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Lev Sapieha and the Truce of Deulino¹

Annotation: The Lithuanian Chancellor, Lev Sapieha, effectively controlled the policy of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth towards the Muscovite state from the beginning of his career. This was especially visible during the Time of Troubles, when at the expense of the interests of Sigismund III and the Tsar-elect, prince Władysław, he reinforced the position of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and muscovite policy. The article, based on unused and unknown before source documents, outlines Sapieha's activity in the final stage of the Time of Troubles - the Moscow expedition of Prince Władysław in 1617-1618.

Keywords: Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Muscovite state, Lev Sapieha, Władysław Vasa, Sigismund III Vasa, Moscow expedition of prince Władysław in 1617-1618, Truce of Deulino

Lew Sapieha i rozejm dywiliński

Streszczenie: Kanclerz litewski Lew Sapieha od początku swojej kariery urzędniczej skutecznie kontrolował politykę Rzeczypospolitej wobec państwa moskiewskiego. Uwidoczniło się to zwłaszcza w czasie moskiewskiej smuty, kiedy kosztem interesów Zygmunta III i cara-elekta, królewicza Władysława, forsował on wzmocnienie pozycji Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w ramach polsko-litewskiego państwa i polityki moskiewskiej. W artykule, opartym o niewykorzystywane i nieznane dokumenty źródłowe, została zarysowana działalność Sapiehy w końcowej fazie smuty moskiewskiej – ekspedycji królewicza Władysława z lat 1617-1618.

Słowa kluczowe: Rzeczpospolita, państwo moskiewskie, Lew Sapieha, Władysław Waza, Zygmunt III Waza, moskiewska ekspedycja królewicza Władysława 1617-1618, rozejm dywiliński

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Лев Сапега и Деулинское перемирие

Аннотация: Канцлер ВКЛ Лев Сапега с самого начала своей официальной карьеры эффективно контролировал политику Речи Посполитой в отношении Московского государства. Особенно это проявилось во время Смуты, когда за счет интересов Сигизмунда III и избранного царя, королевича Владислава он форсировал усиление позиций Великого княжества Литовского в польско-литовском государстве и отношениях с Московским государством. В статье, основанной на неиспользованных и неизвестных первоисточниках, рассказывается о деятельности Сапег на последнем этапе Смуты – московском походе королевича Владислава в 1617-1618 годах.

Ключевые слова: Речь Посполитая, Московское государство, Лев Сапега, Владислав Ваза, Сигизмунд III Ваза, московский поход королевича Владислава в 1617-1618 годах, деулинское перемирие.

The Truce of Deulino signed on 11th December 1618 put a stop to a Polish-Muscovite war which had ensued for more than a decade. Despite the negotiations being conducted in an atmosphere of nervousness, the Polish-Lithuanian side managed to gain everything possible given the adverse conditions. Regardless of the result, the architect of this truce – Lev Sapieha – was met with severe criticism. Prince Władysław Sigismund Vasa and his court imputed haste and insufficient guarantees for Sigismund III son's claim to the Tsar's throne. 'A reckless act' is the most delicate assessment of Lev Sapieha's actions while the harshest – 'sabotage' – was lingering in the air.

Sigismund III and his closest senators did not have tremendous faith in the Chancellor while arranging the Russian conquest. However, it is quite difficult to pinpoint the exact reason behind it. Perhaps, it was an appraisal of his mediocre political gains with regards to the Muscovite State or simply accusing him of putting the interests of the Grand Lithuanian Duchy in front of the Vasa family's Empire aspirations? Beyond a shadow of a doubt, Sapieha's twofold attitude inspired distrust and ambiguity among the influential members of the crown elites. On the one hand, he seemed to share *idée fixe* of the king and his son, meaning supporting the war with the Tsar at any cost until a clear victory. On the other however, during the campaign, just before the General Sejm in 1616, he lobbied to resolve the conflict on diplomatic terms. On the whole, he was right as the chances of sitting Sigismund III on the Muscovite's throne by force were slim to say the least and what is more, the military actions and all their associated costs until that point (robberies executed by the unpaid Polish-Lithuanian units) ruined and depleted Lithuania².

The lack of faith towards the Chancellor was manifested through a process of creating a commissary council tasked with supervision of all political objectives established for the aforementioned expedition. What is quite interesting is that it was the Lithuanian nobility who happened to be the first to demand such a condition. In spite of supporting the dream of the young Vasa as a general idea, they made it clear that peace is the principal goal. Lev Sapieha was an undisputed reason for this approach. The aforementioned council was founded when the Sejm was in session between 26th April and 7th June

² A. Czwołek, *Piórem i buławą. Działalność Lwa Sapiehy, kanclerza litewskiego, wojewody wileńskiego*, Toruń 2012, pp. 385–387.

1616. Despite the Chancellor initially being the council member, it did not take a long time for the court to make attempts to contest his participation. With that in mind, it spoke volumes when Sapieha wrote a letter to the Lithuanian Field Hetman Krzysztof Radziwiłł, who also happened to be treated with a pinch of suspicion by the king. This letter from January 1617 reads: "Such are the new customs at the court, it's not only just one of us but in fact all Lithuanian peoples. They don't want any Lithuanians anywhere close to the prince. They think they can manage entirely without us or even cuff us, so God please keep us away from it"³.

Moreover, the Chancellor promptly began to try taking over the council. In 1617, he perplexed everyone by deciding not to participate in the prince's expedition. He justified it with his old age (he was nearly 60) and overall exhaustion. A mere empty stunt pulled in an attempt to gain attention. However, the Chancellor hastily changed his mind⁴.

During the Muscovite campaign of the young Vasa, Sapieha worked in unison with other council members for an extended period. Despite initially having arguments with the great Lithuanian hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz regarding annexing Vyazma, whose habitants surrendered to the prince without a fight. Nevertheless, the state of the Lithuanian army deteriorated. The Muscovites began to 'play for time'. In the spring of 1618, Sapieha attempted at negotiating truce conditions, yet ended up with nothing. The Russian side simply refused the prince's claims to the Tsar's throne. In the summer, during the chancellor's absence to collect funds for further military actions, the scales turned in favour of the Polish and Lithuanians. The Cossack's army, under the leadership of Hetman Petro Konashevych-Sahaidachny, allowed the Commonwealth army to bypass Mozhaïsk and attempt at attacking Moscow. The Muscovites compared these actions to the Mongolian conquest of Batu Khan in 1238-1240. Sadly, due to the lack of artillery (which could not have been transported from Vyazma) but mostly due to tactical errors by hetman Chodkiewicz, the invasion ended in a debacle⁵. Nevertheless, the losses on the Muscovites' side forced them to seek negotiations and this is where Sapieha played the leading role⁶.

³ *From Lev Sapieha to Krzysztof Radziwiłł from Stonim, 27 January 1617.*, Львівська національна наукова бібліотека України імені В. Стефаника, ф. 103, оп. 1, nr 123 (no paging).

⁴ A. Czwołek, *Buława i piórem...*, pp. 396-397.

⁵ The Hetman did not ensure the secrecy of even such a modest attack plan which due to the lack of artillery could only be reduced to planning the offensive on the most conveniently located gateway between Bielgorod and Tver. He was deceived by two French military engineers - Jacques Bess and Jacques Besson who deserted from the army during an evening patrol on 11th October 1618. Lack of technical preparedness played a big role in the attack's failure. For example, the ladders used for the attack were too short for the walls. Furthermore, some of the units such as Lisowczycy and Sahaidachny Cossacs had no supervision and so they were reduced to a "Greek chorus" in that farce of an attack (see. T. Bohun, *Штурм Москвы войсками королевича Владислава 11 октября 1618 года*, [w:] Народные и российские города в Смутное время начала XVII века (Материалы Всероссийской научной конференции. Горod Балахна Нижегородской области, 6-7 октября 2011 г.), Нижний Новгород 2012, pp. 197-211).

⁶ A. A. Majewski, *Moskwa 1617-1618*, Warszawa 2016, p. 108-125; П. Сас, Запорожці у польсько-московській війні. Наприкінці Смути 1617-1618 pp., Біла Церква 2010, p. 307-396; *Rejestr wszystkich in genere armaty królewicza JM i potrzeb do niej należących*, *Wiaźma*, 25.12.1617, Rikskarkivet Stockholm, Extra-neae IX Polen, vol. 80, (no pagination).

Both the king and his son were adamant the claim to the Tsar's throne should be acknowledged. However, the guidance given to the Chancellor was more of a general idea than a specific set of instructions. Prince Władysław recused himself from the negotiations in order not to aggravate the situation. From the perspective of the Chancellor, since consulting the court on the topic was futile, this was a rather difficult position to find oneself in, hence he decided to immediately manage it. He simply disrupted the communication with the court. In November, he dismissed a Cossack company in charge of escorting runners handling commissary or crown post. Due to this decision, Father Andrzej Szoldrski, the prince's secretary, who came from Warsaw bearing another letter of instructions from the court, which by the way was word for word the same as all previous memorandums, was left stranded in Vyazma for more than a month⁷.

The spectre of a mutiny of unpaid soldiers making alliances forced Sapieha to be work towards a speedy negotiation with the Russian Empire. The Muscovites however saw through that concern and took notice of the morale declining in the enemy ranks, hence they attempted at delaying the talks for as long as they could. The first meetings occurred near Moscow, by the river Presnya. Unfortunately, the Tsar's negotiators were insistent and uncompromising in their conditions stating clearly that the only prospective Tsar could be Michael Romanov. A mission of Polish and Lithuanian envoys consisting of Witebski region's Provincial Governor, Krzysztof Sapieha, a Łęczycki District King's Cup-Bearer Jan Sasin Karśnicki and Jan Hrydzicz were supposed to help resolve this stalemate. Their task was to arrive at Moscow and negotiate draft conditions of a truce. They ended up staying there for about two weeks during which the only thing they managed to achieve were unfavourable arrangements⁸.

The only option left at their disposal was military pressure. Hetman Chodkiewicz and other commissaries ordered the soldiers to adopt a scorched earth strategy. The counties North-East of Moscow, including the areas near the Trinity Lavra of Saint Sergius, were relentlessly pillaged by the prince's army and Zaporizhian Cossacks. Admonitions sent by the Muscovites were met by Sapieha with an indifferent shrug or a reaction of suspicion, stating these were actually the units accompanying the envoy and commissary from Lithuania, Andrzej Męczyński who came to the prince's rescue. The Great Lithu-

⁷ Статейный список русских послов боярина Федора Шереметьева, князя Данила Мезецкого и прочих чинов, бывших на съезде на речке Поляновке для размена пленных с обеих сторон, а паче митрополита Ростовского Филарета Никитича и для учинения с бывшими тут же польскими послами Александром Говеским, референдарем и писарем литовским с товарищи договорной записи о высылке остальных пленных, об отсрочке межевых судей и пр., РГАДА, ф. 79, оп. 1, , кн. 38, [1619 r., 6 czerwca (27 maja) – *Sprawozdanie gońców kaszyrskiego syna bojarzkiego Grigorija Gubina i poddajczego Nikifora Iwanowicza Szpulina przed wielkim poselstwem bojarów Fiodora Iwanowicza Szeremietiewa i kniazia Danily Iwanowicza Mezeckiego z towarzyszymi o misji do przebywającego w niewoli wielkiego posła Filareta Nikitycza, metropolity rostowskiego i jarosławskiego*], k. 331–350; T. Bohun, A. Małow, O. Smirnowa, *Misja rosyjskich gońców do przebywającego w polskiej niewoli ojca cara Michaiła Romanowa, wielkiego posła Filareta Nikitycza, metropolity rostowskiego i jarosławskiego*, 3–6 czerwca (24–27 maja) 1619 roku [w:] *Historia to (nie) fraszka. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Krzysztofowi Mikulskiemu z okazji 60 rocznicy urodzin*. red. Michał Targowski, Agnieszka Zielińska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2020, s. 183–223.

⁸ J. Sobieski, *Diariusz ekspedycyjnej moskiewskiej dwuletniej królewicza Władysława 1617–1618*, oprac. J. Byliński, W. Kaczorowski, Opole 2010, p. 154; *Diariusz ekspedycyjnej moskiewskiej dwuletniej królewicza Władysława A.D. 1617*, The Princes Czartoryski Library in Krakow, rkps 2763, k. 211–217.

anian Chancellor allegedly reprimanded the soldiers “not to pillage the grounds of your host and not kill the peasants or take their wives and children prisoners”. Eventually, the Muscovites caved⁹.

On December 2nd, it was agreed the negotiations should occur in a village of Deulino located between the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius and Svatkov, the residence of commissaries. In order to house the envoys and their retinue, local houses and farmyards were confiscated. The so-called court of the envoys, meaning the actual room where the talks occurred was located in the centre of this ‘envoy’s section’. According to the procedure and ceremonials, the room of the negotiation was divided into two, exterritorial zones¹⁰.

The session was inaugurated on December 2nd, 14:00. The Polish-Lithuanian side was represented by Lev Sapieha, the bishop of Kamieniec Adam Nowodworski, a Lithuanian justice referee and writer Aleksander Gosiewski as well as Andrzej Męczyński who was delegated by the Sejm from the Sandomierski province. As indicated by the minutes from the negotiation sessions, the only ones actively taking part in the conversations were the ones fluent in Russian, meaning Sapieha and Gosiewski. In the other corner, representatives of the Muscovites, the architects of the Russian and Swedish Treaty of Stolbovo: boyar Fiodor Shermetiev, Knyaz Danilo Mezecki, okolnichy Artiem Izmailov and church officials Ivan Bolotnikov and Matvej Somov¹¹.

The first day was entirely dedicated to procedural arguments. Sapieha challenged the negotiation topics which were previously agreed. First and foremost, he decided to focus on the Prince Władysław’s claim to the Tsar’s throne and the plan of the border of Trubchevsk, Novigrad, Seversk and Bryansk as well as Toropets and Volochek. Aggravated by Gosiewski, Sapieha lamented that after having offered so graciously to forgo the Bryansk claim and demanding only Sierpeysk, Mosalsk and Meshchovsk in return, the Tsar and boyars only agreed to Sierpeysk with the addition of Popovo and Krasnoye near Pskov which at the time “no longer resemble cities for quite some time, they are nothing more than abandoned settlements”. The Chancellor also requested for the Muscovites to stop defining the Prince Władysław’s claims to the Tsar’s throne as perished since it is a ‘God’s affair’. “Last Friday it was, you saw the star beam, in our language we call it Krokmin [author’s note – this word was distorted by Russian accounts – the meaning and intention of the word was comet] and this star was travelling through your state and it will reveal the future of everything and everything that will happen to you for all your lies and deceptions”. The Muscovites who were known to be quite superstitious did not succumb by responding: “There are plethora of signs in the sky and no one could be any the wiser since God did not bless anyone with the wisdom of which country each sign will concern”¹².

⁹ *Отправление полномочных российских послов боярина Федора Шереметева, боярина князя Даниила Мецецкого с товарищи на съезд по Троецкой дороге в деревню Деулино для заключения с польскими послами князь Адамом Новодворским, бискупом Каменецим и протчими : в присутствии с ними польского королевича Владислава перемирия на 14 лет с половиною*, РГАДА, ф. 79, , оп. 1, кн. 34, к. 123–123v.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, k. 119v–121v.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, k. 43; *Diariusz komisyyej z Moskwą pod stolicą w czasie ekspedycyyej królewica JMci Władysława roku 1617* [in:] J. Sobieski, *Diariusz ekspedycyyej moskiewskiej...*, p. 168.

¹² *Отправление полномочных российских послов боярина Федора Шереметева, боярина князя Даниила Мецецкого с товарищи на съезд по Троецкой дороге в деревню Деулино*, РГАДА, ф. 79, оп. 1, кн. 34, к. 49v–53.

Due to the Muscovite's approach, Sapieha adopted a different strategy. He insisted that in the Polish-Lithuanian version of the treaty, the phrase which should be associated with Michael Romanov is supposed to read "referred to as a Tsar" in order not to dismiss Prince Władysław's claims to the Tsar's throne. The reaction of the Muscovites was a strong protest.

The Chancellor, hoping not to escalate the conflict any further, proposed a compromise concerning a matter very close to the Tsar. In exchange for a written and confirmed procedure according to which the border between Velizh and Toropets would be drawn, Sapieha committed to providing a Safe Passage document called *Geleitrecht* for the Muscovite's emissaries whose goal was to join the Rostov's metropolitan bishop and Tsar's father Feodor Nikitich Romanov in Malbork. The very next day, after consultations, the Tsar approved¹³.

December 7th's session began with a quarrel. The Muscovites were driving the discussions to mark the point that all language versions of the peace treaty read the same: Michael Romanov unanimously referred to as a "Prince, Tsar and Grand Knyaz" leading Sapieha to threaten with negotiation breakdown as well as serious consequences:

"there, by the frontier in the Livonian settlements, Hetman Radziwiłł and his troops are holding their head up high. They made peace with the Swedes and are ready and willing to march to the Prince's aid [...]. And if it's not peace we find, not a youngling will be left behind. In Moscow or any other city."¹⁴

In order to intensify the spectre of terror, the Chancellor added that professional standing army will not leave the Muscovite Russia unless the Tsar and his subjects come to their senses. What is more, the exchange of prisoners was out of question at this point meaning Tsar's father would remain imprisoned¹⁵.

It was an obvious bluff, yet it proved quite effective. The Muscovites acknowledged that Michael Romanov's Tsar status in the peace treaty will contrast between both versions as well as accepted handing over the control of the cities Sapieha demanded. Moreover, the official handover would occur before the prisoner's exchange planned on 25th February 1619¹⁶.

The consequent sessions were dedicated to establishing the validation and expiry date of the treaty (fourteen and a half years, beginning 3rd January 1619), organisational matters (such as border and prisoner commissions) as well comparisons and drafting treaty versions. Eventually, the treaty was signed and sworn on 11th December 1618.

"Afterwards, we offered them sugar-coated fruits - as per the account of the commissary and one of the signatories, Jakub Sobieski - and we sat down together for more than half an hour chatting away in a friendly tone et inter seria [between matters of serious nature] interweaving jokes. And then, after having said our goodbyes, we parted"¹⁷.

¹³ *Ibid.*, k. 87-96v.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, k. 123v-124v.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, k. 143-144.

¹⁷ J. Sobieski, *Diariusz ekspedycyjej moskiewskiej...*, p. 93.

After Sapieha's return to the country, the court attacked him immediately and viciously. The Chancellor hoped to avoid criticism or at least slightly limit it by making an appearance at the Warsaw Sejm on 3rd March 1619, exactly two days before its conclusion. Sadly, it turned out to be a futile wish. His attempts at appealing to their common sense explaining that despite all adverse conditions such as leading an unpaid army, fulfilling a state obligation to end the war by the end of the year while keeping in mind the possibility of the Ottoman's Porte attack, he still managed to gain everything that could have been done. The monarchy-supporting senators, on behalf of the king, accused him of ineptitude and circuitously indicated Chancellor's neglect of the Polish interests by not achieving to guarantee of the Prince's claim to the Tsar's throne which was already a delusion in the first place¹⁸. Who was in the right? It appears none other than Sapieha.

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¹⁸ A. Czwołek, *Butawą i piórem...*, pp. 442–443; T. Bohun, *Wymiana jeńców w ramach rozejmu dwulińskiego*, „Вестник Волгоградского Государственного Университета”, 2019, Серия 4, История. Религионоведение. Международные отношения, t. 24, nr 2: 400-летие Смуты в России (1604–1618 гг.), pp. 176–183).