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LIVONIA AND DEPICTION OF RUSSIANS AT IMPERIAL DIETS BEFORE THE LIVONIAN WAR

During the late 15th and early 16th century, the expanding Grand Duchy of Moscow came into awareness of Western Christian powers. The first of those were Moscow's new western neighbours: Sweden-Finland, Poland-Lithuania and Livonia. All those powers entered into military engagements with the Grand Duchy by the end of the 15th century and developed a rhetoric of Russians and Moscow as a threatening and unchristian Other. Such political rhetoric usually included a self-depiction as a defensive shield or wall of Christendom (*Antemurale Christianitatis*) against dangerous, barbaric, and unchristian enemies, which was quite common in other border regions of Late Medieval Catholic Europe, and at least in Poland and Livonia had established already earlier, when both real and rhetorical enemies had been Tatars, Lithuanians, and sometimes also Russian Orthodox principalities¹. These depictions of Russians was strongly influenced by the rhetorical motif of a «Turkish threat» that had spread all over Europe after the fall of Constantinople² — a well-known fact which is especially studied in the context of Livonian War (1558–1582/83)³. On the other hand,

¹ For genesis of this rhetoric in Northeastern Europe: *Srodecki P.* *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit.* (Historische Studien. Bd 508). Husum, 2015; *Selart A.* *Political Rhetoric and the Edges of Christianity: Livonia and Its Evil Enemies in the Fifteenth Century // The Edges of the Medieval World / Ed. J. Kreem and G. Jaritz.* Budapest, 2009. P. 55–69.

² *Schwoebel R.* *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453–1517).* Nieuwkoop, 1967; *Höfert A.* *Den Feind beschreiben: «Türkengefahr» und europäisches Wissen über das Osmanische Reich 1450–1600.* Frankfurt am Main; New York, 2003; *Housley N.* *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat, 1453–1505.* Oxford, 2012.

³ Some studies deal also with earlier period, e. g.: *Tarkiainen K.* *Moskoviten: Sverige och Ryssland 1478–1721.* Skrifter utgivna av Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland. No. 818. Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, 2017; *Maasing M.* *Infidel Turks and Schismatic Russians in Late Medieval Livonia // Fear and Loathing in the North / Ed. C. Heß and J. Adams.* Berlin; München; Boston, 2015. P. 347–388. — Most of the studies concentrate almost solely on the war

this antagonistic depiction often overshadows the fact that there was also another way that Russians and Moscow could be seen: namely, as fellow Christians with whom the formation of a church union or an alliance, preferably against the Turks might be possible⁴. And finally, it was also possible to mention Russians or the Grand Duchy of Moscow neutrally, without the aforementioned polemical connotations, which was quite common in the everyday correspondence of its western neighbours⁵.

The current article is mainly inspired by these questions: how much did polemical depictions of Russians that were mainly coined by their western neighbours reach further west, namely to the Holy Roman Empire before the beginning of the Livonian War; and how large might have been their impact there? One possibility to study this on a longer scale is offered by observing these depictions at general Imperial Assemblies (*Reichsversammlungen*) which were the Empire's most important political gatherings where the Emperor or the Roman King and Imperial Estates (*Reichsstände*) convened. At the end of the 15th century, these assemblies that earlier had convened quite infrequently and did not have a clear procedure, transformed into Imperial Diets (*Reichstage*) that had a certain procedure for meeting, discussing and deciding issues, and that took place more regularly than earlier assemblies⁶. The materials about those

period, e. g.: *Kappeler A.* Ivan Groznyj im Spiegel der ausländischen Druckschriften seiner Zeit: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des westlichen Rußlandbildes. Geist und Werk der Zeiten. Bd 33. Bern; Frankfurt/M., 1972; *Ott T.* «Livonia est propugnaculum imperii»: eine Studie zur Schilderung und Wahrnehmung des Livländischen Krieges (1558–1582/83) nach den deutschen und lateinischen Flugschriften der Zeit. München, 1996; *Филлюшкин А. И.* Изобретая первую войну России и Европы: Балтийские войны второй половины XVI в. глазами современников и потомков. СПб., 2013; *Donnert E.* Der livländische Ordensritterstaat und Russland: der Livländische Krieg und die baltische Frage in der europäischen Politik 1558–1583. Berlin, 1963; *Soldat C.* Erschreckende Geschichten in der Darstellung von Moskovitern und Osmanen in den Deutschen Flugschriften des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Lewiston, 2014; *Halperin C.* The Double Standard: Livonian Chronicles and Muscovite Barbarity during the Livonian War (1558–1582) // *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana*. 2018. № 1. С. 126–147.

⁴ Idea of Moscow as an ally against Ottomans might originate from Byzantine emigrants to the West (*Selart A.* Switching the Tracks. Baltic Crusades against Russia in the Fifteenth Century // *The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century. Converging and Competing Cultures* / Ed. N. Housley. London; New York, 2016. P. 94). About church union and alliances with Russia/Moscow: *Hösch E.* Die Stellung Moskoviens in den Kreuzzugsplänen des Abendlandes: Bemerkungen zur griechischen Emigration im Moskau des ausgehenden 15. und beginnenden 16. Jahrhundert // *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*. N. F. Bd 15. 1967. № 3. S. 321–340; *Halecki O.* From Florence to Brest (1439–1596). Hamden, 1968.

⁵ For Livonia: *Selart A.* Zur Sozialgeschichte der Ostgrenze Estlands im Mittelalter // *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*. 1998. Bd 47. No. 4. S. 520–543.

⁶ Those assemblies were known under many names (*königliche Tage*, *Hoftage*, *königlose Tage*); here, all of them are they addressed as Imperial Assemblies. Next to Imperial Diets, which are mainly discussed in the article, some other assemblies like meetings of Imperial Electors (*Kurfürstentag*) remained but Russian topic was usually not discussed there. About emergence of Imperial Diets as a part of so-called Imperial Reform (*Reichsreform*): *Angermeier H.* Die Reichsreform 1410–1555: die Staatsproblematik in Deutschland zwischen Mittelalter und Gegenwart. München, 1984; *Der Reichstag 1486–1613: Kommunikation — Wahrnehmung — Öffentlichkeiten* / Hrsg. M. Lanzinner and A. Strohmeier. Göttingen, 2006; 1495 — Kaiser, Reich, Reformen: der Reichstag zu Worms: Ausstellung des Landeshauptarchivs Koblenz in Verbindung

conventions are published in the series *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*. These series offer a good opportunity to see which kind of images of Russians were spread amongst Imperial elites since the beginning of the 15th century. In this paper, special attention is turned to the role of Livonia, as Russian topics in the Empire were mostly connected with that region: they were either brought up by Livonians or Livonia was mentioned alongside with them.

More specifically, this paper aims to answer following questions. Which kinds of depictions of Russians were present at Imperial Assemblies? As vivid political discussions formed a great part of the material connected with those meetings, it was assumedly rather polemical, and as it was quite often connected with Moscow's western neighbours, then dominance of negative depictions might be also presumed. From here, another question arises: for which reasons were Russians mentioned; what was the intention of the presenter of the Russian topic? And also, was Russian rhetoric useful to its presenters — did it actually help to achieve their political goals?

The paper is divided into three parts. The first, the period before the emergence of Imperial Diets is observed, when rhetorical tradition of addressing Russian-related issues to the Empire began to take shape. The second part discusses the reign of Maximilian I (King of the Romans 1486/93–1519, Emperor since 1508) when both Russians and Livonia found quite intense discussion. The third part discusses the reign of Charles V (1519–1556, Emperor since 1520/30) during which Livonian princes started to participate at the Imperial Diets.

RUSSIANS AT THE IMPERIAL ASSEMBLIES UNTIL THE END OF THE 15TH CENTURY

At the Imperial Assemblies in the beginning of the 15th century, the terms «Russia» or «Russians» were used in various contexts. In 1414, a «Duke of Russians» or «of Russia» was present at two gatherings, but it was probably Lithuanian Duke Sigismund Korybut (*Žygimantas Kaributaitis*)⁷. In 1422, the Russians of Novgorod and Pskov were mentioned by the Teutonic Order⁸, but in the 1430s, Russians (*Rutheni*) were mentioned as denoting all Orthodox Slavs in connection with church union attempts at church councils of Firenze-Ferrara and Basel⁹. But Russians began to appear as enemies of Christendom as well.

Already before the beginning of the 15th century, the main source of legitimation the Teutonic Order was its self-presentation as defense shield of all Christendom, but its position in Prussia was complicated by the rivalry with the King of Poland who also claimed himself as a true defender of the Christendom¹⁰. In order to get support from the Empire, the Order

mit der Stadt Worms zum 500jährigen Jubiläum des Wormser Reichstags von 1495 / Hrsg. C. Helm and J. Hausmann. Koblenz, 1995.

⁷ *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund. Erste Abtheilung: 1410–1420* / Hrsg. Dietrich Kerler. München: Cotta, 1878. S. 200, 248.

⁸ *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund. Zweite Abtheilung: 1421–1426* / Hrsg. Dietrich Kerler. Gotha: Cotta, 1883. S. 151–152.

⁹ *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund. Vierte Abteilung. 2 vols* / Hrsg. Hermann Herre. Gotha, 1900. S. 205; *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter König Albrecht II. Zweite Abteilung: 1439* / Hrsg. Helmut Weigel. Stuttgart, 1935. S. 136, 306.

¹⁰ *Sarnowsky J. The Teutonic Order Confronts Mongols and Turks // On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe: Structures and Perceptions*. Farnham, 2011. P. 253–262; *Srodecki P. Antemurale Christianitatis...* S. 57–72, 105–147; *Sach M. Hochmeister und Großfürst: die Beziehungen zwischen dem Deutschen Orden in Preußen und dem Moskauer Staat um die Wende zur Neuzeit*.

argued that it was surrounded by many dangerous and mostly non-Christian enemies, including Russians¹¹. After the fall of Constantinople, the Order tried to use rhetoric of infidel Russians to get support from the Empire against the King of Poland, especially during the disastrous Thirteen Years' War (1454–1466)¹². In 1497, the Grand Master had to partake the unsuccessful Polish campaign against Turkish vassal state of Moldavia, which later enabled the Order to present itself as a steadfast protector of Christendom, both against the Turks (as Prussian branch) and the Russians (Livonian branch)¹³.

In Livonian rhetoric, Russians had a more central place than in Prussia. Livonia had started to depict itself as a defensive wall of Christians already since the end of the 13th century at the latest¹⁴, and among their enemies, there were «schismatic Russians» who became the main rhetorical enemies during the course of the 15th century¹⁵. But as the Livonian branch of the Order usually communicated with the Empire via Prussia until to the last decades of the 15th century¹⁶, Livonian argumentation only seldom reached directly to the Empire. One of such cases was during the second part of the 1420s, when Imperial elites tried to get military

Stuttgart, 2002. S. 39–61; *Miethke J.* Heiliger Heidenkrieg? Theoretische Kontroversen zwischen Deutschen Orden und dem Königreich Polen vor und nach dem Konstanzer Konzil // Heilige Kriege: religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich / Hrsg. K. Schreiner. München, 2008. S. 109–125; *Militzer K.* Der Wandel in der Begründung der Existenz des Deutschen Ordens und seiner Selbstrechtfertigung vor und nach der Schlacht bei Tannenberg // Kancelaria wielkich mistrzów i polska kancelaria królewska w XV wieku / Hrsg. J. Trupinda. Malbork, 2006. S. 179–190; *Thumser M.* Eine neue Aufgabe im Heidenkampf? Pläne mit dem Deutschen Orden als Vorposten gegen die Türken // Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance / Hrsg. B. Guthmüller and W. Kühlmann. Tübingen, 2000. S. 141–144.

¹¹ E. g., the Order claimed in 1438 that it was surrounded by Poles, Samogitians, Tatars, Russians, heathens and heretics (Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter König Albrecht II. Erste Abteilung: 1438. 2 vols / Hrsg. Gustav Beckmann. Stuttgart; Gotha, 1908. S. 506); or Poles, Dukes of Stolp (Pomerania), Masovia, and Samogitians, Lithuanians, Russians and Tatars (Ibid. S. 717). In 1441, Order's evil enemies — heathens, Russians, Tatars, Poles, Bohemians, and heretics — who had devastated both Prussia and Livonia were mentioned (Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III. Zweite Abteilung: 1441–1442. 2 vols / Hrsg. Hermann Herre and Ludwig Quidde. Stuttgart; Gotha: Perthes, 1928. S. 110, No. 8d). See also: *Srodecki P.* Antemurale Christianitatis... S. 111–132.

¹² E. g., in 1454, the Order complained that King of Poland prevented it to fight against the Turks, and added that if Prussia would fall, then Livonia would not be able to fight off Tatars and Russians, and infidels would soon reach the Rhine (Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III. Fünfte Abteilung, Zweiter Teil: Reichsversammlung zu Frankfurt 1454 / Hrsg. Johannes Helmraht and Gabriele Annas. München: Oldenbourg, 2013. No. 22.2; citation about Livonia, Russians and Tatars — S. 714).

¹³ *Thumser M.* Eine neue Aufgabe... S. 161–162, 168–170; Liv-, Est- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch. Zweite Abtheilung. Bd 1. 1494 – Ende Mai 1500 / Hrsg. L. Arbusow Sen. Riga; Moskau, 1900 (LUB II 1). No. 443, 535, 624, 625.

¹⁴ *Selart A.* Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades in the Thirteenth Century. Leiden; Boston, 2015. P. 290.

¹⁵ In the end of the 14th century, the «infidel Russians» sometimes already appeared as main enemies of Livonia next to the «infidel Lithuanians» (*Selart A.* Political Rhetoric... P. 57–61, 67–68). About 15th century: *Selart A.* Switching the Tracks...

¹⁶ *Mäesalu M.* Liivimaa ja Püha Rooma keisririik 1199–1486. Tartu, 2017. L. 144–147.

and financial support against the Hussites from Livonia and Prussia¹⁷. Then, both the Livonian Master and the Archbishop of Riga reported that they cannot help due to various reasons, including schismatic and infidel Russians¹⁸. This kind of rhetoric was probably behind the fact that in the 1430s, representatives of the German nation in the council of Basel included Russians in the list of enemies of Christians¹⁹. A decade later, during the war between the Order and Novgorod (1443–1448), the Order was able to exploit the fact that Novgorod had recently refused the Church union of Florence, as the Grand Master depicted Novgorodians as stubborn heretics who were assisted by other infidels (Pskovians, Moscowians, and Tatars), and who obstructed the Order to help the King of Romans against Turks²⁰. Later, the Livonians used the argumentation that they are constantly threatened by either infidels and schismatics generally, or by Russians and other neighbouring nations specifically, many times to avoid Imperial requests and demands²¹.

The political situation on the eastern border of Livonia changed significantly, as the Grand Duchy of Moscow subjugated Novgorod (1478) and became Livonia's direct neighbour. Thereafter, Russians in Livonian rhetoric generally denoted Moscowians (Muscovites), and they were increasingly depicted as dangerous enemies to all Christendom as Turks, especially

¹⁷ *Mäesalu M.* Die Steuerforderungen des Heiligen Römischen Reiches an die Kirchenprovinz Riga im 15. Jahrhundert // *Livland — eine Region am Ende der Welt? Forschungen zum Verhältnis zwischen Zentrum und Peripherie im späten Mittelalter* / Hrsg. A. Selart and M. Thumser. Köln; Weimar; Wien, 2017. S. 259–282.

¹⁸ In 1426, the Master reported to the King of the Romans that «evil, schismatic, infidel Russians» were endangering Livonia (Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch. Abt. 1. Bd 7. 1423 Mai – 1429 Mai / Hrsg. H. Hildebrand. Riga; Moskau, 1881. No. 544). In 1428, the Archbishop explained to the Elector of Brandenburg that Livonia was endangered by infidel Russians, and other heretics, heathens and infidels (Akten und Rezesse der livländischen Ständetage. Erster Band (1304–1459). Vierte Lieferung (1450–1454) / Hrsg. L. Arbusow Jun. Riga, 1928. No. 368; Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund. Dritte Abtheilung: 1427–1431 / Hrsg. Dietrich Kerler. Gotha, 1887. No. 204 (regest)).

¹⁹ The representatives complained that Spain, Hungary, Livonia, Austria, Bavaria, Meissen, Saxony and some other areas suffer under attacks of the enemies of the Christendom: Turks, Ruthenians/Russians, Barbarians and Bohemians/Hussites (Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund. Fünfte Abteilung: 1433–1435 / Hrsg. Gustav Beckmann. Gotha, 1898. S. 279. No. 134.10).

²⁰ Liv-, est- und kurländisches Urkundenbuch. Abt. 1. Bd 10. 1444–1449 / Hrsg. P. Schwartz. Riga; Moskau, 1896. No. 325. — The Order used similar argumentation also with the Pope (Ibid. No. 307, 354), and got permission to use two thirds of the indulgence money that was collected in Livonia for uniting the Orthodox with the Catholic Church for the Novgorod War (*Selart A.* Schismatiker, Vereinigung der Kirchen und das Geld. Livland und die Union von Florenz (1439) // *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*. 2009. Bd 36. Heft 1. S. 1–31). About the war: *Dircks B.* Der Krieg des Deutschen Ordens gegen Novgorod // *Deutschland — Livland — Russland. Ihre Beziehungen vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert* / Hrsg. N. Angermann. Lüneburg, 1988. S. 29–52; *Selart A.* Ein westfälisch-russischer Krieg von 1443–1448? Bemerkungen zum Krieg des livländischen Deutschen Ordens gegen Novgorod // *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung*. 2012. Bd 61. Heft 2. S. 247–262. — Infidel Russians were also mentioned during the Tartu-Pskov War (1458–1463) (Liv-, est- und kurländisches Urkundenbuch. Abt. 1. Bd. 12. 1460–1472 / Hrsg. v. P. Schwartz. Riga; Moskau, 1910. No. 143, 214).

²¹ *Selart A.* Political Rhetoric... P. 61–62; *Mäesalu M.* Die Steuerforderungen...; *Maasing M.* Infidel Turks... P. 361–363.

in the argumentation that was directed towards the Empire²². In 1486, the Imperial Electors complained that the new atrocities of the Turks had surpassed even those unheard misdeeds that the infidels had done in Livonia²³. Quite certainly, war between the Teutonic Order in Livonia, and Pskov and Moscow (1480–1481) was meant²⁴. During the war, the Livonian Master sent his ambassador Gert von Mallinckrodt to the Empire²⁵. It is very probable that Mallinckrodt introduced the Livonian viewpoint about the «evil deeds of the infidels» to the elites of the Empire.

RUSSIANS AND LIVONIANS AT THE DIETS DURING THE REIGN OF MAXIMILIAN I

During the 1490s, Moscow and the Russians were brought to the awareness of the Imperial elites. As a contributing factor, certainly important was the emergence of the Imperial Diet, as well as new plans for general Turkish crusades: when possible allies were sought against the Ottomans, also Moscow was considered at the Diet of 1493²⁶. But Russian topic would have hardly reached to Imperial Diets unless direct contacts between rulers of the Holy Roman Empire and Ivan III of Moscow (1462–1505), which were intensified by the fact that both Maximilian I and Ivan III pursued Anti-Jagiellonian politics²⁷. At the Diet of 1489, Emperor's first envoy to Moscow presented greetings from «Duke John of Moscow»²⁸, and in 1492–1493,

²² Selart A. Political Rhetoric... P. 68.

²³ Reichstag zu Frankfurt 1486. 2 vols / Hrsg. Heinz Angermeier and Reinhard Seyboth. Göttingen, 1989. No. 190. S. 188.

²⁴ The Master probably hoped to justify his ultimately unsuccessful subjugation of the Archbishopric of Riga with a successful war against «infidels and schismatics», although it is interesting to mention that he also tried to cooperate with Moscow (*Neitmann K.* Um die Einheit Livlands. Der Griff des Ordensmeisters Bernd von Borch nach dem Erzstift Riga um 1480 // *Deutsche im Nordosten Europas* / Hrsg. H. Rothe. Köln; Wien, 1991. S. 109–137; *Бессуднова М. Б.* Россия и Ливония в конце XV века: истоки конфликта. М., 2015; *Baranov A.* Zwischen Bündnis und Konfrontation. Der livländische Ordensmeister Bernd von der Borch und Großfürst Ivan III. von Moskau (1471–1483) // *Akteure mittelalterlicher Außenpolitik: Das Beispiel Ostmitteleuropas* / Hrsg. S. Flemming and N. Kersken. Marburg, 2017. S. 127–144; *Баранов А.* Роль Тевтонского ордена в Ливонии в «большой европейской» политике Великого княжества Московского в 1480–1483 гг. // *Вызов времени: становление централизованных государств на Востоке и Западе Европы в конце XV–XVII в. М.; Калуга, 2019. С. 397–404).*

²⁵ *Mäesalu M.* Liivimaa ja Püha Rooma keisririik... L. 144–147.

²⁶ Reichstag von Worms 1495. 3 vols / Hrsg. Heinz Angermeier. Göttingen, 1981 (RTA MR 5). S. 98.

²⁷ *Uebersberger H.* Österreich und Russland seit dem Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts. Bd 1: Von 1488–1605. Wien; Leipzig: Baumüller, 1906. S. 1–65; *Wimmer E.* Livland — ein Problem der habsburgisch-russischen Beziehungen in der Zeit Maximilians I.? // *Deutschland — Livland — Russland: ihre Beziehungen vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert. Beiträge aus dem Historischen Seminar der Universität Hamburg Deutschland* / Hrsg. N. Angermann. Lüneburg, 1988. S. 54–68; *Bessudnova M.* Die Schliessung des hansischen Kontors in Novgorod im Jahre 1494 im Kontext der Beziehungen des Grossfürsten von Moskau zu Maximilian von Habsburg // *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*. 2009. № 127. S. 69–99. — In 1491, an Anti-Jagiellonian treaty was made in Nuremberg (*Reichsversammlungen 1491–1493. 2 vols / Hrsg. Reinhard Seyboth. München, 2008 (RTA MR 4). S. 133–134. No. 11).*

²⁸ *Deutsche Reichstagsakten. 1488–1490. 2 vols. / Hrsg. Ernst Bock. Göttingen, 1973. S. 1201–1202. No. 304a.*

embassies from Moscow visited Imperial Diets, where they were repeatedly mentioned as «White Russians of Moscow»²⁹.

But already during that time, interests of Maximilian I and Ivan III diverged, as Maximilian found a compromise with Hungarian and Bohemian King Vladislav II (1490–1516) in 1492, and as he did not discuss seriously Ivan's marriage proposal with his daughter. Only during the second half of the 1500s, relations between Maximilian and Vassili III of Moscow (1505–1533) started to intensify which resulted in an alliance in 1514. But as Maximilian made conclusive agreements with the Jagellionians in 1515 (which contributed inheriting Hungary and Bohemia to the Habsburgs after 1526) political alliance with Moscow was not enforced again³⁰. During this period, also a Russian embassy was mentioned visiting the Diet in 1507, but was then named as an embassy of Tatars (*tarterisch potschaft*)³¹. At the Diet of 1510, the conflict between Poland-Lithuania and Moscow was briefly mentioned³².

The alliance made in 1517 between Grand Master Albrecht (1511–1525) and Vassili III³³ certainly found attention in the Empire. Unfortunately, the documentation about the last Diets of Maximilian's reign (1513–1517) has not been published yet, but this alliance was mentioned during the first Imperial gatherings of Charles V. In the election meeting in 1519, the Electors answered the letter of Vassili who asked them to elect an Emperor who is benevolent to the Grand Master³⁴, while the King Zygmunt I of Poland (1506–1548) wanted an Emperor who would be ready to make an alliance against the Grand Master and Moscow³⁵. It was also probably due to the Moscow-Prussian alliance, that «Muscovites and Russians» were mentioned amongst foreign nations that had closer ties with the Empire in 1521³⁶.

There was another significant factor why Moscow reached to the attention of the participants of Imperial Diets since the 1490s was the rise of tensions between Livonia and Moscow; which was also the time when Livonians started to propagate Russian threat rhetoric very actively³⁷.

²⁹ RTA MR 4. S. 647, 652, 654, 676, 686, 690, 692, 698, 702, 705, 1184, 1187, 1198, 1226, 1236–1237. — About documentation concerning the dealings with the embassies: Ibid. No. 441. S. 594–603; No. 720. S. 901; No. 736. S. 917, 919, 1235–1238; No. 1063. S. 1264–1269. — See also: *Wimmer E.* Livland — ein Problem... S. 68, 97.

³⁰ *Fiedler J.* Die Allianz zwischen Kaiser Maximilian I. und Vasilij Ivanovic, Großfürsten von Russland, vom Jahre 1514 // Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch–Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Bd 43. 1863. S. 183–289. — See also: *Uebersberger H.* Österreich und Russland... S. 66–158; *Wimmer E.* Livland — ein Problem... S. 68–72, 97–98.

³¹ *Der Reichstag zu Konstanz 1507.* 2 vols / Hrsg. Dietmar Heil. Berlin; Boston, 2014. S. 1100.

³² *Die Reichstage zu Augsburg 1510 und Trier/Köln 1512.* 3 vols / Hrsg. Reinhard Seyboth. Berlin; Boston, 2017. No. 564.

³³ *Sach M.* Hochmeister und Großfürst...

³⁴ *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V. Erster Band / Hrsg. August Kluckhohn.* Gotha, 1893 (RTA JR 1). S. 794.

³⁵ RTA JR 1. S. 592, 718–719. — Zygmunt's position was crucial in electing the new Emperor as he had custody over underage King Ludvik/Lajos II of Bohemia and Hungary (1516–1526), who as the King of Bohemia was an Elector.

³⁶ In addition to Russians, also Poland, Lithuania, Hungary and Bohemia were mentioned (*Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V. Zweiter Band / Hrsg. Adolf Wrede.* Gotha, 1896 (RTA JR 2). S. 415).

³⁷ *Бессуднова М. Б.* «Русская угроза» в Ливонской Орденской документации 80-х и начала 90-х гг. XV в. // *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana.* 2014. № 1. С. 144–156; *Maasing M.*

In 1494, Ivan III ordered the Hanseatic *Kontor* (trade center) in Novgorod to be closed³⁸. In Livonia, Ivan's hostility was probably interpreted as readiness to an invasion, and help from the Empire was asked. In August 1495, King Maximilian and participants of the Diet of Worms asked the Elector Brandenburg, Dukes of Mecklenburg and Pomerania, as well as city of Danzig (Gdańsk, which was also named as a member of the Empire), to help Livonia³⁹. Remarkably, Maximilian described his recent ally as «a great power that is against Christian faith» who had made atrocious deeds in Livonia, a member of the Empire, which he threatens to conquer⁴⁰. Nevertheless, nobody that was asked to support Livonia was ready to do so⁴¹.

In 1496, Livonian Master Plettenberg asked Order's German Master to further notify Imperial Estates about Livonia's situation⁴². This brought some results: at the end of the next Diet in 1497, the Estates stated that besides the fact that the Empire was attacked by the King of France and the Turks, also Livonia was threatened by the *fürst von Musca*⁴³; and it was decided to discuss the Livonian question at the next Diet⁴⁴. There, Archbishop and Elector Berthold von Henneberg of Mainz (1484–1504) presented his concern about two threats to Christendom: Turks and the Duke of Moscow, as he also claimed that the Duke was helping the Turks — according to the information the Archbishop had obtained from the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order⁴⁵. The reason why Berthold von Henneberg — one of the most important political actors of the Empire — decided to discuss this topic was probably the fact that his brother Georg was Teutonic Order's Commander (*Komtur*) of Mergentheim⁴⁶.

Nevertheless, it was mostly the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order that tried to use the rhetoric that it was endangered by both Turks and Russians for various reasons during

Infidel Turks... P. 363–371. — On conflict between Moscow and Livonia: *Vegesack S. v. Die Gesandtschaften Wolters von Plettenbergs an den Grossfürsten von Moskau in 1494–1497 // Baltische Monatsschrift. Bd 75. 1913. S. 315–340; Lenz W. Die Auswärtige Politik des livländischen Ordensmeisters Walter von Plettenberg bis 1510. Riga: Plates, 1928; Kentmann R. Livland im russisch-litauischen Konflikt. Die Grundlegung seiner Neutralitätspolitik 1494–1514. // Beiträge zur Kunde Estlands. Bd 14. 1929. S. 85–160; Selart A. Zur Geschichte der Russen in Livland um die Wende des 15. zum 16. Jahrhundert: Der Vorwand zur Schliessung des St. Peterhofes in Novgorod im Jahr 1494 // Städtisches Leben im Baltikum zur Zeit der Hanse. Zwölf Beiträge zum 12. Baltischen Seminar / Hrsg. N. Angermann. Lüneburg, 2003. S. 177–210.*

³⁸ Possible reason for this might have been that Ivan wanted to punish the subjects of Maximilian, as the King had rejected Ivan's alliance plans and marriage with his daughter, and the Livonians had been presented as subjects of the Emperor to him (*Bessudnova M. Die Schliessung des hansischen Kontors... S. 91–99*).

³⁹ LUB II 1. No. 247–250; RTA MR 5. No. 1199–1200.

⁴⁰ RTA MR 5. No. 1199; LUB II 1. No. 247. — Maximilian had the information about events in Novgorod and the situation of Livonia probably after May, as then he wrote to Ivan and asked that two merchants of Augsburg would obtain the same trading privileges as the Hanseatic ones in Ivan's realm; thus he did not know about the closing of the *Kontor* yet (RTA MR 5. No. 655).

⁴¹ E. g., Dukes of Mecklenburg replied that they are too far away to help (RTA MR 5. No. 912).

⁴² Reichstage von Lindau, Worms und Freiburg 1496–1498 / Hrsg. Heinz Gollwitzer. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979 (RTA MR 6). S. 128–129.

⁴³ RTA MR 6. S. 284.

⁴⁴ RTA MR 6. S. 345.

⁴⁵ RTA MR 6. S. 385–386.

⁴⁶ *Wimmer E. Livland — ein Problem... S. 101. Note 73.*

the 1490s and also later⁴⁷. One of the most interesting instances was the attempt to get back recently lost possessions of the Order in Southern Italy⁴⁸. In 1495, the participants of the Diet wrote to the Pope in order to ask to retrieve the Order's possessions in Apulia, as the Order has been always faithful to the Catholic faith and has bought the Russian lands with its own blood⁴⁹. At the same time, King Maximilian wrote to the rulers of Spain, and asked to return the province of Palermo, as the Order had always protected Christianity and the tyrannical ruler of Moscow was threatening Order's land in Livonia with purportedly 300 000 men⁵⁰.

Livonia did not get any actual support from the Empire for the war with Moscow (1501–1503), during which Livonians were allied with Lithuania, but after the war, the Livonian branch of the Order managed to obtain Papal approval for two indulgence campaigns (1503–1506; 1507–1510) against «heretic and schismatic Russians and the most wicked Tatars»⁵¹, which was mostly held in the Empire and turned out to be a financial success⁵². This was helped by active propaganda, of which probably the most effective was a writing called «Eynne Schonne hysthorie van vunderlyken gescheffthen der heren tho lyfflanth myth den Rüssen unde tataren» which depicted Russians as barbaric, evil, and un-Christian; Grand Duke of Moscow as a tyrant and in a secret pact with Tatars and Turks; while the Livonians were portrayed as steadfast protectors of Christendom⁵³.

In addition to the indulgence campaign, Livonians still sought help also from Imperial Diets. In 1505, Livonian Master Wolter von Plettenberg (1494–1535) sent a direct letter to Maximilian I and the members of the Empire, and asked help against the «schismatic, heretical Russians»⁵⁴. The response from the Empire was not very enthusiastic⁵⁵. Nonetheless, Maximilian I tried to support Livonia, as he asked additional help from the Pope in 1505,

⁴⁷ Cf.: RTA MR 6. S. 392. No. 25a; LUB II 1. No. 443, 535, 624–625; *Thumser M.* Eine neue Aufgabe... S. 152–162; *Selart A.* Switching the Tracks... P. 98.

⁴⁸ *Toomaspoeg K.* Der Verlust der Besitzungen des Deutschen Ordens in Italien am Ende des 15. und zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts // *Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica.* 2006. № 21. S. 129–154.

⁴⁹ RTA MR 5. S. 940. No. 1201.

⁵⁰ RTA MR 5. S. 941. No. 1202.

⁵¹ *Liv-, Est- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch.* Abt. 2. Bd. 2. 1501–1505 / Hrsg. L. Arbusow. Riga; Leipzig: Deubner, 1905. S. 666. No. 842.

⁵² *Arbusow L. Jun.* Die Beziehungen des Deutschen Ordens zum Ablasshandel seit dem 15. Jahrhundert. Riga: Häcker, 1909; *Ehlers A.* Die Ablasspraxis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter. Marburg, 2007. S. 392–402; *Housley N.* Crusading and the Ottoman Threat... P. 287–289.

⁵³ *Eynne Schonne hysthorie van vunderlyken gescheffthen der heren tho lyfflanth myth den Rüssen vnde tartaren* // *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Curlands* / Hrsg. Carl Schirren. Bd 8. 1861. S. 113–225. — See also: *Benninghoven F.* Russland im Spiegel der livländischen Schönen Hysthorie von 1508 // *Rossica Externa: Studien Zum 15.–17. Jahrhundert: Festgabe Für Paul Johansen Zum 60. Geburtstag* / Hrsg. H. Weczerka. Marburg, 1963. S. 11–35; *Thumser M.* Antirussische Propaganda in der «Schönen Historie von wunderbaren Geschäften der Herren zu Livland mit den Russen und Tataren» // *Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Livland* / Hrsg. M. Thumser. Köln (etc.), 2011. S. 133–153; *Kreem J.* Crusading Traditions and Chivalric Ideals: The Mentality of the Teutonic Order in Livonia at the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century // *Crusades.* 2013. № 12. P. 233–250.

⁵⁴ *Der Reichstag zu Köln 1505.* 2 vols / Hrsg. Dietmar Heil. München: Oldenbourg, 2008 (RTA MR 8). S. 827–829. No. 506.

⁵⁵ Only cities of Lübeck and Rostock had agreed to give financial support (RTA MR 8. S. 827).

probably to prolong the indulgence campaign⁵⁶; and he was also ready to raise a customs tax in Livonian favor, but wanted that Livonian Master would become an Imperial Prince in turn⁵⁷. It seems that the Livonian branch had a serious interest towards this tax, but as it met opposition both in Prussia and Livonia, and the Master became Imperial Prince only in the second half of the 1520s, the tax was never implemented⁵⁸. Helping Livonia against the Russians was discussed also at the Diet of 1509 alongside with tense Polish-Prussian relations over the Second Treaty of Toruń. However, those discussions at the Diet had no definite conclusions⁵⁹, and thereafter, the acuteness of the problem ceased, as a chain of truces was made between Livonia and Russians until 1551.

LIVONIANS AND RUSSIANS AT THE DIETS OF CHARLES V

During the 1520s and 1530s, Russians or Moscow were mentioned at the Diets less frequently than before. This might be caused by the fact that both crucial factors that had caused the rise of Russian topic during the reign of Maximilian — Imperial interests towards Russia⁶⁰ and Livonian active rhetoric to obtain real support — were missing. Nevertheless, Moscow and Russians still appeared in the discussions that concerned mercantile interests in the 1520s⁶¹. As the Turkish question started to become more prominent at the Diets, especially after the Ottomans had conquered most of Hungary (1526), and besieged Vienna (1529)⁶², Russians were initially presented as a comparable threat or even allies of the Turks. As Poland had been increasingly involved into Lithuanian-Moscowian wars since the 1490s, its *Antemurale* rhetoric included also its new enemy that quickly rose next to the Turks and Tatars in Polish argumentation⁶³. In 1522, Polish envoys in the Empire complained repeatedly

⁵⁶ RTA MR 8. S. 135.

⁵⁷ RTA MR 8. S. 827–829. — Already in 1500, plans to make Livonian Master as Imperial prince were discussed (Neue und vollständigere Sammlung der Reichs-Abschiede, Welche von den Zeiten Kayser Conrads II. bis jetzo, auf den Teutschen Reichs-Tägen abgefasset worden, sammt den wichtigsten Reichs-Schlüssen, so auf dem noch fürwährenden: Reichs-Tage zur Richtigkeit gekommen sind. Bd 2: Reichs-Abschiede von dem Jahr 1495. bis auf das Jahr 1551. inclusive / Hrsg. Heinrich Christian von Senckenberg and Johann Jacob Schmauss. Frankfurt am Main, 1747. S. 83).

⁵⁸ RTA MR 8. S. 827–829; Akten und Rezesse der livländischen Ständetage. Bd 3 / Hrsg. L. Arbusow Sen. Riga, 1910. (AR 3). No. 35. S. 26, 30–31; No. 245. S. 635, 638.

⁵⁹ Der Reichstag zu Worms 1509 / Hrsg. Dietmar Heil. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2017. No. 261, 296–298. — The German Master claimed that as Poles had made peace with Moscow without Livonia, thus Moscow might attack Livonia which then could not help Order in Prussia against Poland (which leaves an impression of a possible secret pact between Poland and Moscow against the Order) (Ibid. No. 296, 483–485).

⁶⁰ Charles V retained diplomatic relations with Moscow, but they were mostly connected with his relations with Poland-Lithuania, and generally, he sided with the latter power (*Uebersberger H. Österreich und Russland... S. 159–249*).

⁶¹ RTA JR 2. S. 415; Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V. Dritter Band / Hrsg. Adolf Wrede. Gotha, 1901 (RTA JR 3). S. 549, 565, 626; Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V. Siebenter Band / Hrsg. Johannes Kühn. Stuttgart, 1935 (RTA JR 7). S. 1091. No. 75. — These discussions included a warning from Tallinn to Lübeck that King of Denmark and Fuggers try to take over Russian trade from Hanseatic merchants (RTA JR 3. S. 590).

⁶² *Schulze W. Reich und Türkengefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert. München, 1978.*

⁶³ *Srodecki P. Antemurale Christianitatis... S. 292–303.*

that they were harassed by three unchristian enemies: Muscovites, Tatars, and Turks⁶⁴. Ten years later, German branch of the Teutonic Order claimed to the envoys of the Elector of Saxony that the Muscovites and Tatars planned to attack Poland, Moravia, and Silesia⁶⁵, and the Elector replied that he had heard from the merchants of Cracow that the Turks would attack Moravia and Silesia, which would correspond well with the attack of the «allies of the Turks» that the Order had mentioned⁶⁶.

During the 1520s, all Livonian lords became recognized as Imperial Princes, and they started to participate at the Imperial Diets. Nevertheless, their participation was quite infrequent until to the second half of the 1540s (see Table 1)⁶⁷.

Before that, the Russian threat rhetoric towards the Empire was also rather scarce, but it did not disappear completely⁶⁸. The Russian threat was also a reason, why Archbishop Johann Blankenfeld of Riga (1524–1527) visited the Imperial Diet of 1527: he was accused of treacherous cooperation with the Russians, and had to put himself under the protection of the Livonian Master (1526), and act as an ambassador of the Master in Poland, Italy, Germany, and Spain⁶⁹. At the Diet of Regensburg, Blankenfeld sent a letter to the Livonian Master, where he stressed that the recent truce with the Russians should not be trusted⁷⁰. Perhaps this remark was meant to show the Master that Blankenfeld had never had any treacherous relations with the Russians.

During the Imperial Diets of the 1540s, Moscow and the Russians had significantly more attention than the previous two decades. Firstly, it was connected with the Turkish question, as Roman King Ferdinand I (1531–1564, Emperor since 1558) fought many campaigns in Hungary against the Ottomans. At the Diets of 1541, 1544, and 1547–1548, Moscow was repeatedly mentioned alongside with other non-Imperial Christian powers, and interestingly, these lists sometimes also included Livonia⁷¹. It is also interesting to mention that in 1541,

⁶⁴ RTA JR 3. S. 199, 329. — The envoys of Hungary were nevertheless sure that the King of Poland would help them, even if he was attacked by both Muscovites and Tatars (Ibid. S. 332).

⁶⁵ Der Reichstag in Regensburg und die Verhandlungen über einen Friedstand mit den Protestanten in Schweinfurt und Nürnberg 1532. 3 vols / Hrsg. Rosemarie Aulinger. Göttingen, 1992 (RTA JR 10). S. 965. No. 253.

⁶⁶ RTA JR 10. S. 974. No. 257.

⁶⁷ About Livonians as Imperial Princes and their participation at the Diets: *Mäesalu M.* Die Steuerforderungen...; *Maasing M.* Livland und die Reichstage (1520–1555) // Livland — eine Region... S. 283–312; *Demel B.* Zur Reichspolitik des livländischen Ordenszweiges in den Jahren 1521 bis 1561/1562 // *Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica.* 2016. Vol. 20. S. 145–172.

⁶⁸ Cf.: *Maasing M.* «Русская опасность» в письмах Рижского Архиепископа Вильгельма за 1530–1550 гг. // *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana.* 2010. № 1. С. 184–194; *Selart A.* Eesti idapiir keskajal. Tartu, 1998. L. 119–127; *Maasing M.* Infidel Turks... P. 371–376.

⁶⁹ Cf.: *Selart A.* Johann Blankenfeld und Russland // Die baltischen Länder und Europa in der Frühen Neuzeit / Hrsg. N. Angermann, K. Brüggemann, I. Pölsam-Jürjo. Köln (etc.). 2015. S. 105–129; *Selart A.* Иоганн Бланкенфельд и Мисюръ Мунехин. К истории ливонско-русских отношений в 1520-е гг. // *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana.* 2011. № 1. С. 157–170; *Schuchard C.* Johann Blankenfeld († 1527) — eine Karriere zwischen Berlin, Rom und Livland // Berlin in Geschichte und Gegenwart. 2002. S. 27–56.

⁷⁰ RTA JR 7. S. 48–51.

⁷¹ In 1541, the participants of the Diet thought that help should be sought from Poland, Muscovites, Livonia, and Scandinavia (Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1541 / Hrsg. Albrecht P. Lutterberger and Christiane Neerfeld. Berlin; Boston, 2018 (RTA JR 11). S. 1082, 1174). In 1544, help was

participants of the Diet also considered to get help against the Turks from both the Muscovites and Tatars⁷².

Table 1. Livonian representation at Imperial Diets, 1527–1557

Diet	Master of Livonia	Archbishop of Riga	Bishop of Tartu	Bishop of Osilia	Bishop of Courland	Bishop of Tallinn
1527 Regensburg	(represented by Riga/ Courland)	personally			personally	
1529 Speyer	(excused by GM)	represented by a canon of Riga				
1530 Augsburg	represented	represented			represented	
1532 Regensburg	(excused by GM)					
1541 Regensburg	(excused by GM)					
1542 Speyer	(envoy to the King of Romans)					
1542–44 Livonians were not represented at Nürnberg (1542, 1543), and Speyer (1544)						
1545 Worms	represented	represented		represented		
1546 Regensburg	represented by GM	represented				
1547/48 Augsburg	represented	represented by a canon of Riga (and other ambassadors)				
1550/51 Augsburg	represented	represented		represented		
1555 Augsburg	represented			represented		
1556/57 Regensburg	represented	(Elector of Brandenburg; Duke of Mecklenburg)				

Unofficial representation is presented in brackets. GM — Grand Master (Administrator) of the Teutonic Order

hoped from Muscovy, Poland, Prussia and Livonia (Der Speyrer Reichstag von 1544. 4 vols / Hrsg. Erwein Eltz. Göttingen, 2001 (RTA JR 15). S. 637, 644, 734, 1286). In 1547/48, Muscovy was mentioned alongside with Poland, Wallachia and Transylvania (Der Reichstag zu Augsburg 1547/48. 3 vols / Hrsg. Ursula Machoczek. München, 2005 (RTA JR 18). S. 2182, 2186–2187, 2191, 2227, 2649).

⁷² RTA JR 11. S. 1182.

At the Diets of the 1540s, Moscow and the Russians were connected with Polish-Teutonic conflict over Prussia. After Prussia had been secularized and transformed into the vassal Duchy of the Polish King, the German Master of the Order obtained the office of the Grand Master⁷³, and started to reclaim Prussia. The Order had some diplomatic success as the Emperor gave Prussia as an Imperial fief to the German Master, and in 1532, Duke Albrecht of Prussia was put under Imperial ban. Thereafter, the Order demanded Imperial help to actually reclaim Prussia at almost every following Imperial Diet, but this was countered by Poland and Prussia⁷⁴. In 1541, the Order stressed that it had fought both the Turks and Russians in the past, referencing Grand Master Tiefen's campaign to Moldova (1497) and Plettenberg's war with Moscow (1501–1503)⁷⁵. Thus, the Order reestablished its former argumentation about being the defensive wall against all Christendom. Multiple times, German branch pointed out that if it could recuperate Prussia, it would be able to assist Livonia⁷⁶; with this, assistance against the Russian threat was meant⁷⁷. On the other hand, also the King of Poland stressed himself as a defensive shield against enemies of Christendom, such as the Turks, Muscovites and Tatars⁷⁸. Also Duke Albrecht of Prussia expressed himself quite similarly: the King of Poland has to fight against the Barbarians, Muscovites and Turks⁷⁹.

Livonians themselves used the Russian threat rhetoric mostly either to repel obligations from the Empire or to obtain some special rights. Although Livonian rulers were not included into the *Reichsmatrikel* (Imperial Register) in 1521, and thus also not included into the Imperial obligations system, support against the Turks was still foreseen from them at the Diet of 1529⁸⁰. To avoid contributing, the Livonians decided to use the same rhetoric that was fruitful already in the 15th century: that their precarious situation at the end of the Christendom

⁷³ Officially, the German Master became the Administrator of the Grand Master's office in Prussia; since the beginning of the 17th century, he was called Grand Master and German Master (*Hoch- und Deutschmeister*); this title he held officially from 1834 to 1929. Cf.: *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens: 1190–2012, Zweite, erweiterte und korrigierte Auflage* / Hrsg. U. Arnold. Weimar, 2014.

⁷⁴ *Herrmann A.* Der Deutsche Orden unter Walter von Cronberg: (1525–1543); zur Politik u. Struktur d. «teutschen Adels Spitalen» im Reformationszeitalter. Köln (etc.). 1974. S. 83–132; *Arnold U.* Mergentheim und Königsberg/Berlin — die Rekuperationsbemühungen des Deutschen Ordens auf Preußen // *Württembergisch Franken*. 1976. № 60. S. 14–54. — About Polish envoys at the Diets: *Bömelburg H.-J.* Die Wahrnehmung des Reichstags in Polen-Litauen. Mitteleuropäische Kommunikationsstrukturen und die polnischen Gesandtschaften zum Reichstag 1486–1613 // *Der Reichstag 1486–1613...* S. 405–437.

⁷⁵ RTA JR 11. S. 1691.

⁷⁶ Cf.: *Der Reichstag zu Speyer 1542*. 2 vols / Hrsg. Silvia Schweinzer-Burian. München, 2003 (RTA JR 12). S. 1113–1115; *Der Reichstag zu Nürnberg 1542* / Hrsg. Silvia Schweinzer-Burian. München, 2010. S. 862; RTA JR 15. S. 2137; RTA JR 18. S. 2587–2588; *Der Reichstag zu Augsburg 1550/51*. 2 vols / Hrsg. Erwein Eltz. München, 2005 (RTA JR 19). S. 1457–1458. No. 267.

⁷⁷ Cf.: RTA JR 18. S. 2590.

⁷⁸ RTA JR 11. S. 1628.

⁷⁹ RTA JR 11. S. 1631. Cf.: *Ibid.* S. 1646: Russians with other infidels are enemies of Christendom.

⁸⁰ In January 1529, Livonian Master appeared in the list of contributors to the Turkish war (RTA JR 7. S. 427). In April, Archbishop of Riga and Bishops of Tartu, Osilia and Curonia were included (*Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V. Achter Band*. 2 vols / Hrsg. Wolfgang Steglich. Göttingen, 1970–1971. S. 1086–1088).

makes it impossible⁸¹. During the end of the 1530s and the first half of the 1540s, the Empire was again interested in collecting Turkish contribution from Livonia⁸², but also the Duke of Prussia was actively contributing into Turkish help in order to avoid executing Imperial ban over Prussia⁸³, and he urged the Livonians to contribute as well. But the Livonians had still no intention to do it⁸⁴.

In the Empire, the Livonian Master used Russian rhetoric also for another reason: in 1541, he asked the Emperor to reaffirm that no clerics had the right to marry, as rumours about that it is allowed would cause great disturbances in Livonia, and this would be advantageous to Livonia's archenemy, «the White Russian, who is no smaller enemy as the Turk»⁸⁵. Thereafter, the Coadjutor of the Master obtained a privilege from King Ferdinand that allowed him to intervene into the election of Livonian bishops; in order to ensure that only Catholics were chosen⁸⁶. The Livonian Master wrote about imminent attack of the Muscovites to the Grand Master (Administrator) in 1546, when he sent his envoy to the Imperial Diet⁸⁷.

The Livonians were not successful in avoiding paying all Imperial taxes. It appears that the Order had paid for the upkeep of the Imperial Chamber Court (*Reichskammergericht*) quite regularly at least from the 1530s⁸⁸; while the Archbishop claimed in 1530 that he had paid Imperial taxes for the Turks, Chamber court and Imperial regiment⁸⁹. If this was true, then it probably was an exception, as there is no evidence that he had paid any taxes later. In any case, the Diet of 1544 was also unhappy with the tax discipline of the Bishops of Tallinn, Osilia and Tartu, as they had allegedly paid the Chamber Court tax only once⁹⁰. At the next Diet in 1545, it was thought that Livonia was the only peripheral area of the Empire from where one actually could actually obtain taxes⁹¹, and this question was also discussed at the next Diet

⁸¹ AR 3. No. 291.7; 298.7; 302.14; *Maasing M.* Infidel Turks... P. 373.

⁸² RTA JR 11. S. 1082, 1174; RTA JR 12. S. 301; RTA JR 15. S. 367–368, 644, 734, 1278, 1286, 1293; *Demel B.* Zur Reichspolitik... S. 160–161.

⁸³ Die Türkensteuer im Herzogthum Preußen 1540. 3 Bde / Hrsg. H. H. Diehlmann. Hamburg, 1998–2008.

⁸⁴ *Maasing M.* Infidel Turks... P. 373–374.

⁸⁵ RTA JR 11. S. 1736–1737. No. 347.

⁸⁶ HA 3. No. 1220/3, 1331/2. — The Archbishop and Bishops opposed fiercely against this privilege, as they saw it as an attempt to curb their autonomy, and it was never used.

⁸⁷ Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1546 / Hrsg. Rosemarie Aulinger. München: Oldenbourg, 2005 (RTA JR 17). S. 162–163.

⁸⁸ Nordosteuropa und der Deutsche Orden: Kurzregesten. Bd 1. Bis 1561 / Hrsg. K. Wieser. Bad Godesberg; Bonn, 1969. No. 838, 854, 936, 1000–1001, 1003–1004, 1030, 1115, 1141, 1189–1190, 1250, 1308; *Demel B.* Zur Reichspolitik... S. 160. — About Livonian processes in the court: *Diestelkamp B.* Die Reichsgerichtsbarkeit in den Ostseeländern // Die Integration des südlichen Ostseeraumes / Hrsg. M. North and N. Jörn. Köln (etc.), 2000. S. 13–38; *Leesment L.* Über die livländischen Gerichtssachen im Reichskammergericht und im Reichshofrat. Tartu: Loodus, 1929; Repertorium der Akten des Reichskammergerichts: untrennbarer Bestand. 1, Prozessakten aus der Schweiz, Italien, den Niederlanden und dem Baltikum, sowie der freiwilligen Gerichtsbarkeit / Hrsg. O. Koser. Heppenheim a. d. Bergstraße: Ekkehard, 1933.

⁸⁹ HA 1. No. 109.

⁹⁰ RTA JR 15. S. 1124–1125.

⁹¹ Der Reichstag zu Worms 1545 / Hrsg. Rosemarie Aulinger. München, 2003. S. 581–582, 610, 621, 657–659, 1079, 1120–1121.

in 1546⁹². But it was the Diet of Augsburg in 1547–1548 where Livonian taxation was taken into serious focus. The Livonians again claimed that «infidel Muscovites» were as dangerous as the Turks, which was indirectly supported by the German Master who presented an account of Muscovite violence against Livonia⁹³, and Livonians managed to avoid paying any Turkish taxes and reduce the amount of the Camber Court contribution which every Livonian lord should pay⁹⁴. But this tax reduction was to last only as long as Livonia was threatened by «infidels»⁹⁵. One reason why Imperial Estates preferred not to specify which kind of «infidels» were endangering Livonia was probably the fact that they simultaneously discussed about asking help against the Turks from Moscow⁹⁶.

Although the Livonians were probably generally content with the outcome of tax discussions of 1547–1548, it had a serious backlash for them at the next Diet (1550–1551). The long truce with Russians was ending, and already from the last years of the 1540s, after a long time, Russian threat was seen again as a frightening reality and not just a useful rhetorical construct by the Livonians⁹⁷. In 1550, the Livonian Master asked for Imperial support against the Russians, and reminded that he had done it already during the last Diet⁹⁸. But the Imperial Estates replied that they had actually helped Livonians by exempting them of Turkish taxes, and that further help to Livonia was impossible, as Livonia was too far from the Empire, and that the Turkish threat caused many problems⁹⁹. Thus, help was limited to the Emperor's letter to Ivan IV and the decision of Imperial estates to forbid the sales of military materials to Russia, although the Emperor had decided already in 1548 that sending of weapons and military experts to the East could be stopped by the Livonian Master; then concerning the activities of Ivan IV's agent Hans Schlitte, whose aspirations were halted due to Livonians' pleas¹⁰⁰.

During the next two Diets before the Livonian War, it is not known that the Livonians would have asked help from the Diets. This might be partially explained by the new Russian-Livonian truce of 1554¹⁰¹. However, the Duke of Pomerania and his envoys mentioned Moscow in both

⁹² RTA JR 17. S. 162–163.

⁹³ RTA JR 18. S. 2590.

⁹⁴ RTA JR 18. S. 656, 661, 664, 669, 671, 674, 698, 726–728, 906, 1483, 1640–1641, 2355–2361, 2410–2411, 2422–2423, 2429–2430, 2643–2644; *Maasing M.* Livland und die Reichstage... S. 302–303.

⁹⁵ RTA JR 18. S. 2365. — Order's envoys actually tried to remove that restriction and make the tax reduction permanent (*Ibid.* S. 2366–2367).

⁹⁶ RTA JR 18. S. 2649.

⁹⁷ Cf.: *Маасинг М.* «Русская опасность»...

⁹⁸ RTA JR 19. S. 1473–1374. No. 271; HA 3. No. 1511. — There are no known pleas for help against Moscow from 1547–1548, but during the tax discussions, they might have been made orally. From 1550–1551, there is another plea from other Livonians, including the Archbishop (HA 3. No. 1510).

⁹⁹ RTA JR 19. S. 667–668, 1435–1437, 1474.

¹⁰⁰ *Diestelkamp B.* Eine versuchte Annäherung Zar Iwans IV., des Schrecklichen, an den Westen? Ein Reichskammergerichtsprozeß, der dies nahelegt // *Reich, Regionen und Europa in Mittelalter und Neuzeit.* Festschrift für Peter Moraw / Hrsg. P.-J. Heinig et al. (= *Historische Forschungen.* Bd 67). Berlin, 2000 (here esp.: S. 314–318); about Schlitte, see also: *Uebersberger H.* Österreich und Russland... S. 289–302; *Русаковский О. В.* Ганс Шлитте и наем немецких воинов на русскую службу в 1547–1548 гг. // *Русский Сборник.* 2018. № 24. С. 7–29.

¹⁰¹ *Selart A.* Der 'Dorpat'er Zins' und die Dorpat-Pleskauer Beziehungen im Mittelalter // *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands: Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag* / Hrsg.

Diets. In 1555, the Duke expressed his conviction that help against Turks might be found if Poland and Moscow cease preparations to fight against each other¹⁰²; thus he meant that both should turn weapons to against Turks. During the next Diet, internal conflict known as the Coadjutor's Feud (1556–57) between the Archbishop of Riga and the Order occurred, and after the Archbishop was imprisoned in the summer of 1556, a propaganda war started in the Empire between supporters of both sides¹⁰³. Then, Pomeranian envoys described the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order as an important member of the Empire, and expressed concern that a powerful enemy (i. e., Moscow) might use the situation and attack¹⁰⁴. At the same time, the Order accused the Archbishop of machinations against both Livonia and the Empire, and reminded that previous Archbishops had made suspicious deals with Russia¹⁰⁵ — probably meaning the Blankenfeld affair in the 1520s. The Livonians had used accusations of cooperation with enemies of Christendom, including the Russians, to discredit each other, already for centuries¹⁰⁶, but the aforementioned case here is the only known time when this kind of accusation was directly presented at Imperial Diets.

Generally, it seems that the Russian question did not receive much attention at the last Imperial Diets before the beginning of the Russo-Livonian War¹⁰⁷, although the war itself soon changed the situation significantly¹⁰⁸. Then, the negative depiction of Russians and their comparison with the Turks became the dominating narrative, although after the dissolution of Livonian Order and bishoprics, the narrative of Russians as possible allies and plans for church union returned to the Imperial Diets¹⁰⁹.

B. Jähnig and K. Militzer. (= Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission. Bd 12). Münster, 2004. S. 11–37.

¹⁰² Der Reichstag zu Augsburg 1555. 4 vols / Hrsg. Rosemarie Aulinger, Erwein Eltz, and Ursula Machoczek. München, 2009. S. 600–601.

¹⁰³ Cf.: Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1556/57. 2 vols / Hrsg. Josef Leeb. München: Oldenbourg, 2013. — About Coadjutor's Feud: *Hartmann S.* Neue Quellen zur livländischen Koadjutorfehde 1555/6 // *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands...* S. 275–306; *Bergengrün A.* Herzog Christoph von Mecklenburg, letzter Koadjutor des Erzbistums Riga: ein Beitrag zur livländischen und mecklenburgischen Geschichte. Reval: Kluge, 1898. S. 20–94; *Lange T.* Zwischen Reformation und Untergang Alt-Livlands: Der Rigaer Erzbischof Wilhelm von Brandenburg im Beziehungsgeflecht der livländischen Konföderation und ihrer Nachbarländer. Hamburg, 2014. S. 161–242; *Понов В. Е., Филлюшкин А. И.* «Война коадьюторов» и Позвольские соглашения 1557 г. // *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana*. 2009. № 1. С. 151–184; *Weber D.* Pamphlet as a means of a propaganda in Baltic region in early modern time // *Vestnik of St. Petersburg University. History*. 2017. Vol. 62. Issue 2. P. 291–298; *Maasing M., Weber D.* Die Gerüchte über den Tod des Erzbischofs Wilhelm von Riga im Sommer 1556 // *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*. 2019. Vol. 25. No. 1. S. 3–18.

¹⁰⁴ Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1556/57... S. 1281.

¹⁰⁵ Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1556/57... S. 1283.

¹⁰⁶ *Selart A.* 1) Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades... (esp. P. 286–293); 2) Political Rhetoric...

¹⁰⁷ This might have been different if the planned embassy of Ivan IV would have reached the Empire in 1557 (Der Reichstag zu Regensburg 1556/57... S. 161–162).

¹⁰⁸ Livonian War was extensively discussed at the meeting of Electors in 1558 and at the Diet of 1559 (Der Kurfürstentag zu Frankfurt 1558 und der Reichstag zu Augsburg 1559. 3 vols / Hrsg. Josef Leeb. Göttingen, 1999; *Reimann E.* Das Verhalten des Reiches gegen Livland in den Jahren 1559–1561 // *Historische Zeitschrift*. 1876. Bd 35. S. 346–380).

¹⁰⁹ E. g.: *Völkl E., Wessely K.* Die russische Gesandtschaft am Regensburger Reichstag 1576. Kallmünz, 1976.

CONCLUSIONS

Observation of the available materials about Imperial Diets before the outbreak of the Russo-Livonian War made it quite clear that topics concerning Russians or Moscow never gained a central place there. Nevertheless, they were rather often mentioned at these Diets which took place since the last decades of the 15th century. Moreover, there are also some general trends that can be noticed. It appears that since the end of the 15th century, Russians or Russia were almost always identified with Moscow. Additionally, almost all of those mentions were polemical: Russians or Moscow were either depicted as enemies of Christendom or as possible allies, mostly against the Turks. It appears also that Russian-related topics were generally presented by three powers: the central branch of Teutonic Order (firstly in Prussia, later in Germany), the Livonian branch of the Order (although the Archbishop of Riga sometimes expressed his positions about Russians in the Empire, he almost never did it directly at the Diets), and the King of Poland. However, also relations of Maximilian I with Moscow played temporarily an important role (especially during the 1490s), and these relations could be also the main reason why the participants of Imperial Diets started to consider Russians or Moscow as possible allies against the Turks.

Most often, Russians were depicted as dangerous enemies of Christendom, however. At the same time, there were differences why and how this rhetorical motif was used. The main branch of the Teutonic Order and Poland mostly utilized «unchristian Russians» as a supportive argument in their conflict over Prussia. For the Order, Russians were either one of many enemies (especially during the 15th century), or one of main adversaries (others being mostly Turks and sometimes Tatars) against whom the Grand Master had to help Livonia (firstly, this kind of rhetorical construction was used during the 1450s, and as a common argument since the 1490s). In addition to its usage in the context of Teutonic-Polish conflict over Prussia, the Order also applied the «Russo-Livonian argument» to excuse non-participation in Imperial efforts (wars or taxes), especially when they were connected with the Turks. Polish rhetoric included Russians as the main enemies significantly later (at the turn of the 16th century), and at Imperial Diets, they had a stable role alongside Tatars and Turks as Poland's main enemies only since the 1540s, when the Prussian question started to appear at almost every Diet.

Livonian rhetoric of Russians differed in two main aspects. Firstly, Russians became the Livonians' main rhetorical enemies already during the first half of the 15th century; a position which was ultimately cemented during the conflicts with Moscow at the last decades of the century. Secondly, Livonians were the only ones who used anti-Russian rhetoric at Imperial Diets to get actual support against Moscow. But on the other hand, also Livonians used Russian threat rhetoric mainly in order to achieve other political goals, especially getting exemptions of Imperial obligations (from the 1420s to the 1540s). At the same time, rhetoric which accused fellow Western Christian rivals of cooperation with schismatic or infidel Russians was quite rarely used at the Diets, as probably the only case was during the Coadjutor Feud when Order used it against the Archbishop of Riga.

If one observes the positioning of Russians in comparison with other un-Christian peoples or groups, then it appears that while they were quite often associated with «schismatics, heretics and infidels» generally (especially during the 15th century), then most often, they were paired with the Tatars. Partially, this was probably connected with the fact that the Golden

Horde had been the overlord of most of Russia that was east of Lithuania, and that there were actually Tatar troops in Moscow's army, as well as that Moscow was in an alliance with the Crimean Khanate during the reign of Ivan III. On the other hand, Tatars had been especially important un-Christian and barbaric adversaries of Catholic Eastern European powers since the 13th century, and thus mentioning Russians alongside them was an easy way to stigmatize them¹¹⁰. And moreover, using of Tatars enabled to link them directly with the Turks, the arch-enemies of Christendom, after Crimea had become a vassal of the Ottomans — just like «Eynne schonne hysthorie» (which had paired Russians and Tatars right in its title) did. Naming Russians alongside with Tatars certainly had an impact in the Empire, as they were mentioned often together as enemies of Christendom, but they were additionally in the list of possible allies against the Turks in 1541; and probably also for this reason, the Moscovian embassy was named as Tatarian one in 1507.

But how successful was the Russian rhetoric for its presenters' political goals? It seems that using the Russian motif as a side argument in the Teutonic-Polish conflict over Prussia hardly had an effect in the Empire; in any case, the general quarrel itself ended inconclusively there (which was useful for the King of Poland and Duke of Prussia). On the other hand, argumentation about dangerous Russians was probably seen as a valid excuse for exemption of Imperial taxes — at least there is no doubt that the Russian threat was the main argument due to which the Livonians got tax reductions at the Diet of 1547–1548. However, this turned out to be a somewhat Pyrrhic victory, as Imperial Estates who had heard about endangerment of Livonia by Russians for decades, and were probably annoyed that the Livonians had not paid any Turkish taxes, refused to give any substantial help against Moscow in 1551, although the Livonians perceived Ivan IV as an actual threat by then. On the other hand, one should not think that the Livonians lost actual Imperial support because of their own overexploited rhetoric. Help from the Empire was lacking already during the wartime in the 1500s, and when it remained the same after the beginning of the Russo-Livonian War, then it was mostly connected with lack of real possibilities to support Livonia, as there were always issues that were seen as more pressing (such as war with the Turks), and there was only lukewarm interest towards Livonia by most of the Imperial Estates who were unmoved by any rhetorical enterprises of Livonians. That did not mean, however, that the Empire had no interest towards Livonia, and it seems that the rhetoric outside of Diets had sometimes more effect, as during the 1500s, when Livonian indulgence campaigns against «heretic and schismatic Russians and the most wicked Tatars» were quite successful in the Empire.

Finally, the current results permit to claim that there was no single dominating narrative about Russians and Moscow at the Imperial Assemblies, as well as amongst Imperial elites during the 15th and 16th centuries. It is clear that Russians were mostly depicted as evil enemies of Christendom, but this rhetoric was never able to subjugate the narrative of Russians as possible allies and/or fellow Christians. Sometimes, these were even used simultaneously, just like at the Diet of 1547–1548 when the Imperial Estates decided to reduce the Livonians' taxes due to threat of infidels, and to ask help from Moscow against the Turks. Thus, it is perhaps not that unsurprising that both narratives of the Russians persisted also during the Livonian War.

¹¹⁰ In Livonia, both concept pairs of «infidel Lithuanians and schismatic Russians» and «infidel Tatars and schismatic Russians» was used in 14th century, where Russians were seen as subjects, helpers or allies of «true enemies of Christendom» (Cf.: *Selart A.* 1) Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades... (esp. P. 286–293); 2) Political Rhetoric... P. 67).

Информация о статье

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Заголовок: Livonia and depiction of russians at imperial diets before the Livonian War [Ливония и образ русских по материалам имперских рейхстагов до Ливонской войны]

Резюме: В статье рассматриваются образы русских и Великого княжества Московского, представленные в материалах императорских сеймов (рейхстагов) с начала XV в. по 1550-е гг. В документах встречаются описания русских как раскольников и неверных, угрожающих (западному) христианству, подобно туркам-османам, как христиан, с которыми возможен церковный или, по крайней мере, политический союз. Темы, связанные с русскими, были актуальны для центральной ветви Тевтонского ордена, королей Польши и Ливонских территорий. Они использовали негативный образ как риторический инструмент для достижения определенных политических целей. И Орден, и Польша использовали образы русских в тевтонско-польской борьбе за Пруссию, в данном контексте русские сравнивались с нехристианскими врагами — татарами и турками. Кроме того, Орден часто утверждал, что для помощи Ливонии ее земли следует освободить от налогов и вернуть ей прежние владения. Ливонцы также использовали риторику русской угрозы, чтобы добиться освобождения от некоторых императорских обязательств, особенно от налогов. Порой они просили и прямой помощи против Москвы, но безуспешно, даже во время войны. Отчасти это может быть связано с конкурирующим нарративом: с 1490-х гг. Москва периодически рассматривается в качестве возможного союзника против турок. Затем интерес к Московии возрастает в империи благодаря контактам короля Максимилиана I с Иваном III и Василием III. В итоге до Ливонской войны ни один из этих двух сценариев не стал доминирующим в императорских рейхстагах. Даже во время войны, когда усилилась антирусская пропаганда, позитивный сценарий сохранялся — возможно, потому, что он имел довольно давние корни.

Ключевые слова: Россия, Великое княжество Московское, Священная Римская империя, Ливония, Имперские рейхстаги, Тевтонский орден, Польша

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Title: Livonia and depiction of Russians at Imperial diets before the Livonian War

Summary: The paper analyzes depictions of the Russians and the Grand Duchy of Moscow at the Imperial Diets from the beginning of the 15th century to the 1550s. Russians could be presented as schismatics or even infidels threatening (Western) Christendom, just like Ottoman Turks; or as fellow Christians with whom church union or at least a political alliance might be possible. Russian-related topics were usually presented by central branch of the Teutonic Order, the King of Poland or Livonian territories, who used negative depiction as a rhetorical tool to achieve certain political goals. Both the Order and Poland used the Russians in Teutonic-Polish conflict over Prussia, in which case they were described and compared with non-Christian

enemies: the Tatars and the Turks. Additionally, the Order often claimed that in order to help Livonia, it should be exempted from taxes, or that possessions and lands should be reinstated to it. The Livonians used Russian threat rhetoric also to get exempted of some Imperial obligations, especially taxes, and with a clear success. Sometimes, the Livonians asked direct help against Moscow, but without success even during the war times. Partially, it might be connected with the competing narrative: since the 1490s, Moscow was then and again proposed as possible ally against Turks. Then, interest towards Moscow also rose in the Empire due to contacts between King Maximilian I with Ivan III and Vasiliy III. In the end, neither of these two narratives became dominant at the Imperial Diets before the Livonian War, and even during the war, when Anti-Russian propaganda was intensified, the positive narrative persisted; perhaps because it already had quite long roots.

Keywords: Russia, Grand Duchy of Moscow, Holy Roman Empire, Livonia, Imperial diets, Teutonic Order, Poland

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