *Bağdad Donanması*

¹⁰²⁸ *üstüaçık*

¹⁰²⁹ *Bağdad başkapudamı*

Considering what the available sources have to offer, the Sublime Porte seems to have followed common sense in listening to the Safavid Prime Minister's advice for assembling a large army. It is not clear why Çelebi İsmâil Pasha had dismissed the entire letter as trickery. He might have expected a personal gain from not marching southwards with a large army, or he might simply have believed that the campaign could best be launched in another manner. No matter what his motives were, the time which had been lost in 1699 must have shown the imperial government that its Iraq policy could not be satisfactorily executed as long as the governor-general of Baghdad was not working towards its actualization with might and main. Thus, his successor must have been instructed beforehand what was expected of him regarding the reestablishment of state authority in southern Iraq: coordination with the Iranians and a major tour de force clearing all resistance on the army's way. The creation of the Admiralship of the Shatt was on the other hand another measure indicating the state's plan of essentially expanding its zone of authority in Iraq even in comparison to the pre-rebellion period.

It is beyond any doubt that since the spring of 1699, the Ottoman State, which now had its hands free after the signing of the Peace of Karlowitz, was determined to re-impose its sovereign rights in Basra without compromise. The extent of the mobilization, the ranks of the campaigning commanders, and the boosted presence of the Sublime Court Corps in Iraq makes it evident that an army large enough to wage war and besiege fortresses was fielded. The subsequent creation of a marshalship made the already existing state of war official.

From the tone of the above-mentioned imperial-writ, it can be understood that the Iranian xans' handing Kurna and Basra over to the Ottomans without causing any strife was considered

¹⁰³⁰ CV. BH. 1729: The admiral's annual salary was 100,000 aspers; Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 330. Indeed, these frigates, transports, and bridges must have been built for the Basran campaign by his predecessor Çelebi İsmâil Pasha, whose exposition to the center had also triggered the establishing of the Admiralship of the Shatt. Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 444.

as the stronger possibility. But, in the event that they did not immediately evacuate these fortresses, the Ottoman State would not hesitate to put this Imperial Army to use. The orders that in the case of the xans' defaulting Daltaban Mustafa Pasha take these fortresses by force, without consulting the center again, testify to the finality of this decision. The description of the scenario of defaulting also shows that in this case, the xans would no longer be considered legal custodians of the padishah's property from the Safavid side but rebel-collaborators acting contrary to the precise orders and commitments of the Shah. In this way, the Ottoman Empire would justify to Iran why it had to resort to arms. From the Sublime Porte's own legal point of view, it would not necessarily be fighting a war with Iran but rather crushing disobedience in its sovereign territory. In this respect, the Ottoman investiture document sent to the first Iranian trustee of Basra attains further importance, as it was a clear move by the Ottoman side to register the Iranian xans' custodian status in Basra, which had already been declared officially by Sultan-Hüseyin. Thus, the Porte was legally well-equipped, by official commitments and rescripts of the shah as well as by Ottoman documents, to present the second scenario as one in which the empire would not be initiating any hostilities with Iran. The possibility that the Safavids might react as a state was not mentioned in writing, probably because it was not really entertained as a possibility. Under normal circumstances, as was the case since the conclusion of the Pacification of Zuhab, both the Ottoman Empire and Iran knew well that the latter had nothing to gain from a military show-down. Indeed, it may well be said that by nourishing bilateral relations as a policy at a time when its senior partner was militarily and economically paralyzed, Iran showed an awareness of this fact.

That the governor-general of Mosul would remain throughout the Basran campaign in the city of Baghdad at the head of the contingents that were left behind was also an indirect message

intended for Iran. If the purpose had just been to maintain authority in the garrison and the province while its own governor-general was on campaign, his own household would have sufficed given that enough forces were left behind. However, another governor-general's being assigned for temporary garrison duty must have been directly related to the level at which the empire wanted to embody itself in a second point of concentration within Iraq while an Imperial Army was campaigning in Basra. The reports of Safavid preparations for an offensive upon Baghdad had come out false, but the yet-extra military investment it had triggered was not terminated at all. By definition of his office, a governor-general had the authority to respond politically and militarily to a development of interstate significance. Thus, in the case of a strife with Iran that could arise if the entrustee-xans would not hand over the fortresses causing the Ottomans to besiege them, the empire would still have sufficient political and military presence in central Iraq to be put to use if need be. The earlier order that the chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps also stay in Baghdad, which then had been revoked upon Daltaban Mustafa Pasha's request, was also a measure taken in the same direction. Taking into consideration the scope of the mobilization for Iraq, it can be easily said that just in case it was needed, the capacity to fight a full-scale war would be maintained there for the duration of the campaign.

That the signing of the Peace of Karlowitz had delivered the Ottoman Empire from the burden of the protracted war fought simultaneously against four great powers and that this would have immediate consequences for the eastern frontier must not have escaped Iranians' notice. In March 1700, the governor of Nahçıvan asked the Germans passing from his area of jurisdiction:

what kind of a peace [has] the Great-Regent [i.e. Emperor] of the Germans . . . made with the [Great-]Sultan of Istanbul and for how many years, why [has] the Great-Regent of Germany not continued to chastise the [Great-]Sultan, whether this Great-Regent was

from the lineage of the one (Rudolf II) who, one hundred years ago, had formed an alliance with . . . Shah Abbas against the Turks, and further [question] of this kind¹⁰³¹

Probably upon observing the Ottoman mobilization, the scale of which was unprecedented for peacetime, Iranian frontier officials tried to gather information as to whether the empire still had to commit most of its power to against the Holy League, because the signs they had observed suggested the otherwise. Apparently, the Sublime Porte had not notified the royal government as to the details of the Peace of Karlowitz, and the officials of the latter were trying to ascertain the fate of the Great Turkish War in order to be able to estimate how much force the empire could redeploy from its northwestern to southeastern frontier. The Iranians would not be left puzzled for long.

Once the launch of the campaign became certain, the Sublime Porte set up yet another diplomatic contact with the royal government. In late June 1700, Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha sent a letter¹⁰³² to his Iranian counterpart, Muhammed Tâhir Kazvînî “his sublime excellency, the recourse of deputyship, gauge of grand[-viziership].¹⁰³³” After evoking the hereditary ancient pact between the Shah and the Supreme-Shah, the Grand-Vizier excused himself for the two years that had passed since the Shah’s notifying them of the Iranian entry to Basra, presenting its keys to the padishah, and inviting the Ottomans to take over via the Rüstem Zengene embassy. The excuse he gave was that the cleanup operations against Süleyman Kirmac had been given due precedence; the “extirpation¹⁰³⁴” of this rebel chieftain was also announced by this occasion. Beyzâde Ali Pasha’s nomination as governor-general of Basra and Daltaban Mustafa Pasha’s

¹⁰³¹ “was der Groß-Regent der Teuschen (er verstunde dadurch Ihre Römische Kaiserliche Majestaet) mit dem [Groß-]Sultan von Stamboul für einen Frieden gemacht / und auff wie viele Jahr? warumb der Groß-Regent von Teuschland nicht fortgefahren / den [Groß-]Sultan zu züchtigen? ob dieser Groß-Regent seie von dem Geschlecht dessen (Rudolphi II.) der vor 100 Jahren eine Bündnuß mit dem Groß-Cham (Groß-König) aus Persien Schah Abas wider die Türcken habe auffgerichtet? und mehr dergleicher?” Franz Caspar Schillinger, *Persianische und Ost-Indianische Reis*, (Nürnberg: in Verlegung Johann Christoph Lochners / Buchhaendlers, 1709), 142

¹⁰³² NMH.d. 5, ent. 180; *Münşeat Mecmuası*, ff. 5a-6b (with slight differences).

¹⁰³³ “cenâb-ı meâli-meâb-ı vekâlet-iyâb, sadâret-nisâb”

¹⁰³⁴ “‘istîsâl”

commission to carry out his installment was officially conveyed to the Safavid side. With reference to the “brotherhood, union, and harmony¹⁰³⁵” therebetween, the Grand-Vizier stated: “it is expected that they [i.e. the Prime-Minister, the Safavid side] assist in the execution of the pact . . . and hand over the country of Basra and Kurna to the aforementioned vizier[s].¹⁰³⁶”

To the same effect, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha’s customary letter-of-friendship¹⁰³⁷ to the Safavid prime-minister emphasized the current cordial relations and vicinity rights. From this letter, it is also understood that the Prime-Minister had already established correspondence with the new governor-general.¹⁰³⁸

Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha’s letter, in full conformity with the post-1686 accord in titulature and hierarchy, officially announced the upcoming Ottoman campaign to the Safavid side. Through its unmistakable preciseness and conciseness in comparison to other samples of this genre, it reveals that, after Sultan-Hüseyin’s written commitments and assurances, the Sublime Porte wanted to give the impression that it did not calculate in the possibility of a clash with the Safavids. As a result of the outward assuredness from the other party, it was deemed sufficient to mention the initiation of the campaign and the names of the two governors-general whose participation, among others, would concern the Iranians, while information on the level, scope, and objectives of the investment was withheld. This was an implied message to the Safavids that apart from the handover of the mentioned fortresses, whatever was about to happen in Iraq was none of their business, evoking the Iranians’ trustee status and the padishah’s sovereign rights. The Porte no doubt knew that the scale of the mobilization in Iraq would soon

¹⁰³⁵ “uhuvvet . . . ittihad . . . tevâfuk”

¹⁰³⁶ “Basra ülkesi ve Kurna’yı vezîr-i müşârünileyhe teslim ve ifâ-yı ahd. . . e himmetleri melhûzdur”

¹⁰³⁷ *muhabbet-name*

¹⁰³⁸ Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, 39b-40a. The Prime-Minister’s *inscriptio* included “his sublime majesty.” Although the names and a dating are missing, by taking into consideration that the letters in this compilation are in chronological order and that this letter is the fourth to last of its kind, this one can be attributed to the fourth to last governor-general of Baghdad Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi saw, namely Daltaban Mustafa Pasha.

become known at the other side of the border as well. By not hinting at the state of war, it must have wanted to keep its eastern neighbor on the hop, though forecasts as to a potential offensive against Iran were preempted by the official declaration of the primary objective.

Throughout the fall of 1700, the assigned troops gradually joined the encampment outside the walls of Baghdad with processional entries: the companies under the personal command of the chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps on December 13, the marshal at the head of his household troops and the provincial council of Baghdad (among others the chiefs of the financial bureau, comptroller Celeb Üskübî Mustafa Efendi, and council-master Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi) on December 18, and at the head of their household and provincial troops Mısırlı Bıyıklı Mehmed Pasha (governor-general of Diyarbekir), Topal Yusuf Pasha (governor-general of Şehrizer), Karakulak Aşçı Mustafa Pasha (governor of Rum), Eyüp Pasha (governor of Karaman), and Hacı Ali Pasha (subgovernor¹⁰³⁹ of Birecik). Aşçıoğlu Mehmed Pasha and Beyzâde Ali Pasha brought the Shatt Fleet on 18 January 1701 to the nearby pier Rıdvâniye. As the assigned troops were gathering, privy-counsellor¹⁰⁴⁰ Bilal Agha, sent from the capital on 23 October 1700, arrived in the encampment with an imperial-writ attached to marshalship regalia¹⁰⁴¹ and, after a processional entry to the war council, invested Daltaban Mustafa Pasha with marshalship in the presence of the entire army. This confirmed his ability to exercise unrestricted, grand-vizierial powers without any need for additional approval from the center.¹⁰⁴² Although the dimension of the campaign that concerned the Safavids was – probably intentionally – marginalized both in the Grand-Vizier’s letter to the Prime-Minister and in the

¹⁰³⁹ *mutasarrıf*

¹⁰⁴⁰ *hassa musahibi*

¹⁰⁴¹ a robe of honor of sewed sable fur, a sword with bejeweled sheath.

¹⁰⁴² Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 332-336; MHM.d. 111, ent. 1520; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 456-457, 473; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 706-707. See also Bıyıklı Mehmed Pasha’s execution, Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 713

entire Ottoman internal correspondence, the insertion of this imperial-writ into the imperial epistles register,¹⁰⁴³ which normally covered the padishah's and the grand-vizier's correspondence with foreign and tributary addressees, testifies to the direct relevance the creation of a marshal in Iraq had to Iran.

By virtue of being marshal, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha possessed the authority to make final decisions with grand-vizierial powers while on campaign in Iraq. An Imperial Army of over 40,000¹⁰⁴⁴ with a marshal, two other viziers, the chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps, four other governors, field- and siege artillery, and a brand new, professionally-manned, artillery-equipped, admiral-led fleet of eighty-four frigates, several-thousand seamen and hundreds of smaller vessels, in addition to which a governor-general and additional janissary companies stood watch in the fortress of Baghdad, were in every respect more than enough for cleaning up the rebel remnants. This was indeed intended for making a tour de force before the Safavids during Kurna and Basra's handover, or for retaking these fortresses by force from the entrustee-xans if need be. To this, it must also be added that most of the commanders, the marshal above all, the admiral, and the janissary chief-of-staff, and a large part of the troops subordinated to them, were distinguished, battle-trying veterans of the Great Turkish War. In the event that the campaign would somehow lead to a conflict with Iran, the Ottoman military presence in Iraq, which had the official status of an Imperial Army, was sufficient to wage a major war until being upgraded to *the* Imperial Army with further reinforcements.

None of the orders issued to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha included instructions about what to do if they became militarily engaged with the shah's troops; it must be noted that the perceived possibility of a clash with Iran, which was regarded separately from the default by the entrustee-

¹⁰⁴³ NHM.d. 5, ent. 186.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 708.

xans, was quite low. On the one hand, as its essential policy since 1686, the Safavid court had been taking initiative to bring bilateral relations from a state of non-hostility to that of *perpetual peace in alliance*. On the other hand, as a particular policy concerning Basra, it was the Safavid side that had encouraged a large-scale campaign. Thus, under normal circumstances, the Imperial Army present in Iraq would not bring harm to the relations; it would be put to use to reinstate state authority. Any question of legitimacy that could have originated from the empire's returning to Basra via only installing a governor, which might have resembled the pre-1667 status of *autonomous-fiefdom* or even the earlier one of *tributary-dominion* for some observers, was out of the question. Thus, Basra's post-1668 status as a regular province was to be restored not only in legal terms but also through a major tour de force. On the other hand, no room was left either for the Iranian entrustee-xans to present their potential default in handing over the fortresses as a case of incoordination between the two sides. A marshal under whom a chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps and an Imperial Navy admiral along with other viziers served, did not represent the state in the capacity a vizier-led provincial establishment would during normal times; with the grand-vizierial powers the marshal possessed, any opposition to him was to be taken as a direct opposition to the padishah's absolute-deputy.

Once the scale of the Ottoman mobilization became apparent, Davud Xan, violating his commission and acting contrary to Sultan-Hüseyin's commitment, envisaged to keep the fortresses – probably independent from any ruler, following in the footsteps of the similar attempts by Efrâsiyaboğlu Hüseyin, Mâni es-Sa'dûn, and Seyyid Ferecullah. On the eve of the campaign, in return for peaceful coexistence, the Bedouin on the countryside convinced the entrustee-xan of their ability to deny the Imperial Army passage over the Euphrates and the Tigris. Agreeing with the deal, Davud Xan declared the countryside the Bedouin's, sent gifts,

and even gave a commitment – without Sultan-Hüseyin’s knowledge – that upon performing this service, the Shah would reward them duly. As a part of his design to remain in possession of the fortresses of Basra and Kurna, he even used his extraordinary authority by means of summoning a 40,000-strong Iranian army to Devrak in the name of the shah. This force was kept at the border point, to be employed immediately upon necessity. Though the entrustee-xan shied away from bringing this army into the province that legally belonged to the padishah, even its provisions were transferred to Basra. Moreover, he erected a new fort at Gûridilân, across from Basra, manned it, strengthened the fortifications of the city of Basra, and built up a fleet.¹⁰⁴⁵ According to the later inquiry by the Russian minister-resident at Constantinople, Pyots Andreyevich Tolstoy, this army was to be put to use to entrench Safavid, or Davud Xan’s, rule in Basra in the case that the empire fail to assert its authority in an undisputed manner.¹⁰⁴⁶ In short, Davud Xan was preparing to put up a resistance that had the potential of leading to an Ottoman-Safavid war in the event that the former would recognize the resistance as the Shah’s policy or that the latter would choose to stand behind the entrustee-governor’s fait accompli.

The assembled Imperial Army and the fleet marched out in procession on 29 January 1701 from the field of Karakapı. As the campaigners proceeded with the army’s marsh-filling and the fleet’s pontoon-bridge-building operations, various Bedouin chieftains approached to pay homage, which also conformed to the Ottoman policy, hence, readmittance to the imperial regime was not spared from them. Eventually, the leaders of the Bedouin coalition submitted to the House of Osman one by one: on February 17, at the way station Hantur, Seyyid Ferecullah’s nephew Seyyid Yusuf was received into the presence of the marshal with the intercession of

¹⁰⁴⁵ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 708.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Tolstoy’un Gizli Raporlarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu. İstanbul’daki Rus Büyükelçi Pyotr Andreyeviç Tolstoy ve Onun Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’na Dâir Hâtıraları*. ed. M. R. Arunova, F. S. Oreşkova, İlyas Kamalov., trans. İbrâhim Allahverdi (İstanbul: Yeditepe, 2013), 77.

Abdüşşân of Benî Lâm, who himself had already paid alligence to the padishah and joined the campaign. The request that their ally Seyyid Ferecullah be given a letter-of-conciliation¹⁰⁴⁷, for he sought Ottoman asylum after his conflicts with the Shah, was accepted by Daltaban Mustafa Pasha. Likewise, upon Mâni es-Sa'dûn's letter of repentance and obedience, he was given conditional quarter. On February 22, at the way station by the shrine of Abdullah b. Ali b. Ebutâlib, Davud Xan's letter to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha arrived with a messenger. Opened and read aloud, its content was found "vague, indicating independence, [and] unsuitably equivocating"^{1048,1049} Davud Xan even claimed that his investiture with Basra included full independence [in decision-making] – a claim no Safavid document supported. In order to decide the fate of the fortresses, he asked for a twenty- to thirty-day respite. By this time, Davud Xan's plan of denying the Ottomans access to southern Iraq with the help of the Bedouin had already failed. The tribes, daunted by the might of the advancing army, the sight of which made them evaluate the scale of the mobilization as sufficient to fight a war with Iran, swore allegiance to the padishah. The Bedouin army dispersed, and their chieftains, following the example of and counsel by Abdüşşân of Benî Lâm, came to the presence of the marshal to pay homage, one by one.¹⁰⁵⁰

In order to make clear the "sealed objective"¹⁰⁵¹ of the campaign to the entrustee-xan, the marshal had the council-master of Baghdad, Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi, pen a reply concurrently with the Imperial Army's resumed march upon Basra, a clear message that the

¹⁰⁴⁷ *istimâlet-nâme*

¹⁰⁴⁸ "mübhem, müş'ir-i istiklâl, . . . nâ-münâsip tatvîl-i kelâm"

¹⁰⁴⁹ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 337, 339, 341-344; compare missing words and phrases with the same treatise inserted into Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 338-345.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 709-711.

¹⁰⁵¹ "emr-i mahtûm", see the reference below to the letter.

points touched upon in this letter of monition were no empty threats¹⁰⁵², and dispatched it on February 23 with his agent Eyüp Agha, who was accompanying the xan's man back:

Your letter and men have arrived . . . at a distance of one or two way stations to Kurna . . . [In] Your letter, . . . as to the delivery of the mentioned province to the [Ottoman] Sublime State, . . . at times the malignity of the Bedouin has been propounded and at times it has been referred to that the recovery of the mentioned province took considerable time and thus fell into delay and suspension, and it has been inquired whether the governor nominated by the Sublime State to the guardianship of the mentioned province had the capability of expelling the malignity [of the rebels].

. . . it shall be known that, firstly, guarding the province is surely . . . the least [of the] service[s which can be performed by] whoever comes with this many legions, . . . State Ammunition, and abundant provisions. Secondly, it is also obvious to the men of intellect that the delay and suspension took place when the legions of Islam were preoccupied with matters . . . more important than this. Now, it is apparent that also the Shah his Majesty surely does not consent . . . to the unclear words . . . You wrote. . . . Hence, it shall not be concealed that for a long time, . . . the mentioned province has been . . . the patrimony . . . of our Padishah . . . his Majesty. . . . Besides the undisputable fact that the viziers . . . and other legions assigned with Us are sufficient . . . for the actualization of this matter, . . . it is the least [of the] Padishahly efforts[s] to decree and assign . . . many times more [troops] . . . if need be. Hence, . . . in order to take over Basra, Kurna, and their adjunct territories, and to make their governor possess them in accordance with the true pacts, . . . the Triumphant Army . . . has pitched camp . . . on field of Kurna. It has been previously . . . notified to You . . . that the waiting of the Triumphant Legions was out of the question. . . . Think wisely, contemplate rationally, . . . leave vagueness and verbiage, explain Your will, enunciate what [thoughts You have] within You, and urgently express [them] to Our side, so that We also accordingly get moving and rush to the matters to whose execution We are assigned.¹⁰⁵³

¹⁰⁵² Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 711.

¹⁰⁵³ “Kurna’ya karîb bir iki menzil mesâfede . . . mektubunuz ve adamınız vârid olup . . . mektubunuz[da] vilâyet-i mezkûrenin Devlet-i Aliyye’ye teslîmi bâbında, gâhî eştirâ-ı A’rabı . . . îrâd ve gâhî vilâyet-i mezkûre istirdâdı hayli zamân olup tehire ve tavika düşdüğü[ü] işâret, ve Devlet-i Aliyye’den vilâyet-i mezkûre muhafazasına tâyin olunan hâkim-i hâsimin def-i eştirâ istîdâdı olup olmadığı istihbâr olunmuş. . . . mekşûf ola ki, evvelâ bu kadar asâkir . . . ve cebehâne-i âmire ve zehâyir-i vâfire ile bu tarafa gelen her kim ise, elbette hıfz-ı vilâyet . . . etmek ednâ hizmeti olduğu zâhirdir. Sâniyen, tehir ve tavik hâli dahi, asâkir-i İslâm bundan ehem olan husûs. . . a meşguller iken olunduğu erbâb-ı nühâya nümâyândır. Hâlâ tahrir ettiğiniz . . . nâ-mâlûm sözlere, elbette . . . Şah . . . hazretlerinin dahi rızâsı olmadığı zâhirdir. . . . İmdi, pûşide olmaya ki vilâyet-i mezkûre müddet-i medîdeden beri . . . pâdişâhımız . . . hazretlerinin mülk-i mevrûsları olup . . . bizimle memur olan vüzerâ . . . ve sâir asâkir . . . bu emrin husûlune . . . kifâyet ettiği bilâ-nizâ olduğundan gayrı, . . . lâzım gelir ise bunun ez’af-ı müdâ’afi. . . fermân u memur etmek ednâ himmet-i pâdişâhânelidir. İmdi, . . . uhûd-ı sâdika üzere, Basra ve Kurna ve tevâbilerin[i] tesellüm ve vâlisine zabt ettirmek için . . . sahrâ-yı Kurna cünûd-ı nurset-mevfûra madrip-i hıyâm . . . olmuştur. Asâkir-i mansûrenin meksi adîmü’l-îmkân olduğu bundan akdem size . . . îlâm olunmuştu. . . hakîmâne tefekkür ve âkılâne tedebbür edip . . . ibhâm u îhâmı terk, murâdınızı tavzih ve mâfi’z-zamîrinizi tasrih edip muaccelen tarafımıza ifâde edesiz ki biz dahi ona göre hareket ve memur olduğumuz umûrun icrâsına müsâreat edelim.” Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 344-346; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 345-346.

Via Eyüp Agha, the marshal orally added that the only option the entrustee-xan had was to surrender the fortresses, immediately and unconditionally, upon any sighting of Ottoman forces. Restraining this many troops was impossible, and thus any respite was out of the question.¹⁰⁵⁴

Though this letter observed the elaborate language common to its genre in its composition, it was at the same time at least as direct and precise as its sender invited his addressee to be. Thereby, the marshal explicitly told Davud Xan not to beat about the bush and to declare whether he would immediately surrender the fortresses. Non-compliance, which would also go against the Shah's orders, would lead to immediate military action by the Ottomans to recover the fortresses *viêt armis*. This would carry grave consequences for the entrustee-xan both in terms of his fate after a potential military engagement and his standing in the eyes of the Shah because of the serious harm his non-compliance would bring to interstate relations.

Though already legally empowered to make these demands by the Shah's commitment, the Padishah's instructions, and the legal status of Iranian presence at Basra, what had actually enabled the marshal to demand absolute and immediate compliance in the field, with no room left for bargaining, was that an Imperial Army was subordinated to him; it was no serious challenge for it to besiege and take Basra. Daltaban Mustafa Pasha must have specifically instructed Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi to be so precise in the reply letter. This is because one observes in the council-master's other compositions for the governors-general of Baghdad that he had a rather elaborate, lexiphanic, though not vague, style. In view of Nazmizâde's courteous wording that otherwise marks his composition, the striking clarity of the presented position in this letter cannot be the result of anything other than the marshal's decidedness and explicit

¹⁰⁵⁴ Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 711.

instructions to his council-master in this direction. Davud Xan had organized a resistance. Now, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha declared that unless Davud Xan obeyed Sultan-Hüseyin's publicized instructions, the two were to measure swords with each other.

As soon as the reply was dispatched, the Imperial Army resumed its march in procession on 23 February 1701. In accordance with their assigned positions in the army, keeping a distance of an arrow shot between each contingent [as a-state-of war precaution when on hostile territory], the Sublime Court, household, provincial, and Local troops and the artillery commanded respectively by the governors[-general] of Şehrızor, of Rum, of Diyarbekir, their subgovernors and seigneurs, the governor-general of Basra, the chief-of-staff of the Janissary Corps, the marshal, and the governor of Karaman paraded to the next way station, the “shrine of Üzeyir¹⁰⁵⁵” accompanied by the performing military band. No doubt, the purpose was to intimidate any potential opposing onlookers via a show of force. There, the letters from centurion Ali-kulu (from the Iranian garrison in Kurna) to Davud Xan (in Basra), from centurion Abdürrahim (likewise in Kurna) to the Iranian commander at the headquarters in Devrak, from Davud Xan to the Iranian army at Devrak, and from Davud Xan to the Bedouin chieftains, all of which Seyyid Ferecullah had intercepted and forwarded to the Imperial Army, arrived. Centurion Ali-kulu reported to Basra the diffuse flight of the Bedouin, who had been counted on by the Iranians to serve as a barrier, before the advancing Ottomans and the plight of the Iranian garrison in Kurna. This garrison, just like that of the 6,000-strong in Basra, was not regularly receiving its rations and pay. Ali-kulu was willing to surrender the fortress unless a relief army was sent. Centurion Abdürrahim communicated similar information to Devrak. Davud Xan's correspondence with Devrak and the chieftains, in which he immediately invited the Iranian

¹⁰⁵⁵ “Hazret-i Üzeyir âsitânesi”

army and the tribes to rush to the defence of Basra and Kurna, revealed his entire designs to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha. In his cover letter to the dispatch, Seyyid Ferecullah expressed his gratefulness for having been granted Ottoman protection. He also invited the marshal to hurry towards Kurna, for whose restitution letters of conciliation and quarter to the garrison would suffice. He finally declared that in Kurna, he would personally join the army and report for duty in the padishah's service.¹⁰⁵⁶

Following yet another day of marching in procession, as the army and the fleet were building a pontoon-bridge on River Mâdiyân on February 24, centurion Abdürrahim arrived in the encampment and requested an Ottoman officer to take over Kurna. Three janissary companies under Haseki Mehmed Agha's command were assigned with the directives to report back the handover of the garrison, to ensure that the Safavid troops depart safely without being harrassed, and to make certain that the inhabitants not be wronged in the process. After issuing letters-of-quarter to various Bedouin chieftains via Seyyid Ferecullah's intercession and getting from Haseki Mehmed Agha the receipt of Kurna's handover dated February 25, the Imperial Army crossed the bridge and encamped in a one-and-a-half-hour distance before mentioned fortress. Haseki Mehmed Agha was left as commanding officer in the garrison of Kurna with six janissary companies.¹⁰⁵⁷

While the marshal was arranging military transport by river to Basra at Kurna, Davud Xan's messenger brought another letter. Prior to this, the entrustee-governor had consulted with the Safavid garrison officers who had observed the Ottoman army before Kurna. Daunted by the report that spoke of 150,000 troops, artillery, a fleet, and the capability to build bridges and to

¹⁰⁵⁶ On the same day, ten representatives from the inhabitants of Kurna arrived in the encampment to ask for letters-of-conciliation from Daltaban Mustafa Pasha. They were issued as the marshal's mandate. Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 347-350; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 710; *Chronicle of Events*, 427-428; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1171.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 350-352, 361.

cross rivers in a breeze, the xan “reinterpreted the explicit words and replaced the vague and unclear discourse he had previously written;¹⁰⁵⁸” he assented to the handover of the province but again asked for a term of respite. The marshal, now aware of the Safavid military concentration in Devrak and the xan’s designs to employ it, ruled out any possibility of respite in his reply and said that even he (despite his grand-vizierial powers) was not in a position to restrain his army from recovering Basra. The reply was dispatched concurrently with the departure of the proxy of Basra’s nominated Ottoman governor-general, who was to immediately take over the provincial government, leaving no room to the Safavid entrustee-governor for further bargaining or refusal, unless he chose to fight. On 28 February 1701, Seyyid Ferecullah’s brother brought Davud Xan’s reply of compliance, to which Daltaban Mustafa Pasha replied back: “if You come and meet with Us before Kurna, the matters that You wish will be finalized.¹⁰⁵⁹” Leaving a sizable detachment as rear guard before Kurna, the bulk of the Imperial Army, to which Seyyid Ferecullah’s son also joined, built a bridge over and crossed the Shatt en route to Basra on March 4, while a navy detachment carrying the proxy-governor and guard troops sailed off. Hearing of the Ottoman advance, some Safavid troops in Basra went to the new fort they had recently built in Gûridilân. On March 9, the 6,000-strong Iranian garrison in Basra sighted the Ottoman army and fleet, whose joint “festive-salvos of artillery and musket¹⁰⁶⁰” scared the observers who, alarmed, laid waste to as many as 1,000 houses. On the very same day, the Ottoman proxy-governor arrived, demanding the keys of Basra, which Davud Khan handed over to him “in fear and trembling”. The Iranian garrison immediately evacuated the fortress en masse with the previously prepared

¹⁰⁵⁸ “mukaddemâ tahrir ettiği beyyin sözleri te’vîl ve müphem ü meçhul olan kelâmı tebdîl edip”

¹⁰⁵⁹ “gelip Kurna altında bizimle mülâkî olursanız, murâd ettiğiniz mânâlara bir sûret verilir”

¹⁰⁶⁰ “top ve tüfenk şenliği”

fleet, in panic and even without taking their provisions, while Davud Xan withdrew to the site Muqâm. Magistrates and notables of Basra came out to greet the marshal.¹⁰⁶¹

The mobilized Iranian army waiting for Davud Xan's command to intervene was of the same size as its Ottoman counterpart in terms of numbers, and considerably larger than it when considered together with the garrisons at Basra and Kurna as well as the allied Bedouin. In spite of this, in terms of capabilities born out of personnel and equipment, it was comparatively too weak to effectively put up the envisaged resistance.¹⁰⁶² Immediately after the Ottoman takeover, Nacak Agha, Sultan-Hüseyin's commissary, arrived to carry off the Safavids' provisions that had been left behind. In a conversation with Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi, whom he met in the governorate palace, Nacak Agha solemnly swore that the observed strength and high discipline of the Ottoman army were quite unexpected for the Safavid side.¹⁰⁶³ During his subsequent grand-vizierate, based on his observations of the Bedouin and the Iranian mobilization in comparison to what he had had under his command, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha would not calculate in the Bedouins' and the Safavids' challenging Ottoman rule in Iraq as a potential risk factor¹⁰⁶⁴ so long as the peacetime numbers of forces deployed at the frontier were duly maintained.

For the Iranian side, the reason for the disparity in effective forces was not just caused by the difference in scope of the respective mobilizations. The Safavid military was essentially behind that of the Ottomans in industry, equipment, expertise, professionalism, and combat efficiency. The scorched-earth tactics, through which the Safavids had long conducted Ottoman wars with a relatively inferior military,¹⁰⁶⁵ were simply not sufficient for holding onto fortresses.

¹⁰⁶¹ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 352-355; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 486; Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 711-712; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites*, 1171-1172.

¹⁰⁶² *Elçi Tolstoy ve Hâtıraları*, 77.

¹⁰⁶³ Nazmizâde, "Sefer-i Basra," 357.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Elçi Tolstoy ve Hâtıraları*, 79.

¹⁰⁶⁵ See an overall evaluation in Kaempfer, *am Hofe des persischen Großkönigs*, 75-77.

This would necessitate taking on the Ottomans in a full-fledged siege or a pitched battle without being able to disrupt their supply lines by withdrawing to central Iran and removing or burning down any trace of life and civilization along the way. In short, the fielding of this Ottoman army in Iraq *ipso facto* ruled out any possibility of resistance. Davud Khan's initial default can be attributed only to the time that had to pass until he collected reliable information on the scope of the Ottoman investment.

On 10 March 1701, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha invested Beyzâde Ali Pasha with regalia for the guardianship of Basra and processionally saw him off to his provincial capital, which signaled the de facto end of the campaign by having accomplished all of the objectives. Next day, the Basrans welcomed the new governor-general with extravagant ceremonies, followed by "festive-salvos of artillery and musket" from the governorate palace and the army encampment. On March 12, the marshal personally entered Basra to perform the Eid prayers in the Arab Mosque, where the padishah's name was restored to the formal sermon. With the addition of the other campaigning pashas/generals entering Basra, 30,000 Ottoman troops filled the provincial capital during the successive three-day processions. These troops exchanged greetings not only with the indigenous inhabitants but also the European residents, who were relieved by their arrival after having lived under Davud Khan's oppression and arbitrary rule. Davud Khan, who had not left the fortress during the evacuation of the Iranian garrison, fled aboard a boat upon observing the Ottoman troops filling the city. Yet, already sick and racked with excessive fright, he suddenly died. His corpse was brought to and buried at Muqâm. The new governor-general's reconciliation feast with the notables took place on March 13, after which the inhabitants organized a two-day city-wide illumination of the ramparts and minarets. The initiation ceremonies ended with Beyzâde Ali Pasha's feast on March 14 to the marshal along with the

campaigning commanders and officers at the Basra pier by Muqâm[-ı Ali]. Later, the marshal convened the judge, the mufti, the clergy, and the notables of Basra in a session held at the governorate palace and asked: “did the padishah’s province come into possession as before by the Sublime State, and did its governor become installed independent [of opposition], and the handicap[s] fended off?”¹⁰⁶⁶ The attendants replied: “the padishah’s province became liberated, . . . if there are [still] remaining ones persisting on obstinancy, . . . it is hoped that they be reformed . . . with either [good] moral[s] . . . or justice . . . or blow [i.e. by force].¹⁰⁶⁷” The notables registered the session, signed the proceedings, and had the judge, the mufti, and the chiefs authenticate it, while also writing a separate collective-petition to the imperial court in which they confirmed the completion of all campaign objectives and praised the marshal’s conduct.¹⁰⁶⁸

At the time of departure, Haseki Mehmed Agha was commissioned with the command of the Kurna fortress (now acting as principal) with 1,004 janissaries in addition to the newly-recruited 1,767-strong Local corps plus another hundred for Gûridilân. Approximately five hundred additional janissaries and several hundred Locals were assigned to the city of Basra itself. The returning army and commanders left Basra northwards on 18/19 March 1701. On the way back, on March 20, Seyyid Ferecullah appeared in the encampment before Kurna in order to

¹⁰⁶⁶ “vilâyet-i pâdişâhî ke’levvel Devlet-i Aliyye tarafından zabt ve vâlisi [muhâlefetten] müstakil ve mustakarr olup def’-i mahzûr oldu mu?”

¹⁰⁶⁷ “vilâyet-i pâdişâhî istihlâs . . . olu[nu]p, inâda musirr eğer bir kimse kalmış ise . . . ya hulk . . . ya adl . . . ya darp . . . ile onlar dahi ıslah olunmak ümîd olunur”

¹⁰⁶⁸ Nazmizâde Murtazâ records that the inhabitants organized the welcome festivities “as if they were like prisoners saved from the hand of the enemy and in such a degree that they came anew to the world [when] they had been dead and [then] resurrected (a’dâ elinden halas bulmuş esir gibi ve yeniden dünyâya gelmiş ve mürde iken ihyâ olmuş mertebelerinde)”. Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 355-357. The marshal dissolved the session in the governorate palace after rebuking the attendants for their past share in what had come to pass but then pleasing them with reconciliatory words. Likewise, province-wide pardons were issued to the inhabitants and the Bedouin who from then on would be obedient. Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 358-359. See Ibid., 360-363 for the collective petition. Ibid., 363-365. Indeed, with an imperial-writ dated early May 1700, the center had instructed the marshal and Basra’s nominated governor-general to issue a conditional general pardon upon restitution, MHM.d. 111, ent. 1196-1197. Also see Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 352-355; *Chronicle of Events*, 428; *A Chronicle of Carmelites*, 1172-1173.

declare, as promised, his unrestricted services to the padishah and to revere the marshal. Amidst “festive-salvos of artillery and musket,” grenade-games, and fireworks displayed both on the field and from the Shatt fleet adorned for Nevruz celebrations, he was ceremonially feasted together with the rest of the campaign dignitaries. He left the encampment on March 23 after another round of private discussions with the marshal.¹⁰⁶⁹

Thus, the most hectic phase of the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations came to a close. In the exact manner Sultan-Hüseyin had committed himself and Mustafa II had wished, the fortresses in the province of Basra held in entrustment by the Safavids were restored to the Ottomans. The in-situ execution of the operations, despite the lack of any hostilities, was more complicated than suggested by the satisfactory outcome. Davud Xan did want to offer resistance, for which he had already entrenched his positions, assembled a large army, and built a fleet. However, this was exactly the occasion for which the Ottoman Empire had mobilized an Imperial Army strong enough to fight a full-scale war if necessary. Davud Xan’s sighting of the seasoned and well-equipped Ottoman army and fleet that exhibited technical expertise as well as the reserve forces present in Baghdad, which was also at the marshal’s disposal, paralyzed the resistance he had organized. Whenever the marshal sensed that he might encounter opposition, he asserted – via direct threats, military parades, and salvos – his determination to put his forces into use without hesitation. The ranks of the campaign’s top commanders were also proof of the fact that the Ottoman army had not been assembled just to intimidate; the state apparatus, the

¹⁰⁶⁹ The janissaries assigned to Kurna were organized in six companies. The Locals were organized into the following conventional sub-corps: [Local] janissaries, *Müstahfizler*, right and left flank Volunteers, *Azeban*, Local munitioners, Local artillerymen, *Küttâb*, *Çavuşân-ı Divân*. The Local recruitment was made from among the willing troops of the campaigning pashas’ households. Sufficient provisions, ammunition, and two additional pieces of artillery were left for Kurna. Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 363-367; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 491-492; *Chronicle of Events*, 428. I estimated the size of the garrison left in the city of Basra via a comparison of the figures given in Râşid, *Târih*, 601, with those in Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra” and Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*. In late March, still uninformed of the successful completion of the campaign, the court sent provisions and salaries sufficient to cover the next year for the Sublime Court and the Local Corps in Iraq. MHM.d. 111, ent. 1802.

military, and even the financial bureau of the empire were physically present in the field, fulfilling the criteria of an Imperial Army.

The possibility of an Ottoman assault was so real for the Safavid garrison that Basra became evacuated even without carrying away the provisions, and Davud Xan literally fled despite being seriously ill, which proved fatal. Learning that his resistance designs had become known to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha was an equally important cause for the hasty escape which cost him his life and which he had preferred over a meeting with the marshal. He must have feared that this meeting could lead to his arrest by the Ottomans and even to his execution under the orders of the Shah. The possibility of minor delays in Ottoman advance that could have stemmed from the marshal's not knowing the Iranians' capabilities, on the other hand, was eliminated with a successful employment of renegade Seyyid Ferecullah's network in intercepting Davud Xan's correspondence with nearby officers. In the final analysis, it must be mentioned that Davud Xan's designs were in complete contradiction to the royal government's official and definitive commitments to the Sublime Porte. Only the superiority of the Ottoman army, not in size but in equipment, discipline, regularity, technical expertise, and campaign experience, vis-à-vis the Safavid forces prevented a large scale clash that could have had even more serious consequences at interstate level. However, the entire Safavid policy since Basra's capture from the rebels displayed consistency in intending to restore the padishah's province and even preferring to see in Iraq a strong, unopposed Ottoman military presence. The royal government made the highest possible sacrifice in order to perpetuate the peace with the empire, while the Porte made sure that the recovery operation would go as planned even if the handover did not go as swiftly as announced by the other side. In the end, despite tensions in the field, both parties attained what they had wanted: the Padishah his province, and the Shah the continued

convergence in bilateral relations. The inequality of the gains and sacrifices in this deal was, on the other hand, the direct consequence of the inequality of the parties in diplomatic hierarchy and in terms of hard power.

Daltaban Mustafa Pasha reported the successful completion of all campaign objectives to the Grand-Vizier with a courier carrying his letter, which reached the addressee on 6 April 1701 in the field of Davudpaşa outside Constantinople. The summation of the marshal's letter and his courier's oral statement was submitted to Mustafa II in Adrianople on April 8 during Friday prayer at the Selimiye Mosque. Out of joy, the Padishah bestowed one thousand gold coins upon Mehmed Agha, the summation-reporter.¹⁰⁷⁰ Shortly afterwards, Beyzâde Ali Pasha's letter, the judge of Basra's judicial-deed, and the notable's collective-petition also arrived, for which the Padishah rewarded the commanders with tokens for their success.¹⁰⁷¹ Due to various reasons, the state would not recall for a considerable time the extraordinary forces deployed in Iraq.¹⁰⁷²

¹⁰⁷⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 465. The summation-reporter was also bestowed the customary sable fur of dignitary class.

¹⁰⁷¹ See, for example, the decrees issued in June 1702 for the robes of honor and the swords sent to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha and Beyzâde Ali Pasha forwarded with the second-master-of-the-horse: MHM.d. 111, ent. 2003, 2051; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 370.

¹⁰⁷² MHM.d. 111, ent. 1879, 1985, 2004-2016, 2082, 2303; d. 112, ent. 86, 758; d. 113, ent. 93. The Admiralship of the Shatt was to be permanently maintained (see İE.BH. 1092; MHM.d. 112, ent. 284-296, 760; d. 113, ent. 77) like the rest of the peacetime Sublime Court, Local, and household troops in Iraqi provinces. On the occasion of Boşnak Mustafa Agha's quite late recall to the center, he would be promoted to vice-chiefdom of the Janissary Corps for his praised service in Iraq, Sarı Mehmed, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 733.

CHAPTER VI. 1702-1720:

DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS AND RETURN TO THE PRE-1686 STATUS QUO

This chapter narrates the last episode of Ottoman-Safavid relations before their termination in 1722. The first decade of the century was marked with the Safavids' antagonizing requests and attempts at *fait accomplis* which, if the Ottomans had granted, would have opened a breach in the latter's sovereign rights and legitimacy of rule. The Sublime Porte did not even negotiate these matters and issued sarcastic rejections to the missions of 1702 and 1705-6, which had forwarded the relevant correspondence. This case is important in the sense that it shows that the deterioration of relations began immediately after the turn of the century, not twenty years later shortly before their termination. It is noteworthy also in the sense that it shows how prominent individuals can directly affect the course of relations. The antagonization caused in turn led to the initiation of the demotion of the shah's rank back to plain sultanic/kingly level and the abrogation of *perpetual peace in alliance*. Both processes would be consummated in the 1710s. The deterioration escalated further in the 1710s with chief-vizierial letter exchange over border issues and the 1716 epistle exchange on the occasion of the Ottoman recovery of the Peloponnese. The Bedouin coalition of the 1690s was definitively defeated but not dissolved, which resurfaced and committed gross violations across the southern flank of the border. In the already tense relations, these developments manifested themselves in the form of armed and diplomatic confrontations involving alienating accusations, unfriendly demands, and cross-border operations. This showdown was concluded with the empire's asserting its hard power at the frontier once again, but this time to the detriment of Iran. The second decade of the century also witnessed the surfacing of an imposter Safavid royal-prince in the empire who tried to have the Ottomans undertake a campaign into Iran, and the Ottomans' intercepting two missions sent

from France and Germany to Iran, which indicates the Ottomans' unilateral right to detain emissaries from third parties traveling to Iran. Several minor violations shed light on the well-developed on-site dispute resolution mechanism involving both sides' judicial courts, provincial councils, and joint committees. Last but not least, the diplomatic activities narrated in this chapter demonstrate that in Ottoman-Safavid relations, fine and literary arts had a crucial function as alternative platforms on which to conduct diplomacy and express attitudes. The chapter concludes with the history of the last missions exchanged (1720-1722) under the shadow of the unfolding Afghan insurrection in Iran. The very last acts before the termination of relations (1722) prove that in these relations, the parties' being not Iran nor the empire but the dynastic Ottoman and Safavid states was not just an ideological construct; it had vital consequences.

VI.1. Practical Disagreements and “Diplomatic” Contention

On 11 April 1701, marching close to the Zagros Mountains, the Imperial Army returning from Basra encamped in the proximity of the village Beksâ, in Iranian territory. Its prefect Kâzım, a subordinate of the Safavid viceroy of Luristan, went to greet the Ottoman marshal and was duly invested with a robe of honor. On the 15th, Mâni's reply arrived. The former enemy of both states offered unconditional obedience to the padishah in exaggerated words, probably as a result of the present army's sanction power. Daltaban Mustafa Pasha entered his seat of governorate on the 23th in procession and demobilized the contingents that were normally deployed outside of Baghdad.¹⁰⁷³ The Padishah's appreciation of the military's performance at the Iranian frontier in

¹⁰⁷³ Nazmizâde, “Sefer-i Basra,” 374-380.

Iraq soon followed: the imperial-writs and the Mustafa II's tokens congratulating the commanders were sent out in late June 1701.¹⁰⁷⁴

Abbas Huz'ali did not reply to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha's post-campaign mandate commanding the former rebels to submit, and Selman Huz'ali did only improperly. With this response, a punitive operation became definite. The army, which had begun assembling outside Baghdad in mid-October 1701, marched out on December 3. While on the march, the marshal learned from captured enemy spies that Selman Huz'ali had mobilized the entire Iranian and Ottoman Bedouin from the town Ane to as far as Basra and Huveyze to come to his aid. Among those who accepted this call was also Hamûd es-Sa'dûn, son of the now-deceased Mâni, recently appointed the chieftain of the Mûntefik by the governor-general of Basra. With their numbers close to 40,000, they had driven out the inhabitants and claimed the land theirs. In doing so, they had transformed disobedience, which attained an interstate dimension with a cross-border participation, into a full-fledged rebellion. The ambush assault by the rebel coalition on December 19 at a site half an hour's distance to Diyab, which seemed to have taken the Ottoman army by surprise, backfired when the charging Bedouins heard one single artillery fire from the ambushed imperial encampment. Surrounded and denied mercy, more than 10,000 rebels were indiscriminately put to sword, and thousands were captured, while many of those who could flee drowned in river. Selman and Abbas Huzali managed to escape. Severed heads of the killed were heaped up into towers to be made an example of, however those captured alive were pardoned and set free. The late-arriving fleet detachment then hit the rebels' villages and set their housings on fire. Upon hearing what had happened, numerous Bedouin tribes hurried to the marshal's

¹⁰⁷⁴ MHM.d. 111, ent. 1879, 1888, 1919, 2004-2018, 2051, 2245; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 370; MHM.d. 112, ent. 86, 758-760.

headquarters to swear allegiance to the padishah.¹⁰⁷⁵ In the meantime, the center continued to reinforce the Imperial Army and the Admiralty of the Shatt in Iraq.¹⁰⁷⁶

In mid-February 1702, as the punitive army was attending to damming and channeling operations which were the main objectives of this follow-up campaign, news came that an emissary from Iran sent to the governor-general had arrived in Baghdad. By sending a letter and a cavalry guard detachment, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha summoned him to the army. The emissary reached the headquarters on February 22, delivered the letter entrusted to him, and was properly attended to. On the 25th, Daltaban Mustafa Pasha hosted him alongside the present viziers and governors. Following the feast, fireworks, grenade throws, and festive artillery salvos were performed, which seemed to impress the emissary. On the 26th, he was discharged with a reply letter en route to Kerbela. There, he was approached by defeated rebel chief Selman Huzali, who had mingled in the crowd. He expressed his repentance from disobedience and asked the Iranian emissary to intercede for the marshal's quarter in return for his submitting to the padishah's deputies. The emissary wrote a letter-of-intercession to Daltaban Mustafa Pasha, who granted mercy and issued a letter-of-conciliation summoning the former rebel leader to his presence. Selman, out of fear, delegated the homage-visit to his father Abbas Huzali, who, also fearing for his life, sent back the superintendent of the bailiffs (who had went out to give quarter to and summon Abbas Huzali) with a nephew of his. The Huzalis' later attempts at gaining footholds around Hille, Najaf, and Kerbelâ failed as a result of the establishment of a new garrison and a fifteen-frigate fleet base at the former and the leaving of reserve forces to guard the latter two. Abbas Huzali was cautioned with a mandate to observe his repentance and remain submissive.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 373-379, 382.

¹⁰⁷⁶ See in AE. SMST.II. 3129 the note for the payment of travel allowance and subsistence money by chief-grenader Abdülkerim Agha to the additional grenaders redeployed to the fortress of Baghdad, 15 January 1702. See ĪE. BH. 982 (11 December 1701) and 1071 (25 August 1702) for amounts paid to cover the admirals' salaries and the supply of ammunition.

The gradual recalling of the extra contingents that had been subordinated to the marshalship of Iraq as a wartime measure during the last two years began only after this point,¹⁰⁷⁷ heralding the end of the state of war at the Iranian frontier.

The emissary's sender and rank are not stated in the only source relating the mission. However, when its description and the nature of the next Safavid mission to the Sublime Porte are juxtaposed, it can be inferred that the emissary in question was an unaccredited agent of the Prime-Minister. With a lower possibility, he was a provincial emissary. His mission does not seem to have been anything but a conventional contact between the royal government and the Ottoman governorate-general of Baghdad, which in this specific case might have also involved each side's updating one another regarding the completed Basran campaign. Also that Nazmizâde Murtazâ Efendi, who had witnessed the emissary's visit, only narrates the above-mentioned intercession attempt aside from ceremonies, indicates that the mission itself did not have an extraordinary objective.

Selman Huzali's managing to establish contact with the emissary and having him intercede were attempts made by the defeated rebel leader to re-internationalize the issue. In the case of securing the Safavids's championing of the Huzali cause, Selman must have expected to enjoy a privileged handling by the Ottoman State, despite the fact that his movement had been crushed. Also his earlier attempt of uniting all Ottoman- and Safavid-tributary Bedouin in Iraq and Huveyze must have been aimed at the same objective of pulling Iran into the issue and using this to trump the Ottomans with his bargain, which had failed with most of his allies' paying homage to the padishah. How he now could convince the Safavid emissary to accept to

¹⁰⁷⁷ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 381-382, 388-390 (see page 390 also for references to the provisioning of the campaign and salary transfer for troops over the Euphrates); MHM.d. 112, ent. 925-931, 935, 952; for the extra reserve forces re-assigned to Baghdad from other provinces for the next season's cleanup operations, see ent. 937, 945-946, 1183-1200, 1309, 1406-1407; d. 114, ent. 538, 540-542.

intercede, i.e. what Selman Huz'ali offered the emissary in return, cannot be identified. Nor is there any record shedding light on how the emissary, seemingly not authorized in advance by his government to take such a step, agreed to it. There is also no information on the nature of the intercession, i.e., whether the emissary had initiated it as a private individual or in his capacity as a Safavid representative.

In the meantime, Beyzâde Ali Pasha had undertaken a comprehensive investigation of the respective positions of the Bedouin in Iraq and Huveyze. In a memorandum¹⁰⁷⁸ dated 23 December 1701, regarding relations with Iran, he informed the Grand-Vizier that the Bedouin were still occupying – not politically but physically – Cezâyîr, and refusing to disband. Ideologically, they regarded the state as the usurper of their ancestral lands and, now accustomed to governing the country during the last years, could not come to terms with withdrawing back to their tribal ways. Moreover, the memorandum included information on Seyyid Ferecullah's anti-Safavid coalition with the Benî Lâm and the Benî Müntefik that had led to their attacking Safavid-loyal elements in Huveyze on the eve of the Ottomans' Basran campaign. Yet, the coalition was still active, reported Beyzâde Ali Pasha: Seyyid Ferecullah's [Mushasha] following was still residing among the Benî Lâm and the Benî Müntefik, who had renewed their oath to assist Seyyid Ferecullah if the Safavids attacked. Likewise, Seyyid Ferecullah also reconfirmed his oath to assist them if the Ottomans attacked. In consequence of an isolated clash of Bedouin tribes in the Iranian side of the Gulf region, a group of 2,000-households estranged from Safavid rule immigrated to Basra upon hearing of its recovery by the empire. They sent a delegation to the governor-general in order to notify their allegiance to the padishah. They had come along with their 150 sea vessels, each one equipped with two to three artillery pieces and thirty to forty

¹⁰⁷⁸ *kâime*

musketeers. The governor-general did not immediately assign them a defined territory. He informed the center that if they chose to permanently settle down in Basra, they would be assigned lands, otherwise they would be allowed to return to their homelands in Iran. The report also contained a sizable evaluation of the balance of power around the Persian Gulf between the Imam of Muscat, Iran, and Portugal. Information on each party's available fleet strengths, respective bilateral relations, and current agreements was inserted.¹⁰⁷⁹

With regards to the empire's relations with Iran, Beyzâde Ali Pasha's memorandum should be taken into consideration in several ways. Firstly, it was a warning that Seyyid Ferecullah was still the shah's enemy and he was determined to take back Huveyze, either as viceroy or as rebel. Giving asylum to him under these circumstances could jeopardize the cordial relations between the royal government and the Sublime Porte. Neither the Mushasha nor the Benî Lâm and the Benî Müntefik were to be trusted: their oath to each other was still binding, and could well be directed against the empire as well as to Iran when the time was ripe. On the other hand, conceding subjecthood to sizable and well-armed tribes immigrating from Iran was regarded positively. Interstate relations would not be risked for their sake, however, if they chose to reside in the empire without displaying enmity to the shah, the contribution in terms of population, military power, and commerce by these potentially Ottoman-loyal tribes was welcome. The survey of power relations around the Persian Gulf indicates, on the other hand, that following the recovery of Basra, the empire intended also to reenter into the intercontinental rivalry unfolding further south in the region.

Towards the summer of 1702, the royal government followed up on the diplomatic contacts with the Sublime Porte in connection with the Basran affair. At first, the rumors at the

¹⁰⁷⁹ MHM.d. 111, ent. 2517-2518, 2520.

Ottoman court had suggested that the incoming representative was the Shah's ambassador. Only with the mission's arrival in Bolu and sending an agent from there to the court did it become understood that it was led by Hacı Mehmed Selim Beyg, a royal court usher and now the unaccredited agent of prime-minister Mehmed Mümin Xan Şamlu, carrying a letter to the Grand-Vizier. Presumably upon arrival in Scutari, the grand-vizierial lieutenant wrote on 21 July 1702 to Mehmed Selim Beyg a letter-of-welcome communicating the appointment of Lipovalı Ahmed Agha from the Grand-Vizier's entourage as his host-officer, and inviting him to court at Adrianople. The level of subsidies and protocol were degraded according to his rank. Soon, Lipovalı Ahmed Agha, after welcoming the unaccredited agent in Scutari, attended to his necessities in Constantinople (late July), and escorted him to Adrianople, where he was lodged and treated according to his emissarial rank.¹⁰⁸⁰

Mehmed Selim Beyg's hosts found a "quite reasonable, humble . . . and decent"¹⁰⁸¹ person in him. In the audience with the Grand-Vizier, following the ceremonies, he delivered the letter and the gifts.¹⁰⁸² The mission had thirty personnel and all of them, including the unaccredited agent, were of Kızılbaş tribes, though the sources do not mention specific surnames. Either the arrival in Adrianople or the audience with the Grand-Vizier took place on 6 August 1702; between these two events, not much time passed anyway. On August 8, having been taken to a house overlooking the gate of the Selimiye Mosque, the unaccredited agent was made to watch Mustafa II participate in the *mevlit*-procession on the occasion of the anniversary

¹⁰⁸⁰ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 24a-24b; *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 162.

¹⁰⁸¹ "hayli söz anlar ve tevâzu sâhibi . . . âdab üzere"

¹⁰⁸² *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 162. For the reception ceremony, see *Ibid.* Also see *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât 1105-1135*, 87. The dating of the Mehmed Selim mission to the previous year in the *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi* is incorrect; compare with the following entries in the same chronicle and the exact dating in Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha's reply letter. For the dating of Mehmed Selim's stay in Constantinople, see the transactions and correspondence in CV. HR. 4206.

of Prophet Muhammed's birthday.¹⁰⁸³ The farewell audience with Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha took place on or immediately after September 2.¹⁰⁸⁴ Given the reply letter and gifts, and invested alongside his immediate subordinates with robes of honor, Mehmed Selim Beyg was granted leave. Lipovalı Ahmed Agha, who had welcomed the mission in Constantinople, again became the host-officer to accompany it over the way of Erzurum until the border^{1085 1086}.

As Sultan-Hüseyin was fully satisfied with what had come to pass in Basra, Mehmed Mümin Xan Şamlu opened the address of his letter¹⁰⁸⁷ by "presenting . . . affinity and portraying . . . union¹⁰⁸⁸" to the Grand-Vizier "his sublime majesty.¹⁰⁸⁹" Evoking Köprülü Amcazâde Hüseyin's previous letter, the Prime-Minister notified his recipient that the Shah had accepted all of the points raised there. The "endless alliance with . . . the Supreme-Shah [Mustafa II] . . . which had [already] been consolidated . . . since olden times, . . . have at present times become intensified.¹⁰⁹⁰" Daltaban Mustafa Pasha's conducting such a large army directly and in a disciplined manner to the target sites in accordance with the "unity¹⁰⁹¹" therebetween, despite the existence of numerous bypasses through Huveyze/Arabistân, was especially praised. No mention was given to Davud Xan's having organized a resistance and the strife it had led to. Instead, the conduct of the deceased trustee-governor in duly surrendering Basra also received praise.

¹⁰⁸³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretname*, 547.

¹⁰⁸⁴ The Grand-Vizier's reply letter is dated "9 Rebiülahir 1114", NHM.d. 5, ent. 220.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Anonim Osmanlı Târihi*, 162-163.

¹⁰⁸⁶ See the documents in CV. HR. 4206 for the Ottoman internal correspondence involving the vice-grand-vizier, the barley-commissioner, the chief-butcher, the janissary commanding-officer in charge of Constantinople, and all magistrates on the road between Adrianople, Constantinople, and the Iranian border regarding the quartering and subventions of the Mehmed Selim mission. To estimate relative sizes, compare the daily cash subvention of 57.75 thaler (6,930 non-debased aspers) with those of previous Safavid embassies.

¹⁰⁸⁷ NMH.d. 5, ent. 218; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât 1105-1135*, 82-86.

¹⁰⁸⁸ "takdîm-i . . . vedâd ve tersîm-i . . . ittihâd"

¹⁰⁸⁹ "âli-hazret"

¹⁰⁹⁰ "ittifâk-ı bî-pâyân . . . bâ . . . Şâhinşâh . . . ki ez dîr-bâz . . . istihkâm yâfte der in evân iştîdâd . . ."

¹⁰⁹¹ "yegânegi"

Then begins the unconventional content of the letter. After mentioning the financial and human costs that Iran had to shoulder in order to expel the rebels from the provinces of the “Greatest [i.e. Ottoman] Monarchy¹⁰⁹²” in Iraq and Kurdistan, reintroduce order, restitute the fortresses to the Ottomans in accordance with the peace conditions, and thus contribute directly to the Ottoman war effort against the Holy League, which Sultan-Hüseyin opted for only out of “loving, succor, and assistance,¹⁰⁹³” and not out of “endless expectations¹⁰⁹⁴” as “superficial observers¹⁰⁹⁵” would guess, the Prime-Minister enumerated the following requests for the sake of “lasting alliance.¹⁰⁹⁶” (1) That “Supreme-Shah . . . Caesar¹⁰⁹⁷” [i.e. Padishah] issue his “decree of celestial-conjunction-power¹⁰⁹⁸” that his appointees in no way harass the [Safavid-subject or Safavid-friendly] “inhabitants of the Holy Shrines [in Iraq],¹⁰⁹⁹” and if these inhabitants commit a fault, the appointees not retaliate before receiving instructions from the imperial court; (2) The Padishah also issue an irrevocable permission for the shah’s officials so that the latter can renovate and make donations to the Holy Shrines without applying for permission in each case; (3) That Iranians’ mortal remains’ transfer to and burial in these holy sites , not be barred in any way; (4) That whenever vassal third parties cause complications at the frontier, provincial office-holders from both sides cooperate actively with each other to crush them, so that the chaos of the 1690s not recur.

¹⁰⁹² “saltanatü’l-kübrâ”

¹⁰⁹³ “düst-dârî ve yâverî ve yârî”

¹⁰⁹⁴ “çeşm-dâşt u tavakkuât-ı bî-pâyân”

¹⁰⁹⁵ “zâhir-perestân”

¹⁰⁹⁶ “ittifâk-ı dîr-pâyî”

¹⁰⁹⁷ “şehinşâh . . . kayser”

¹⁰⁹⁸ “fermân-i kadr-kırân”

¹⁰⁹⁹ “sâkinîn-i Atebât[-i Âliye/Âliyât] . . . sükkân-ı mazâcî’-ı müteberrike”

In the reply letter¹¹⁰⁰ to “his sublime excellency, the gauge of viziership,¹¹⁰¹” Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha confirmed the positive receipt of the letter and gifts sent with Mehmed Selim Beyg. He informed his addressee that the enumerated requests were submitted to the “supreme of the grand sultans . . . the Padishah . . . his imperial majesty,¹¹⁰²” who, in accordance with the “hereditary . . . ancient amity and perpetual friendship with . . . the Shah . . . his sublime majesty¹¹⁰³” indeed issued [a one-time] permission for the placing of new/renovated sarcophagi to the sepulchers of Mûsâ el-Kâzım and Muhammed et-Taqî at Kâzımıye, for which imperial decrees were issued. Regarding the inhabitants of the Holy Shrines, it was only communicated that the turmoil had been dealt with. In the case of any transgressions to be committed there, perpetrators would be prosecuted just like any Ottoman inhabitant or Safavid subject in any other province of the empire, and both groups would continue to enjoy the rights that those in the same status in other Ottoman provinces did. The Safavids’ request for an irrevocable permission for them to donate to the Holy Shrines was categorically denied, the honor being declared exclusively the padishah’s. The point regarding cooperation between frontier appointees was readily affirmed with reference to the “alliance, . . . vicinity rights, . . . [and] rites of helping”¹¹⁰⁴. Mehmed Selim Beyg’s performing his mission with “high-grade manners and heart-winning attitude¹¹⁰⁵” was praised. The letter concludes with wishes for the further realization of mutual efforts towards the perpetuation of the concord, union, and alliance.

The granting of the Shah’s request to donate to Kâzımıye, which must have been submitted during the inter-audience diplomacy of the embassy of either Rüstem Zengene or

¹¹⁰⁰ NMH.d. 5, ent. 220; Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 23a-24a (some words missing).

¹¹⁰¹ “cenâb-ı meâlî-meâb” . . . vezâret-nisâb”

¹¹⁰² “a’zam-ı selâtîn-i izâm . . . şevketlü . . . Pâdişah hazretleri”

¹¹⁰³ “âli-hazret . . . Şah hazretleriyle mütevâris-i ‘ani’l-ebâ . . . olan musâfât-ı kadîme ve mülâvât-ı müstedîme”

¹¹⁰⁴ “ittifak . . . levâzım-ı hem-civârî . . . merâsim-i yârî”

¹¹⁰⁵ “üslûb-ı mergûb ve tavr-ı câlibü’l-kulûb”

Ebukavuk Mehmed, was apparently nothing other than the execution of the priorly agreed-upon Ottoman gesture of good-will in return for the smooth completion of the Safavids' handing over Basra. In terms of observing and even furthering the concept of *perpetual peace in alliance*, both letters more than fulfill the requirements via repeated and explicit references. The same is true for the partial adherence¹¹⁰⁶ to the post-1686 accord in hierarchy. Remarkably, probably as a reaction to unreasonable Safavid requests, the Grand-Vizier, in his letter to the Prime-Minister, referred to the shah as "his sublime majesty," in defiance towards his august-sultanic rank. This deviation from the recently initiated accord was the beginning of a gradual deterioration in bilateral relations.

The Prime-Minister's requests in the second part of the letter are a novelty within the post-1639 Ottoman diplomacy. This can partly be attributed to the success of the Safavid emissary to Baghdad, who had interceded with the Ottomans on Selmân Huzali's behalf. Seemingly, the two had managed to make the 1702 rebellion an interstate affair by occasioning the royal government to submit the matter to the Sublime Porte at the chief-minister level. Beyond that, though the Shah's donating to the Holy Shrines under Ottoman sovereignty had priorly been the subject of negotiations, it had not entered into interstate correspondence. For the first time, these matters became referred to in inter-court letters in an itemized and emphasized manner. While the content seems to be negotiable in principle, especially if the clauses on the special treatment of certain groups in certain territories and the irrevocable privileges were to be granted, it would constitute an obvious restriction of the padishah's sovereign rights.

¹¹⁰⁶ Also in Ottoman internal correspondence regarding the remittances of Mehmed Selim Beyg's daily subventions, as the hosting was overseen by the grand-vizier, the shah was titled "his sublime majesty." CV. HR. 4206. On the other hand, both letters emphasized, more than once, several of the padishah's exclusive imperial titles that make him the shah's superior even if the latter were to be regarded as august-sultan.

While these points were solely requests, and not demands whose acceptance or rejection would determine the Safavids' observance or non-observance of any other current regulation, their insertion into the letter must have been quite unexpected and even unpleasant for the Ottoman side. The Sublime Porte's refusing even to negotiate these matters with precise, categorical rejections indicates how serious it took the potential consequences of the precedence that could be set by the granting of these requests. The message was clear: the troubles caused by Mâni es-Sa'dûn and Süleyman Kirmac had become interstate affairs only because territory, vassals, and subjects from the both sides of the border were involved, but not necessarily because these rebellions had affected certain sites in Iraq. Any Ottoman policy regarding any issue and locality in Iraq would exclusively concern the empire, while any Safavid request for exceptions in the form of concessions from Ottoman sovereign rights would directly lead to the demotion of the Safavids' rank in interstate hierarchy as first response. This last point implied that there would also be further consequences.

These requests were the manifestation of Mehmed Mümin Xan Şamlu's anti-Ottoman policy. The two instances in which the Padishah gave the Shah permission to undertake sarcophagi renovations at Sâmerâ and Kâzîmiye were isolated cases, granted as one-time favors and only in return for comparatively greater sacrifices from the Safavid side, respectively the symbolic offering and the actual handover of the province of Basra in its entirety. But this time, the Prime-Minister was asking that certain privileges be granted in perpetuity, not an exceptional favor but a permanent concession from sovereign rights. He definitely knew well that such favors could be attained only via one-time gestures of good will in return for at least equally meaningful or even greater concessions. He also knew that in the absence of these circumstances,

such requests would bring about nothing other than antagonism towards the other party, and that, given the circumstances, their rejection was certain.

Thus, in submitting these requests, Mehmed Mümin Şamlu must have aimed primarily at creating tensions between the two states rather than expecting that they might be granted. This policy can be attributed to his prime-ministership on several counts. Firstly, before his coming to power in 1699, requests of permanent concessions from Ottoman sovereign rights had not been the subject of Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy. For both parties, it was clear that such attempts would only help worsen the thriving relations. So, in this case, religion did not become a part of the interstate relations but it was used as a platform from which to attain political goals. Secondly, separate from Mehmed Mümin Şamlu's personality and internal policy, Sultan-Hüseyin does not feature the characteristics of a monarch who might have formulated this foreign policy towards the Ottoman Empire. His record as a ruler before and after the prime-ministership of Mehmed Mümin Şamlu, which was more pro- than anti-Ottoman, suggests that he was not the mastermind behind this. Thirdly, such initiatives would soon recur, again on the initiative of Mehmed Mümin Şamlu and in yet more intensive manner.

A potentially harsh reply and a subsequent crisis was only avoided because the Safavids had offered their full commitment throughout the letter to *perpetual peace, alliance*, the institutionalized primacy of the Ottomans, and had not made the perpetuation of any of these points conditional to the acceptance of the submitted requests. This might have been the result of Sultan-Hüseyin's reservations on Mehmed Mümin Şamlu's adventurist foreign policy. The same goes for the submitting of these requests via correspondence not at monarch- but at chief-minister level. In diplomacy considered to be taking place between monarchs, whose dynasties were themselves the states, rather than representatives of a state apparatus existing independent

of the ruling dynasty, inter-chief-minister level, though fully official and binding, can ultimately be regarded as a secondary level in diplomatic correspondence. That these mentions did not find themselves a place in a royal epistle must not have been just a matter of coincidence. The royal government must have been aware how unconventional the requests were and that their being granted would symbolically limit Ottoman sovereign rights. Calculating in the high possibility of rejection, they were conveyed in such a manner that such a refusal would not imperil cordial relations. This aim was attained: the Porte stated its continued interest in preserving the *perpetual peace in alliance* in spite of categorically rejecting even the prospect of negotiating the Safavid requests. It did so by drafting the reply with due references in the prologue and emphasized expectations in the epilogue.

Almost three years after escaping to Iran at the beginning of 1700 to seek political asylum, Çelebi İsmâil Pasha reentered into the agenda of Ottoman-Safavid relations. The former vizier had resided in Iran since then, having declared himself the shah's servitor. Apparently, however, he had done so without recruitment into active service, which indicates that he had been meaning to return to the empire and trying to have Sultan-Hüseyin intercede on his behalf. He had first approached to the governor of Çors, Eyüp Xan, with whom he had "waited and resided as guest."¹¹⁰⁷ He received an invitation to go to Tabriz, however, he had to leave his cash money, jewels, wares, belongings, weapons, and even mounts, which were registered and held under Eyüp Xan's safekeeping. Çelebi İsmâil Pasha passed away in Tabriz and this news reached the Ottoman court in December 1702.¹¹⁰⁸ Understandably, his defection had not led to a crisis between the two courts. On the other hand, as in the case of Seyyid Ferecullah's successive defections, such developments were regarded as a natural consequence of sharing a long and

¹¹⁰⁷ "müsâferet tarîkıyla meks ü ikâmet"

¹¹⁰⁸ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeât*, ff. 26a-26b; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 462; *Sarı Mehmed*, *Zübde-i Vekâiyât*, 753; Râşid, *Târih*, 625.

complex border. Nevertheless, the essential difference between these two defections, that Çelebi İsmâil was a vizier who had grown up in the padishah's service as a career janissary and that Seyyid Ferecullah was a vassal and the head of a local dynasty, is worthy of note. It was probably this difference that had Seyyid Ferecullah offer unrestricted services to whichever monarch he defected to and Çelebi İsmâil to wait until circumstances for his pardon were ripe. The restitution of Çelebi İsmâil's estate back to the empire by the Safavids also demonstrates that the royal government had not wanted to take advantage of this asylum case at the expense of the Sublime Porte, neither in political nor in financial terms.

On 17 July 1703, under the government of Râmi Mehmed Pasha, who had succeeded Daltaban Mustafa Pasha after the latter's brief term as grand-vizier, a rebellion by the Munitioner Corps broke out when the government ordered them to be deployed to Georgia at a time when their pay was long in arrears. Soon, the discontented factions from all ruling classes joined the munitioners' cause. The rebels initially only directed their grievances against the arbitrary dominance of chief-mufti Seyyid Mehmed Feyzullah Efendi, long-time favorite of Mustafa II. However, following a coup within the movement that replaced the moderates with extremists and delegation exchanges between Adrianople and Constantinople, both sides mobilized. As a result of the already-stronger legalist army of Constantinople's managing to lure the loyalists of Adrianople, a clash was avoided: the rebels dethroned Mustafa II and enthroned imperial-prince Ahmed [III], his brother, on August 22. Dictator-chief-mufti Seyyid Feyzullah was hunted down and executed, while the deposed grand-vizier, Râmi Mehmed, went into hiding. The Incident of Adrianople resulted in the imperial court's returning to Constantinople.¹¹⁰⁹ However, the coup leaders who wanted to continue to wield an influence after the change of monarch were soon

¹¹⁰⁹ See Rifa'at Ali Abou-el-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1984) for a social class based analyses of the Incident of Adrianople.

purged.¹¹¹⁰ The Safavid court was soon notified of the change of ruler via a mission,¹¹¹¹ most probably led by an unaccredited agent.

On 11 October 1703, Beyzâde Ali Pasha became the new governor-general of Baghdad.¹¹¹² His predecessor, Topal Yusuf Pasha, in his customary letter-of-friendship sent to the Safavid prime-minister approximately in mid-1702, had duly referred to the ongoing state of “alliance” therebetween.¹¹¹³ At the occasion of his subsequent initiation, Beyzâde Ali Pasha addressed the Prime-Minister with a similar letter-of-friendship in which he stressed the current “concord and alliance.”^{1114,1115}

In turn, Eyüplü Hasap Pasha, Beyzâde Ali Pasha’s successor at Baghdad, sent his own customary letter-of-friendship to the Safavid prime-minister in approximately the summer of 1704.¹¹¹⁶ Soon afterwards, he organized the envisaged campaign against the Benî Lâm. As mentioned in Beyzâde Ali’s abovementioned memorandum, the Benî Lâm was the only major tribe that still had not submitted to Ottoman authority and at the same time remained hostile to the Safavids. This double hostility had become more problematic because of this tribe’s location

¹¹¹⁰ İsmâil Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi* vol. 4/1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 3rd ed. 1982), 40-45.

¹¹¹¹ Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri*, 241 - ent. 12. The head of mission is unnamed and Unat does not cite his source.

¹¹¹² Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 646.

¹¹¹³ Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, ff. 43b-44b. Although the names and a dating are missing, by taking into consideration that the letters in this compilation are in chronological order and that this letter is the third to last of its kind, it can be attributed to the third to last governor-general of Baghdad Nazmizade Murtazâ Efendi saw, namely Topal Yusuf Pasha.

¹¹¹⁴ “yek-cihetî . . . ittifâk”

¹¹¹⁵ Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, ff. 44b-45b. The “sublime majesty (âli-hazret)” address to the Prime-Minister in the opening of the letter is seemingly the result of a mistake by the copier. The opening address, which also includes other royal formulas, such as “Keyvân-menzilet”, must have been intended for the addressee’s master, the Shah, and the omission I suppose the copier of this compilation had committed resulted in their becoming mixed into the titles used for the Prime-Minister. Another round of counting prime-ministerial titles later in the same letter, which begins with “his sublime eminence, favoured excellency (âli-câh, ikbâl-penâh . . . hazretleri)” confirms this interpretation. Although the names and a date are missing, by taking into consideration that the letters in this compilation are in chronological order and that this letter is the second to last of its kind, it can be attributed to the second to last governor-general of Baghdad Nazmizade Murtazâ Efendi saw, namely Beyzâde Ali Pasha (second term).

¹¹¹⁶ See Nazmizâde, *Münşeat*, ff. 45b-46b for the text. Although the names and a dating are missing, by taking into consideration that the letters in this compilation are in chronological order and that this letter is the last of its kind, it can be attributed to the last governor-general of Baghdad Nazmizade Murtazâ Efendi saw, namely Eyüplü Hasan Pasha.

along the border, from where it harrassed both sides' subjects and pillaged both sides' territories. In early 1705, leading a contingent superior to the forces the Benî Lâm coalition could field, Eyüplü Hasan put the rebels to flight. The tribal leadership escaped with their families and movable belongings to the Ottoman side of the Zagros mountain range, where, against their expectations, they were pursued by the governmental forces despite the rocky, rough terrain, and defeated severely. The survivors fled to the Iranian side of the border, hoping to find refuge. However, the Safavid subjects there, fed up with the Benî Lâm's transgressions, hunted them down and pillaged whatever was left from the booty the Ottomans had already captured. In the spring, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's summons to Selman Huzali produced no results, and consequently, the governor-general retook Haske with force and left a garrison in the newly raised fort. The chieftain of the Benî Lâm disappeared into the wilderness.¹¹¹⁷ The center, approving the governor-general's request submitted via a letter, an exposition, and a register, confirmed Haske's new garrison of 650 janissaries and 102 munitioners, and allocated resources for the renovation of the standing fleet.¹¹¹⁸

At the Safavid court, following Çelebi İsmâil's death, Sultan-Hüseyin issued a rescript that the deceased pasha's heirs be notified of and given the inheritance. Accordingly, the register of his estate was forwarded via Hacı Mehmed from his household to his son who had remained in Ottoman service, [Çelebioğlu] İbrâhim Bey. In order to regulate the formal dimension of the procedures concerning the estate that had remained registered in safekeeping in Iran, grand-vizier Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha sent a letter dated 6 March 1704 to prime-minister Mehemmed

¹¹¹⁷ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 395-397

¹¹¹⁸ See in A.DVN. 305/90 the mandate for the issuance of the decree approving the new garrison's staff via new tenure admissions to the Sublime Court Corps and redeployment from among those on garrison duty in Baghdad. See D.PYM.d. 35167 for the register including the names of the mentioned munitioners, the petition for their tenures, and the mandate dated 20 January 1706 ordering that the tenures be granted.

Mümin Xan Şamlu “his vizierial excellency, the gauge of principhood,¹¹¹⁹” in which he spoke in praise of the Shah “his sublime majesty’s . . . performing the good tradition of faithfulness.¹¹²⁰” Attached to the letter, the Grand-Vizier also conveyed the registers of the estate drafted in Iran and the judicial-deed drawn up in the Ottoman Empire empowering a certain Hacı Hasan Agha as the deputy of the inheritors. The Grand-Vizier requested the Prime-Minister’s permission for the estate to be handed over to Hacı Hasan Agha, who was to transport it back to the empire.¹¹²¹ Once the estate returned from Iran, the imperial court made purchases from it.¹¹²² Besides the subject matter of the 1704 correspondence, Kalaylıkoz Ahmed Pasha’s letter intensified the demotion of rank for the Safavids that had ensued in 1702. As a sign of the beginning of the second phase in the deterioration of relations, the Grand-Vizier addressed the Prime-Minister and referred to the Shah in disregard of the post-1688 promotion of their diplomatic degrees.

Sultan-Hüseyin’s belated conventional embassy to congratulate Ahmed III’s accession was finally formed and dispatched in mid-1705. The governor of Nahçıvan, Murtazâ-Kulu Xan Ustaclu, was chosen as ambassador. After his entry to Ottoman territory from the province of Kars, gatekeeper-captain Halil Agha escorted him as his host-officer.¹¹²³ As we learn from grand-vizier Pakçamüezzın Baltacı Mehmed Pasha’s letter-of-welcome¹¹²⁴ sent in late September / early October, governor-general of Erzurum Arnavut Abdi Pasha informed the center of the

¹¹¹⁹ ”cenâb-ı vezâret-mehab-ı iyâlet-nisâb”

¹¹²⁰ ”âli-hazret . . . icrâ olunan deydene-i hasene-i vefâdârî”

¹¹²¹ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 26a-26b.

¹¹²² A.MKT. 6/65: the governmental correspondence with references to various officials involved in the case.

¹¹²³ İE. HR. 1084. Halil Agha’s belongings worth 700 thaler were robbed on the road between Sarıköy and another village attached to the district (*kaza*) of Kars, but the host-officer could not attend to their recovery because he had to continue traveling and to escort the ambassador. Later, the imperial decree dated late April 1706 ordered that now that Halil Agha would travel back the same route as the host-officer of the return journey, the governor-general of Erzurum and the judge of Kars attend to the investigation of the case.

¹¹²⁴ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, f. 24b, the upper entry.

ambassador's arrival. This "auspicious glad-tidings,¹¹²⁵" said the Grand-Vizier, caused "enormous joy,¹¹²⁶, and former [grand-vizierial] officer of the ceremonies Hasan Agha was appointed as host-officer to bring the mission to Constantinople.

Despite the utmost friendliness and courteousness of the style, as sensed in the Grand Vizier's appreciation for the embassy by order of the Shah his "sublime majesty¹¹²⁷" to the court of the Padishah his "imperial majesty¹¹²⁸" who had acceded to the "throne . . . of the Caesar,¹¹²⁹" Baltacı Mehmed Pasha made it evident that the Sublime Porte had not forgotten the disappointment caused by the royal government's last set of unreasonable requests. Furthermore, he made it known that the reaction thereto in the form of using lowered titulature for the Safavids in grand-vizierial diplomatic correspondence was not a temporary display of discontent; unless the Safavid side compensated for this injury, return to the 1686-1701 accord should not be expected. Thus, this letter-of-welcome inaugurated the third phase in the deterioration of relations.

On 24 October 1705, after arriving in Scutari, Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu was transported across the Bosphorus to Eminönü, where the marshal of the Imperial Council, Zaim Yusuf Bey, and the chief of the *sipâhiler* Sublime Court Cavalry officially welcomed him. The cortege led by these two officials brought the ambassador to his residence, Şâhîhûbân Palace.¹¹³⁰ Unconventionally, the conduct of diplomatic business began immediately, which reflects the

¹¹²⁵ "nüvîd-i sa'îd"

¹¹²⁶ "ibtihâc-ı firâvân"

¹¹²⁷ "âlî-hazret"

¹¹²⁸ "şevketlü"

¹¹²⁹ "taht-ı . . . kayserî"

¹¹³⁰ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 677, 681-682; Râşid, *Târih*, 755-756. See İE. HR. 802 for the redirection to the chief-comptroller and other processings of the petition from Kandıra and Taşköprü that they did not have the means to accommodate and provide for the traveling embassy. See in İE. HR. 1284 (dated 19 December 1705) the bill for the amounts spent by the Central Treasury on the ambassador's daily subsidies. See in İE. HR. 881 (dated 7 February 1706) the bill of the expenses for the repair of the pavements by the ambassador's residence.

preference of the host state as the side regulating the event calendar. Most probably after the Porte had been informed of the content of the prime-ministerial letter via informal talks, the ambassador was instructed to submit its main points to the Grand-Vizier in advance of presenting the instrument itself. In the letter, Mehemmed Mümin Xan Şamlu spoke of the project by one of the former shahs of Iran to dig a canal from Murad-Water to Najaf, a.k.a Imam Ali Town, now in Ottoman Iraq. Once the canal digging had reached a distance of one and a half hours to the terminus, the work was brought to a halt due to various hindrances. Now, the Shah was asking via his prime-minister's letter for the Padishah's permission to complete the project. The Sublime Porte replied by saying "the quality of this matter is not known at this side"¹¹³¹ and that it deemed an in-situ inquiry necessary. It then ordered to commission a report to *amici curiae* on the project's potential benefits and harms incumbent on the Ottoman State with an imperial decree and a grand-vizierial letter to the governor-general and the judge of Baghdad in early January 1706.¹¹³² Among other factors, dynastic legitimacy and technical matters were simultaneously in question. A commission given to the governor-general of Baghdad in late January – immediately preceding the ambassador's padishahly audience – for building new frigates and repairing the existing galleons of the Shatt fleet¹¹³³, along with a parallel commission to the governor-general of Basra for the building of new and the repair of the

¹¹³¹ "bu husûsun keyfiyeti bu tarafta mâlum olmayıp"

¹¹³² See the draft of the imperial decree and the grand-vizierial mandate for its issuance in AE. SAMD.III. 20076. Also see A.DVN. 305/49. Again in January, a [n additional?] residence was repaired [probably for use by the embassy] under the supervision of Halil Agha, host-officer of the Safavid ambassador: see the *pusula* of allocation dated 24 January 1706 in AE. SAMD.III. 20277. See AE. SAMD.III. 20281 for further repairs of houses where the embassy personnel were to be lodged. See İE. HR. 704 regarding the Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu embassy's daily subsidies and other expenses covered by the Central Treasury while at court.

¹¹³³ See AE. SAMD.III. 20291 (22 January 1706) and 20292 (25 January 1706) for the Central Treasury allocations to Eyüplü Hasan Pasha for building the frigates and paying the wages of the repair workers

existing frigates of the same fleet's southern branch¹¹³⁴, augured how much these demands had antagonized the Sublime Porte.

Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu's imperial welcome audience took place on 27 January 1706, after an unconventionally extended waiting period of three months that apparently signals the the Sublime Porte's perceived necessity of discussing the abovementioned matter. The cortege of forty to fifty Imperial Council bailiffs led by their marshal along with the *sipâh* and *silahdar* Sublime Court Cavalry chiefs brought the ambassador from his residence to the Triumphal Council held for the occasion. During the feast, the ambassador was seated below chancellor Küçük Osman Pasha. After being invested with the conventional robes of honor with his retinue, he entered the Audience Hall with ten of his men following the admission of the present viziers. There, he presented the Shah's epistle and gifts consisting of an elephant and other items.¹¹³⁵

At first glance, the royal epistle's¹¹³⁶ content appears quite friendly. The Shah completely disregards the recent deterioration in relations; the current state, with reference to the post-1686 accord, is described as the result of the fact that "the structure of friendship [was] firm since the ancient times.¹¹³⁷" The embassy was dispatched to "congratulate the [accession to] monarchy¹¹³⁸" and to "present the necessities of union,¹¹³⁹" so that the "unity¹¹⁴⁰" therebetween

¹¹³⁴ See İE. ML. 9087 (the eventual bill issued on 20 January 1707).

¹¹³⁵ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 681-682; Râşid, *Târih*, 755-756. The one piece of robe of honor, a sable fur, with which the ambassador was invested, cost 850 thaler: see the exposition, the financial bureau's note (10 January 1706), and the grand vizierial mandate (14 January 1706) in AE. SAMD.III. 11749. See Hüseyin Hüsameddin, *Nişancılar Durağı*, transcription by Bilgin Aydın and Rifat Günalan, ed. İsmail E. Erünsal (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2015), 117-118 and Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill-i Osmânî* vol. 4, 1307 for the identification of Küçük Osman Pasha's name. See AE. SAMD.III. 20280 for the allocation *pusula* concerning the purchase of "council [riding] equipment]," 27 January 1706.

¹¹³⁶ NMH.d. 6, ent. 61; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât, 1105-1135*, 136-141.

¹¹³⁷ "binâ-yı dûtî . . . ez zamân-ı bâstân . . . pâ-ber-câst"

¹¹³⁸ "mübârek-bâd-ı saltanat"

¹¹³⁹ "takdîm-i levâzım-ı . . . ittihâd"

¹¹⁴⁰ "yegâneği"

would not be affected from the “blemishes of alienation and separation.¹¹⁴¹” Sultan-Hüseyin expresses his hope for preserving the “union-of-hearts¹¹⁴²” via future exchanges. The bold request submitted via the prime-ministerial letter did not find itself a place in the royal epistle. In this regard, the Sultan-Hüseyin and Mehemmed Mümin Xan Şamlu duo had repeated the discursive tactic of 1702: they submit bold requests via the prime-ministerial letter but do not mention them in the royal epistle. As discussed above, this must have been the result of Mehemmen Mümin Şamlu’s anti-Ottoman policy and Sultan-Hüseyin’s allowing his prime-minister to pursue it, though with certain reservations. Thus, the second wave of alienating requests was submitted in writing and at the state level. The Shah must have been hoping that even if the attempt failed, he could avoid the embarrassment of being rejected by the padishah.

In any case, a comparison of this royal letter with the previous ones of its kind immediately reveals a decrease in frequency and intensity in honoring the concepts of *consolidated peace* as well as the non-existence of any reference to *alliance*. This was neither a coincidence nor a result of the style of composition. Beyond the concept of alliance, the text also lacks any references to the Ottoman monarch’s universal mandate, emperorship, or supreme-caliphate. These are remarkably unprecedented eliminations as they had been the three distinctive capacities of the Ottoman monarch that registered his primacy vis-à-vis his Safavid counterpart since 1639, unaffected by the later alteration in the status quo. Now, apparently without a prior mutual agreement, and again apparently aware that the omission of the references denoting Ottoman primacy would shake the post-1686 regulations from their foundations, the Safavids chose not to include in interstate correspondence the three constituents defining the hierarchy of rulers. This was a unilateral Safavid pretension rather than the result of a new

¹¹⁴¹ “şevâib-i bigâneğî ve iftirâk”

¹¹⁴² “yektâ-dilî”

accord. This violation of the current norms in *inscriptio* can be interpreted as a reaction on the part of the royal government to the Sublime Porte's use of lowered titulature for the Safavids and its rejection of all requests for privileges in 1702 in grand-vizierial correspondence.

The hierarchical matter must have enraged Sultan-Hüseyin more than the rejection of his requests because the demotion of his titles back to sultanic level by the grand-vizier defied the post-1686 achievements. This demotion had in turn revealed the Sublime Porte's reaction to the Safavid request for concessions from Ottoman sovereign rights in certain spheres. In this epistle, which outwardly congratulates Ahmed III's accession and reconfirms the concept of ancient peace, the royal government also makes it evident that it was keeping up with the Porte in the exchange of "diplomatic" insults. The third phase of this exchange was unfolding during Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu's conventional embassy into a full-blown crisis. Both sides opted to express their discontentment with the actions in the political sphere in a "diplomatic", courteous manner. They had each hoped to avoid fueling the matters of contention, while still making sure that their grievances would reach the addressee in the most express manner possible.

Apparently immediately after the imperial welcome audience, the ambassador submitted to the grand-vizierate a diplomatic note in which the requests of the royal government are written down. Baltacı Mehmed Pasha, in his reply-note dated 1 February 1706, confirms this receipt but communicates that the matter had to be submitted to the Padishah himself; after the submission of the summation thereof and the issuance of Ahmed III's ruling, Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu would be duly informed.¹¹⁴³ Most probably, the requests were made concerning the abovementioned matter brought up in Mehemmed Mümin Xan Şamlu's letter. That even the grand-vizier declared himself unauthorized to give a final decision on the issue strengthens this

¹¹⁴³ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, ff. 24b-25a.

possibility. The imperial court was waiting for the commissioned report from Baghdad. Because dynastic legitimacy was in question, issuing the ultimate decision – as the Ottoman sovereign’s monopoly – was beyond grand-vizierial authority, despite this office’s definition as the padishah’s absolute-deputy.

The Sublime Porte did not have to wait long for feedback on the proposed canal project. On 11 February 1706, the committee of experts consisting of the Local Corps officers, Court Corps officers, and the clergy of Baghdad composed the final report in the form of a collective-exposition to the imperial court. Deliberations had taken place in the council of Baghdad presided over by the governor-general himself. The final opinion asserted that granting permission to the shah’s request would cause “sheer harm to the domain and to the Sublime State¹¹⁴⁴,” because the project would facilitate the flow of Safavid subjects into the province.¹¹⁴⁵

Further details are to be found in Eyüplü Hasan Pasha’s letter to the Grand-Vizier, dated 14 February 1706. The governor-general stated that he had reconnoitered the site twice, and in addition to the above-mentioned commission members, the administrators of the tax-farm¹¹⁴⁶ at the site were also consulted. The remaining earth to be dug was clay, which meant that a network of pits rather than a direct canal was necessary to make the water reach the town of Imam Ali. This necessitating three to four years of work with a daily employment of one thousand digger-workers. The province no longer remained as populous as in the past, and the inhabitants were barely able to maintain the existing river facilities, making it questionable who would provide the workforce. Even if the workforce were to be provided from outside the province with added financial costs, the new canal would have to be re-dug every year. This was due to the regime of

¹¹⁴⁴ “gerek memlekete ve gerek Devlet-i Aliyye’ye mahz-ı . . . zarar . . . olduğu”

¹¹⁴⁵ A.DVN. 305/23.

¹¹⁴⁶ “mukâtaa”

the province's rivers; for example, Murad-Water's annual overflows brought sand, while the salt and earth were deposited from the side of the desert. Without annual re-diggings, any progress made on the canal would revert to its original state within one year. In this case, the following questions arose: Was it possible that the Safavids would annually send the necessary supervisors, resources, and workforce? Even if the canal were to be re-dug every year, keeping it guarded from the Bedouins would necessitate the garrisoning of troops. If the shah was to undertake the project, it was "obvious¹¹⁴⁷" that Safavid troops would be stationed, and they would then become "entangled in fights and skirmishes with the Bedouin¹¹⁴⁸", which in turn would lead to "evils.¹¹⁴⁹" Safavid troops' presence at the same place as Ottoman viziers, governors, and Sublime Court Corps would naturally result in "dispute and hostilities.¹¹⁵⁰" But above all, the presence of Safavid troops in the province would be "a sort of intervention to the padishah's domain,¹¹⁵¹" which, according to the governor-general, carried the potential of creating "coldness between the Two States;¹¹⁵²" after all, "God knows, whoever made the mentioned matter occur to the shah's prime-minister and provoked this affair, surely does not know propriety at all, and does not understand the consequences.¹¹⁵³" The Safavid claims to precedents were researched and it came out that the unfinished project had been undertaken under the rule of Abaqa Khan (r. 1265-1282) of the Mongol Ilkhanids, Genghis's great-grandson and Hülagu Khan's son. Ruined with the lapse of time, Shah İsmâil Safavi had renovated it (after 1508 and before 1524, when Baghdad had been under Safavid control). The excerpts of the chronicles reporting these

¹¹⁴⁷ "nümâyan"

¹¹⁴⁸ "urban ile keşmekeş ve cenk ü cidal"

¹¹⁴⁹ "mefâsid"

¹¹⁵⁰ "münâzaa ve muhâsama"

¹¹⁵¹ "memleket-i pâdişâhîye nev'an müdâhale olup"

¹¹⁵² "Devleteyn beyninde bâis-i bürûdet"

¹¹⁵³ "Allâhu a'lem, husûs-ı mezkûru îtimâdüddevele-i şâhîye ilkâ ve bu emri tahrik eden kimse gâyet salâh-ı hâli bilmez ve âkîbet-i emri fehmetmez kimse olmak gerektir"

precedents were quoted and attached to Eyüp Hasan Pasha's letter. In short, stated the governor-general, this matter could produce nothing but injury to friendly relations.¹¹⁵⁴

Concurrently, the royal government attempted at a *fait accompli*. We learn from the same letter by Eyüplü Hasan Pasha that in late December 1705 / early January 1706, an "emîr" named Abdülhakk arrived at the head of his retinue in Baghdad with a letter from the Prime-Minister, who requested that Abdülhakk serve as co-trustee of the endowments at Kerbela registered under the name of padishah Süleyman I (the Magnificent, r. 1522-1566) and that he donate cash in a publicly visible manner. The governor-general replied: "how is it possible that something unprecedented becomes innovated in the padishah's province . . . the mentioned matter must be submitted to the Sublime State."¹¹⁵⁵ Upon hearing this, emîr Abdülhakk requested that the governor-general send a letter to the Prime-Minister formulating the reply, and Eyüplü Hasan Pasha duly had the letter of rejection composed. He concluded his report to the Grand-Vizier as follows: "though it is outwardly something like charity, nonetheless, also in this [matter] there is the smell of intervention, . . . it should not happen, and it is the most appropriate manner that the involvement of the mentioned group [i.e. Safavid officials] in such businesses not be permitted."^{1156,1157}

The attempt by the royal government to score a *fait accompli* in Baghdad against the Ottomans was most probably planned in such a way that its diplomatic repercussions would coincide with the Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu embassy. In the previous year, Sultan-Hüseyin had sent

¹¹⁵⁴ A.DVN. 305/49.

¹¹⁵⁵ "bu âna dek olmamiş şey vilâyet-i pâdişâhîde ihdâs olunmak nice mümkündür . . . husûs-ı mezkûr Devlet-i Aliyye'ye arza muhtaçtır"

¹¹⁵⁶ "Sûret-i zâhirde egerçi hayrat gibi bir şeydir. Fe-ammâ bunda dahi râyiha-i müdâhele olup . . . olmaması lâzım ve tâyife-i mezkûrenin böyle böyle işlere duhûllerine müsaade olunmamak vech-i enseb olduđu"

¹¹⁵⁷ A.DVN. 305/49.

a bejewelled pastille¹¹⁵⁸ via his armor-bearer¹¹⁵⁹ Mahmud Agha to be placed at the sepulcher of Prophet Muhammed in Medine. On the grounds that the padishah's permission was lacking, the personnel in charge of the complex had prevented the royal armor-bearer from executing the placement. Probably following his instructions, Mahmud Agha had not carried the bejewelled pastille back to Iran but had rather left it in Medine. Now, Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu also asked for the Shah's donation to be placed upon its destined location.¹¹⁶⁰

The Safavids' belated dispatch of a conventional embassy with unreasonable requests and their concurrently attempt, in a provocative manner, to score two separate faits accomplis – one in Iraq and one in Hejazs – simply cannot have coincided incidentally. These actions make up the second episode of the series in which Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu's putting his anti-Ottoman policy into action. Because the novel matters he had introduced to Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy had been perceived as attempts to open a breach in Ottoman sovereign rights, Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu's initiative had categorically been rejected in 1702. The Prime-Minister's repeated course of action that was tripled in scope in 1705-1706 cannot be explained by anything other than his political objective of reversing the post-1686 achievements in Ottoman-Safavid relations. He could not have seriously entertained the idea that the Sublime Porte would accept these requests. After all, the initiative would only serve to antagonize the other party, which must have been the Prime-Minister's real agenda. One cannot know whether his end-goal was to return to the state of merely non-hostile relations by undoing the achieved stage of peacetime coexistence, *perpetual peace in alliance*, or to go as far as to incite hostilities. Nevertheless, Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu's initiatives suggest that he had adopted the deterioration in relations as his direction for foreign policy. In this vein, he had been taking concrete, consistent steps with

¹¹⁵⁸ *murassa' şemmâme*

¹¹⁵⁹ *cebedâr*

¹¹⁶⁰ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, f. 25b.

increasing intensity towards this end since coming to power in 1699. After the full manifestation thereof in 1702, the 1705-1706 initiative represented the culmination of his anti-Ottoman policy before his term would end in 1707.

After a relatively long biding period at court probably due to extended negotiations, awaited commissioned reports, and deliberations within the Sublime Porte, ambassador Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu was invited by grand-vizier Baltacı Mehmed Pasha, with the Padishah's approbation, to a feast on 30 March 1706, "as it was necessary and important to display grandeur to this kind of emissaries.¹¹⁶¹" Deceased grand-vizier Amcazâde Hüseyin Pasha's waterside-residence¹¹⁶² at Anadoluhisarı outside the capital was specifically selected from among other resorts in order to surpass the feasts given to Ottoman missions at Çeharbağ in Isfahan. There, in consideration of the "discipline of music, the technique in which the Iranians claim mastery,¹¹⁶³" best of the singers and instrumentalists of Rûm were gathered to perform in that assembly:

The one or two discordants, whom the above-written emissary had brought as musicals, were about to display knowledge to the masters of Rûm, and became breathless in astonishment when they saw the musicians of Istanbul; however, when the Owner-of-the-State [i.e. Grand-Vizier] raised the melody of persistence that >>your [i.e. Iranian] musicians also come [and perform]<<, they – out of necessity – brought out their discordant instruments, and upon the commencing of the melody, they disgraced themselves before the masters of Rûm.¹¹⁶⁴

Until dinnertime, the ambassador conversed with the Grand Vizier, grand-mufti Paşmakçızade Seyyid Ali Efendi, second-vizier Küçük Osman Pasha, and third-vizier Çorlulu [Damad] Ali Pasha, though interrupted at intervals by musical performances. The setting of the feast was that

¹¹⁶¹ "Bu makûle elçilere arz-ı şevket olunmak lâzım ve mühim olmağın"

¹¹⁶² *yali*

¹¹⁶³ "Acem tâifесinin üstadlık dâvâsında oldukları fen ki ilm-i musıkîdir"

¹¹⁶⁴ "Elçi-yi merkûmun musıkî-şinas diye getirdiği bir iki nâ-sazlar Rûm üstadlarına arz-ı mâlumât sadedinde iken, İstanbul mutriplerini gördüklerinde hayret ile dem-beste olup lâkin sizin mutripleriniz dahi gelsin diye demede sahib-i devlet hazretlerinin nağme-i ibramları bülend olmağla, bi'z-zarûre sâz-ı nâ-sâzların çıkarıp âğâz-ı nevâyla Rûm üstadlarına rüsvâ oldular."

befitting a monarch.¹¹⁶⁵ After the event had come to an end, Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu was taken back to his residence in the boat of the head of the Imperial Guard.¹¹⁶⁶ Baltacı Mehmed Pasha must have handed his reply letter to Mehmed Mümin Şamlu over to the ambassador at this event.

On April 6, Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu was invited to the Imperial Council, feasted, received in audience following the viziers, invested with a robe of honor, handed in the imperial epistle, and given permission to leave.¹¹⁶⁷ Orders for the embassy's return-journey subsidies were issued on 16 April 1706 as decrees.¹¹⁶⁸ The same host-officer (gatekeeper-captain Halil Agha) was appointed to escort the embassy until it reached the border.¹¹⁶⁹

Soon after departing, the ambassador received a diplomatic note from the Grand-Vizier dated late April / early May 1706, in which the completion of his embassy in line with the “union and unity¹¹⁷⁰” was registered. The ambassador was requested to “prescribe and emphasize to his retinue and servants that they not oppress or transgress against the inhabitants in the way stations they pass from¹¹⁷¹” in Ottoman territory.¹¹⁷² From a general decree dated early May 1706 that

¹¹⁶⁵ „tertib-i mülûkâne”

¹¹⁶⁶ Râşid, *Târih*, 757-758; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 734.

¹¹⁶⁷ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 683, Râşid, *Târih*, 760.

¹¹⁶⁸ AE. SAMD.III. 6991: the daily subsidy was 300 thaler (one thaler – 160 aspers), see the same document for the transaction made at the way station of Koçhisar and the mandate thereto. See AE. SAMD.III. 6169 for the billet (*pusula*) drawn up on 28 June 1706 for the processing of the embassy's daily subsidy of the very same amount used at the way station of Sabancı, and the mandate thereto. See A.DVN. 343/72 for the exposition by Seyyid Ali (judge of Tosya) and AE.III.Ahmed 15468 for the draft of the imperial decree concerning the deduction of the paid amount at the way station of Tosya from the due taxes. The ambassador's weight cargo was transferred via ships to Trebizond to be transported from there to Erzurum on land, A.DVN. 353/66 (the exposition for the hiring of the land transport and the mandate approving it, with the condition that the ambassador pay for it out of his own pocket, which suggests that sea transport was Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu's personal request and thus not to be covered by additional subsidies from the Ottoman State). See İE. HR. 1354 for the processing of the same daily subsidy at the way station of Turhal in the vicinity of Tokat on 23 May 1706 and for the fifteen way stations plus five days without travel within the province of Erzurum (3 June 1706 being one of the twenty days spent within the province).

¹¹⁶⁹ A.DVN. 340/30; İE. HR. 1084

¹¹⁷⁰ “ittihad . . . yegâneğî”

¹¹⁷¹ “ubûr eylediğiniz menâzil. . . de vâkı . . . sükkân. . . a . . . taaddi ve tecâvüz olunmamak üzere etbâ' ve hademenize tembih ve tekide mübâderet”

¹¹⁷² Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeât*, f. 26a, ent. 38.

was circularized to all administrative, judiciary, military, and provincial office holders from Scutari to the Iranian border, we learn that there had been quarrels¹¹⁷³ between the embassy personnel on one hand and the [Ottoman] ruling class¹¹⁷⁴ and subjects on the other at some way stations. The addressees were reminded of their responsibility to protect the mission; if such complaints would be repeated, the office holders of that place “should know that the [their] reprimand was decided upon.”^{1175,1176} Around that time, Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu responded with a diplomatic note, to which the Grand-Vizier sent a counter note stating that all officials had been prescribed to provide the safety of the mission, and that two bailiffs were sent to accompany it throughout the return trip. The Grand-Vizier added: ”however, the restraining of Your retinue by Your side is also necessary . . . may You attend to the discipline of Your retinue.”^{1177,1178} Then, Baltacı Mehmed Pasha circularized a letter to all receivers of the above-mentioned decree also to stress its content in person.¹¹⁷⁹

It is understood that the returning embassy personnel had strifes with office holders and inhabitants at some way stations. These probably occurred over the issue of the volume and the price of provisioning purchases. The Ottoman State, already subsidizing the mission, also took measures to ensure its security for which it was naturally responsible. However, the tone with which the Grand-Vizier warned the ambassador to discipline the embassy personnel provides evidence regarding the ongoing tensions in bilateral relations. Apart from whether the mission had deserved such admonition or not, which cannot be ascertained, the very fact that the Grand-

¹¹⁷³ “kavga”

¹¹⁷⁴ *tâife-i askeri*

¹¹⁷⁵ “mu’âteb olmanızı mukarrer bilip”

¹¹⁷⁶ A.DVN. 319/9.

¹¹⁷⁷ “ancak tarafınızdan dahi etbâ’ınızın zabtı lazım olmakla . . . etbâ’ınızın zapturaptlarına . . . himmet eyleyesiz”

¹¹⁷⁸ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeat*, f. 26a, ent. 39.

¹¹⁷⁹ A.DVN. 308/55

Vizier used such reproving language testifies to the crisis whose existence was already obvious within the interstate correspondence and inter-audience negotiations of 1705-1706.

In the imperial epistle¹¹⁸⁰ to the Shah his “most-sublime majesty,” ambassador Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu’s successful completion of his mission is confirmed at length. Among other things, reference is made to the “friendship, union, and unity¹¹⁸¹” between the two houses. With regards to the matters that had not been included in the royal epistle but submitted by the ambassador, for which the imperial epistle did not provide further details, it is only said that suitable replies were given. As the only content not dealing with formalities of this letter, which otherwise owes its length to extraordinarily extended descriptive passages dedicated to formalities, the Padishah stressed

Whoever is favor-seeker, of good-opinion, wisher of stately-fortune, and faithful with regards to this [i.e. Ottoman] Dynasty of great-glory, always are the feast-tables of benefit and the income salaries conferred as welcome, kindness and pleasant-desire along with caress and bounty ready and prepared, and the doors of leniency, favor-conferral, tenderheartedness, and affection-bestowal open.¹¹⁸²

The main text of this epistle was committed to paper by Firdevsî [Hüseyin] Efendi, the Quranic verses in *sülüs*-script by the prayer-leader of the Mîrahor Mosque, and the poetic couplets in *talik* by Durmuşzâde.¹¹⁸³

In his reply letter¹¹⁸⁴ to Mehemed Mümin Xan Şamlu “his vizierial excellency, recourse of regency, of deputial affiliation¹¹⁸⁵”, the Grand-Vizer also announces the successful completion

¹¹⁸⁰ NMH.d. 6, ent. 66; *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât 1105-1135*, 142-151. The dating “Muharrem 1108” in both versions contradicts with the apparent dates of Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu’s farewell audition, during which he was given the imperial epistle, and of departure (see above).

¹¹⁸¹ “ittihad . . . yegânegî . . . düstî”

¹¹⁸² “bu hânedân-ı azîmü’şân. . . in ikbal-cuy ve hayr-endiş ve devlet-hah ve sadâkat-kîşi olanlara hemvâre mevâid-i fevâid ve revâtib-i avâid terhîb ve te’hîl ve telattuf u te’mil-i cemîli ve nevâziş ü tenvîl-i cezîli mu’add ve âmâde ve ebvâb-ı irfâk u iltâf u işfâk u i’tâfi . . . güşâde . . . olup”

¹¹⁸³ M. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili*, 161. See in İE. HR. 1150 (dated 5 March 1706) the bill of the amounts spent for the diamond and the gold-bejewelling of the imperial epistle’s disk.

¹¹⁸⁴ Râmi Mehmed, *Münşeât*, ff. 25a-26a (misdated in this copy).

¹¹⁸⁵ “cenâb-ı vezâret-meâb, niyâbet-iyâb, vekâlet-intisâb”

of the embassy by Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu, ambassador from the “sole lord of Greater Iran, the Shah his sublime majesty¹¹⁸⁶” to the “Padishah . . . Supreme-Shah Ahmed [III] . . . his imperial majesty.¹¹⁸⁷” Unlike in his master’s reply epistle, Baltacı Mehmed Pasha gets straight to the point. Firstly, concerning the bejewelled pastille affair, he reminds Mehmed Mümin Şamlu that it is impossible in Medine to place or remove anything without explicit permission from the padishah. Nevertheless, “because it [i.e. the bejewelled pastille] ended up being sent . . . and in accordance with the ancient amity between the Two Sublime States, its being returned was not deemed appropriate,¹¹⁸⁸” an imperial decree would be issued for its placement within the tomb. However, this should be performed by the padishah’s pilgrimage-procession superintendent.¹¹⁸⁹ Secondly, undertaking the river canal project to Najaf is portrayed as the padishah’s exclusive honor. If the Iranian side were to embark on this enterprise, it would cause “bother”¹¹⁹⁰, but if it were the Ottoman side, “ease.”¹¹⁹¹ The Grand-Vizier comforts the Safavids by referring to Ahmed III’s statement that the Shah would also receive devine merit¹¹⁹² by virtue of having occasioned the enterprise. Even more sarcastically, the Grand-Vizier writes that he hopes that the Safavid side would “constantly deign to preoccupy itself with letting the rivers of amity flow.¹¹⁹³” Regarding the other issues orally submitted by the ambassador, affirmative decrees were issued and handed over to him.

The feast at Anadoluhisarı was a well-staged retaliation in the form of a carefully orchestrated diplomatic insult on the part of the Sublime Porte in reaction to the royal

¹¹⁸⁶ “Hüdâvend-i yegâne-i Îrân-zemîn . . . âli-hazret . . . Şah”

¹¹⁸⁷ “şevketlü . . . Pâdişah . . . Şehinşah . . . Ahmed”

¹¹⁸⁸ “amma çünkü . . . gönderilmiş bulunmuş, iki Devlet-i Aliyye beyninde olan musâfât-ı kadîmeye binâen reddi münâsip görülmemekle”

¹¹⁸⁹ *surre emîni*

¹¹⁹⁰ “zahmet”

¹¹⁹¹ “suhûlet”

¹¹⁹² “sevap”

¹¹⁹³ “dâima enhâr-ı musâfât icrâsına iştiğal buyurulmak”

government's opting for the continuation of the contention which had begun after 1701. The Safavid side had demonstrated this in both the latest correspondence and the inter-audience negotiations. Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu's policy of antagonizing the Ottomans was partially successful. It hit the mark in the sense that with this salvo fired under the cloak of music, the Grand-Vizier was returning his counterpart's counterattack and delivering a clear message that the shah would never be on an equal footing with the padishah. Moreover, diplomacy would not accommodate such an amendment either. Nor was the capacity of the Iranian domains enough to provide the shah with sufficient means to emulate the supreme position that the padishah inherently possessed through the power that his empire's domains, held together by his own might, were in turn bestowing upon him.

That the shah's august-sultanic/high-kingly rank in the post-1688 period came nowhere near to making him the equal of the emperor-padishah was not the only message delivered by the Sublime Porte regarding hierarchy. The terminology used between 1688 and 1700 to denote the shah's newly acquired august-sultanic rank disappeared completely from the Porte's diplomatic compositions. This manifested the initiation of the third phase of the shah's demotion back to sultanic/kingly level. The only exception to this was the unaffected address "most-sublime majesty" in the imperial epistle as opposed to "sublime majesty" in the grand-vizierial letter, the last margin left by the Porte to see if the Safavids would ever give up their post-1701 antagonism. In doing so, the Ottomans were following the precedent set when the shah had been elevated to the level of august-sultan; various descriptive titlature denoting the elevation had been first introduced in 1688, and the address "supreme (replacing sublime) majesty" had followed only in 1692. As the opening formula of the shah's long *inscriptio*, this was chosen as the ultimate phrase to seal promotions or demotions. One also sees that in the grand-vizierial

letter to the Prime-Minister, just like in 1702, the shah is referred to with full royal titulature, without the reservation found in the imperial epistle, and the padishah's undisputable imperial dignity and universal mandate is stressed. Moreover, the Prime-Minister received his share of the continued demotion in hierarchy. Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu was indeed more responsible than his master in the recent escalation of tensions. Stripped of his boosted grade stemming from the post-1688 accord, he once again ranked as prince.

The third phase of the Sublime Porte's undoing the post-1688 elevation of the Safavids' diplomatic degree also manifested itself in the above-quoted passage in the imperial epistle, where Ahmed III, as a return to the pre-1688 status quo, uses an unconventionally patronizing, condescending, top-down style when extending his offer of beneficence to the shah. In terms of interstate relations, the concept of *perpetual peace in alliance* still received reference, though only once and with concise, unelaborated phrases unlike those found in earlier correspondences. This tells us that although the concepts introduced during the post-1686 convergence were still honored, their gradual dismantling had begun. With regards to the two Safavid requests that provoked reaction, the Sublime Porte did not content itself just with rejecting them. The bejewelled pastille donated by the Shah would not be sent back, however, it would be held until the arrival of the padishah's pilgrimage-procession superintendent and be placed by him within the tomb. This was meant to remind the donator who the sole sovereign of the donation site was. In the same vein, in communicating that the Shah would receive merit by the padishah's undertaking of the canal project to Najaf, declared an exclusive Ottoman prerogative due to sovereign rights, the Grand-Vizier added insult to the injury of the Shah's rejection. By mid-1706, Mehemmed Mümin Şamlu's anti-Ottoman policy that he had pursued since coming to power in 1699 bore results: over the last several years, both states had displeasing requests and

rejections, the Porte was deeply antagonized, and the dismantling of the post-1686 achievements in bilateral relations had begun.

VI.2. The Undoing of the Achievements of 1686-1701

This third phase of the “diplomatic” contention also witnessed several cases of defections and encroachments from the Ottoman to the Safavid side of the border over the province of Kars. The first case had taken place before the arrival of the incoming ambassador Murtazâ-kulu Xan Ustaclu. In early 1705, the paymaster¹¹⁹⁴ of the [Local] right-flank Volunteers of the fortress of Kars (Mustafa) had deserted his office and reportedly escaped to Iran.¹¹⁹⁵ In another case, the former subgovernor of Zarşat (Hüseyin Bey), his brother, the bailiff of the [Local] right-flank (Ahmed Çavuş), and the 150 cavalymen they led somehow had secured from the governor of Kars, [Atabeğli] İshak Pasha, a mandate according to which they had crossed the border to Iran and looted the villages of the township Kaygulu, seizing over a thousand oxen, beasts of burden, and water buffalo. Once the new governor, [Telhîsî] Murtazâ Pasha, had took over office, the wronged Safavid subjects had applied to the provincial council of Kars with a petition requesting the recovery and restitution of their stolen livestock. The governor had wanted to take legal action, but the mentioned mandate had legally protected the perpetrators, and the had petitioners returned empty-handed. In an exposition to the imperial court dated 8 November 1706, [Telhîsî] Murtazâ Pasha reports the violation, names the involved Locals bandits, and requests the issuance of a decree explicitly empowering him to recompense for the stolen livestock from the

¹¹⁹⁴ *veznedar*

¹¹⁹⁵ A.DVN. 303/83: the exposition by Ömer Agha, chief of the left-flank [Locals] at the fortress of Kars, to the Imperial Council. It was processed on 26 August, 29 October, and 2 December, and the definitive mandate for Mustafa’s replacement was issued on 27 December 1705.

involved Locals' available assets or subtract their worth from their salaries. The grand-vizierial mandate came out in the affirmative.¹¹⁹⁶

In another similar case of a relatively larger scale, Kızlaroğlu Hüseyin from the Local right-flank Volunteers of Kars and an inhabitant of a border village in the vicinity of river Arpaçayı had been killed along with three of Kızlaroğlu's men by a certain number of Iranian horsemen and footmen, with whom the Local trooper had faced hostilities. The assaulters had also looted the property of the killed. Upon learning this, Şeyhhanoglu Ali, Susanoğlu İbrâhim, and Güsuroğlu Abdullah from the same corps had taken a certain number of cavalry and infantry with them, crossed the border to Iran, hit the homes of fifty to sixty from the community of Uyursu, killed fifteen to twenty people, looted their property, and returned to Ottoman territory. In counter-retaliation, a 2,000-strong cavalry from Erivan had come to Arpaçayı and pillaged several villages in the township of Şûregil. The clergy, officers, and elders of Kars had then taken the matter to the court, and they had registered with a judicial-deed their commitment to annulling the land-tenures of those Locals who had been provoking raids from Iran, to return the looted property to their owners, and to punish the offenders. The present committee had directly proceeded to the border point, where they had met and negotiated with their Iranian addressees. The joint committee had come to the agreement that both sides should restore the stolen property to their respective owners. This deal was also registered with a judicial-deed. The Iranians had immediately executed the restoration; however the mentioned Şeyhhanoglu, Susanoğlu, and Güsuroğlu had defaulted. The governor of Kars submitted an account of their disobedience to the center with an exposition, to which the center replied with a decree ordering the annulment of the

¹¹⁹⁶ A.DVN. 325/23.

perpetrators' land-tenures, their temporary confinement to the fortress of Anakara, and the execution of property restoration.¹¹⁹⁷

In the spring of 1708, the governor of Kars dispatched a letter to the imperial court informing it that some of the prefects¹¹⁹⁸ and inhabitants of the border villages under township Şuregil were looting Safavid subjects' dwellings across the border with the pretext of collecting pawn-toll¹¹⁹⁹. In order to take measures against this, the governor asked for the issuance of an imperial decree. In late April, the court duly decreed that he intervene and make sure that these transgressions in violation of the hereditary peace stop.¹²⁰⁰

It must be noted that these occurrences do not testify to an extraordinary lack of discipline or authority at Kars. Such incidents must have been ordinary for not only the major part of both sides of the Ottoman-Safavid border but also for other frontiers in the pre-modern age. What we have here before us is nothing more than the coincidental survival at the state center of successive documentation of incidents of this type. Otherwise, the fortress of Kars did not feature as a location less safe than the rest of the border-line. Even the continued existence of a province of Kars, separate from those of Erzurum and Çıldır, was probably due to its strategic location as this frontier section's last fortress before the Iranian border. By the last decade of the seventeenth century and the first of the eighteenth, it still stood as a splendid structure built onto a high rock with its devastated towers but well-maintained walls. Despite the uninterrupted peace of almost seventy years, fortress gates were still shut after sunset. Those traveling to Iran, even ordinary merchants, were occasionally suspected of espionage, which then led to thorough investigations and interrogations. These searches did not necessarily result from apparent signs,

¹¹⁹⁷ A decree dated late August 1714 would eventually set them free. MHM.d. 122, ent. 422.

¹¹⁹⁸ *sübaşı*

¹¹⁹⁹ *gırev*

¹²⁰⁰ MHM.d. 116, ent. 439.

and even occurred when passengers carried passports from both the Sublime Porte and the governor-general of Erzurum, to whom the governor of Kars was subordinated in border matters.¹²⁰¹ The abovementioned cases of violations must be contextualized in light of these facts.

Following the completion of the Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu embassy, the Ottoman State initiated an improvement to its major garrisons overlooking the Iranian border. Eyüplü Hasan Pasha had the worn-out parts of the fortress of Baghdad repaired and additional bridges built at key river crossings¹²⁰² with an eye to facilitating military transportation for potential operations. The Basran garrison was subjected to inspection.¹²⁰³ The arsenal of the fortress of Van was thoroughly reinforced from the center.¹²⁰⁴ After a short while, this fortress also went through a repair and renovation project,¹²⁰⁵ to be followed later by that of Kars¹²⁰⁶ and Şehrîzor¹²⁰⁷.

In 1709, the Gîlzî uprising led by Mîr-Üveys [Hûtek], which would eventually transform into the Afghan rebellion overthrowing the Safavid State in Iran, began in Kandahar with the killing of the governor-general, Gûrgîn Şahnevaz Xan, formerly George XI (Bagration, prince of Kartli). The royal court preferred, or had to choose, compromise over retaliation.¹²⁰⁸ In the same

¹²⁰¹ Schillinger, *Persianische Reis*, 90-92; Joseph de Tournefort, *Tournefort Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Stefanos Yerasimos, trans. Ali Berktaş and Teoman Tunçdoğan (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, 2008), 146-150.

¹²⁰² See in YB.04.BLG.IST. 4/5 the judicial-deed, exposition, mandate, the financial bureau's processing, and the resultant decree for the subtraction of the 4,000-thaler cost of the fortress repairs and the 4,000-thaler cost of the bridge constructions from the tax-farm revenue of the Central Treasury from Birecik for the years h.1117-1118. See AE. SAMD.III. 14171 and 14315 for the fund allocations (dated 4 October 1706) from the Central Treasury to the repair works of the fortress of Baghdad commissioned to Eyüplü Hasan Pasha.

¹²⁰³ See the revised register of those garrisoning the fortress of Basra in İE. AS. 6996, dated 1 October 1707.

¹²⁰⁴ see CV. AS. 54897 for the decree and CV. AS. 47348 for the register of the equipment shipped to Trebizond, September-November 1707.

¹²⁰⁵ See MHM.d. 115, ent. 2562-2575 for the details; also see AE. SAMD.III. 10819. For another round of repairs in 1719, see MHM.d. 129, ent. 326-338. Also see AE. SAMD.III. 15150, MHM.d. 129, ent. 1023-1041.

¹²⁰⁶ See MHM.d. 119, ent. 1054 (mid-September 1712) for the details.

¹²⁰⁷ See MHM.d. 118, ent. 1389 for a decree dated late February 1712 regarding the maintenance of the fortress of Kerkük.

¹²⁰⁸ Laurence Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 45, 87-89.

year, on July 15, king of Sweden Charles XII (“the Fixture”), defeated by Peter the Great of Russia in the Ukraine, crossed the border to the Ottoman province of Ochakov together with a retinue of 2,000 and requested protection against the Russians from the padishah, which the Sublime Porte granted with full honors. Russian retaliations thereto would lead to the Ottoman declaration of war on 20 December 1710.¹²⁰⁹

Aproximately in February 1710, governor-general of Erzurum İzmirli Tellak Ali Pasha forwarded to the center the verbatim copy of the letter he had written to the governor-general of Çukursa’d, of another letter addressed again to Erivan, and his own cover letter briefing the center on the issue. A subsequent decree dated early March 1710 only communicated him that the padishah was now informed of the dispatch’s content.¹²¹⁰ The present documentation tells no more as to the content of the cross-border correspondence, though, with an eye to the fact that the Sublime Porte did not instruct any measures to be taken, there must not have been a matter beyond the customary correspondence between the governors-general of Çukursa’d and Erzurum, or a minor cross-border dispute among the subjects.

In 1711, the Benî Lâm tribe reassumed its former state of disobedience and caused unrest in the province of Baghdad, pillaging and hi-jacking in the easternmost townships and villages along the Iranian border. When Eyüplü Hasan Pasha launched a punitive operation in the spring to crush the movement, the rebels crossed the border and sought refuge in Huveyze from viceroy Seyyid Abdullah Xan [Ferecullah’s son]. At that time, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha, who was personally commanding the operation, stopped the pursuit at the border point of Durluk. “As they were

¹²⁰⁹ Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı 1123 (1711)* vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1951), 115-188.

¹²¹⁰ MHM.d. 116, ent. 1404. Unless proven otherwise by other sources, the issue of Bayezid, which is also covered by the governor-general’s letter and attended to by the court in the decree, seems to be separate from the correspondence with Erivan. For the naming of the governor-general, otherwise unnamed in the register copy of the decree, see Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 717 and Râşid, *Târih*, 848.

Bedouins and many [in number],¹²¹¹” the viceroy, who himself was of the Bedouin Mushasha dynasty, embraced their cause and interceded to the governor-general of Baghdad for their pardon, which was accepted with the condition that they restore the property they had plundered.¹²¹²

For this matter, Eyüplü Hasan’s lieutenant Alibeyzâde Agha was sent as emissary to Huveyze along with a letter stating

the bandits that at present took refuge under your protection are Bedouins of Baghdad. You are unrelated to them. Because they sought asylum in accordance with tribal custom, then at least let us give them quarter upon the [condition] that those who of their own accord restitute the plundered property of the Muslim poors dwell again in their previous location.¹²¹³

During the emissary’s presence at the Huveyzan court, however, the viceroy “passed days with procrastination, [and] despite having outwardly accepted the restoration of the mentioned properties, no trace of it[s execution] came into sight.¹²¹⁴” In order to give the mission the runaround, he offered presents to the governor-general and issued the reply, ”then You go back, afterwards we will return and send your subjects to their location,¹²¹⁵” to emissary Alibeyzâde Agha. Eyüplü Hasan Pasha rejected the presents. Though he could militarily enforce his request upon Huveyze, he adjourned the prosecution of the matter in observance of the current peace.¹²¹⁶

It also became known that by this time that after staging a grand rebellion of the Iraqi Bedouin and the crushing of this movement only by the army assembled from all over Iraq and

¹²¹¹ “Arap ve hayli olmaları ile”

¹²¹² Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 405. I estimated the timing of Eyüplü Hasan Pasha’s punitive action by juxtaposing the course of events as narrated by Nazmizâde Murtazâ with the dating (early June 1711) of the decree in MHM.d. 116, ent. 1482, in which the operation is mentioned as having already been undertaken.

¹²¹² NMH.d. 6, ent. 134.

¹²¹³ “hâlen himâyenize ilticâ eden eşkıyâ Bağdad urbânıdır. Sizin alâkanız yoktur, çünkü âdet-i kabâil üzere tarafınıza dahîl düşmüşler, bâri târâc ettikleri emvâl-i fukarâ-yı müslimîni kendilerinden istirdâd edin, yine kadîmî yerlerinde sâkin olmaları üzere aman verelim”

¹²¹⁴ “mümâtala ile gün geçirip emvâl-i mezkûrenin reddini suretâ kabul etmiş iken eseri zuhûr etmeyip”

¹²¹⁵ “siz geri avdet edin, bâdehu reyanızı biz yerlerine ircâ’ ve irsâl ederiz”

¹²¹⁶ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 405; Râşid, *Târih*, 934.

Kurdistan and subordinated to Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's command (1707-1709), Megâmis es-Sa'dûn, Mâni's successor as the rebel-chieftain of the Müntefik, had crossed the border to Iran and sought refuge at the Huveyzan court. Under the protection of the viceroy, the rebels occasionally continued to attack Ottoman possessions.¹²¹⁷

The resurgence of Bedouin disobediences in 1707-1711, crushed each time by governmental forces, pertained directly to Ottoman-Safavid relations. The flag-bearers of these rebellions were the Benî Müntefik and the Benî Lâm, which each crossed the border to Iran and sought refuge at the court of their kinsmen, the Mushasha viceroys of Huveyze. These acts and attempts, which at first glance might appear to be a chain of coincidences comprised of isolated incidents, were indeed nothing other than the confirmation of Beyzâde Ali Pasha's 1701 memorandum that the cross-border anti-state Bedouin coalition between the Mushasha, Benî Müntefik, and Benî Lam, though seemingly inactive, was still valid, and their joint gathering still continuing. Each side had committed to come to the others' aid in the case that their respective sovereigns, i.e. the Ottomans or the Safavids, would take action against them. Now that these tribes were involved in rebellions, the Ottomans undertook punitive operations, and the Huveyzan Mushasha granted them asylum embracing their cause, the validity of this coalition was proven in deed. As the matter remained unsolved and caused friction between Baghdad and Huveyze, it would consequently involve the royal government and the Sublime Porte. This time, the issue would develop into a full-blown crisis between the two states rather than into one in which the two sides would initiate further fraternization in their dealings.

In eastern Europe, the Battle of Prut which ensued in Moldavia ended in the Tsar's surrender to commander-in-chief Baltacı Mehmed Pasha, and the Peace of Prut signed at the

¹²¹⁷ NMH.d. 6, ent. 134.

battle site on 21 July 1711 restored Azov to the empire. This clause, in executing which tsar Peter defaulted, would be enforced in 1712 with the empire's threat of war, and king Charles XII would depart under Ottoman protection en route to Sweden in August 1714.¹²¹⁸ Meanwhile, in eastern Iran, soon after the Ottoman victory at Prut (September 1711), the Gilzî rebels defeated the government's punitive army besieging Kandahar, their base. Mîr-Üveys Afghan extended his zone of control to the rest of the province of Kandahar and declared himself deputy-ruler.¹²¹⁹

After arrangements between Baghdad and the center, grand-vizier Baltacı Mehmed Pasha wrote a letter in the summer/autumn of 1711¹²²⁰ to prime-minister Şah-kulu Xan Zengene, and dispatched it to the governor-general of Baghdad to forward it with his own emissary, for which Eyüplü Hasan Pasha commissioned a certain Ömer Agha from among his entourage. After summarizing the transgressions, Baltacı Mehmed Pasha declared viceroy Seyyid Abdullah's policy contrary to cordial relations and demanded the withdrawal of Huveyzan support from the rebel tribes.¹²²¹

In reply, Şah-kulu Xan Zengene sent a letter directly to the new grand-vizier, Gürcüağa Yusuf Pasha. The courier, who was an agent of the sub-governor of Çapakçur,¹²²² arrived in Constantinople on 25 November 1711.¹²²³ In his letter,¹²²⁴ the Prime-Minister reminds the

¹²¹⁸ Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı II*; Uzunçarşılı *Osmanlı Târihi*, vol. 4/1, 62-95.

¹²¹⁹ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 89-92.

¹²²⁰ The letter must have been sent after Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's failed attempt to secure the extradition of the rebels and before the termination of Baltacı Mehmed Pasha's second grand-vizierate, i.e. after the spring of 1711 and before November 20 in the same year.

¹²²¹ We know of the content of this letter and that it was sent thanks to the Ottoman register copy of the Turkish translation of the Prime-Minister's subsequent reply letter to the Grand-Vizier, in which the story of the previous letter is briefly introduced. See NMH.d. 6, ent. 134.

¹²²² see below

¹²²³ See AE. SAMD.III. 7706 for the petition, the exposition, the financial bureau's processing (6 January 1712), and the affirmative mandate (9 January 1712) regarding the payment of the ½-thaler daily rent of the house in which the envoy was accommodated. See İE. HR. 788 for the bill of the travel allowance allocated by the Central Treasury for his return journey.

¹²²⁴ See in NMH.d. 6, ent. 134 the Ottoman register copy of its Turkish translation.

Grand-Vizier of the age-long peace and the “treaty of alliance¹²²⁵” being furthered from day to day, as a result of which “alienation and separation [therebetween had] disappeared,¹²²⁶” and friction came to be deemed illicit. The Iranian taking of Basra from the rebels and its restitution to Ottoman officials are evoked as affirmations of the Safavids’ commitment to this fraternization, and especially to the concept of alliance, in demonstration of which the two states came to eliminate insubordination in friendship and cooperation.¹²²⁷ Apparently, the diplomatic courier also carried gifts to Ahmed III.¹²²⁸

It was declared impossible that Safavid servitors, by which Seyyid Abdullah is implied, would dare to incite an insurrection at the Ottoman side. Furthermore, Baltacı Mehmed Pasha’s raising the aforementioned points was said to be “in complete contrariness¹²²⁹” to the current level in bilateral relations, and it was “unbelievable¹²³⁰” that the Grand-Vizier, despite knowing the current state of relations, had allowed those harboring grudge against the two states to speak their mind. It was not a remote possibility that the “aforementioned letter [by Baltacı Mehmed Pasha] be attributed to the fraudulence of the aforesaid [Eyüplü Hasan] Pasha,¹²³¹” as the latter entertained corrupted ideas for enriching himself. He was illegally collecting money from various social classes with various and “contradicting excuses,¹²³²” committing excessive embezzlement, and exacting illegal and ever-increasing payments onto the Safavid-subjects in his area of jurisdiction. Furthermore, with “ever-increasing greed, haughtiness, and malicious

¹²²⁵ ”muâhede-i ittifak”

¹²²⁶ “bîgânelik ve ayrılık aradan kalkmıştır”

¹²²⁷ NMH.d. 6, ent. 134.

¹²²⁸ By imperial decree, the items listed in the first entry of the expenditure register of the Privy Purse for Muharrem h.1124, which were the Shah’s gifts, were handed over to the Harem for the Padishah’s personal use. See TSMA.d. 2353.18.

¹²²⁹ “münâfât-ı tâmmе”

¹²³⁰ “inanılmaz”

¹²³¹ “zîkrolunan mektup Paşa-yı müşârüneyihin düzmesine hamlolunur ise”

¹²³² “birbirine uymaz bahâneler ile”

imaginations¹²³³”, he was already collecting many times more than these illegal exactions by annually hitting the Bedouin within the provinces of Baghdad and Basra, compelling them to seek asylum from Safavid officials, and by violating the border with the pretext of their extradition, which was exactly what had happened in the latest incident. The governor-general was even accused of entertaining the idea of gaining the possession of Huveyze, against which the viceroy had the means to retaliate with force but abstained from acting, in full observance of the peace conditions. In addition to all of this, the Prime-Minister also evoked the ancient Bedouin custom in place since pre-Islamic times that extraditing those who had sought asylum was regarded as a disgrace and a shame. It was not a distant possibility that the viceroy might have practiced this custom, in which case the affair would not be contrary to the conditions of interstate friendship. Such cases had been taking place earlier, and were solved after the exchange of mutual assurances between the two parties. However, it was unheard of that these had led to border violations by state officials, as had the ones committed by Eyüplü Hasan Pasha, who was “possessed by arrogance and haughtiness.¹²³⁴” If he were not to quit illegal exactions and border violations, warned the Prime-Minister, the viceroy could engage him militarily, in which case the Safavid side should not be attributed with breaking the peace. Further accusations asserted that, using the revenues of Iraq, which in the past had sufficed on their own to maintain monarchies, Eyüplü Hasan was assembling an excessive amount of troops with the obvious purpose of not only breaking the peace but also of breaking off his servitude to the padishah, and declaring independence from the empire. If he had had been informing the Sublime Porte otherwise, it was to conceal his transgressions and intentions.¹²³⁵

¹²³³ “tama’ ve gurur ve hayâlât-ı fâsidesi günden güne izdiyad bulmuştur”

¹²³⁴ “kibir ve nahvet müstevlî olup”

¹²³⁵ NMH.d. 6, ent. 134.

In any case, said the Prime-Minister, he had made the Shah issue rescripts prohibiting Iranian border officials from any kind of violation against the Ottoman Empire and ordering them to honor the peace clauses even more stringently than before. The current state of relations was not contested; mutual well-wishes and high-opinions were evident and discussed by all. The Grand-Vizier was warned to take measures to prevent Eyüplü Hasan from actualizing his intentions. With the foreseen risk that the governor-general might intercept this dispatch, the Prime-Minister said that he had sent the letter directly to the Grand-Vizier over Erzurum via a man of the sub-governor of Çapakçur, and in order not to bewilder the addressee, had it composed in a succinct manner.¹²³⁶

Due to various reasons, this letter exchange of 1711 between Ottoman and Safavid chief-ministers presents multiple unknowns. Firstly, Baltacı Mehmed Pasha's letter did not make its way into the imperial registers or other compilations, prohibiting the researcher from ascertaining its full content and style. Secondly, this diplomatic contact is referred to in none of the Ottoman state, court, provincial, etc. chronicles, not to speak of the sources of the poorly documented history of Safavid Iran, which is even more acute for the later reign of Sultan-Hüseyin. The sole references I could locate recording the incoming unaccredited agent from Iran are the governmental transactions concerning the dates of his residence, the rent-payment by the state for his accommodation in Constantinople, and the travel allowance he received for his return journey.

As this diplomatic contact is otherwise unrecorded and undocumented, we do not have clues as to the motivations of and information available to Baltacı Mehmed Pasha. By having his letter to the Prime-Minister forwarded by the governor-general of Baghdad instead of sending

¹²³⁶ NHM.d. 6, ent. 134.

out an unaccredited agent, he might have aimed at either including Eyüplü Hasan Pasha in every step of the activity due to the latter's centrality to the matter or scorning the Prime-Minister by reminding him of his hierarchical equality with an Ottoman governor-general. What makes the issue even more complicated is that in the case of the latter possibility, it must also be calculated in that Mehmed Mümin Şamlu, the architect of the Safavids' anti-Ottoman policy, was no longer in power. Last but not least, the lack of any references to the Ottoman-Safavid diplomatic activities of 1711 by Ottoman chroniclers must as a rule indicate the triviality of the matter within the already-trivial relations with Iran. Nevertheless, the content of the Prime-Minister's reply suggests otherwise. Given the uncertainties surrounding Baltacı Mehmed Pasha's initiation of a diplomatic contact, the safest option for the sake of authenticity is to proceed by means of basing the analysis solely on Şah-kulu Xan Zengene's reply letter and Gürcüağa Yusuf Pasha's counter-reply thereto.

The Prime-Minister's rejection towards all accusations as to Seyyid Abdullah's intentions in giving asylum to the rebel Bedouin from Ottoman Iraq is not surprising and could be taken solely as a diplomatic move if it were not for the striking content dominating the rest of the letter. The imputations to Eyüplü Hasan Pasha, both in content and expression, are unprecedented in the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations: they are not only the most explicit accusations of border- and peace violations from the royal court to a vizier of the padishah, but they are also direct denunciations of a governor-general's manner of dealing with the dynamics of his own province. Most importantly, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha was even accused of possibly having forged a grand-vizierial letter and plotting a declaration of independence from the empire for all of Iraq. The Prime-Minister's emphasis in the prologue and epilogue on the *consolidated peace* and state of *alliance* in no way cancels out the striking character of the extremely

unconventional content and style in the main body. Şah-kulu Xan Zengene must have known well that such a letter carried great risks with it. The only possibility that it would not directly lead to a major crisis was that the Sublime Porte could take the accusations seriously and the royal government's intentions as sincere, which could then lead to internal investigations and prosecutions at Baghdad. Otherwise, the letter featured every aspect with which the Ottoman State could accuse the Safavids of meaning to break the peace, interfere in the internal affairs of the padishah's province, dispute Ottoman sovereignty in Iraq, and pave the way for a war over this domain. Even if the Prime-Minister did not have such intentions at all, in light of the facts above, it is very surprising that he ventured the transformation of Ottoman-Safavid relations overnight from alliance to a state of complete rupture only for the sake of explicitly expressing the injuries he believed the Safavid side had suffered from Eyüplü Hasan Pasha.

The diplomatic courier left Constantinople on 5 January 1712 en route to Iran.¹²³⁷ Gürcüağa Yusuf Pasha's reply letter to the Prime-Minister "his sublime excellency, the gauge of state, refuge of viziership¹²³⁸," must have been sent along with the returning courier, whose mission went otherwise unrecorded. In the letter, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's course of action was presented as just and in the way of suppressing rebellion against sovereign authority, while Seyyid Abdullah had himself initiated the crisis by *sua sponte* "inviting¹²³⁹" rebel Megâmis es-Sa'dûn to his court, expanding the rebel coalition's base by sending out agents to the sub-tribes of Benî Müntefik in Ottoman territory, and eventually dispatching more than a thousand of his own cavalymen with Megâmis, who then had returned to Cezâyîr and rejoined his confederates in attacking Ottoman positions at Basra. Furthermore, the viceroy had also given auxiliary musketeers from the Huveyzan Bedouin to the rebellious Benî Lâm, and together with them, the

¹²³⁷ AE. SAMD.III. 7706.

¹²³⁸ "cenâb-ı meâlî-meâb, devlet-nisâb, . . . vezâret-penâh"

¹²³⁹ "dâvet"

Benî Lâm had raided tax-farms at Baghdad. In complete opposition of Şahkulu Zengene, Gürcüağa Yusuf declared the intention of his predecessor Baltacı Mehmed's letter as the removal of "such controversies and deterioration that had arisen between these two states."¹²⁴⁰ As Seyyid Abdullah's course of action was "such a discomforting affair whose occurrence caused coldness and the violation of the rules of unity between these two states,"¹²⁴¹ the Grand-Vizier requested the "expulsion and deposition"¹²⁴² of the viceroy from Huveyze in order for the state of relations to be restored to the levels of friendship and alliance. Yet, as a sign of goodwill, decrees would be sent to border officials in order to make sure that they observe the conditions of peace and neighborhood.¹²⁴³

With this reply, which was even more unconventionally succinct than Şah-kulu Zengene's letter, the Grand-Vizier made several points clear: Firstly, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's course of action was fully justified and a matter of internal affairs. In the same vein, the Prime-Minister's gravest imputations regarding the governor-general's plotting for independence went completely unanswered, implying that the Ottoman Empire categorically refused to make its internal matters a subject of diplomatic correspondence with another state. Secondly, the imputation Eyüplü Hasan Pasha had been subjected to – that he was about to violate the peace – was indeed committed by Seyyid Abdullah, who, by sending his own troops and Bedouin auxiliaries, had been actively helping the rebels pillaging in the countryside of Iraq.

Thirdly, though less provokative than the Prime-Minister in word choice, the Grand-Vizier expressed his readiness to let the crisis escalate to the next level. No matter how

¹²⁴⁰ "bu iki devlet beyninde zuhûr eden bu makûle ihtilaf ve ihtilal"

¹²⁴¹ "bu iki devlet beyninde bunun gibi emr-i nâ-mülâyimin vukuu bir bürûdete ve ihlâl-i kavâid-i yegâneğîye bâis olan"

¹²⁴² "def ü ref"

¹²⁴³ NMH.d. 6, ent. 135.

provocative his letter was, Şahkulu Xan Zengene had still chosen to present the case in which it was Eyüplü Hasan Pasha who had been conspiring against the Ottoman-Safavid convergence, which was otherwise fully valid. Even under these conditions, he had requested not the deposition but the disciplining, of the governor-general. However, with less provocative language, Gürcüağa Yusuf Pasha directly requested the deposition of the viceroy, which was a bold response that was given as a consequence of the Ottomans' sensing that the Safavid government was trying to interfere in their internal affairs. In this regard, the Sublime Porte was responding in kind and with increased intensity. The Grand-Vizier further escalated the crisis by openly formulating the controversy and the revolutionized relations between the two states, from which the Prime-Minister had abstained.

Now, the crisis was registered in official correspondence at the chief-minister level. The continuation of the state of friendly relations and alliance was implicitly made conditional upon the Shah's removal of Seyyid Abdullah, which should be taken as an Ottoman ultimatum given to the Safavid State. In all these respects, the letter exchange of 1711 represents the most fragile moment in the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations. Unlike Mehmed Mümin Şamlu's previous provocative letters, to which the Ottomans had responded in kind but had perceived as toothless assertions, this letter by Şah-kulu Zengene provoked the Sublime Porte into implicitly threatening with solid sanctions and into pronouncing an ultimatum. The only door left open for potential reconciliation was the prime minister's restored diplomatic grade in accordance with the post-1688 promotion, which should be interpreted as a sign of the Ottoman perception that the escalation of the crisis since 1701 was attributed to Mehmed Mümin Şamlu's foreign policy marked by anti-Ottomanism, and that in the case that the Safavids abandon it, reconciliation would still be possible.

Approximately in late 1711¹²⁴⁴, a person claiming to be royal-prince Abbas, Shah Sultan-Hüseyin's brother, crossed the border from Iran to the province of Van. After hearing his claims, the governor-general [Boşnak Recep Pasha] immediately arrested him. Yet, after a while, by attributing his claims to madness, Boşnak Recep Pasha set him free, saying "he [i.e. the claimant] speaks nonsense, what can a person with such inborn possessedness be capable of!"¹²⁴⁵ The claimant soon re-embraced his cause, "enlisted around twenty to thirty accursed ones as his retinue,¹²⁴⁶" and boarding a ship in Trebizond approximately in mid-summer 1712, set sail for Constantinople. The ship was stopped by the sentry point of Fort Kavak on the Asian side of the Bosphorus's northern entrance. The development was communicated to the court. A certain Sâdî, an Imperial Council master, whose recent visit to his hometown Van had coincided with the claimant's arrival in that province, was consulted via Dürri Ahmed Efendi.¹²⁴⁷ He related a plot by royal-prince Abbas to overthrow Sultan-Hüseyin and his subsequent escape after being daunted by the forces sent by the Shah, who had made a preemptive attack. Whether false or genuine, Shah Süleyman's son Abbas was the royal-prince in question.¹²⁴⁸ Probably, Sâdî Efendi had made the reference to the urban revolt of 1707 in Isfahan when the royal court had been residing in Meşhed, during which an angry crowd demanded the enthronement of royal-prince Abbas, who was at the Âli Kapu Palace.¹²⁴⁹

Via the guards who had established contact with him after the ship had been stopped, the claimant submitted the following proposal:

¹²⁴⁴ I estimated the date by jaxtaping the slightly problematic chronology provided in Râşid, *Târih*, 895 and Boşnak Receb Pasha's term as governor-general of Van, from May-June 1710 to December 1711, as provided in Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 728-729, 757.

¹²⁴⁵ "yabâne söyler, bu makûle bir mecnûn-ı mâder-zâd neye kâdir olsa gerektir"

¹²⁴⁶ "yirmi otuz kadar melâini tevâbi' nâmına kendine tâbi kılıp"

¹²⁴⁷ Râşid, *Târih*, 895.

¹²⁴⁸ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 767; Râşid, *Târih*, 895.

¹²⁴⁹ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 49.

The domain of Ajam is empty [of authority], and the Shah is mad. If a [certain] amount of troops [commanded] by a marshal are sent via the ways of Baghdad, Erzurum, and Van, quite [a number of] places in the clime of Ajam [will] be conquered, and I, by conducting [the armies], will end up having performed a servitude to the Ottoman State, and by becoming Their [i.e. the Padishah's] favored one in the hearth of my forefathers, I [will] wield the sword of the Sublime [Ottoman] State as long as I live^{1250 1251}.

While the claimant was not let out of the ship, the matter was presented to the Padishah.

Ahmed III's reply came out on 6 August 1712: "even his stopping at my capital is totally a mistake, let alone [the empire's] undertaking, with the words of such a malicious one, campaign against monarchs who [adhere] to peace and righteousness.¹²⁵²" He was sentenced to confinement in the fortress of Lesbos.¹²⁵³ Though not reckoning his claims to be true, the Sublime Porte opted to investigate and ascertain the matter before rushing to issue the final sentence, and meanwhile, allocated him a handsome monthly salary of two hundred thaler. Yet, the Impostor Abbas did not keep quiet in Lesbos. With the proclamation, "I am the shah of Iran,¹²⁵⁴" he harassed the inhabitants, entered into disputes with authorities, and petitioned the government as follows: "how can the assigned salary suffice for my needs!¹²⁵⁵" The collective-petition of the inhabitants to the imperial court resulted in his transfer to island Lemnos.¹²⁵⁶

The Imposter Abbas was brought into forced residency at the fortress of Lemnos along with four of his servants. He soon caused disturbance by refusing to take his reduced monthly salary of one hundred thaler, still a significant amount, and by subsisting with his own methods. Soon sinking into poverty, he petitioned the fortress-keeper (Ahmed) for the re-allocation of the

¹²⁵⁰ "Acem memleketi hâlidir ve Şah delidir. Bağdad, Van, ve Erzurum yollarından bir serdar ile bir mikdar asker gönderilse Acem diyârından hayli yer zaptolunup ben dahi rehberlik etmekle hem Devlet'i Osmaniye'ye bir kulluk etmiş olurum ve hem babam ocağında çerâğ-ı hasları olup ömrüm oldukça Devlet-i Aliyye'nin kılıncını sallarım".

¹²⁵¹ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 767-768.

¹²⁵² "Böyle müfsidin sözüyle sulh u salâh üzere olan mülûke asker çekmek değil, bunun Âsitâne'mde durması bile küllî hatâdır"

¹²⁵³ Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 768.

¹²⁵⁴ "ben şâh-ı Îrân'ım"

¹²⁵⁵ "bu tâyin olunan ulûfe benim ne işimi görür"

¹²⁵⁶ Râşid, *Târih*. p. 896. The salary was to be paid from the customs of Smyrna.

one-hundred-thaler salary. The fortress-keeper then sent the request as an exposition to the imperial court. After verification and record-retrieval process by the chief-comptroller, a new daily maintenance of fifty aspers were allocated by grand-vizierial mandate on 6 April 1714, with the financial registration finalized on April 18.¹²⁵⁷

Not long after, the Impostor Abbas managed to escape from his forced residency in Lemnos and resurfaced in the subprovince of Bozok in central-east Anatolia. Raising a sizable following from among the villagers there, he launched his coming-out, and as the first act, killed the judge of Mecedözü along with several notables from the vicinity. To the surrounding areas, he sent papers in which was written, "I am the shah of the domains of Iran. Come, take refuge under and rely on my standard of emergence,¹²⁵⁸" sealed with the following couplet: "became the heir to the seal-ring of monarchy / the master of celestial-conjunction, Abbas the Third¹²⁵⁹". His next act involved trying to install a Turkish tribal bey as the pasha of Çorum. When the situation was conveyed to the court, the crushing of this movement became decided upon. The force made up of a general-summons¹²⁶⁰ from the subprovince of Bozok engaged Abbas's assembled warriors, who had reached to a size of 3,000. After the victory of the state-assembled militia, the impostor royal-prince and his retinue were caught just as they were about to escape, and were summarily executed. Meanwhile, the rest of his fleeing men were pursued. The Sublime Porte breathed a sigh of relief when the movement, which had been attributed the potential of causing a "great sedition¹²⁶¹" during that year's (1715) imperial campaign against Venice, was crushed

¹²⁵⁷ İE.HR. 1115.

¹²⁵⁸ "ben şâh-ı memâlik-i İrân'im. Gelip zîr-i livâ-yı hurûcuma ilticâ ve istinâd edesiz"

¹²⁵⁹ "niğîn-i saltanat râ geşt vâris / şeh-i sâhib-kırân Abbâs-ı Sâlis"

¹²⁶⁰ *nefir-i âm*

¹²⁶¹ "azîm fitne"

easily in the spring.¹²⁶² Note that in the same year, there was a failed conspiracy in Iran attempting at enthroning the genuine royal-prince Abbas instead of his reigning brother.

Apparently, the incident of the Imposter Abbas did not lead to a contact between the royal government and the Sublime Porte. The Empire seems to have conducted the investigations that proved the falsity of the claims by its own means and via the intelligence that could be gathered without asking the Safavid court for more information. This is very normal given that the Porte would definitely desire the possession of a Safavid royal-prince. This is because even if peaceful relations were to be maintained, a royal-prince in the padishah's hands would give the Ottomans further bargaining power on any issue that could be the subject of interstate negotiations. Nevertheless, the Impostor Abbas's immediate confinement in a not-so-honorable manner on Aegean islands, generally chosen as locations used to keep exiles in cases with security concerns, indicates that the Ottomans never harbored the intention of accepting his proposal that the padishah undertake a campaign and install him as shah of Iran, in return for which the padishah would conquer sizable territory. On the other hand, his being kept on the payroll with a handsome salary for two and a half years until his escape, during which his imposture must have already become known, shows that the Ottomans nevertheless did not regard him as completely useless.

In the last round of inter-governmental correspondence of 1711, seemingly not followed up by further contacts, the post-1639 Ottoman-Safavid relations had entered into its most fragile stage. In such an atmosphere, someone who had the potential to plot mischief in Iran, even if he were an imposter, was a valuable asset that the Ottoman Empire could employ indirectly by promoting a plot and officially disowning it. However, when constrained from carrying on with

¹²⁶² Râşid, *Târih*, 896.

his plan, the Imposter Abbas stirred up trouble in the Ottoman Empire instead. He did so without changing his claim but by using the traditionally pro-Safavid population segments as a recruitment base. The crushing of his emergence prevented the affair from turning into something similar to the incident of the Imposter Shah İsmâil in 1577. Once executed, the Imposter Abbas was no longer a potential asset for the Sublime Porte, and the affair seemingly remained unaddressed in interstate relations. We do not know how or to what extent the royal government was informed of these developments or how much it was following them, as this very poorly documented period of Iranian history seems not to have granted us historians with pertinent information.

In the meantime, the Ottoman State, contrary to the undiplomatic requests of Şahkulu Xan Zengene in 1711, had not only reconfirmed Eyüplü Hasan Pasha in the governorship-general of Baghdad for successive times, but also had additionally given him a general authorization over security issues at Basra, Şehrîzor, and Mosul.¹²⁶³ These were normally only delegated to an extraordinarily appointed marshal or commander-general, and for limited amounts of time. In this respect, , the Ottoman government responded to the Safavid requests of curbing Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's power at Baghdad with making him so-to-say the proconsul of Iraq, a clear message to the Safavids and a token of appreciation for Eyüplü Hasan's proven record of success in the spheres of security and welfare.

In Huveyze, Seyyid Muhammed Xan had succeeded the abovementioned Seyyid Abdullah Xan as viceroy. However, within a couple of years, the latter regained not only the Shah's favor but also his former dominion. Upon achieving this, Seyyid Muhammed crossed the border at the head of his own Bedouin and began to dwell together with the Benî Lâm, who gave

¹²⁶³ See the decree dated late September 1714 in MHM.d. 122, ent. 474 and see the punitive operations in northern Iraq in the spring and the summer of 1715 in Râşid, *Târih*, 932-933 and Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 405-406.

him their support in accordance with the Bedouin customary law. The reinstated viceroy lost no time in informing the Shah of the defection of his predecessor (1715), and gathered provincial troops including those of Kirmanşah together with the viceroy of Luristan and six other governors. Equipped with artillery, muskets, and other war materials, they crossed the Ottoman border as far as five way stations' distance. The news of this violation sent by the tax-farmer of Cevâzer, the officers of Cesân, the beys of Mendelcin, and the chieftain of the Benî Lâm reached Eyüplü Hasan Pasha while he was on disciplinary action in northern Iraq in the spring and summer of 1715. Already undertaking operations elsewhere, and not empowered explicitly to engage the Iranians militarily, the governor-general contented himself with taking defensive measures and writing to the Iranians' commanding-officer:

exceeding the determined and demarcated border is contrary to the law of peace and righteousness. Not only is there no August Potentately consent [of the Padishah] to such insolent move but also should there be no permission from your Shah. Then, you will be reprimanded; get up and retreat to your domain.¹²⁶⁴

Instead of retreating, the Iranians seized Basran ships and, with the pretext of capturing Seyyid Muhammed, crossed river Zeke, entered the tax-farm of Cevâzer, haughtily set up camp where the Benî Lâm were, and began to dig trenches.¹²⁶⁵

As we learn from the information Eyüplü Hasan Pasha provided the court with, out of necessity, the Benî Lâm sent black flags to the Bedouin of Baghdad and Basra as was their customary law for seeking aid. The gathered Bedouin forces charged onto the Iranian army with the intention of exterminating it. The defeated Iranians left 2,000 dead on the battlefield, 1,000 drowned during the disorderly retreat requiring them to cross the river Zeke, and their entire encampment became booty. Eyüplü Hasan Pasha immediately communicated what had come to

¹²⁶⁴ “tâyin ve tahdit olunan sınırı tecâvüz mugâyır-ı kânun-ı sulh u salâhtır. Bu gûne hareket-i küstâhânenize rızâ-yı hümâyun-ı şehriyârî olmadığından gayrı, şâhınızın dahi müsaadesi olmamak gerektir. Sonra mu’âteb olursunuz. Kalkup memleketinize ric’at edesiniz.”

¹²⁶⁵ Râşid, *Târih*, 934; Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 406.

pass with a memorandum: in 1711, he had stopped the pursuit of the Benî Lâm at the border point in order not to encroach on Huveyze at a time when the Huveyzan side was looking forward to finding the smallest pretext for blaming Baghdad of violating the peace conditions. However, in a similar situation now in 1715, the Iranians, instead of submitting a complaint to the Ottoman side, had not only committed a gross breach with an army of 30,000 carrying artillery and heavy weapons but would also probably put the blame of their rout by the Bedouins on the shoulders of Eyüplü Hasan.¹²⁶⁶ Yet, according to the chronicle entry of Nazmizâde Murtazâ, the governor-general's council-master who was in a position to know, it was the central and the governorate's forces based around Cevâzer that routed the Iranians. The looted encampment was sold off in bazaars, including the captured books.¹²⁶⁷

The events of 1715 were yet another consequence of the cross-border Mushasha-Lâm-Müntefik coalition, which had occasionally been giving way to crises from local to state level between the empire and Iran. This time, unlike in previous cases, the Benî Lâm gave its support not to the reigning but to the deposed Mushasha viceroy, which made the matters even more complicated along the border. Moreover, the repercussions of this coalition had seemingly made Eyüplü Hasan take a passive hostile stance against the house of Huveyze across the border, as he had come to owe his favored position to his reputation in instating order, and the Huveyzans' coalition with the Ottoman Bedouins in Iraq had been undermining this state of orderliness.

His statement in the memorandum, that he had honored the borders in 1711 despite being in the right vis-à-vis the viceroy who had given refuge to fugitives but that the same viceroy readily violated the border at a situation where Eyüplü Hasan had not even offered asylum to the fugitives from Iran, would suffice for proof of his adherence to and the viceroy's violation of the

¹²⁶⁶ Râşid, *Târih*, 934-935.

¹²⁶⁷ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 406.

peace. However, due to the passive enmity between them, the governor-general apparently did not hesitate to add to his memorandum the non-existent artillery, heavy weaponry, size of 30,000 men, and Bedouin aid summoned by the Benî Lâm. Fielding artillery was a non-tolerable violation of peace necessitating retaliation, and knowing this very well, Eyüplü Hasan was probably trying to have the state press for the downfall of Seyyid Abdullah. 30,000 is a very high number for forces gathered by provincial initiatives; the Imperial Army of almost 40,000 equipped with artillery and mostly made up of professional, seasoned troops in 1701 was very exceptional and strong enough to essentially upset the balance of power in Mesopotamia and the Gulf region in favor of the Ottoman Empire by restoring the pre-1690 order and making a serious tour de force to the Iranian side. Even the Safavid State itself was probably not in a position to raise one royal army matching this secondary imperial army in strength, let alone any Iranian frontier elements' accomplishing it. And even if such an army had indeed been fielded, the township garrisons of Baghdad's countryside tax-farms would simply not be sufficient to rout it. Most probably, Seyyid Abdullah wrongly convinced the neighboring governors of the rightfulness of a punitive action into Ottoman territory against Seyyid Muhammed, and they together raised a sizable force, probably well over 10,000, made up of poorly disciplined provincials and auxiliaries with several guns. This force was then routed by professional Ottoman countryside garrisons whose battle efficiency was reinforced by the Bedouin hordes succoring the Benî Lâm.

Despite Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's distorting the content, by virtue of having involved provincial governors, provincial troops, and an unacceptably large military gathering, the 1715 incident was the most serious case in the successive violations of the Ottoman-Safavid border along Iraq since 1701. Until then, only lesser rebellious vassals, and not officials representing the

government, had committed violations. Notwithstanding whether this gross breach took place with or without the placet of the royal government, it certainly did not have a positive effect on the already deteriorating bilateral relations.

In the same year, the Ottoman Empire declared war against Venice with the justification that the Republic was giving asylum to rebels from Montenegro, which had served as the necessary pretext to recover the territory ceded at Karlowitz. At the end of the land and naval campaigns of 1715, the empire swiftly recovered the entire Peloponnese, its surrounding islands, and parts of the Dalmatian strip.¹²⁶⁸

Once that year's operations were over, the Sublime Porte had state chronicler Râşid Mehmed Efendi compose a letter-of-conquest to be dispatched to governors of the empire's provinces and the neighboring rulers with separate messengers.¹²⁶⁹ The one Ahmed III sent to "his sublime majesty . . . adorer of the throne-room of Ajam . . . sitter on the [throne-]seat of the clime of Iran . . . Shah [Sultan-]Hüseyin¹²⁷⁰" was finished and dispatched on early February 1716 from the winter-quarters at Haslar. The commissioned envoy was Yusuf Agha (probably a gatekeeper-captain¹²⁷¹). After a strong emphasis on his universal mandate via supreme-caliphate, the Padishah gave a very detailed account of the 1715 campaign with carefully selected references to successive stages, participating forces, chain of conquests, how land and naval contingents were deployed at each operation overwhelming the opposing Venetians, and what

¹²⁶⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi*, vol. 4/1, 101-109.

¹²⁶⁹ Râşid, *Târîh*, 967. See İE. SM. 2683 for the bill of craftsmanship wages and the cost of gold and diamond spent for the newly manufactured bejeweled disk for the imperial epistle.

¹²⁷⁰ "vâlâ-hazret . . . serîr-ârâ-yı tahtgâh-ı Acem . . . mesned-nişîn-i iklîm-i Îrân . . . Şah [Sultan-]Hüseyin"

¹²⁷¹ The envoy's titulature ran in the imperial epistle as "kîdvetü'l-emâcid ve'l-ekârim", and in the grand-vizierial letter as "kîdvetü'l-emâcid ve'l-âyân." I tend to judge that he was a gatekeeper-captain because the imperial epistle describes him as "sedene-i sürâdikât-ı Devlet-i Aliye'mizden (from the doormen of the marquee of Our Sublime State) and the grand-vizierial letter as "hademe-i âsitân-ı . . . Osmânîlerinden (from the servants of Their Ottoman . . . threshold)", as opposed to the emphasis on "dergâh (court)" that was more prevalent in the case of court-notables who otherwise shared the titulature above. The title *bey* by which the bill of the envoy's travel allowance refers to him (İE. HR. 767) must be a mistake made by the scribe of the treasury department who drafted this document. Otherwise, the grand-vizierial letter makes clear the title *ağa* in the credentials section, see below.

the conquered country meant in terms of the number of the fortresses, abundance of inhabitants, and size of land. These auspicious developments were shared with the Shah “to consolidate the peace-cultivating and mingling structures of steady-foundation, and to intensify the pedestals of fidelity and union and . . . affinity.^{1272,,1273}

The Yusuf Agha mission also delivered the letter sent by commander-in-chief Dâmad [Şehid] Ali Pasha to Sultan-Hüseyin “his sublime majesty.^{1274,,} Dâmad Ali Pasha reported in alternative composition more or less the same developments that he personally oversaw by “decree of the master-of-the-celestial-conjunction^{1275,,} from the “refuge of the supremes of the grand sultans . . . ripper of the fortresses of the foe . . . paladin-overthrowing enemy slayer . . . epitome of the monarchy-titled Earth-conquering House of Osman . . . Padishah . . . triumph-clad Supreme-Shah.^{1276,,} In order to “herald such a recently-unprecedented massive triumph,^{1277,,} these letters were sent to the “most-honorable side [of the Shah] whose being unswerving and [a] center of fidelity and straightforwardness in promoting the reputation of concord and affinity, and protecting affection and union from divergence were time-tested.^{1278,,1279}

In the reply epistle¹²⁸⁰ to the “his most-sublime majesty . . . supreme-khakan . . . most-impregnable and premier overlord . . . Sultan Ahmed Khan [III],^{1281,,} conveyed with the returning Yusuf Agha, the Shah enumerated the matters touched upon in the incoming

¹²⁷² “rasîfü’l-esâs olan mebâni-yi müsâlemet ve istîfânî teşyîd ve kavâid-i sıdk u ittihâd u . . . vedâdî tesdîd için”

¹²⁷³ NMH.d. 6, ent. 221.

¹²⁷⁴ “âli-hazret

¹²⁷⁵ “fermân-ı . . . sâhib-kırâni”

¹²⁷⁶ “melce-i e’âzım-ı selâtîn-i izâm . . . kâlî’-ı kılâ’-ı . . . e’âdî . . . tehemten-fiken-i düşman-şiken . . . hülâsa-i dūdmân-ı saltanat-ünvân-ı gîtî-sitân-ı . . . Osmânî . . . Pâdişah . . . Şehinşâh-ı nusret-şîâr efendimiz”

¹²⁷⁷ “eyyâm-ı mâdûdede mesbuk bi’l-misl olmadık böyle bir nusret-i cesîme . . . tebşîri için”

¹²⁷⁸ “himâyet-i nevâmîs-i vifâk u vedâd ve hırâset-i i’râz-ı tahâbb ve ittihâdda râsihü’l-kadem [ve] merkez-i sıdk u sedâd olduđu âzmûde . . . olan taraf-ı eşref-i a’lâlarına”

¹²⁷⁹ NMH.d. 6, ent. 222.

¹²⁸⁰ NMH.d. 6, ent. 246. Although this entry is a Turkish translation of the [presumedly Persian] original, the vocabulary of titles in Ottoman-Safavid diplomacy was common to both languages and thus was left untranslated.

¹²⁸¹ “a’lâ-hazret . . . hâkân-ı . . . eham . . . hıdîv-i emna’-ı ekrem . . . Sultan Ahmed Han”

correspondence, whereby he congratulated the Padishah, the Grand-Vizier, and Ottoman soldiery on their conquests, victories, and valour. This “news, . . . which is like the True Dawn, . . . and the good-tidings, which is like the Rising Star,¹²⁸²” wrote Sultan-Hüseyin, were announced and celebrated in all the assemblies of his domains. He wished that such exchanges be maintained in observance of “attachment, affinity, affection, and union.¹²⁸³”

The detailed and epic account of the Ottoman reconquest of the Pelleponese, especially in the imperial epistle, with some additional references to the political background in the grand-vizierial letter, was “heralded” to the Safavid side self-evidently in order to impress this neighbor with the efficiency-in-practice of the empire’s deployable power. Genre-specific titlature of the padishah was also inserted to amplify the effect. This was indeed the main purpose of the letter-of-conquest genre, especially when the addressee was a foreign monarch or chief-minister. Via the reply epistle, the Safavids also acknowledged this implicit message, in addition to the explicit content. However, a glance at the titlature employed and the vocabulary selected suggests that the case of 1716 served purposes beyond the generic function of the letter-of-conquest genre.

The 1716 correspondence registered the consummation of the shah’s being demoted back to sultanic/kingly level. The correspondence exchanges of 1702 and 1706 had gradually eliminated all august-sultanic/high-kingly titlature for the shah, preserving only the opening address “his most-sublime majesty,” which had applied between 1692 and 1701 and lived on as the last remnant of his elevated rank valid from 1688 to 1701. The persistence of this formula is seemingly the result of the consideration that a last minute Safavid attempt to improve the worsening relations might not necessitate the finalization of this demotion. Likewise, this opening address had been introduced to the shah’s inscriptio four years after the first elevation in

¹²⁸² “subh-ı sâdık gibi olan haber . . . ve ahter-i şârik gibi olan nüvîd”

¹²⁸³ “meveddet ü vedâd . . . muhabbet u ittihâd”

rank, consummating the promotion. The 1711 correspondence, whose original texts are not extant, must have followed the same pattern with those of 1702 and 1706. As the Safavid side had shown no extraordinary signs of good will since then, and even committed a gross breach of peace clauses in Iraq, though indirectly and apparently unknowingly, the 1716 correspondence sealed the demotion by downgrading the last remnant of the shah's august-sultanic rank of "supreme" to the sultanic "sublime majesty", while keeping the padishah's imperial titles in full.

Moreover, the rest of the post-1688 achievements in Ottoman-Safavid relations were fully revoked: the references to "alliance", still present in the correspondences of the transitional period 1702-1711, disappeared completely, and relations were relegated back to *friendly* level. Thus, the 1716 correspondence not only sealed the shah's demotion back to sultanic rank but also consummated the definitive revocation of the states of passive *alliance*, *perpetual peace*, and *brotherhood* therebetween. The post-1688 achievements were undone in all respects, and bilateral relations reverted back to the 1639-1688 status quo.

Soon after the Ottoman declaration of war against the Habsburgs in the spring of 1716 by way of rejecting the German Emperor's ultimatum demanding the restoration of the Peloponnese to Venice, a memorandum arrived from the governor-general of Rakka (Maktulzâde Genç Ali Pasha). A Frenchman, who had arrived in Aleppo with his five-to-ten-man retinue as part of a merchant convoy, had claimed that he was also a merchant and that his loads were lagging behind. His flurried moves, however, made him a suspect. When interrogated, he stated "I go to Ajam with emissaryship from the King of France."¹²⁸⁴ Maktulzâde Ali Pasha, getting further suspicious of why an emissary would resort to deceit if the dispatch of such a mission was conventional, arrived at the decision that this affair was unprecedented and arrested the

¹²⁸⁴ "Frânçe kralından Acem tarafına elçilikle giderim"

Frenchmen in Aleppo. After doing so, he promptly reported the affair in detail to the imperial court. The grand-vizierial mandates that were issued to Maktulzâde Ali Pasha and Çetrefiloğlu Yusuf Pasha (vice-grand-vizier) summoned the arrested to Constantinople and ordered that they be imprisoned there and not set free unless another grand-vizierial mandate from the Imperial Army was issued.¹²⁸⁵

As mentioned above, in 1716, a Habsburg-Ottoman war broke out. During defeat at the resultant Battle of Petrovaradin (5 August 1716), commander-in-chief Dâmad Şehid Ali Pasha was shot dead in the front-line. Soon, Temesvar fell (15 October 1716) to the besieging army of the victorious Habsburgs commanded by prince Eugene of Savoy. In August 1717, another Habsburg victory and consequent siege would cost the empire the prized fortress of Belgrade.¹²⁸⁶

During Temesvar's fall, Ottoman-Safavid relations were tested with an affair of diplomacy and espionage. In late September – early October 1716, when the province of Erzurum was being run by İsmâil, proxy of governor İzmirli Ahmed Pasha (who was personally serving at the head of his troops in the Imperial Army on the Habsburg campaign), an emissary of the German Emperor to the Shah entered the city of Erzurum. As the person in question was traveling under partial disguise, a group of military officers (İbrâhim Beşe, flag-bearer Mustafa Beşe, Ahmed Beşe) and clergy (prayer-caller Gaddar Ömer, Süleyman Beşe, Osman) testified that they had visually observed his being an emissary. The attesters repeated their testimony in the session presided by the new governor (Mısırlı Çerkes Mehmed Pasha, who also soon departed for the Habsburg front): customs superintendent Mehmed, “due to his crude cupidity,

¹²⁸⁵ Râşid, *Târih*, 1013.

¹²⁸⁶ Ivan Parvev, *Habsburgs and Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade (1683-1739)* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 163-182; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi*, vol. 4/1, 109-136

had fronted for¹²⁸⁷, the mentioned emissary's cause and granted him passage towards Iran. The authenticity of the statements was "established via mass-consensus."¹²⁸⁸ Then, the judge of Erzurum communicated all that had come to pass to the imperial court with a letter accompanied by the attesters' collective-petition. The government, registering that the customs-superintendent's having committed "treason against the Sublime State was apparent,"¹²⁸⁹ dispatched a commissary in mid-April 1717 to oversee the execution of the decreed matters. As a result, a general prosecution and investigation covering the localities on the road from Erzurum to Iran including the province of Kars was to be conducted; as soon as the authenticity of the testimony was crosschecked, the customs-superintendent was to be canonically punished "to be made example of to other malicious ones,"¹²⁹⁰ for which the judge's court was to assemble and sentence him to "penal servitude."^{1291,1292}

We do not know about the fate of the Frenchmen claiming to be the emissary of Louis XV. As a rule, the Sublime Porte did not readily give passage to missions going from a European state to Iran, even when at peace with both parties of the exchange. The French legation of 1705 led by envoy Jean-Baptiste Fabre, for example, had faced a difficult time in crossing the empire to reach the Iranian border at Erivan. The same goes for Sultan-Hüseyin's return legation of 1714 led by Mehmed Rıza Beyg, whom the Ottomans had even temporarily imprisoned.¹²⁹³ The correctness of the testimony by the arrested person at the Aleppon incident of 1716, that he was a French emissary to Iran in disguise of a merchant, can be doubted given that the incident took

¹²⁸⁷ "tama'-ı hâmi sebebiyle sâhip çıkıp"

¹²⁸⁸ "tevâtür ile sâbit olduğu"

¹²⁸⁹ "Devlet-i Aliyye' me ihâneti zâhir olmağın"

¹²⁹⁰ "ehl-i fesâda ibret için"

¹²⁹¹ "muhkem kale-bend"

¹²⁹² MHM.d. 126, ent. 43.

¹²⁹³ Laurence Lockhart, "European Contacts with Persia, 1350-1736," in *The Cambridge History of Iran* 6, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 405-406.

place during the presence of a Safavid envoy (Mehemmed Rıza Beyg) at the French court, whom would soon be reciprocated with the dispatch of a French consul to Iran in 1717. Contrary to the previous cases, the consul would travel publicly and officially over Constantinople.¹²⁹⁴ While the 1717 consulate might well have been the replacement for the failed attempt at smuggling a mission in 1716, there is also the possibility that the person in question was a Venetian emissary sent to Iran during the ongoing Ottoman – Habsburg & Venetian war. As far as is known, the 1714-1718 war did not initiate a Venetian offer of alliance to Iran.¹²⁹⁵ Still, could this affair have been a failed attempt which did not make it into other records, and if so, could the Venetian emissary have stated being a French emissary as prevarication with the hopes of eluding arrest? Maybe. It should be remembered that in 1646, after the outbreak of the Cretan War, Venetian emissary Domenico de Santis, commissioned with offering an anti-Ottoman alliance to Abbas II, had used the same route over Aleppo and the disguise of a merchant, whose suspicious bales had almost made him arrested before crossing the border at Şehrızor. In light of the material available to me, it is reasonable to assume that one of the two abovementioned possibilities applied to the 1716 Aleppan affair. In any case, the presence of a governor-general in Rakka with temporarily extended authorization covering Aleppo ensured swift prosecution.

We are likewise not informed of the fate of the investigation of the 1716 Erzurum affair, but German emperor Charles VI's sending an emissary to Iran to propose an anti-Ottoman alliance makes sense in light of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century precedent cases. Unlike in the Aleppan affair, in 1716, Erzurum lacked not only the conventionally vizier-ranking governor but also the presence of the incumbent two-horsetail-ensign pasha, who had been appointed to,

¹²⁹⁴ Jean Calmard, "France. II, Relations with Persia to 1789," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 10, Fasc. 2, 127-131, electronically accessed on 18 May 2016 from Iranicaonline.com; Yosefo Tiflîsî, *Acem Târihi*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, OA, Ms. or. oct. 3127, f. 2b.

¹²⁹⁵ Rota, "Safavid Persia and its Diplomatic Relations with Venice," 152.

represented *in absentia* via his proxy in, and eventually deposed from the governorate of Erzurum while he was personally with the Imperial Army on the Habsburg front. This lack of a governor-general's personal presence in Erzurum for a considerable time must have given way to a relative lack of discipline, without which the escape of an identified Habsburg emissary to Iran would have been much less possible.

In any case, by 1716, the fifteen-year gradual deterioration in Ottoman-Safavid relations had already completed its evolution. The entire achievements of the post-1688 period were undone with the shah back at sultanic/kingly level and the Ottoman-Safavid relations relegated from *perpetual peace in alliance* back to plain *friendly* level. To crown it all, within the year of the letters-of-conquest sealing the consummation of this process, the empire possibly intercepted one and let slip another attempt by its current belligerents to smuggle emissaries into Iran over Ottoman territory in order to offer an alliance. Even the suspicion of such contacts was enough for the Sublime Porte to have negative prospects for the already deteriorated relations with the royal government.

Again in 1716, in addition to the Afghan uprising at Kandahar now led by Mîr-Mahmud, the Safavids had another full-blown rebellion of the Abdâlîs in Herat, who had overthrown governor-general Abbas-kulu Xan Şamlu and routed the successively sent punitive forces commanded respectively by Cafer Xan Ustaclu/Hâtemî, Mansur Xan Şahseven (governor-general of Meşhed), Feth-Ali Xan Türkmen (master of the hunt¹²⁹⁶), and Safî-kulu Xan Türkistanoğlu (the prefect¹²⁹⁷ of Isfahan). In 1717, the Omânîs took Bahrain in addition to other islands in the Persian Gulf, proceeding as far as laying siege to Hürmüz, and Kurdish rebels

¹²⁹⁶ *mîr-şikâr-başı*

¹²⁹⁷ *dârûga*

captured Hemedân, following which they ravaged the countryside until reaching Isfahan.¹²⁹⁸ The Safavid establishment's paralyzed state in the face of these local rebellions, which could have otherwise remained minor cases, was leading to their transformation into major movements resulting in sizable loss of territory for the state. Sultan-Hüseyin, known for replying to any submitted matter by saying "very well,"^{1299,1300} also did not provide efficient leadership at a time when the collective scope of the rebellions was on the verge being perceived as a threat to not only governmental authority but the existence of the Safavid State itself.

In 1717, the once-Ottoman and long-since de facto Safavid-vassal Kurdish tribe Câf encroached into the province of Baghdad from Derne and lodged just one way station away from the border. There, the Câf enlisted mercenaries from friendly Ottoman- and Safavid-vassal tribes of Kirmanşah and Baghdad; the governor of Kirmanşah also directly contributed to the Câf's cause by appointing a chief to the assembled force of 7,000 to 8,000. The (Safavid) governor of Sine also gave considerable support. On 5 August 1717, at Çîkrân, four way stations into the Ottoman territory from the border between the provinces of Baghdad and Kirmanşah at Derne and within the seigneury of Bâcîlân located in the subprovince of Kasr-ı Şirin, the Câf warriors killed Bâcîlân's bey Osman, more than two hundred men from his house, and around one hundred women. They also looted the property and dwellings of the killed before seizing the fortress of Derne itself. Eyüplü Hasan Pasha launched a punitive operation. The escaping Câf were pursued and routed, after which their gathering dispersed and the encroachers fled in a disorderly fashion in order to find refuge at various localities. The heirs of those killed by the Câf wrote a petition to the Imperial Army headquarters requesting legal retribution. A memorandum from Eyüplü Hasan Pasha, an exposition from the judge of Baghdad, and a testimony by

¹²⁹⁸ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 96-99, 109-110, 115.

¹²⁹⁹ "yahşıdır"

¹³⁰⁰ Roemer, "The Safavid Period," 311.

Baghdad's notables, military officers and clergy confirmed the content of the petition. In late October 1717, the Imperial Army headquarters dispatched a commissary, decreed the judge of Baghdad to convene a judicial session at a suitable border point and the governor-general of Baghdad to write a letter to the (Safavid) governor of Sine so that the latter, in line with the peace conditions, send the felons to the judicial session. It also prescribed judicial retribution to be served there. If the governor of Sine would refuse to cooperate and protect the felons, Eyüplü Hasan Pasha was to re-inform the headquarters in detail.¹³⁰¹

In conjunction with the dispatch of the above-mentioned decree, the Grand-Vizier wrote also a letter to the Prime-Minister explaining the violation. Though we do not have any sources mentioning the mission or the content of the letter, the affirmative conclusion on 25 October 1717 of the internal correspondence for the procurement of a gold letter-disk¹³⁰², *âbâdî*-type paper, a purse of satin, and a piece of *paşmaklık*-type green baldachin as the materials required for the Grand-Vizier's letter to the Shah's Prime Minister¹³⁰³ indicates that the issue was handled at the chief-ministerial level. In line with the injuries listed in the letter, the Safavid government deposed the involved governors and ruled that blood money be paid, which settled the dispute.¹³⁰⁴

The Câf affair revealed once again the enmity between Eyüplü Hasan Pasha and the Safavid viceroys across the border. The cross-border committees or border-courts involving provincial and judicial dignitaries from both sides, which, as shown in the previous cases from Kars, worked well to settle disputes without having to recourse to state centers, did not prevail in this case. This is because the already-hostile governors of both parties defaulted in cooperating.

¹³⁰¹ MHM.d. 126, ent. 659; also see Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 408.

¹³⁰² *kozak*

¹³⁰³ İE. HR. 1014.

¹³⁰⁴ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 408.

As the in-situ dispute settlement mechanism current between Iran and the Ottoman Empire failed to address the problem at Iraq in 1717, correspondence between the chief-ministers became necessary. Bilateral relations had already been fading into a worse level with each year since 1701, and neither the C af affair nor the correspondence it triggered can be said to have played a constructive role which could help reverse the process. In light of such deterioration in relations, one is led to presume that the deposition of the involved Iranian officials in addition to the payment of blood-money could only be the result of an explicit or implicit threat of retaliation from the Ottoman side, and the Safavids' assuming full responsibility for what had happened. Even in the best-case scenario, the 1717 correspondence cannot be said to have contributed positively to the deteriorating relations, because it was initiated not by a violation in which the Safavid government had played no part but by the non-cooperation of Safavid officials in the conventional dispute settlement mechanism and their direct support to the perpetrators of a major violation.

In 1718, Sheikh Abd l li of the Ben  L m, who had recently been captured, brought to Baghdad, and then set free, attacked in coalition with the Bedouin of Huveyze to the incumbent chieftain of the Ben  L m in the vicinity of Ces n, and fled to Huveyze in defeat. In addition to this, some Huveyzan Bedouin also plundered a merchant ship from Basra on Ottoman soil and quickly withdrew back to their homestead. Ey pl  Hasan Pasha gathered a contingent for punitive action, and when he fell sick, he delegated the command to his lieutenant in order not to lose precious time. The Baghdad troops crossed the Safavid border into Huveyze and encamped by river Kerha. The viceroy of Huveyze, Seyyid Abdullah Xan, realizing that the Ottoman contingent was too large for him to block an advance, expressed remorse for his earlier protection of the Ben  L m, displayed friendship by providing the Ottoman troops with

provisions enough for several days, and submitted to the governor-general of Baghdad by declaring his expectation of being pardoned. The Ottoman troops nevertheless pursued the transgressors for three more way stations into Safavid territory and engaged them by River Kâzerûn. During the first several hours of the battle, the Ottoman-loyal Bedouin in the Baghdadi forces quit the field in defeat, however, the fortitude and zeal of the soldiers from Rûm brought the Ottomans victory: the transgressors fled leaving behind their entire movable loads and livestock as booty to the victors, and within the process many of them drowned in the river. After the successful completion of this cross-border operation, the Ottoman contingent returned triumphantly to Baghdad.¹³⁰⁵

Selman Huzali, former rebel against the empire whom governmental troops had defeated and driven out, had for some time been residing in Iran, where he had fled and where he had even found employment by deceiving local authorities. When his fraud came to light in 1718, he came to Baghdad in repentance, asking for the governor-general's mercy and pardon. Granted, he took up residence in the provincial capital. Again in the same year, Abdülâlî of the Benî Lâm also submitted to Eyüplü Hasan Pasha by coming to Baghdad. Due to his past transgressions, he was first imprisoned for a considerable time before being set free. As the last major event of 1718's cross-border developments, viceroy Seyyid Abdullah Xan turned away from the Safavid court. Fearing for his life, he defected to Baghdad with his family and a retinue of servants numbering over sixty. There, he sought refuge under the protection of Eyüplü Hasan Pasha. Out of consideration for the viceroy's dynasty and lineage, the governor-general granted mercy, pardoned his past violations, and allowed him the right to reside in the city of Baghdad.¹³⁰⁶

¹³⁰⁵ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 410-411.

¹³⁰⁶ Nazmizâde, *Gülşen-i Hulefâ*, 415-417.

In addition to Ottoman supremacy in terms of the comparative collective strengths of the two states, a constituent of the post-1639 relations, superiority vis-à-vis the Safavids was asserted also in terms of the peacetime province-borne hard power along the Iraqi frontier. In addition to the abovementioned cross-border operation, also the successive defections and asylum requests to the governorate-general of Baghdad by the Ottomans' former rebels who had taken refuge under Iranian protection and even by the formerly-hostile Safavid viceroy of Huveyze demonstrate the finality of the newly manifested, destructive assertion of the empire's supremacy. The return of the rebel Bedouin chieftains aside, the empire, as the party having the upper hand in bilateral relations, could force the Safavids to come to terms with their fugitive viceroy's taking up official residence on Ottoman territory. Meanwhile, in the exact same cases with reversed positions presented by Basra's Efrâsiyaboğlu viceroys during the 1650s and the 1660s, the empire had categorically refused to tolerate the rebel viceroys' taking up residence in Iran and enforced their deportation by the Safavid court. In short, the deterioration of bilateral relations since 1701 had resulted in the definitive deployment of the empire's hard power at the frontier in a manner which was no longer coordinated but assertive. As of 1718, Ottoman-Safavid relations were fully exposed to the effects of any negative development and ready to receive amplified harm from even minor frictions.

VI.3. Postscript: The Last Diplomatic Exchange Before the Termination of Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Safavid Kingdom of Iran (1718-1722)

The Peace of Passarowitz signed on 21 July 1718 sealed for the Ottomans the losses of Temesvar and Belgrade along with strips in Wallachia and Bosnia, completing the Habsburg takeover of

Hungary which had begun with the Great Turkish War. Yet, the very same treaty confirmed the Ottomans' reconquest of the Peloponnese and other positions from Venice.¹³⁰⁷

In the autumn of 1719, a Safavid emissary was at court in Constantinople.¹³⁰⁸ That the activities of this mission went otherwise unrecorded hints at the emissary's capacity as unaccredited agent. A responsive grand-vizierial letter to the prime-minister letter – dated late October / early November 1719 – was issued, which was probably dispatched with the returning emissary. It briefly informed the Safavid government that arrangements concerning Iranian merchants were inserted into the commercial treaty between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans.¹³⁰⁹

In 1719, Mîr-Mahmud Afghan began his westward march from Kandahar at the head of 11,000 men and captured the province of Kirmân. However, when he had to return to his base to crush a coup attempt, government troops under the new governor-general, Rüstem Mehemmed Sa'dlu, re-garrisoned Kirmân. In the same year, a third failed attempt at enthroning royal-prince Abbas at the capital in the absentee Sultan-Hüseyin's place was thwarted by the very same royal-princess Meryem¹³¹⁰ who had taken initiative by preferring Sultan-Hüseyin over Abbas in the first place upon Süleyman II's death.

In approximately early 1720, a certain Seyyid Nimetullah Özbekî “wrote counterfeit epistles to the Shah of Ajam and the Uzbek Khan, drew on them monograms imitating the

¹³⁰⁷ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târîhi*, vol. 4-1, 138-146; Gábor Ágoston, “Ottoman Wars and the Changing Balance of Power along the Danube in the Early Eighteenth Century,” in *The Peace of Passarowitz*, ed. Charles Ingrao, Nikola Samardzic, and Jovan Pesalj (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2011).

¹³⁰⁸ See in İE. HR. 834 the bill dated 5 November 1719 for the rent payment of the residence in Galata, which was in the possession of a certain Saraylı Hanım, previously used for residing by the Dutch [mission's] scribe, and now allocated for lodging the retinue of the emissary of the shah of Iran. It is a far possibility that a Safavid envoy's presence at Constantinople went unrecorded in Ottoman chronicles. The emissary must have carried the rank of an unaccredited agent.

¹³⁰⁹ The grand-vizierial letter, dated late October / early November 1719 in NHM.d. 6, ent. 268, did not include the credentials of the emissary carrying it. While this alone does not necessarily rule out the possibility of the reply letter's having become conveyed with an Ottoman unaccredited agent, incoming unaccredited agents also carried back reply letters and their visits did not trigger the dispatch of a reciprocal unaccredited agent in the post-1639 order as a rule.

¹³¹⁰ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 111-113, 115.

imperial monogram,¹³¹¹” and ”forged letters.¹³¹²” In these documents, he named himself the padishah’s envoy to Iran and the Uzbek Khanate. After raising a thirteen-men entourage and setting off for his self-designated mission, he exacted the amounts conventional for legations’ daily subventions from the inhabitants of each way station along the way. Governor-general of Basra Boşnak Sarı Mustafa Pasha arrested them while passing from Nusaybin and handed them over to the exactor-general¹³¹³ of Mardin (Ahmed), with the instructions for the forger-imposters to be imprisoned in the fortress of Mardin and not to be set free until orders arrive. The exactor-general wrote a memorandum to the government relating what had come to pass, with which the forged epistles and letters were also forwarded. The resulting imperial decree dated mid-June 1720 evoked chief-mufti Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi’s ruling prescribing that although the canon law stipulated heavy penalty¹³¹⁴ and long-term imprisonment for these crimes, these felons were sentenced to death, as their saving their skin would “lead to the opening of the gates of malice . . . blemishing the glory of the Sublime State.¹³¹⁵” The exactor-general was decreed to execute Nimetullah Özbekî and imprison his entourage for life.¹³¹⁶ Accompanying the decree conveyed by a master-courier (Osman), the Grand-Vizier sent a separate letter with further instructions. The exactor-general’s reply letter dated 15 July 1720 confirmed the execution of the sentences.¹³¹⁷ Thus, an attempt at dispatching a forged imperial epistle, grand-vizierial letter, and a fake legation from the Sublime Porte to the royal government was thwarted. The purpose of the perpetrators must have been to make profits until their fraud became disclosed.

¹³¹¹ “Acem Şâhı’na ve Özbek Hânı’na olmak üzere sahte nâmeler tahrir edip ve üzerlerine tuğra-yı hümâyunuma taklid sahte tuğra çekip”

¹³¹² “mektuplar düzüp”

¹³¹³ *voivoda*, governor-collector of administrative regions whose revenues were allocated as income for the privy treasury.

¹³¹⁴ *tâzir-i şedîd*

¹³¹⁵ ”bâb-ı fesâd infitâhına bâis olup şân-ı Devlet-i Aliyye’ye şeyn olacak”

¹³¹⁶ İE. ŞKRT. 368.

¹³¹⁷ A.SKT. 1/50

By the summer of 1720, prime-minister Feth-Ali Xan Daghestânî's protracted search for alliance against the Omânî invasion and efforts to get the royal court moving for leading the punitive campaign upon the rebels in the east had failed. Furthermore, in 1718-1719, the Lezgî rebels from Daghestan had encroached upon Şirvan after routing the governor's troops, and subsequently raided Kartli.¹³¹⁸ With the paralyzation of the court, the revolution in Iran began to unfold. It must have been exactly at this moment of desperation that Sultan-Hüseyn had resorted to an unofficial yet direct appeal for aid from the Sublime Porte, which would reach the imperial capital in December 1720. After a series of deliberative councils, the reply would come out negative,¹³¹⁹ hinting at the fundamental policy change the Ottomans were about to undesirably initiate in the face of the spreading upheavals in Iran.

In 1720, the Sublime Porte formed an extraordinary legation to be sent to the royal court with the official objective of notifying it, once again, of the content of the clause concerning Iranian merchants inserted into the Habsburg-Ottoman Commercial Treaty of Passarowitz (1718). Sending out invitations to neighboring states for the grand festivities to be held for the imperial princes' circumcision was also a secondary excuse. However, the unofficial objective of monitoring political developments, learning domestic customs, and gathering useful information about the state of affairs in Iran was prescribed orally to master-scribe Dürrî Ahmed Efendi, the incumbent poll-tax accountant¹³²⁰ who was created envoy with the temporary grade of second-comptroller.¹³²¹ As the letter of 1719¹³²² had already performed the necessities of consummating

¹³¹⁸ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 115-118.

¹³¹⁹ Mary Lucille Shay, *The Ottoman Empire from 1720 to 1734: As Revealed in Despatches of the Venetian Baili* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1944), 87. According to the Venetian bailo's report, the reason for the negative reply was that "any assistance would provoke resentment among the Turks." In response to the spreading upheaval in Iran, the empire took defensive measures along the border at the provinces of Baghdad and Basra. The extant sources from neither side narrate the initiative and the rejection thereof.

¹³²⁰ *haraç muhasebecisi*

¹³²¹ Münir Aktepe, *1720-1724 Osmanlı-İran Münâsebetleri ve Silahşör Kemânî Mustafa Ağa'nın Revan Fetih-Nâmesi* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1970), 3-5; Aydın Talay, "Dürrî Ahmed

the trade clause in Iran, the repetition of this matter at the occasion of the Dürrî Ahmed legation was only to conceal the real agenda of this next mission. It was indeed commissioned with gathering as much information as possible about the unfolding revolution in Iran, so that the Sublime Porte could take precautions and position itself accordingly. The formal agenda of consummating the trade matter and boosting bilateral relations by convincing the Safavids of the Ottomans' goodwill was just the pretext thereof.

Receiving the imperial epistle and the grand-vizierial letters in late June 1720,¹³²³ departing¹³²⁴ from Constantinople in August,¹³²⁵ and traveling via the way of Iraq, the legation left the city of Baghdad on 2 November 1720 and reached the border on the 11th. As Eyüplü Hasan Pasha had priorly wrote to the Shah and the governor of Kirmanşah to communicate the arrival of an Ottoman legation, an agha welcomed the committee at the border point as provisional host-officer. Although a welcome ceremony to be held by the governor of Kirmanşah had been decided upon, the governor excused himself from a feast on the road with some pretext, and had his brother at the head of 300 guardsmen perform the duty. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi, “on impulse, displayed resentment,¹³²⁶” and penned a diplomatic note: “unless the xan comes to this location, I will not proceed one step further, and will submit the insolence of This [xan] to the

Efendi,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 10 (1994): 34-35; [Bedreddinzâde Ali b. Osman], *Kâime*, published in Fahretin Kırzioğlu [ed.], “Kaa’ime, h.1117-1135 (1705-1723). (Çökmekte olan İran – Safavî Devleti’nde Afgan Sülâlesi hâkimiyeti, Şirvan ile Dağistan Sünnîlerinin istiklâli ve Moskof Çarı I. Petro’nun İstilâsı üzerine, Osmanlı gizli istihbârâtının özeti),” *Atatürk Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Araştırma Dergisi*, n.7 (1976): 121.

¹³²² Aktepe, in his “Dürrî Ahmed Efendi’nin İran Sefareti,” correctly remarks that Râşid Mehmed Efendi, in his *Târih*, predates the Dürrî Ahmed legation (1720) to 1719. However, unaware of the preceding correspondence in 1719, Aktepe supposes that the trade matter was still the one of the main agendas of the Dürrî Ahmed legation.

¹³²³ See NMH.d. 6, ent. 278-280 for the dating of the epistle and the letters.

¹³²⁴ The daily subsidy of the traveling legation was 2,000 non-debased aspers plus an in-kind delivery of barley and straw: Faroqhi, “An Ottoman Ambassador in Iran: Dürrî Ahmed Efendi,” 168-169. See Ibid. for cases of over-collection and refund.

¹³²⁵ Talay, “Dürrî Ahmed.” See AE. SAMD.III. 17463 and 21039 for the subsidies allocated to the outgoing legation.

¹³²⁶ “bî-ihdiyâr dargınlık sûretini gösterip”

Shah.¹³²⁷ Upon receiving the note, the governor rode at full gallop, reached the feast, expressly excused himself, and escorted the envoy personally to Kirmanşah (arrival on November 18). There, on the mission's fifth day of stay, he hosted the envoy at his palace. At Dergezin (arrival on November 27), a senior usher, Necef-kulu Beyg of *mîr-i alem* rank, took over as the actual host-officer at the head of his one hundred men. On the remainder of the road, until the legation arrived in the town of Tehran (25 January 1721) where the royal court was at that time, governor of Hemedân (arrival on 3 December 1720) Kelb-Ali Xan and governor-general of Kazvin (arrival on 15 January 1721) Tahmasb Xan personally welcomed the legation with processions, trumpets, and festive salvos of musket and artillery. A certain Rüstem Xan of governor-general's rank welcomed the legation ceremoniously at the head of three thousand troops and escorted it to the allocated palace.¹³²⁸

On 3 February 1721, prime-minister Mehemmed-kulu Xan Beydilli-Şamlu invited the mission to his residence. Waiting for the envoy in the reception room, the Prime-Minister stood up upon seeing him and walked to the middle of the room to welcome, after which the two sat side-by-side. With reference to this prime-ministerial welcome audience, the envoy noted that the dispatch of this extraordinary legation had caused great fear in Iran; the realm was in a terrible condition with attacks from several directions, and the affairs in a wretched state. The statesmen suspected that the empire, via the Dürrî Ahmed legation, wanted to make a demand of

¹³²⁷ “tâ ki bu mahalle han gelmeye, bir kadem ileri varmam ve bunun küstahlığını Şâh’a arz ederim”

¹³²⁸ Necef-kulu Beyg also brought the decrees from the Shah allocating the legation a [daily] allowance of 250 thaler for provisions. At the royal residence in Tehran, the Shah's kitchen staff feasted the legation for three days with gold and silver sets, only after which the legation's own kitchen staff began its routine. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi, *İran Elçiliği Tahriri*, ff. 1b-2a, published in Ayhan Ürkündağ, “Dürrî Ahmed Efendi'nin İran Sefâretnâmesi (MA thesis, Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi, 2006). See Külbilge, “Osmanlı-İran Siyâsî İlişkileri (1703-1747)”, 37 for the dates of the legation's arrival at the mentioned way stations, adopted from Ürkündağ's thesis as well as several other sources. I also take the dates for the belowmentioned activities of the Dürrî Ahmed legation at the Safavid court from Külbilge's dissertation, see pages 38-40. It should be noted that the dates provided in the mission report present inconsistencies between the day count, the calendar date, and the name of day. Therefore, these are not necessarily the exact dates. Yet, they can be accepted as such unless corrected by a more accurate source.

territory to the size of several counties or something else. In the pre-welcome deliberations, they had even agreed to cede territory either from the province of Çukursa'd or Kurdistan, and having resolved to send an extraordinary ambassador for this matter, they had halted the embassy's dispatch until the incoming legation declared the Ottomans' demands. When the Prime-Minister requested to receive the Grand-Vizier's letter in order to find out what these demands were about, the envoy, prepared in advance for this situation by deliberately having abstained from bringing the letter, presented instead the letters from the governor-general of Baghdad and his lieutenant. He meanwhile feigned to satisfy the Prime-Minister's bustle by saying that the submission of the grand-vizierial letters before that of the imperial epistle at the royal audition was not lawful.¹³²⁹

The Prime-Minister ascribed the withholding of the Grand-Vizier's letters to the authenticity of the rumors about Ottoman demands, and hitting his hands to his knees, said: "You had this intention beforehand, now it has materialized. . . . Previously, Your grand-vizier [Dâmad Şehid] Ali Pasha had forcibly provoked the Supreme-Lord his majesty, and was about to come upon us after [the Battle of Petro]Varadin, but it was the consent of God his sublimity that he became martyr at the battlefield of [Petro]Varadin."¹³³⁰ In reply to Dürrî Ahmed's sophistic question of how he had acquired such information, Mehemed-kulu Şamlu said that the governor-general of Çukursa'd had communicated it in writing. To the envoy's consequent question of whether the governor-general of Çukursa'd could have a grasp of the concealed consultations between the shah and the prime-minister, Mehemed-kulu Şamlu said "no." Upon this reply, Dürrî Ahmed stated that as the same governor-general of Çukursa'd could even less

¹³²⁹ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, f. 2b.

¹³³⁰ "sizin evvelden bu niyetiniz var idi, şimdi geldi zuhûr etti. Vezîriâzâminız olan [Şehid] Ali Paşa Hünkar hazretlerini zorla tahrik edip Varadin'den sonra bizim üzerimize gelecek idi ama Allah-ı Teâlâ hazretlerinin rızâsı bümüş ki Varadin mârekesinde şehit oldu"

likely have a grasp of a confidential conversation between the padishah and the grand-vizier, the report was a lie, and he was surprised how a reasonable person could rely on such reports. The eighty-five-year-long peace had seen seven padishahs since Murad IV, none of whom had entertained the idea of an offensive against the Safavids; moreover, it would not be chivalric for the Ottoman monarchs, gloried with valor, to harbor such intentions at a time of such wretchedness in Iran.¹³³¹

Dürrî Ahmed Efendi, much offended by this out-of-place discussion at the welcome audience, refused to continue:

We have come from such a long distance. Today, We are your guests and You are the prime-minister of this state, and as of now, the running of affairs is at Your hands and all Our negotiations are to take place with You. We have just met; without even inquiring after [each other's] conditions and having a small talk, . . . is this reproving controversy the agenda of the first assembly? If You desire something with this, let us negotiate upon the principle of debate etiquette.¹³³²

[to which Mehemmed-kulu Şamlu replied:] I do not know what the debate etiquette is.¹³³³

[Upon this, Dürrî Ahmed retorted:] henceforward I will not negotiate with you and will not come to your assembly. The mighty Padishah his majesty sent me to the Shah of Jamshid-eminence his majesty, I go and negotiate with Them. Make ready the horses, I am going to the residence.¹³³⁴

Only with the intercessions by the chief-exchequer and the royal-secretary (Mirza Hayat¹³³⁵) could the envoy become convinced to stay for the ensuing small talk, music performance, and meal. The next day, the Prime-Minister apologized by dispatching a note with the host-officer and the marshal of the Royal Court, who also secured the envoy's permission for bringing in the Prime-Minister's brother. Along with gifts and sweets, the latter conveyed the verbal apology:

¹³³¹ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, f. 3a.

¹³³² “bu kadar mesafe-i bâideden geldik. El-yevm size misafiriz ve siz bu devletin îtimâdü'd-devletisiniz. Hâlen hall ü akd-i umûr sizin elinizdedir ve cümle mükâlememiz sizinle olsa gerektir. Henüz görüştük ve hal hatır sorulup bir mikdar âfâkî musâhebet olunmadan muâheze yolundan bu münâkaşa meclis-i evvelin sözü müdür? Eđer bundan bir murâdınız var ise sizinle âdâb-ı münâzara kâidesi üzere mükâleme edelim”

¹³³³ “ben âdâb-ı münâzara nedir bilmem”

¹³³⁴ “şimden sonra seninle mükâleme etmem ve meclisine gelmem. Beni kudretli Pâdişahım hazretleri Şâh-ı Cemcah hazretlerine göndermiştir. Varır, onlar ile mükâleme ederim. At hazır etsinler, konağa giderim.”

¹³³⁵ Floor, *Safavid Government Institutions*, 57.

“last night, We irritated the emissary efendi, They have taken offence, let Them have complaisance. I am a [prime-]minister of two months, I do not know the language[-etiquette] of state. Reconcile us, let Them pardon our faults.^{1336,1337}

On 10 February 1721, a Sunday, the Shah invited the envoy to the royal welcome audience. The legation prepared for the occasion with might and main: the portable-throne¹³³⁸ brought for the occasion was adorned and glorified in a manner worthy of the reputation of the Ottoman State. The imperial epistle was placed on the portable-throne carried by twelve Arab porters¹³³⁹ and surrounded by eight footmen¹³⁴⁰, all in ceremonial outfit. It was brought by the legation to the Shah’s place of residence. When entering the audience room, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi took the imperial epistle to his hand and held it at head level. When at a half-an-arm’s distance to the seated shah, the envoy stopped, standing to the left of the Prime-Minister, took the imperial epistle to his right hand, and dropped a curtsy. After introducing the epistle in elaborate language, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi conveyed the Padishah’s greetings, all in loud voice. The Prime-Minister attempted twice to take delivery of the epistle, but the envoy remained unimpressed. The Shah inclined to take it *sua sponte*, but the envoy, still delivering the address, remained unmoved. Only in Sultan-Hüseyin’s third display of inclination did the envoy kiss the imperial epistle twice, placed upon his head, and presented to the Shah, who stood up on his knees and took it with his two hands directly from those of the envoy, kissed it, placed it upon his head, and

¹³³⁶ “Elçi efendiği dünkü gece rencide ettik. Bize hâtır-mânde oldular. Lütfeylesinler, ben iki aylık vezîrim. Lisân-ı devleti bilmem, bizi barıştır, taksirâtımızı afv etsinler.”

¹³³⁷ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 3b-4a. On the fifteenth day of arrival in Tehran, an amount of 500 tuman equaling 6,333 thaler from the side of the Shah was given by the marshal of the Royal Court and a retinue of thirty soldiers to the legation for its daily expenses. The envoy returned the favor by serving coffee with frankincense and giving the marshal of the Royal Court as gift fifty gold pieces with the imperial monogram on them, a broadcloth, one piece of cloth, and to his retinue one hundred pieces of gold with the imperial monogram impressed upon them.

¹³³⁸ *tahturevan*

¹³³⁹ *akkâm*

¹³⁴⁰ *çuhadar*

forwarded to the chief-eunuch.¹³⁴¹ Then, Sultan-Hüseyin commanded Dürrî Ahmed Efendi to sit down. When the latter, out of propriety, did not, the marshal of the Royal Court made him sit down by pulling him from his arms. The Shah asked in Turkish: “how is the Supreme-Lord his imperial majesty, is his state of health good and is he currently in Istanbul?”¹³⁴² The envoy replied in Turkish: “yes, my Shah, Their illustrious body is upon health and well-being, They are upon rest in Their seat of monarchy.”¹³⁴³ When Sultan-Hüseyin asked his prime-minister in Persian what the envoy’s name was, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi interrupted in Persian: “my Shah, ask my name to me . . . I am Dürrî, I am the emissary of the Shah of Rûm.”¹³⁴⁴ The part of the conversation in Persian ended after a short dialogue on welcoming and the travel, following which, during the feast, by the Royal Court marshal’s conduct, the envoy was seated below the second-minister. Throughout the feast, Sultan-Hüseyin continued to occasionally converse – in Turkish – with Dürrî Ahmed, during which he also mentioned how good a man Eyüplü Hasan Pasha was and expressed his joy from this governor-general’s neighborliness.¹³⁴⁵

Ahmed III, in his imperial epistle to “his sublime majesty,”¹³⁴⁶ after formally introducing to Sultan-Hüseyin the clause inserted into the 1718 Ottoman-Habsburg Treaty of Commerce concerning Iranian merchants, defined Ottoman-Safavid relations only with terminology that applied to the states of *ancient* peace and *friendly* relations, and expressed the intention of this initiative to be reviving the interrupted exchange of missions and epistles.¹³⁴⁷ Additionally, he

¹³⁴¹ *kızlarağası*

¹³⁴² “şevketlü Hünkar hazretleri ne âlemededir, dimağları çağ mıdır yani mizaçları iyi midir ve hâlen İstanbul’da mıdır”

¹³⁴³ “belî Şâh’ım . . . vücûd-ı şerîfleri sıhhat ve âfiyet üzeredir”

¹³⁴⁴ “Şâhem, ism-i merâ ez men pors . . . Dürrî’yem, elçi-yi Şâh-ı Rûm’em”

¹³⁴⁵ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 4a-5a. See Ibid. for the complete description of the ceremonies during the royal audience.

¹³⁴⁶ “âli-hazret”

¹³⁴⁷ NMH.d. 6, ent. 278.

outlined the previous affair of the Imposter Abbas.¹³⁴⁸ The epistle was signed along the same pattern with that of Süleyman II: “the Confirmed [One] with the confirmations of God the Aid-Sought Monarch / *Ghâzi*-Sultan Ahmed Khan son of Sultan Mehmed Khan¹³⁴⁹”,¹³⁵⁰ Nevşehirli Damad İbrâhim Pasha’s letter to Sultan Hüseyin did not diverge in content from that of Ahmed III the “supreme of the grand sultans, supreme-shah,¹³⁵¹”¹³⁵² though in his letter to Mehmedkulu Xan Şamlu “his sublime excellency,¹³⁵³” he briefly referred to the concepts of alliance and continuous peace. All three documents are dated late June 1720.¹³⁵⁴ Both the imperial epistle and the grand-vizierial letters conformed to the recent demotion of the shah’s rank back to sultanic/kingly degree and retained the padishah’s imperial/supreme-monarchical rank.

On 17 February 1721, this time the Prime-Minister received the envoy, where the grand-vizierial letter was delivered. Upon seeing Dürrî Ahmed Efendi’s entry to the room, Mehmedkulu Xan Şamlu stood up welcoming him and made him sit down side-by-side. The envoy handed in Nevşehirli Damad İbrâhim Pasha’s letter by kissing and placing it upon his head, and

¹³⁴⁸ The passage on the Imposter Abbas affair is found the verbatim copy of the epistle published in Nevâî’s *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât*, 1105-1135, 157-161; the photocopy of Dürrî Ahmed’s mission report from a private collection is cited as the source. The same passage does not exist in the epistle’s verbatim copy in the *Nâme-i Hümâyün Defteri*, cited above. The Nevâî version lacks date and the name of the envoy, though it states the envoyship. While the *defter* entry contains slightly more details, the two versions mostly agree in content and wording. In light of these facts, it is reasonable to suppose that either two epistles were sent or one of these verbatim copies belong to a finished draft that was eventually not dispatched. Yüksel Muslu, who also came across a similar situation in her research, informs us that the dispatch of two epistles – the secondary one contained a summary of the primary one and a list of gifts, was not unprecedented in oriental diplomacy. Another possibility proposed by Yüksel Muslu was that the chancellery of the sender could compose several drafts and then the dignitaries would deliberate their pros and cons. Eventually, this would lead to the dispatch of only one version while the other version could have been circulated at the court of the sender in the cases that the content difference pertained to sensitive issues such as legitimacy, recognition, prestige, titulage, etc. See Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamluks*, 28, 112-113. As the Nevâî – *defter* difference of our case does not concern a delicate matter, the two versions may be consolidated by assuming that the Dürrî Ahmed legation conveyed two imperial epistles.

¹³⁴⁹ “el-Müeyyed be-teyidât-ullah el-Melikü’l-müste’ân / es-Sultan el-Gazi Ahmed Han ibn-i Sultan Mehmed Han”

¹³⁵⁰ TSMK. Hazine no. 1432, f. 90b quoted in Ürkündağ’s MA thesis. Note the erroneous reading of words by Ürkündağ, which is also a general problem noticable in his transcription of the legation-report.

¹³⁵¹ “a’zam-ı selâtîn-i izâm . . . şehinşah”

¹³⁵² NMH.d. 6, ent. 280. Note the address “his most-sublime majesty” in the Shah’s *inscriptio* in Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha’s letter to Sultan-Hüseyin and the address “his sublime majesty” in the Shah’s titulage in Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha’s letter to the prime-minister. In the imperial epistle, the Shah’s *inscriptio* began with “his sublime majesty.”

¹³⁵³ “cenâb-ı meâlî-meâb”

¹³⁵⁴ NMH.d. 6, ent. 279.

the Prime-Minister received it in the same manner. The audience, which began in conversations on various locations in the empire, above all Constantinople, and alternated between Turkish and Persian, soon turned into a poetry session, as many of the participants were “experts-of-learning.¹³⁵⁵”. The Iranian participants praised in surprise those coming from Rûm on their knowledge of Persian [language and literature]. The event concluded with a feast accompanied by a music performance. After several days, Muhammed Zeki, Agha Nur Ekber, Mesrur, Merkâs, Ali Nakî, and Muhammed Nakî, the men-of-learning whom the Shah had especially brought from Isfahan for the occasion in order to accompany the guests, visited the mission together with several singers and musicians they brought along.¹³⁵⁶

On 25 February 1721, a second royal audience took place. After serving sherbet and inquiring after health and state, Sultan-Hüseyin asked whether Ahmed III was at his capital or out hunting, to which Dürrî Ahmed Efendi replied that the Padishah was not out hunting. The Shah insisted on knowing whether Ahmed III was not even on “mountain hunt,¹³⁵⁷” so the envoy said the Padishah “hunts magnificence.¹³⁵⁸” Sultan-Hüseyin laughed, mentioned how inclined Ahmed III’s father [Mehmed IV the Hunter] and brother [Mustafa II] were towards hunting, and wondered why Ahmed III was not so, especially as hunting pertained to the glory of great rulers. The envoy gave the allegorical reply that during his imperial-princely years, Ahmed had studied much history, and learned from a book how the Persian shah Chosroes I Ânûşîrevân, at one of his consultations with his minister Buzurgmihr, came to the conclusion that the hearts of the subjects were the best possible hunt. He relayed how Ahmed, upon learning this, had vowed not to go on a hunt but to attend to the realm’s prosperity, instead. Sultan-Hüseyin, praising the

¹³⁵⁵ *erbâb-ı maarif*

¹³⁵⁶ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 5b-6a. By this time, the prior allowance had run out, and the Shah sent another 400 tuman equaling to 6,660 thaler. See Ibid. also for the detailed description of the ceremonies.

¹³⁵⁷ “şikâr-ı kûh”

¹³⁵⁸ “şikâr-ı şükûh”

answer, asked how the Padishah was then spending his time, to which the envoy replied by enumerating the Imperial Council's routine, lesson sessions in Ahmed III's newly-built palace library, Friday processions, audiences with the grand-vizier, communal marksmanship practices with bow and musket, and javelin games.¹³⁵⁹

After this conversation, Sultan-Hüseyin praised the envoy [in Turkish]: “emissary efendi, an emissary like you [i.e. as distinguished as you] did not come to this clime, neither in my day nor in the day[s] of my father, never did he come. The Supreme-Lord his majesty selected you and sent you to me.¹³⁶⁰” When the envoy displayed humbleness and inferiority vis-à-vis the Padishah's other servitors, the Shah replied [in Turkish]: “hey hey efendi, do not say so. I know, by God, that the Supreme-Lord his majesty selected you and sent you to me. May They be vitalized, I investigated and came to know that the Supreme-Lord his majesty have sent you to me as They love me much. I am immensely satisfied with You. Among the sons of Rûm, I did not see a knower of Persian [i.e. literature] like you. Welcome, you brought enjoyment!¹³⁶¹”¹³⁶²

During the [pre-]Nevrûz festivities on 5-6 March 1721, a third meeting of Sultan-Hüseyin and Dürrî Ahmed Efendi took place. At this occasion, Sultan-Hüseyin asked whether Ahmed III was residing in Constantinople or was frequenting the capital's surrounding cities of five to ten way stations for excursions, as some localities were favorite resorts for their climates [obviously implying Adrianople]. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi said no, and justified it with Constantinople's being God's manifestation in and the capital of the world, with an unequalled climate, streams, hills, resorts, strait, and seaside gardens, making it useless to seek these pleasures elsewhere. Then,

¹³⁵⁹ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 5a-7a; Râşid, *Târih*, 1260.

¹³⁶⁰ “elçi efendi, senin gibi elçi bu diyâra kim geliptir, ne benim günümde ne babam gününde, hiç gelmeyiptir. Seni Hünkar hazretleri intihâb edip bana gönderiptir”

¹³⁶¹ “hey hey efendi! Öyle demeyin. Bilirim vallahi vallahi Hünkar hazretleri seni intihâb edip gönderiptir. Muammer olsunlar. Tahkik ettim ve bildim ki Hünkar hazretleri beni çok sevdiklerinden seni bana göndermişler. Gâyet sizden memnun oldum. Ben ebnâ-yı Rûm'da senin gibi Fârsî-dân görmedim. Hoş geldin, sefâ getirdin”

¹³⁶² Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 7a; Râşid, *Târih*, 1261. See both versions for the detailed description of the ceremonies.

upon the Shah's inquiry, the envoy gave an account of Constantinople. After contemplating, Sultan-Hüseyin added: "I love the Supreme-Lord his majesty much, to the degree that Their affection is ever in my heart. Most of the time, I try to discover from within whether They also love Us and whether Their affection is as much as Ours, how do you know it [to be]?"¹³⁶³ Dürrî Ahmed replied: "my Shah, there is indeed path from heart to heart . . . They also love You. If They had not, They would not have sent me to You and present friendship in the august epistle."¹³⁶⁴ The meeting ended after a feast accompanied by musicians and singers.¹³⁶⁵

In the farewell royal audience on March 12, another round of talks eventuated. Sultan-Hüseyin first inquired about the duration of the empire's recent peace treaties [with the Habsburgs, Poland-Lithuania, Venice, and Russia]. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi explained that though all parties to contracts with the empire wished eternal peace treaties, these varied between twenty and thirty-five years, and were conditional upon their signatories' observing their commitments to the empire. Then, the Shah implied that he had complaints from some Ottoman-subject Kurdish beys at the frontier. However, Mehemed-kulu Xan Şamlu, who was standing to the right of the envoy, made a gesture meaning to prevent the Shah his master from speaking further on this matter, due to which Sultan-Hüseyin refrained from openly pronouncing the complaints. Yet, Dürrî Ahmed dared to reply to what had been implied, saying that no Kurdish beys were capable of committing the slightest unruliness; if any deviation would take place, frontier viziers and governors would execute the necessary punishment, as had been done in the former rebellion by the Bebe [in the 1690s]. Once Sultan-Hüseyin gave Dürrî Ahmed credit for his statement, the

¹³⁶³ "Hünkar hazretlerini . . . ben çok severim, şu mertebe ki muhabbetleri kalbimden çıkmaz. Ekser evkat derûn haliyle müşâhede ederim, acabâ onlar dahi bizi severler mi ve muhabbetleri bizim kadar var mı. Sen nice biliyorsun?"

¹³⁶⁴ "Şâhim, elbette kalpten kalbe yol vardır . . . onlar dahi sizi severler, eğer sevmeyeler idi beni size göndermezler idi ve nâme-i hümayununda dostluk arz et. . .mezler idi"

¹³⁶⁵ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 7b-8b.

envoy dared even further: “my Shah, I also have a say pertaining to the frontiers¹³⁶⁶”. When the Prime-Minister squeezed the envoy’s arm with a facial expression which the envoy translated as, “be complaisant, do not say it,¹³⁶⁷” he shifted: “the proper thing for monarchs is to keep their frontiers like their inner territories.¹³⁶⁸” Sultan-Hüseyin, discontinuing the topic, and after handing over the courtesy reply epistle, as the detailed one was to be dispatched with the prospective extraordinary embassy, saw off the envoy: “may You say many many greetings and deign to pray for the Supreme-Lord his majesty. May You convey submissions of [my] affection. May [these messages] be God’s entrustment. Say so: >>may God his sublimity give Them and Us vita of many years. May such emissaries constantly come [and go] between us. . . . I love Them and am Their beadsmen<<.^{1369,1370}

Following this, the prime-ministerial farewell audience took place. In the apparently last round of talks, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi asked “why was it that You told me to >>not speak of the frontier matters in the assembly of the Shah?<<.¹³⁷¹” In reply, the Prime-Minister pointed out his concerns that Sultan-Hüseyin could have grieved and rebuked him (i.e. the Prime-Minister), and then he invited the envoy to speak his mind now. Dürrî Ahmed submitted the following matters: firstly, the fortress of Mekü, whose demolition had been prescribed by the Pacification of Zuhab, had been rebuilt and garrisoned during the rise of Mîr-Üveys. Secondly, in Bâcîlân, the interstate border near Baghdad, some ruined locations had been settled and rebuilt by several Safavid-vassal tribes. Driven out by the Ottomans, they had returned again. Thirdly, the Safavids had

¹³⁶⁶ “Şâhim, benim dahi serhatlere müteallik sözüm vardır”

¹³⁶⁷ “lütf et, söyleme”

¹³⁶⁸ “pâdişahlara layık olan kendi serhatlerini iç illeri gibi hıfzetmektir”

¹³⁶⁹ “Hünkar hazretlerine çok çok selamlar edip duâlar buyurasız, arz-ı muhabbetler götüresiz, Tanrı emâneti olsun. Şöyle dersin ki >>Hakk-ı Teâlâ onlara ve bize çok yıllar ömürler versin ve daima beynimizde böyle elçiler gel..sin. Ben onları severim ve duâcısıyım<< . . .”

¹³⁷⁰ Dürrî Ahmed Efendi, *Takrir*, ff. 9b-10a; Râşid, *Târih*, 1263-1264.

¹³⁷¹ “>>Şah meclisinde serhat husûsunu söyleme<< dediğiniz ne için idi”

given the seigneur of Hakkâri (Ottoman-vassal, in the province of Van) two villages from Iran as appanage and seventy tuman of cash as a quasi-salary. After enumerating the complaints, the envoy added that such actions by a party claiming friendship were improper, and that the Safavids would not be able to justifiably respond to a potential Ottoman retaliation. Mehemed-kulu Şamlu feigned ignorance: “ [I swear] by the head of the Shah, I have no knowledge of this.¹³⁷²” After summoning and talking from ear to ear¹³⁷³ with the chancellor¹³⁷⁴ (Mirza Rafî’a¹³⁷⁵), he had the concerned decrees annulled¹³⁷⁶ on the spot. Only then began the poetry session with the invited experts-of-learning, during which a[n Iranian] poet dedicated a poem to grand-vizier Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha and received largesse in return. The session ended with dinner and music performance.¹³⁷⁷

After a feast with the Safavid extraordinary embassy to the Sublime Porte, Mehemed-kulu Xan Şamlu invited the envoy for one last time (late March). The location was a room by the back gate of the Shah’s palace, where the conversations inside could be heard from an adjacent room. The Prime-Minister and the envoy entered the room alone, without any retinue, and the Shah listened to the dialog from the adjacent room. First, Mehemed-kulu Şamlu complained from his predecessor’s [Feth-Ali Xan Daghestani] lack of diligence which had caused confusion in the realm: “even Mîr-Üveys, long-time [Safavid] subject, aspired to [seizing] the State,¹³⁷⁸” and the “Lezgî gypsies¹³⁷⁹” rose in impudicity. The Prime-Minister justified the continuing contention via Sultan-Hüseyin’s refusing to dispatch intermediaries on his own motion and yet

¹³⁷² “Şâhın başı için [yemin olsun ki] bundan haberim yoktur”

¹³⁷³ “kulaklaştı”

¹³⁷⁴ *münşi-i memâlik*

¹³⁷⁵ Floor, *Safavid Government Institutions*, 53.

¹³⁷⁶ *terkin*

¹³⁷⁷ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 10b-11a; Râşid, *Târih*, 1264.

¹³⁷⁸ “hattâ kadîmden reâyâmız olan Mîr-Veys aşîretleri devlete el özendi”

¹³⁷⁹ “Lezgî çingâneleri”

refusing, out of mercy, to send troops, with hopes that the rebels repent and the innocent among them not be killed. Admitting the “wretched¹³⁸⁰” state of the realm, Mehemmed-kulu Şamlu declared that reforming and reorganizing it was his most urgent agenda. “If faults occurred in honorably hosting You [i.e. the Ottoman envoy]” said the Prime-Minister, “may You deign to treat by way of forgiveness; [otherwise], it is not that we do not appreciate the value of Your excellency.¹³⁸¹” Mehemmed-kulu Xan concluded his speech by acknowledging how affectionate and protective the Padishah was towards the Safavids, favoring them over the Uzbeks and the Indians. In return for this, the Iranians also loved the Ottomans more than they did the Uzbeks and the Indians. Now that the war with the Europeans was over and that the padishahs would surely not remain idle, the Prime-Minister asked, with what Ahmed III was occupying himself. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi answered that the Padishah had just sent decrees and commissaries to the four corners of the empire, above all to Rumelia, Bosnia, the Peloponnese, Asia Minor, Kurdistan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Hejaz, the Mediterranean Islands, the Crimea, and North Africa, for renewing, repairing, completing, and organizing the arsenals, ammunition, artillery, grenades, and other war materials. Having heard – via Sultan-Hüseyin – the news of the birth of imperial-prince İbrâhim and that Eyüplü Hasan Pasha had send a[n Imperial] Council bailiff to the envoy while on mission in order to request the rapid composition and dispatch of a chronogram-poem, the Prime-Minister inquired after the newborn imperial-prince’s health and conversed a bit about other imperial-princes. In this matter, Dürrî Ahmed assured his addressee that there were more than twenty imperial-princes, all prosperous, busy with their studies, and practicing arts of war, doing anything they incline to, and residing in their allocated places as these were so capacious and heart-warming that they did not want to move somewhere else. Concerning this matter, the

¹³⁸⁰ “perîşan”

¹³⁸¹ “eğer ikrâmınızda taksirât olundu ise afv ile muamele buyurasınız. Bizler sizin cenâbınızın kadrini bilmez değiliz”

twelve-year old imperial-prince Süleyman's distinction and shining presence in public during Friday processions were emphasized. The Prime-Minister submitted the courtesy reply letter containing the epitomized version of the clauses of the talks, and announced that the detailed letter would be sent with the return embassy. His last request was that Dürrî Ahmed "perform the rites of friendship by [displaying] kindness to the needy [i.e. the Safavids] upon arrival [in Constantinople].¹³⁸²" The legation departed from Tehran in mid-April 1721 and entered the empire from the border at Van in late May - early June.¹³⁸³

At the end of his legation report, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi noted the Safavid soldiery's skill with archery and muskets, and the general lack of fortresses – most of the realm being open-space "like Scutari" –, along with the lack of artillery and arsenal, and the general demand thereof. Mentioning that the Afghan overthrow of Safavid rule via successive victories and declaration of independence in Kandahar had proceeded westwards up to twenty way stations, he reported the insurrection's having approached east-central Iran, namely Kirman and Meşhed, the latter being currently under Afghan siege, while Herat had already fallen. At the same time, the Lezgîs had overrun the northwestern arm of the realm, namely Şirvan, Şemahı, and Karabağ. The envoy asserted that the Safavid State was nearing extinction. According to his detailed investigation performed both concealedly and publicly, the Safavids, in deficiency of statesmen, with their regime in confusion and their state shaken, and unable to fend off the attacks with their deserting troops, were in a helpless situation. Meanwhile, a handful remaining statesmen, in heedlessness, were still claiming that Mîr-Mahmud was "showing coyness and feigning

¹³⁸² "vardıkda garip-nevazlık ile dostluk hakkını yerine getiresiniz"

¹³⁸³ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 11a-13a; Râşid, *Târih*, 1267,1269. See Enes Pelidija, "The Influence of the Peace of Passarowitz on Bosnia," in *The Peace of Passarowitz*, ed. Charles Ingraio, Nikola Samardzic, and Jovan Pesalj (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2011) for the case of Bosnia in the execution of the post-Passarotiwz thrust of refortification and military reentrenchment in accordance with the new border line, a policy which Dürrî Ahmed must have referred to by his mention of the military preparations.

reluctance to the Shah¹³⁸⁴”, that otherwise he was still a subject, that he would soon come and submit, and that the Shah would pardon him. Such inauspiciousness had befallen the Safavids that the experts-of-learning he had socialized with unanimously admitted, “the fortune of the Sheikh’s [i.e. Safi’s] sons [i.e. the Safavids] has turned, their state has gone, and their term is over.^{1385,1386}

When the returning Ottoman legation and the outgoing Safavid embassy were on the road to Constantinople during later 1721, the Lezgîs fully invaded Şirvan. In response to their appealing for Ottoman protection, the Padishah invested the leader, Müderris Hacı Davud, with the governorate of Şirvan, hereinafter Hacı Davud Bey.¹³⁸⁷ Also, Mir-Mahmud Afghan’s ultimate westward march began with the siege of Kirmân.¹³⁸⁸

The Ottoman legation returned to Constantinople on 5 December 1721. Dürrî Ahmed Efendi submitted his report to Ahmed III and Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha.¹³⁸⁹ Although the news of the Safavids’ advances against the rebels had arrived in March and July 1712 and pleased the Sublime Porte – at least the padishah and the grand vizier if not the war party, the returning envoy made the court fully comprehend the gravity of the state of affairs in Iran.¹³⁹⁰ The Porte saw its interests best served in the preservation of an intact Safavid State in Iran – though without the empire intervening to support the House of Safi. Yet, the course of events was already progressing in the opposite direction.

¹³⁸⁴ “Şâhımız ile nâz ve niyâz eder”

¹³⁸⁵ “Şeyhoğlu’nun devri dönmüş ve devleti gitmiş ve müddeti tamâm olmuştur”

¹³⁸⁶ Dürrî Ahmed, *Takrîr*, ff. 14a-15b. The total allowances and the subsidies the legation had received from the Safavid court amounted to a total of fifty-three purses [26,500 thaler]. On his way back, Dürrî Ahmed Efendi donated the unspent amount of fifteen purses [7,500 thaler] to his mother’s charities at Van.

¹³⁸⁷ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 127-128.

¹³⁸⁸ Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, 130-131.

¹³⁸⁹ Münir Aktepe, “Dürrî Ahmed Efendi’nin İran Sefâreti”.

¹³⁹⁰ Shay, *Despatches of the Venetian Baili*, 90; Olson, *Ottoman-Persian Relations 1718-1743*, 47.

Murtazâ Kulu Xan Sa'dlu, governor of Khwâr-Semnân and the extraordinary Safavid ambassador to the Porte, had traveled right behind the returning Ottoman legation. Once on Ottoman soil, the embassy received the conventional subsidies, allocations, and host-officer. It reportedly traveled across Anatolia with a display of pride, vanity, and hauteur. On December 21, shortly after Dürrî Ahmed, the Safavid mission arrived in Scutari. After three days of rest at Süleymanpaşa Palace, on the 24th, two galiots transported the embassy personnel to Constantinople as cannon shots from the Maiden Tower and the State Artillery Works saluted the guests. By the landing point at the Customs Pier, a committee of Sublime Court Cavalry officers, the superintendent of the Bailiffs, and the scribe of the Bailiffs welcomed the embassy, and led the ambassador to the room prepared at the Customs, where the chiefs of the Sublime Court Cavalry and marshal of the Imperial Council Alâiyeli Hacı Ebubekir Agha held a welcoming event. Also joined by the head of the Night-Patrol¹³⁹¹, the prefect, and the junior officers of the Sublime Court Cavalry, the welcome committee had Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu mount the horse given as gift by the Grand-Vizier. They rode in procession to the ambassador's residence, Nakkaşpaşa Palace overlooking Yenibahçe. The welcome ceremony finished after a feast given at this location.¹³⁹² Instead of bringing reports of its government's success against the insurrections, which would have pleased the Ottoman hosts, The Safavid embassy brought the news of the rebels' strength and the geographical spread of the revolution.¹³⁹³

Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa'dlu was well versed in literature and eloquence. On the road, when in Erzurum, he had asked governor-general Silahdar İbrâhim Pasha "who is the most-

¹³⁹¹ *asesbaşı*

¹³⁹² Râşid, *Târih*, 1270-1271. See Ibid. for more details on the protocol of the ceremony. Also see Bedreddinzâde Ali, *Kâime*, 122.

¹³⁹³ Shay, *Despatches of the Venetian Baili*, 90.

accomplished of the poets of Rûm,¹³⁹⁴ and Silahdar İbrâhim Pasha had replied “there was [Yusuf] Nâbî Efendi, he passed away; currently, from his peers in the conduct of poetry and composition, there is [Edirneli] Kâmî Efendi,¹³⁹⁵ former judge of Egypt. Upon hearing this, the ambassador composed two odes¹³⁹⁶ in Persian and one in Turkish, which he submitted, probably publicly, for similitudes¹³⁹⁷. Once the ambassador was in Constantinople, both Edirneli Kâmî Efendi and several other prominent Ottoman poets composed similitudes, and after securing permission from the Grand-Vizier, submitted them to Murtazâ-kulu Sa’dlu. Saying “I would not know the masters of Rûm as such [accomplished poets],¹³⁹⁸” he praised the host poets highly and “in order to take [them] back to the elegants of Iran as gifts,¹³⁹⁹” he began to collect poetry compendia. His claims of Iranians’ mastery in poetry over Rûm, asserted Râşid Mehmed, turned into embarrassment.¹⁴⁰⁰

On 7 January 1722, a committee of bailiffs led by the marshal of the Imperial Council escorted the ambassador and his select retinue to the welcome audience with Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha, in front of whose palace members of various departments of the Outer Court stood in attention. Welcomed at the entrance gate by the marshal of the Outer Court and several other senior officers of various Sublime Court Corps, the ambassador was conducted by the grand-vizierial chancellor¹⁴⁰¹ to the council chamber furnished with Persian carpets brought from the Audience Hall. Right after the ambassador had already entered the council chamber and was waiting on foot, Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha entered as well. After the introduction, a man of the

¹³⁹⁴ “ser-âmed-i şuarâ-yı Rûm kimdir”

¹³⁹⁵ “Nâbî Efendi var idi, merhum oldu. Hâlen ona hem-pây-ı refât-ı şiir ü inşâ olanlardan Kâmî Efendi vardır”

¹³⁹⁶ *gazel*

¹³⁹⁷ *nazîre*

¹³⁹⁸ “ben erbâb-ı . . . Rûm’u böyle bilmezdim”

¹³⁹⁹ “zurefâ-yı İran’a hediye götürürüm diye”

¹⁴⁰⁰ Râşid, *Târih*, 1271, 1278.

¹⁴⁰¹ *sadâret mektupçusu / mektûbî-yi sadr-ı âlî*

Grand-Vizier took the Shah's and the Prime-Minister's letters from the ambassador's hands and gave them to the Grand-Vizier, from whom the State-Secretary, Üçambarlı Mehmed Efendi, took delivery of them. After the Grand-Vizier sat down, the acclamation¹⁴⁰² by numerous Imperial Court bailiffs present in the chamber seemed to baffle Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu, who was invited to take seat afterwards. The two then began to inquire after each other's respective states. The ceremonial, bejeweled, and lightly armed outfit of the present grand-vizierial lieutenant, the state-secretary, and over twenty senior-aghas¹⁴⁰³ of the Inner Court seemed to bewilder the ambassador: he made a noticeable attempt to conceal the jewels on his rings and belt, which he had worn in order to display grandeur, and this caused allusive smiles on the faces of those who discerned what was going on.¹⁴⁰⁴

After a small talk on the current winter season and the capital,¹⁴⁰⁵ the ambassador – turning towards the present state-chronicler (Râşid Mehmed Efendi), master calligraphers¹⁴⁰⁶ lecturer Ekşiaşzâde Veliyüddin Efendi and Vehbi Efendi, and former envoy Dürrî Ahmed Efendi – this time won the approval of his hosts by reciting poetry that complemented the ambassador's just mentioned praise of Constantinople and of Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha's generosity in hosting. As the small talk came to the subject of a comparison of Constantinople with Isfahan

¹⁴⁰² *alkış*

¹⁴⁰³ *gedikli ağa*

¹⁴⁰⁴ Râşid, *Târih*, 1271-1272. See Ibid. for the detailed protocol of the ceremony. Also see Bedreddinzâde Ali, *Kâime*, 122 for the material and verbal preparations the ambassador had made to impress the Constantinopolitans, and how he was reportedly astonished upon observing in the capital's commoner inhabitants the very ornaments and manners that he was prepared to show off as signs of wealth and cultural sophistication.

¹⁴⁰⁵ To the Grand-Vizier's statement "Your coming coincided with the winter (gelmeniz şitâya musâdif oldu)," the ambassador replied "Your munificence and regard has turned Istanbul into the Rose-Garden of Abraham for us (kerem ve iltifâtınız İstanbul'u bize gülizâr-ı İbrâhim etmiştir)." Thus hinting at the Grand-Vizier's being Abraham's (İbrâhim in Arabic/Persian/Turkish) namesake, Murtaza-kulu Sa'dlu paid tribute to his host's hospitality by drawing a parallel between Prophet Abraham's turning the fire, into which he was about to be thrown, into a bed of roses and Nevşehirli İbrâhim's eliminating the hardships of winter through his generosity.

¹⁴⁰⁶ *müderris*

and as the Grand-Vizier mentioned some “heart-warming¹⁴⁰⁷” locations yet unseen to the ambassador, such as the Bosphorus, this time Dürrî Ahmed Efendi and Râşid Mehmed Efendi recited poetry on the Bosphorus. Then, Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha asked the participants whether one of them remembered the date of the quatrain, which the Indian emissary (Hacı Muhammad/Ahmad Said) to the Ottoman Empire during the chief-muftiship of Bahâî Mehmed Efendi (1652-1654) had composed. When no one could, he had Mustafa Naîmâ’s *History* brought, found the relevant entry without much effort, and recited the quatrain. After these poetry recitations, Murtazâ-kulu Sa’dlu requested that the grand-vizier invest him with sable fur of *erkân* class, so that the Safavid ambassador would not be inferior to the ambassadors of Christian monarchs. He was invested with sable fur [under]coated with lemon-yellow broadcloth. As he was taking his leave, the Grand-Vizier made a move feigning an attempt to stand up, but remained seated.¹⁴⁰⁸

The Prime-Minister’s letter to the Grand-Vizier “his sublime majesty . . . pillar of the supreme-monarchy . . . mast of the greatest-grandeur¹⁴⁰⁹,” enumerated some matters concerning commerce and pilgrimage, and accredited Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa’dlu’s ambassadorship, who was dispatched “by way of urgency¹⁴¹⁰” and would report more on the mentioned matters orally. The letter concluded with wishes of the continuation of friendly relations and the alliance.¹⁴¹¹ The Shah’s epistle to the Grand-Vizier was more precise and did not involve the matters on pilgrimage at all.¹⁴¹² The royal epistle to Ahmed III, which would be delivered at the upcoming

¹⁴⁰⁷ “dîl-güşâ . . . ferah-fezâ”

¹⁴⁰⁸ Râşid, *Târih*, 1272-1273; Tahsin Özcan, “Veliyyüddin Efendi” in *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 43 (2013): 40-42. The grand-vizier had a personal interest in studying history, Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Târihi*, vol. 4/1, 152-155.

¹⁴⁰⁹ “âli-hazret . . . rüknü’s-saltanatu’l-uzmâ . . . imâdü’ş-şevketü’l-kübrâ”

¹⁴¹⁰ “ber-sebîl-i istîcâl”

¹⁴¹¹ *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât*, 1105-1135, 172-176.

¹⁴¹² *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât*, 1105-1135, 170-171.

imperial welcome audience, additionally contained a praise of Dürrî Ahmed Efendi's conduct.¹⁴¹³ Via the titulature employed, the Safavid epistles and letter of 1721 honored the padishah's imperial, the shah's kingly, the grand-vizier's grandducal-kingly, and the prime-minister's princely-grandducal degrees.

On 3 February 1722¹⁴¹⁴, a cortege of bailiffs and janissaries led by the marshal of the Imperial Council, the head of the Night-patrol, and the prefect brought the ambassador and sixty men from his retinue with saddled horses given as a gift to the conventional Triumphal Council for the imperial welcome audience. At the council session, the ambassador was seated below chancellor [Pazarcıklı] Abdullah [b. Ramazan b. Ahmed b. Turgut¹⁴¹⁵] Efendi and attended by the master of ceremonies. When Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa'dlu wanted to hand over the Shah's gifts in a sealed chest directly during the Imperial Council session, he was told that it was contrary to the law, and the master of presents took them over as was the convention. At the audience, when it was sensed that the ambassador was meaning to deliver the royal epistle *in propria persona* to the hands of the Padishah, he was told that it was in no way allowable by law, and that he had to deliver the epistle to the closest vizier, from whom it would reach from hand to hand until reaching the "Absolute-Deputy", who then would place it at the margin of the Padishah's throne. Then, although the ambassador had been informed in advance of the permissibility of "notifying the Shah's greetings and request for the Supreme-Shah's grace,¹⁴¹⁶" he remained tongue-tied from the "awe of magnificence and the grandeur of monarchy."¹⁴¹⁷ After delivering the letter in the prescribed way, he uttered the phrase "the Shah of jamshid-eminence" several times but

¹⁴¹³ *Esnâd ü Mükâtebât, 1105-1135*, 165-169.

¹⁴¹⁴ [Göynüklü] Ahmed b. Mahmud, *Defter – Târih-i Göynüklü*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Orientalische Handschriften Ms.or.quart. 1209, 300a.

¹⁴¹⁵ see Hüseyin Hüsâmeddin, *Nişancılar Durağı*, 120-121.

¹⁴¹⁶ "tebliğ-i selâm-ı Şâh ve istid'â-yı inâyet-i Şehinşâh"

¹⁴¹⁷ "mehâbet-i şükûh ve şevket-i saltanat"

could not pronounce the greeting formula he probably had prepared beforehand. Not being able to perform his role in the oral part of the audience, he was conducted out by Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha and made to watch the Triumphal Council participants' return at the Middle Gate. On the way back to his residence, the ambassador praised in the company of Râşid Mehmed Efendi the glory and magnificence of the Ottoman State. When the latter said, "yet the weather was cold,"¹⁴¹⁸ the ambassador, with reference to the overwhelming awe of the Padishah, replied: "the coldness was outside the Imperial Gate. As we entered inside, we saw there nothing but heat."^{1419,1420}

As was the custom, the Grand-Vizier gave a feast in honor of the ambassador. For the occasion, marquees and canopies were erected by the riverside of the Kağıthane district. On February 25, the marshal of the Imperial Council conducted Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa'dlu from his residence to the event site until Unkapanı via land and from there on boats. He was shown his canopy, from where he was made watch the Grand-Vizier's procession from Mîrahor Pavillion to the site of the event participated by court-notables, gatekeeper-captains, bailiffs, 500 to 600 janissaries, Inner Court aghas, military band, and Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha's own household. Among the high ranking participants were the chief-mufti (Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi), the chief-judge of European Provinces (Kevâkibîzâde Veliyüddin Efendi), the *nakîbüleşraf* (Akmahmundefendizâde Seyyid Zeynelâbidîn Efendi), the chief-judge of Asian and African Provinces (Yahyâefendizâde Feyzullah Efendi), the tutor of the padishah and imperial-princes (Arabzâde Abdurrahman Efendi), the governor-general of Syria and pilgrimage-commander

¹⁴¹⁸ "lâkin bürüdet-i hevâ var idi"

¹⁴¹⁹ "bürüdet Bâb-ı Hümâyün'dan taşrada idi. İçeri girdiğimizde onda sıcaktan gayrı nesne görmedik"

¹⁴²⁰ Râşid, *Târih*, 1273-1275.

(Maktulzâde Ali Pasha), the admiral-in-chief (Kaymak Mustafa Pasha), the chief-comptroller, and several council-masters.¹⁴²¹

The musicians numbering forty to fifty, according to Râşid Mehmed, impressed the Iranians who used to claim, “the origin of the technique of music is our clime.”¹⁴²² The Ottoman poets that were present in the event and the Iranian poets among the embassy personnel submitted panegyrics¹⁴²³ dedicated to Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha, and in return received largesse. Then, to the superintendent of the Imperial Registry (Yirmisekizçelebi Mehmed Efendi), the ambassador gave a piece of calligraphy, which he had brought along with the pretense that the [*nesh*]talik script was exclusive to Iran and whose colophon attributed it to the celebrated calligrapher Mîr-İmâd Hasenî, so that the present calligraphers of Rûm could be tested in their mastery of that particular script. The masters of Rûm not only identified the colophon as forged and the piece as not belonging to Mîr-İmâd but also imitated it perfectly. Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha forwarded the imitations to Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa’dlu, who testified that each of them was the carbon copy of the template he had submitted, and selected as his favorite the one drawn by Ekşiaşzâde Veliyüddin Efendi, whom he styled as “İmâd of Rûm”¹⁴²⁴,¹⁴²⁵

Following the feast, musketeer-janissaries, munitioners, artillerymen, and mercenaries numbering more than one thousand in total practiced marksmanship, after which each received one piece of gold, while each of their chief-musketeers¹⁴²⁶ and flag-bearers¹⁴²⁷ received two.

¹⁴²¹ Râşid, *Târih*, 1277-1278; Fındıklılı Mehmed, *Nusretnâme*, 547; Göynüklü, *Târih*, 300a. See Râşid, *Târih*, 1277-1278 also for the detailed setup and protocol of the event.

¹⁴²² “menşe-i fenn-i musıkî bizim diyârımızdır”

¹⁴²³ *kaside*

¹⁴²⁴ “İmâd-ı Rûm”

¹⁴²⁵ Râşid, *Târih*. pp. 1278-1279.

¹⁴²⁶ *tüfekçibaşı*

¹⁴²⁷ *bayrakdar*

Then, it was “decreed” that *sekson*-hounds “be made to wrestle¹⁴²⁸” with bears. After a bitter fight, bears admitted defeat and fled. At departure, the ambassador was invested with sable fur [under]coated with broadcloth. Throughout the following week, after securing permission from the Grand-Vizier, the ambassador paid courtesy visits to the chief-mufti, the governor-general of Syria, and the admiral-in-chief. On March 8, Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha and Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa’dlu met again at a pleasure-trip¹⁴²⁹ by Beşiktaş Palace. There, the Grand-Vizier himself performed marksmanship, hitting the target dies at each attempt. At that moment, an imperial-writ and a robe-of-honor “from the august side of the Supreme-Shah his majesty¹⁴³⁰” arrived with the chief-coffee-maker of the Inner Court¹⁴³¹ (Sührab Agha) to celebrate the Grand-Vizier’s recovery from sickness, from which he had also been suffering during the feast at Kağthane. Holding a small ceremony, Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha rubbed the imperial-writ to his forehead and eyes. The Safavid ambassador followed the two present viziers (the governor-general of Syria and the admiral-in-chief) in kissing the skirt of the Grand-Vizier’s vestment, and was himself followed by the state-secretary, the state-chronicler, and other senior participants. After the imperial-writ was read aloud, Murtazâ-kulu Sa’dlu, impressed by the subtlety and integrity of the composition [by Ahmed III in *propria persona*], bashfully requested permission for a verbatim copy to be produced. The Grand-Vizier granted the request and gave the ambassador the verbatim copy written on the spot. The assembly dissolved after further marksmanship practices and music performances. During the next week, again with grand-vizierial permission,

¹⁴²⁸ “güreştirilmek fermân olunup”

¹⁴²⁹ *temâşâ*

¹⁴³⁰ “kıbel-i hümayun-ı hazret-i Şehinşâhî”

¹⁴³¹ *Enderun Kahvecibaşısı*

the ambassador went first to Baltalimanı in order to spectate the forts guarding the north of the Bosphorus, and secondly to Kavak Privy Garden in Scutari.¹⁴³²

Lastly, the Grand-Vizier commanded the admiral-in-chief that the ambassador be invited to the State Navy-Yard, so that he could “contemplate the mountain-like galleons peculiar only to the Ottoman State, source of envy for all Infidel monarchs.¹⁴³³” On the day of event at the State Navy-Yard, the admiral-in-chief entered the council chamber after the ambassador did, and when the attendants sat down, the admiral-in-chief, himself a vizier, preceded the ambassador. Among the attendants were also lecturers (Emir Hoca Efendi, Selim Efendi, İlmî Ahmed Efendi, Yanyavî Esad Efendi) and a council-master renowned for his knowledge of sciences (Çelebi Efendi). Then, admirals of the Imperial Navy and officers of the State Navy-Yard welcomed the inspection committee that was headed by Kaymak Mustafa Pasha, with Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa’dlu following him. First, a three-masted galleon, whose construction was near completion, was inspected on board. Secondly, a fruit-serving break was given at the master cabin¹⁴³⁴ of the flagship of the admiral of State Galleons¹⁴³⁵. Then, artillery pieces that had been habitually placed in front of the galleons to which they belonged were spectated. A cannon in front of the galleon *Üç-Kantarlı* especially attracted the ambassador’s attention for the deadly blow it was thought to be capable of delivering to anything its shot would hit. There, an embassy personnel asked Seyyid Vehbi Efendi “how can I describe this great cannon in the clime of Ajam?¹⁴³⁶” Seyyid Vehbi Efendi replied: “o father [from] Ajam, shut yourself together like a ball and go

¹⁴³² Râşid, *Târih*, 1279, 1280-1282. See Ibid. for more details on the events.

¹⁴³³ “ancak Devlet-i Osmaniye’ye mahsus bi’l-cümle mülûk-i küffâr. . . a sermâye-i hased olan kuh-pâre kalyonlar temâşâsı”

¹⁴³⁴ *kapudan kamarası*

¹⁴³⁵ *kapudâne-i hümayun* [mîrî kalyonlar amirali olan kapudânenin gemisi]

¹⁴³⁶ “acaba ben bu top-ı azîmi diyâr-ı Acem’de nice vasıf ve beyân . . . edebilirim?”

inside [the cannon] right away, and in this way you inform your fellows in Isfahan.¹⁴³⁷” The implication was to the unordinarily long range and large calibre of this particular cannon. The mentioned Iranian impulsively entered inside the barrel; “he was so to speak bombarded with the laughter of the spectators, [but] knowing that he became cannon fodder in the market of humor,¹⁴³⁸” he admitted: “indeed, to bind [the mouths of] those who have not seen [this cannon], there is no superior, more complete evidence than this.¹⁴³⁹” After a session of music and singing, the feast concluded the event.¹⁴⁴⁰

The ambassador occasionally socialized with Ottoman dignitaries at stately events, but his activities were carefully monitored. As soon as he, by sending flowers, established contact with Russian resident Ivan Neplyneff in order to propose a visit, his guards unit began to keep him under even closer watch, hinting that the Sublime Porte would not allow the meeting to materialize. Murtazâ-kulu Sa’dlu could meet only with a Habsburg dragoman and only to discuss commerce.¹⁴⁴¹ The Ottomans desired that the Safavids restore authority in their realm, but not at the expense of the Safavids’ cooperation with a potential Ottoman enemy, especially if these third parties were to negotiate the deal in the imperial capital.

The Sublime Porte paid special attention to the content and the physical attributes of the imperial epistle to be given to the returning embassy. In terms of content, it was an affirmative reply to the Safavids’ commercial and pilgrimage-related requests. On *âbâdî*-type paper, Firdevsî Hüseyin Efendi, formerly Imperial Council scribe and currently master-scribe of the [Financial]

¹⁴³⁷ “hey baba Acem, hemen yumulup tortop olup içine girersin ve Isfahan’daki yârânına böylece haber verirsin”

¹⁴³⁸ “kahkaha-i temâşâcıyan ile topa tutulmuşa dönüp kendinin bâzâr-ı . . . mizahta top yoluna harç olunduğundan âgâh olucak”

¹⁴³⁹ “hakkâ ki görmeyenleri ilzâma bundan âlâ delîl-i tâm olamaz”

¹⁴⁴⁰ Râşid, *Târih*, 1282-1284. See Ibid. for more details on protocol and the event.

¹⁴⁴¹ Shay, *Despatches of the Venetian Baili*, 90.

Supervisorship of the [Sublime Court] Cavalry¹⁴⁴², penned the main text in *celî* script conventional for this genre. Couplets in Persian were committed to paper by Ekşiaşzâde Veliyüddin Efendi in *talik*. Quranic verses and other Arabic phrases were penned in *rıkâ'* by Bursalı Mehmed Efendi, who had distinguished himself with his learning in specific sciences¹⁴⁴³. To the epistle, he also inserted a framework¹⁴⁴⁴ drawn in dissolved gold and red, black, and white ink. Nevşehirli Dâmad İbrâhim Pasha prescribed that an elaborate purse be employed for this epistle, so that receivers do not ascribe it to a lack of this craft in Rûm, as foreign rulers had been sending their epistles inside jeweled and embroidered purses. Thus, unlike in previous cases, in which simpler purses were used, for this occasion, weavers produced the Grand-Vizier's order of an "unseen and unheard-of special purse¹⁴⁴⁵" from silver-gilt thread¹⁴⁴⁶, which, after placing the material inside it, was sealed in musk with the imperial monogram.¹⁴⁴⁷

On 31 March 1722, the ambassador was conventionally received in audience after the viziers following the Imperial Council session. This time, with reference to his failure in speaking during the imperial welcome audience, Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa'dlu "had made it clear [in advance] that he would perform the ceremony [of greeting] with complete servitude.¹⁴⁴⁸" However, Raşid Mehmed Efendi claims that once the ambassador came into the Padishah's audience, the imperial awe overwhelmed him a hundred times more than the previous case: instead of observing the rite of kissing-the-ground in the habitual way with his hands after kneeling down, Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu literally kissed the ground three times. Ahmed III detested the sight of this and upon noticing, the gatekeeper-captains immediately lifted the ambassador

¹⁴⁴² *Süvâri Mukâbelesi*

¹⁴⁴³ "esnâf-ı maarif-i cüz'iyeye ile ser-efrâz-ı akrân olan"

¹⁴⁴⁴ *cetvel*

¹⁴⁴⁵ "nâdide ve nâşenîde kese-i mahsusa"

¹⁴⁴⁶ *sırma*

¹⁴⁴⁷ Raşid, *Târih*, 1284-1285.

¹⁴⁴⁸ "kemâl-i ubûdiyet üzere icrâ-yı merâsim edeceğine ayân etmiş idi"

him up. Still speechless, he was given the imperial epistle via the Grand-Vizier and discharged with gifts. On April 3, the grand-vizierial farewell audience concluded the ambassador's official business at the Ottoman capital. The Padishah's travel-allowance of 21,000 thaler followed them to the residence. After an outbreak of fire from the embassy personnel's housing around Nakkaşpaşa Palace in the vicinity of the hermitage of Emir Buhârî on the night of April 6, the Grand-Vizier ordered early in the morning that the embassy be transported hurriedly to the Asian side to begin its return journey. On April 8, the Safavid mission left the capital via the same protocol and ceremonies with which it had arrived, and departed from Scutari on the 12th.¹⁴⁴⁹

The conduct of diplomatic business and the protocols applied during the mission exchange of 1720-1722 reflect the extraordinarily sensitive circumstances which had already brought the Safavid State's capacity for survival, let alone the preservation of its standing, into question. The Prime-Minister's and the Shah's conduct when entertaining the Padishah's envoy in 1721 betrayed this vulnerable situation. In Dürrî Ahmed Efendi's report, the Safavid dignitaries' timid behavior, and that the reason for this was that the Safavids – already not able to quell the progress of the rebels – were wary of the Ottomans and apprehensive of an offensive by the empire, for which they were ready concede sizable territory from Armenia or Kurdistan to forestall such an offensive, even precede the envoy's relation of the concerned assemblies.

Mehemmed-kulu Xan Şamlu's alarm during his attempt to unconventionally worm information out of Dürrî Efendi's mouth and to receive Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha's letter addressed to him, along with his blurting out the [false] intelligence of the Ottoman intentions of attacking Iran, and Ahmed Dürrî's categorically rejecting these points at the prime-ministerial welcome audience, indicate the level of alarm within the Safavid government. The resulting

¹⁴⁴⁹ Râşid, *Târih*, 1285-1287. See Ibid. also for more details on protocol and gifts given to the person of the ambassador.

diplomatic friction, i.e., the envoy's reactively declaring his refusal to continue to conduct business with the Prime-Minister while at court, could be obviated only with the royal-secretary's intercession and the prime-minister's subsequent apology. Sultan-Hüseyin was no less restless than his absolute-deputy. During Dürrî Ahmed's opening address, he could not conceal his impatience for receiving the epistle. Also, Sultan-Hüseyin's statement in praise of Eyüplü Hasan Pasha's conduct, in complete contrast to the previous complaints by Mehemmed Mümin Xan Şamlu and Şah-kulu Xan Zengene, demonstrate the Safavids' readiness for making further concessions. Sultan-Hüseyin's innuendos about Ahmed III's not going out hunting and not leaving his capital for pleasure trips, a reference to the post-1703 accord reached with the coup leaders that the padishah would reside in Constantinople and not in Adrianople or somewhere else unless necessitated by state affairs such as campaigns, must have been uttered for the sake of saving face considering the observance of first-class protocol for an Ottoman envoy and the open display of fear. On the other hand, Sultan-Hüseyin's stressed emphasis on how much he loved Ahmed III and how much he hoped that Ahmed III returned his love so much was more than enough to make up for the diplomatic discomfort these innuendos might have caused. The prime-minister's instantly conceding every Ottoman demand regarding frontier disputes along with his and the shah's paying reverence to the padishah in their last words in a manner that exceeded the limits of sending greetings in turn testify to how pressed the Safavids were feeling themselves.

Moreover, neither Dürrî Ahmed's activities as negotiator nor his bold reply regarding a monarch's responsibility to guard his frontiers, delivered during the royal farewell audience, could be accommodated within the authorization of an envoy. These were exclusive rights of ambassadors. Yet, the envoy comfortably asserted himself in negotiations and talking real

business with the shah; whereas, given the delicate situation of the state, the Safavid court could not dare to put him in his place.

Dürri Ahmed's extraordinary legation revealed the vulnerable situation in which the Safavid court found itself by 1721 not only through the manner in which the legation conducted business but also in terms of the protocol it was received with. The Safavids made a major concession with hopes to foster convergence: though the head of this Ottoman mission to the Safavid court was an envoy, to whom normally high protocol applied, he unbendingly demanded and successfully exacted the observance of top protocol during his presence on Safavid soil. As if he were an Ottoman ambassador, he had the governor of Kirmanşah brought out of his seat to welcome him at the feast before entry to the provincial capital, and afterwards they rode in together with procession, in company of military band and saluted by cannon salvos. The governors and governors-general on the road to Tehran repeated the observance of top protocol for the padishah's envoy. Ahmed Dürri's manner of being received at court was also exactly in accordance with top protocol: in entering the room, walking towards each other, and sitting down, the envoy was treated as the prime-minister's equal, while in the subsequent royal welcome audience he delivered the imperial epistle unmediatedly to the shah's hands.

As a continuation of the Safavid timidity in 1721, Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu's extraordinary embassy in 1722 also featured the same degree of alteration of the conventional protocol, again with extraordinary reverence given to the Ottoman side. Normally, a Safavid ambassador to the Ottoman court would be received with high protocol. However, capitalizing on the Safavids' tangible concession, the one practiced for this particular embassy was medium-class, normally due for Safavid envoys. At all events, the Ottomans' display of superiority exceeded the limits conventional for the occasions of receiving Safavid ambassadors.

Ambassador Murtazâ-kulu Ustaclu, well versed in literary sciences, was not that experienced at representing his home state's esteem through his behavior and stance during formal events. As a matter of coincidence, this laid bare the Safavid State's timid approach towards the empire in 1721-1722. Murtazâ-kulu Xan Sa'dlu could not conceal his bewilderedness before the pompous ceremony at the grand-vizierial welcome audience. Despite being instructed in advance by the Sublime Porte of the permissibility of notifying the shah's greetings to the padishah, he failed to speak at both imperial audiences, and behaved self-depreciatingly. This was seemingly the result of his inexperience in preserving diplomatic self-esteem and the subsequent loss of self-confidence due to being stunned under the influence of the displayed awe. Unlike in the previous cases of feigned consternation displayed by Safavid ambassadors as an act of revering the Ottoman monarch as the superior of the Safavid shah, Mustaca-kulu Ustaclu carried the display of self-depreciation to an extreme that, instead of symbolically paying homage, disgusted the host.

Dürrî Ahmed's last remarks in the extraordinary post-farewell session about the empire-wide military buildup, by which occasion the envoy also daunted the Safavids by reminding them of the vastness of Ottoman possessions, must have only furthered Safavid worries. The same goes for the subsequent display of power to Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu during the inspection of galleons at the State Navy-Yard. As the Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu embassy followed the Ottoman legation back to Constantinople, the Sublime Porte was – by virtue having received Dürrî Ahmed's report – in a position to know that the Safavid State was on the brink of being overthrown, and that it was far from being adequately ready to fend off the opposition. As of 1721, the Porte was well aware of the extraordinariness of the Safavids' recent setbacks in Iran, which must have been interpreted more as the precursor of an eventual collapse than as an

exceptionally large provincial rebellion that could nevertheless become crushed, as had been the case in Ottoman Basra and Kurdistan in the 1690s. During Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu's presence in Constantinople, news of Mîr-Mahmud Afghan's advancing upon Isfahan via the way of Kirman-Yezd, defeating at the Battle of Gulnâbâd the very last Safavid army which could be raised under the ultimate command of Mehemmed-kulu Xan Şamlu (March 8), and potentially proceeding with besieging Isfahan must have only confirmed the Ottomans' suspicions that Iran was undergoing a revolution, which in turn revolutionized bilateral relations. Nevşehirli İbrâhim Pasha's hurriedly bundling off the Safavid embassy in early April must have had more to do with the recently arrived news than the completion of the farewell audiences and the fire outbreak in the neighborhood where the embassy was being lodged. A change of Ottoman policy towards Iran could soon become necessary, and in this case, the presence of an active Safavid embassy at court was obviously unwanted.

In the meantime, according to a later report by Joseph Tiflîsî, translator in the mission of the French consul to Iran (Ange de Gardane) who had followed Sultan-Hüseyin from Kazvin back to Isfahan, an attempt which could have revolutionized Ottoman-Safavid relations in another manner if it had materialized, was discussed by Safavid dignitaries. When the news of Mîr-Mahmud Afghan's pillaging the province of Kirman (in late 1721, as Murtazâ-kulu Sa'dlu had already left the Safavid court en route to Constantinople) reached the royal capital, it made the government – until then deeming an attack to the heart of the realm impossible – hold deliberations in panic. The “wise and well-intentioned statesmen of judgement¹⁴⁵⁰” argued that writing new letters to inform the Sublime Porte of Mîr-Mahmud's advance upon Isfahan would have many benefits, tacitly suggesting that the Safavids officially appeal to the Sublime Porte for

¹⁴⁵⁰ “bazı ukalâ ve hayır-hâh-ı devlet olan ehl-i insâf”

succor. Sultan-Hüseyin, having a mild nature and being a man of fair judgment, showed signs of inclination to this proposal. However, the “malicious¹⁴⁵¹” ones “deemed [the proposal] unreasonable¹⁴⁵²”, claiming such an act “will have revealed [the Safavids’] weakness to the Ottoman Sublime State¹⁴⁵³” and “considering this idea is totally mis-taken measure.¹⁴⁵⁴” As a result of this faction’s hardliner stance, the idea was abandoned.¹⁴⁵⁵ The statesmen whose policy prevailed could not trust the Ottomans with their survival.¹⁴⁵⁶

Around the same time, the results of the cross-border reconnaissance (seemingly in the Safavid Caucasus) commissioned to Bedreddinzâde Ali b. Ömer, member of the hereditary military class in Kars and former subgovernor of Zarşat, were submitted to the Grand Vizier in the form of a memorandum. Its content was different from Dürrî Ahmed’s final report, as a result of the separate investigations conducted, but the overall judgements on the state of affairs in Iran were held in common to both reporters. Bedreddinzâde Ali spoke of a general and great weakness in Iran’s human capital: in the provinces, the people did not have the means to resist invasion, and the ruling class, which should have organized a resistance, had disappeared from sight. In the past battles with the Afghan and the Lezgî rebels, the loyalists had not even once featured the smallest sign of victory, let alone winning one of them. In fact, the rebels were of clan and tribe type; they were not versed in statecraft or the art of war. They knew neither how to perform *wagenburg* tactics¹⁴⁵⁷ or trench¹⁴⁵⁸ warfare, nor how to provision themselves with plentiful instruments, ammunition, or supplies from long distances. They were not informed

¹⁴⁵¹ “müfsid. . leri”

¹⁴⁵² “nâ-mâkul görüp”

¹⁴⁵³ “Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniye’ye zaaf ızhâr etmiş oluruz”

¹⁴⁵⁴ “bu fikre mülâhaza gâyet su-i tedbirdir”

¹⁴⁵⁵ Tiflîsî, *Acem Târihi*, ff. 22a-22b. See also Calmard, “France. II, Relations with Persia” for information on de Gardane’s consulate.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Bedreddinzâde Ali b. Osman, *Kâime*, 119.

¹⁴⁵⁷ *tabur* [*cengi*]

¹⁴⁵⁸ *metris*

about how to maintain army trains. Nor could they garrison a position and remain there to protect it. Equipped with only musket, sword, and spear, and knowing only how to make surprise attacks and retreats or give field battles¹⁴⁵⁹, they were destined to be routed in the case of facing a strong enemy, which the Safavids were surely not. Fear reigned among the Safavid statesmen; struck by famine, factionalism, and multiple foes all over, the only measure they could think of was to consider by whom to seek refuge, without entertaining the idea of responding militarily. It was the same non-warlikeness, excessive weakness, and self-perceived incompetence, otherwise not a refrainment from violating the peace, that the Safavids had not dared to encroach upon Ottoman possessions since Zuhab until that time. The shah's definitive defeat before his foes was certain.¹⁴⁶⁰

All in all, as far as the Ottomans could inquire, Safavid rule in Iran was on the verge of collapse. As the idea of the Safavids' officially appealing to the Ottomans for aid in late 1721 / early 1722 did not materialize due to strong objection from a court faction, assumptions on how the course of events regarding Ottoman-Safavid relations, the fate of the Safavid State, and the upheaval in Iran would have shaped in the case of an Ottoman positive reply cannot go beyond speculation. However, we do know what actually happened:

On April 22, soon after the departure of the Safavid embassy from Constantinople, letters and memoranda arrived from the governors-general of Erzurum and Baghdad. They spoke of Mîr-Mahmud's besieging Isfahan with the Shah in it. This correspondence also included the directly relevant intelligence gathered on the state of affairs. The governors-general asked the

¹⁴⁵⁹ *alay cengi*

¹⁴⁶⁰ Bedreddinzâde Ali, *Kâime*, 119-120, 124-125. See page 126 for the reference to the commandership-general of Kelb-Ali Xan [Ziyâdođlu-Kacar], former governor of Ganja and Safavid ambassador to the Ottoman court, at the head of the loyalist forces in their campaign against the rebels around Esterâbâd. See the entire memorandum for a survey of the frontier at the Safavid Georgia, Çukursa'ad, and Azerbaijan, proposals on how Ottoman armies could best advance in these territories, and suggestions on how to best use this to-be-conquered territory as a barrier to Russian expansion, along with other information on the upheaval in Iran.

Sublime Porte the proper course of action. After an extraordinary deliberative session of the Imperial Council convened on May 15 specifically for this matter, decrees notified the governors-general that in line with to the current peace, it was not proper to embark on and rush to disputing certain Iranian provinces. However, as the Safavid Shah's impotence in defending his domains from the enemies was obvious, the Ottomans' remaining in complete silence solely due to the current peace was too risky; the upheaval in Iran could spread across the border to the empire. The governors-general were prescribed to bring the soldiery, military equipment, and ammunition under their jurisdiction to the state of war. In the case that Isfahan would be taken by opposers, with respect to its being the seat of Iranian domains, the definitive fall of the Safavid State would become certain, and nothing necessitating the observance of the conditions of peace would remain. Then, there would be no harm in deploying the mobilized troops for the conquest of the priorly Ottoman-occupied territory in Iran. Transport of troops and ammunition to Erzurum and Baghdad began.¹⁴⁶¹

Isfahan's fall and Sultan-Hüseyin's forced but official abdication from shahship in favor of Mîr-Mahmud in October 1722 triggered the already organized offensive. "In consequence of the extinction of the Shah Hüseyin [i.e. Safavid] state, the peace was [automatically] annulled;¹⁴⁶²" Ottoman armies instantly captured Iranian Georgia, and occupied in 1723 Iranian Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Kurdistan, which were legally, and also arguably actually, devoid of sovereign government¹⁴⁶³. Eventually, the Partition Treaty of Iran was signed in 1724 between

¹⁴⁶¹ Aktepe, *1720-1724 Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri*, 13-15; Râşid, *Târih*, 1287-1288.

¹⁴⁶² "Şah Hüseyin Devleti münkariz olmakla sulh münfesihi olduğu için". Şem'dânizâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi, *Mür'î't-Tevârih*, published in Mustafa Öksüz, "Şem'dânizâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi'nin Mür'î't-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin (180b-345a) Tahlil ve Tenkidî Metni" (MA thesis, Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, 2009), 355.

¹⁴⁶³ See Göynüklü, *Târih*, 300b-303b for the deliberative sessions held at the Sublime Porte since late 1722 concerning the incoming reports from Iran and what course of action to take. Not only Ottoman frontier governors-general and the Sublime Porte, but also provincial and local authorities from Erivan, Tebriz, Tiflis, and Bagavan/Üçkilise petitioning the Ottoman Empire for protection from chaos in exchange for recognizing the

the Sublime Porte and Russia in order to prevent the outbreak of a war between these two in the zones of occupation.

padishah's suzerainty were declaring their territories void of sovereign government: the Safavid shahs, whom they mentioned with gratitude and to whom they had submitted until the very end, had fallen, and it was certain that sultan Mahmud Afghan, now that he had taken also Isfahan and triumphed over the Safavid shah, would also soon come to rule Iranian west. Declaring that they were "in want of an ancient monarch (bizler dahi bir kadîm pâdişâha muhtâcız)" and that the House of Osman had ruled their territories in olden times, they sought Ottoman overlordship after the fall of the Safavids and before the imminent arrival of the newcomer-king's forces. [Formerly royal] prince Tahmasb, Sultan-Hüseyin's son and the claimant to the royal throne who, in Kazvin, had declared himself shah, was recognized only as the "[territorial-]lord (*hâkim*) of Kazvin."

CHAPTER VII. AFTERWORD

That this dissertation is devoted almost exclusively to diplomacy and political relations taking place at court and the frontier zone should not lead the reader to think that religion, culture, and frontier life in their own rights were not factors in the developments concerning the handled themes. I had envisaged to original project to cover these latter themes as well, and had to refrain from involving them only after my primary-source research yielded a wealth of records many times more than what either myself or colleagues had expected. Consequently, I had to separate, if not isolate, diplomacy and politics for the purposes of this dissertation and set apart the sectarian, cultural, and frontier-related dimensions for later projects.

Yet, I want to make a few remarks in order to help the reader contextualize the course of relations from a relatively more multi-directional approach. Religion was an inseparable part of Ottoman-Safavid relations, even when political pragmatism reigned at its peak. In written diplomatic instruments exchanged, religion-related passages, references, and justifications do not cover less space or carry less weight than the temporal political language. In accepting or rejecting one another's requests, religion's role was not less-decisive than non-religious factors in determining the matter's potential effects in the realms of sovereignty and legitimacy. Certain levels achieved in bilateral relations, such as *perpetual peace*, would not have been possible without a previous recognition by each party of one another's Muslimness. In this, the Ottoman acknowledgement of the Safavid transition from Kızılbaşism to Shiism played the decisive role. It was again the same recognition that made cooperation in certain activities, such as pilgrimage and shrine restorations, possible. The same goes for the technical concepts of caliphate, whose recognized forms by and for both sides fully agreed with non-Islamic titulature in determining imperial and royal ranks of the parties. Indeed, I am devoting my very next post-doc project to

the writing of the religious as well as sectarian dimension of Ottoman-Safavid relations from 1639 to 1722.

The same can be said for culture. Under this category, language and arts first come to mind by virtue of the Ottomans' and the Safavids' displaying an extremely advanced degree of integration in these areas. My dissertation handles them to the extent that language was used in and positively affected the conduct of diplomacy, and that arts served as a platform through which diplomatic contentions and current topics could be reproduced in the form of implied messages. Though the prestige which Persian and Turkish enjoyed in both states' courts, ruling class, and chancelleries in various capacities is no secret, the issue still awaits a more comprehensive handling. My research has shown how especially poetry and music stand out as alternative media through which to deliver diplomatic messages. The niceties of this matter will be known to us only after further research by musicologist- and literary historians with reference to the relevant names and events mentioned in this work as well as in studies covering other phases of relations between Early Modern Iran and Rûm. Along the same lines, a comparison of language's role in diplomacy between this case and relations of the Ottoman and the Safavid states with third parties will further reveal the essential role linguistic integration played in facilitating diplomacy, if not furthering relations.

Frontier is an equally crucial theme that deserves more focused attention. The Ottoman-Safavid borderlands featured both continuities and divergences vis-a-vis the empire's other predominantly-land frontiers with, for instance, the Habsburgs. Yet, there are factors that justify the peculiarities. The Habsburg-Ottoman border ran across Hungary, where both great powers' mobilizable strengths were deployed against other in a concentrated manner. The extraordinary density of military works in Hungary was not the case along the Ottoman-Safavid border, which

automatically ruled out this possibility by virtue of extending from Georgia to the Persian Gulf. Consequently, the administrative and military organizations in Iraq, Azerbaijan, or Armenia were also quite different than those in Hungary. Politics of legitimization across the border will also diverge considerably due the essential difference in concerns and aims: the Habsburg monarch was the king of [Royal] Hungary which he wanted to extend to Hungary's core lands under the padishah's rule, with both sides presenting the confrontation as a Christian-Muslim one. Such conflict of claims, at least at the official level, did not exist along the empire's Iranian frontier, concerning whose Iraqi section Islamic discourse dominated the rivalry in legitimacy. The Venetian frontier, due to its predominantly-naval character, will present even more contrasts with the Iranian one. While the Polish borderland might be expected to feature relatively more parallelisms as a result of its extent and province-vassal-tributary diversity in administration and military, it – unlike parts of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands – lacked mutually ideologically loaded soil whose change of hands could shake Constantinople from thousands of kilometers afar.

Yet, frontier diplomacy, especially its practical dimension, can be said to have featured certain parallelisms. As in Hungary (first Buda then Belgrade), the most politically-invested provinces' (Baghdad, Erzurum) governorates at the Ottoman side of the Iranian border assumed a share of diplomatic duties on behalf of the state center, such as corresponding with the neighboring state's governors (Çukursa'd-Erivan, Azerbaijan-Tabriz, Kirmanşah) as well as with the monarch or chief-minister and the in-situ resolution of cross-border conflicts. Very similar – if not exactly the same – criteria applied to differentiate between the types of *kleinkrieg* that necessitated only retaliation/compensation and that constituted a gross breach with a potential to pick a war. Arab- and Kurdish tribal vassals across the border in Kurdistan and the Gulf region,

with their considerable influence in defensive organization and their potential to upset the balance by switching sides, resembled the Hungarian magnates who manned and defended the king's frontier against the padishah but at the same time resisted against the crown's encroachments into their jurisdiction. They likewise occasionally accepted Ottoman subjecthood in return for power or even throne. Both ends of the empire's domains featured a similar amount of conformity with and divergence from the imperial chancellery's conventions in diplomatics.

While religion, language, arts, and frontier were given a place in the dissertation only so long as activities in these domains concern the main themes and are expected to be further contextualized in studies devoted exclusively to them, the outlines of which I pointed out above, the paradigms I construct in approaching diplomacy can also shed more light on the history of the Early Modern Near East and partially Europe if further pursued. It would appear that the distinction I observed among various types of diplomatic written instruments, including the ones for which I had to coin terms, can be extended to the Ottomans' relations with other states without much effort, as the Sublime Porte's diplomacy with the Habsburg-represented Germany (and later Hungary), Venice, Poland-Lithuania, and Muscovy/Russia was not less sophisticated than that with the Safavids. The same goes for accession-occasioned missions, which need to be rescued from their assumed formality and layed bare with their full implications by means of re-reading the correspondence, actions, and reactions surrounding them. On the other hand, unlike the Ottomans and the Safavids, the European states with which these two had relations were not fundamentally dynastic states but states identified with the realm, of which the crown was only one of the constituents, though an essential one. In this sense, this research calls for an investigation of whether the Ottomans and the Safavids, in their relations with European powers,

observed the same degree of dynasticism or featured relatively more characteristics of a realm-based polity.

As occidental sources describe the activities of ad-hoc emissaries from various European states at the Ottoman court much better than the Safavid ones, it seems possible to further develop or expand the coverage of the distinct protocol classes (top, high, medium, low) whose application in Ottoman-Safavid relations I reconstructed by taking into account the different combinations of emissarial rank and the hierarchical relationship between the sending- and the receiving party. The theme of formal levels of relations is arguably the less-applicable one to diplomacy with the occident, because the terminology and the composition conventions that yielded the four different levels were peculiar to oriental chancellery diplomatics. Yet, this in no way rules out the possibility of examining their relevance in the Mughal-Indian and Moroccan cases. As Ottomans were much more specific in the terminology they used in diplomacy with the occident, establishing emissarial rank there presents us with less problems. Yet, in unidentified cases, the methodology I developed for the Ottoman-Safavid can serve to remove ambiguity. Additionally, the distinct and well-delineated authorizations of ambassadors, envoys, and unaccredited agents can – hypothetically – be applied to relations with and between other parties. This will help us better comprehend the real nature of single diplomatic initiatives. Just as one example, knowing that an envoy could not undertake talks leading to alteration of the status quo beyond the framework set by the wording of the written instrument entrusted to him while an ambassador could negotiate and make commitments without preset limits will essentially change the way we evaluate the objectives, achievements, and failures of missions.

Above all, the theme of interstate ranking comes to the fore in this dissertation probably more than any other, due to the fact that it was not only a fundamental within bilateral relations

but was also formally reproduced on every possible platform in diplomacy such as emissarial rank, protocol of ceremonies, monarchical and ministerial titulature, order of precedence, right of correspondence, etc. The consolidated table of oriental and occidental hierarchies I constructed is already designed to be expanded to involve any other state in the orient and the occident. Therefore, observing this fundamental of Early Modern diplomacy should no longer be considered a linguistic burden for historians. Likewise, similar traces of the hierarchically unequal relationship between the Ottoman supreme-monarchy (empire) and the Safavid sultanate (kingdom) should be thoroughly searched in the Ottoman supreme-monarchy's relations with Mughal India, seemingly a sultanate, and with Morocco, seemingly an emirate (principality). The same goes for the diplomacy between the Ottomans as an empire and various kingdoms of Europe, first and foremost Poland-Lithuania. In this, I propose examining whether hierarchical primacy/inferiority was reflected so exactly onto the mentioned platforms in diplomacy also in bilateral relations other than that of the Ottomans and the Safavids.

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