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AZERBAIJANI-TURKIC DIPLOMACY ON THE EDGE OF XVI-XVII CENTURIES IN ISKENDER BEK TURKMAN MUNSHI'S CHRONICLE

Abstract: *Shah Abbas's ruling period (1587-1629) was one of the most interesting pages in the Safavid history. The diplomatic rise of that epoch is related to economic development of European countries. Therefore their interests were diverted to the East and to the Safavid State, in particular. At the same time military threats from the Ottoman Empire catalyzed development of diplomatic relations. In addition, for the considering of the events from the diplomatic life of the earlier historical period we have used the source "Əhsanul-Təvərix" by Hasan bey Rumlu. Ruling period of Shah Abbas I is very amply reflected in the «Tarix-i ələmərə-yi Abbasi». The list of names of envoys from other literal sources is presented in the article. Namely, some events depicted in «Tarix-i ələmərə-yi Abbasi» are reflected as published in English-language literature. At that time envoys were mainly appointed from loyal to Shah Turks. Thus, Azerbaijani Turk diplomats played very important role in the development of the Safavid foreign affairs.*

Key words: *the Hapsburg's court, foreign policy, the Safavid's dynasty, diplomatic agreement, emissary.*

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Introduction

International political situation on the edge of XVI-XVII

Analyzing political powers distribution arranged around Azerbaijani states just starting the time of dynasty Aqqoyunlu reign, it could be noticed that in the second half of XIV¹, as well as in XV, and on the edge of XVI-XVII it continued to be similar. Ottoman threat was over European countries, and many European states were seeking an ally in the name of medieval Azerbaijan. Doubtless, elements of conflict ignition between two eastern states to weaken them both took place. Nevertheless, even their differing peculiarities

were being observed. Development of Azerbaijani-European ties as well as Azerbaijani-European relations as a whole were dictated in two directions – trading-economic and military-political during long historical period; with the only difference that for the relationships with Europe [nevertheless all efforts, negotiations conducted did not result in any decent military conclusion] was the first type of relations and for Eastern countries – the second type.

So, in XVI c. favorable conditions were created for capitalism development in Europe. Developing European and, namely English bourgeoisie, looking for getting sources of cheap raw materials and lucrative markets turned their glances to the East. Their attempts to find out marine ways to India bending the north of America or Asia were not any success, because marine ways were under Portugal and Spain and the Mediterranean was under control of Ottoman Empire (29, p.436-438). In connection with this an idea of Volga-Caspian transit exploitation merged. And except England that was profitable to the following states as Austria, Germany, Sweden,

¹ The first diplomatic relations with Europe were established even by Qara Yoluk Osman Aqqoyunlu. See in: N.F.Akhundova. Азербайджанские государства в XV-XVI вв. по материалам «Кембриджской истории Ирана» (13, p.38-41) and L.Tardy. Beyond the Ottoman Empire (14th-16th century Hungarian Diplomacy in the East) (30, p.3-17).



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Poland, etc. The mentioned states because of long distance between them and centers of silk trade faced the necessity of purchasing it through dealer countries (Venice and Portugal). So they were interested not less than England in establishing and developing trading and political links with Safavids. In its turn it is legal enough that Ottoman Empire was standing against Northern way to be used by Safavids².

And though further Russian merchants insisted Russia to annul trading privileges of Englishmen and established their control on Volga-Caspian way (7, c.244-251), moreover Englishmen and other European travelers' interest to Safavid state rose in correspondence with the said Moscow Campaigns. The long list of European travelers could be enumerated who visited the Safavid state for various reasons, until the beginning of the XVIII century, such as Pietro della Vale, Rafael du Manns, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Jean Chardin, Francois Petit de Lacroix, Engelbert Kaempfer, Pierre Sanson, Tadeusz Krushinsky, etc.³

As for the military-political factor catalyzing the development of European-Azerbaijani relations, then, as before, under the reign of the Azerbaijani dynasty Aqqoyunlu, its fundamental cause lay in the need for a joint struggle against the Ottoman Empire. For example, the 1583-1606's were marked by the Austrian-Ottoman wars, in which the Habsburg monarchy was actively trying to engage the Safavids. Safavid state during the reign of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) in turn, was also in a state of war with the Ottoman Turkey⁴.

² To put this goal to life Ottoman state went to open war conflict, starting a marsh to Astrakhan in 1569.

³ It is specific that since XVI century in Europe there start to appear books devoted to this region (34; 26). As an example it could be mentioned about Safavid-Ottoman wars by Giovanni Tommazo Minadoi, published in Rome in 1587, and a book on the history of Persia (Antwerp, 1583) by P.Bizarus. In Italy «tireless Venetian» Giovanni Baptista Ramusio collected valuable material on travels and discoveries, firstly published in three volumes between 1550 and 1563 in Venice. In 1598 his English double published the same work of Italian Ramusio under the heading «The Principal Navigations. Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries» (33).

⁴ In 1578 «after mejlis Sultan Murad expressed his firm intention to start the war» against Safavids in spite of Peaceful Treaty in Amasia (1555). This intention burst into long exhaustive war (1578-1590), each episode of which was described in details in the works of Ottoman palace chronicler of the time Ibrahim Rahimizadeh by name (15, p.33). Despite

On the other hand, the weakening of two powerful states of the East - the Safavid and Ottoman empires - served while the interests of the majority of the European powers, which, in turn, sought to achieve this goal, pitting them together⁵. Regarding the position of Abbas I, he served in the Austro-Ottoman War, the Shah supported position Habsburg, seeking to prolong the war as much as possible. For this, he held talks with Emperor Rudolf II, trying at the same time to raise other Western states against the Ottomans. However, due to the gradual change in the balance of power and intrigue within the anti-Ottoman coalition, Shah Abbas I tried to start peace negotiations with the Ottoman Empire. The gradual rapprochement did not suit many European monarchs, including the Emperor Rudolf II, who, in turn, in 1609, sent its ambassador to the Shah's palace. In 1609-1610 Safavid envoys held talks in Vienna. But these talks were no results.

However, in the development of the Safavid diplomacy this exchange of ambassadorial missions, of course, played a significant role. Among the most famous Austrian diplomats were the names of George Tektander, S.Kakash and, in turn, Turkman Azerbaijani ambassadors to the Habsburg court were Mehdigulu Bek, Hussein Ali Bek, and others. It is known that there was a diplomatic correspondence between Shah Abbas I and Rudolf II [about which it is narrated in the book Y.M.Mahmudov "Relations between States and the Akkoyunlu Safavid with Western European countries"], and that George Tektander left a remarkable description of the "Journey to Persia" with the annexes Stephen Kakash letters⁶. In connection with this mission Cambridge authors present interesting episodes. So, "in exchange for a diplomatic mission headed by R. Shirly and Hussein Ali Bek Bayat, Rudolf II sends mission headed by the Romanian nobleman S.Kakashy

one-sided and tendentious way of his writings, doubtless they are valuable source.

⁵ So, in spring of 1583 British Ambassador to Turkey W.Harboury in his letter to London pointed out that Ottoman Turkey's war to Safavids is "rather ruinous for Turks that their wars to Christian states. Let the Lord prolong their hardships for ever. Because their hardships are the source of our happiness" (18, p.203).

⁶ In 1877 Sh.Shefer translated it into French and published in Paris, in 1896 Alexei Stankevich did his translation into Russian due to German original book of Tektander, and translation of Kakash letters from French translation, because Vienna manuscripts were not accessible. Manuscripts are kept in Vienna archives and are of great interest for our historiography.

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Zalonkemeny to the Safavids in response ⁷. Before the mission reached Gilan, some members of mission, including Ambassador Kakashy himself, became victims of the unhealthy climate. At this time, Sir Robert Shirley (1581-1628) was at the Safavid courtyard at the request of Shah Abbas I ⁸. Robert Shirley was sent by Shah to meet the embassy and the ambassador to deliver them in Tabriz, where the Shah Abbas was, and this was depicted by A.A.Rahmani (22, p.13-14). Furthermore, Hans Roemer confirms the following details that are missing in the national historiography: "When R. Shirley reached the seat of the ambassadorial mission in Gilan, he, to my regret, found that Stephen Kakash was dead. However, Shirley took Tektander and a few survivors, the surviving members of the mission to his own apartments in Tabriz, where the courtyard itself was located (31, p.389). At the meeting, Shah Abbas showed him (Tektander – N.A.) courtesy and studied his credentials. While he was engaged in that, a Turkish prisoner was brought to his room, and immediately a servant entered and gave Shah two swords in the scabbards. Taking one of the swords, the Shah in one swift blow cut the head of an unfortunate prisoner. Poor Tektander shuddered with horror as the thought that now it was his turn. But his fear was in vain, as the Shah turned to him and gave him the second sword as a gift "(31, p.390). The latter handed letters of King Rudolf, written in Latin and Italian, as well as the letter of the Grand Prince of Moscow to the Shah. Then Tektander accompanied the Safavid army in all military operations after Tabriz events, and the description of this ambassadorial mission were depicted by Tektander in his above-mentioned book.

Materials and Methods

History of the Azerbaijani-Turkic diplomacy

Touching upon the Azerbaijani diplomats, the beginning of the development of national diplomacy, as such, falls to the reign of sultan Hasan Aqqoyunlu. It is rightly mentioned the name of Haji Muhammad, the official ambassador of Uzun Hasan, well known in Venice, Cyprus, Rome and took special active part in the events of 1473; moreover Sara (Saray) ⁹ khatun¹⁰, the first

lady-diplomat of the East, stood at the apex of diplomacy of Aqqoyunlu; she was a mother of Hasan Padishah. However, the number of Turkic ambassadors was much less than those of foreign countries, who were sent abroad on missions on behalf of the Aqqoyunlu sultans. Noticeably began to grow that number at Safavids reign, especially in the time of Tahmasib¹¹: Khoja Ali, Iffet Bey, Khoja Mohammad. The concept and names of envoys changed over time, as well as the number of received and sent ambassadorial delegations. For example, in "Tarix-e-alemaraye-Amini" Ruzbikhan Hunji indicates the number of ambassadorial mission to "around the middle of Ramadan, 893 (August 1488) Qaisar Sultan Bayazid II of Rum" at the court of the governor of Aghgoyunlu Sultan Yakub. Hunji notes that "he (the ambassador – N.A.) was one of the great emirs, and he was accompanied by 100 gulyams (bodyguards). He brought the letter and gifts ... " (23, p.99). Sh.F.Farzaliyev characterizes the diplomatic ceremony during the reign of Shah Tahmasib I with information from «Mükalimeye-Şah Tahmasib ba ilçiyane-Rum»¹² (Shah Tahmasib conversation with the ambassadors of Rum), noting that they were accepting at a time delegations of 2, 3 and even a few hundred people: for example, "in the 1561/62 Sultan Suleyman sent to his court the mission of the two ambassadors,

¹⁰ In details see in: Y.M.Mahmudov «Sara xatun», Azərbaycan diplomatiyası.Bakı, 1993; T.Najafli «Azərbaycan Aqqoyunlu və Qaraqoyunlu dövlətləri» (9, p.220-230); N.F.Akhundova «Azərbaycan Atabəylər, Aqqoyunlu və Səfəvilər dövrünün qörkəmli azərbaycanlı qadınları» (2).

¹¹ In many cases it was connected with peak of exacerbation of relations with Ottoman Empire bursting into Safavid-Ottoman wars (1533-1555) during the period of Shah Tahmasib's reign.

¹² One of the main and valuable prime sources casting light on the events of 20's-60's of XVI is «Tezkireyi-Şah Təhmasib». We've got it in two variants: «Tezkireyi-Şah Tahmasib» and «Mükalimeye-Şah Tahmasib ba ilçiyane-Rum». The first variant is fuller and exists in several handwritten variants, and was published in a few languages. But the manuscript «Mükalimeye-Şah Tahmasib ba ilçiyane-Rum» is kept in the State Public Library after M.E.Saltykov-Shchedrin (catalogue by V.Dorn, №302, p.2 (b-3a). In 1976 this manuscript was translated into Georgian by K.Tabatadze and published in Tbilisi. As soon as Georgian language is not so common for us, by fact the access to this source was nominal in domestic historiography. See also about manuscripts and issues of the both variants in: Ch.A.Story. Persian literature, bio-bibliographic review, part II, adapted by Yu.E.Bregel. M.. 1972, p.857-58.

⁷ This fact serves to confirm that by that time Safavid Shah Abbas I had already organized visit of his emissaries to Austria.

⁸ English traveler, who helped greatly to modernize and improve Safavid army, tried to bring it closer to British standards.

⁹ In «Kitabi- Diyarbakiriya» by Abu Bekr Tehrani the name of a mother of Uzun Hassan is reminded as Saray khatun.

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accompanied by 200 gulyams of Ottoman sultan, as well as about 300 approximate of both sides" (4, p.201). Referring to «Tezkireyi-Şah Təhmasib» (Reflections Shah Tahmasib), you can find a more detailed coverage of this event. "In 1561 Bayezid opposed his older brother Şehzade Selim, teaming up with Shah Tahmasib I ... At the time of Sultan Selim [with the support of his father, Suleyman Qanuni directs the Shah Tahmasib two envoys, each of which was accompanied by 200 servants. The aim of the visit was to meet the request of Sultan and to surrender Bayezid to him..." (11, p.81-82).

Hasan bek Rumlu elaborates on these figures, noticing that "the ambassadors arrived in Azerbaijan - Marash governor, Ali Pasha and qapıcıbaşı Hassan agha, introduced to the Shah, and their total number was 706 people" (4, p.201). At the same time it should be noted that although the envoys declared inviolable personality, however, these missions, for many of them could result in a very unpredictable and even disastrous consequences. Thus, according to information from "Ruzname" Haidar Çelebi, August 22, 1514, envoys who came to the camp of Selim I to negotiate, were brutally executed, after cutting off their limbs (p.76) (4, p.200). Often, in order to revenge monstrously the person that sent emissaries, envoys were burned. According to Hassan Bek Rumlu "Ölme [Ulema Tekeli,¹³ committed a betrayal of the Shah Tahmasib – N.A.], soon sends his emissary Ürkmez [Bek] Zulkadar, gave him with valuable gifts to his the throne" (المه را بن سخن موافق مزاج افتاده اورکمز ذوالقدر را با پیشکشهای لایق و تحفه های موافق به درگاه عرش اشتباه فرستاد) (37, p.1201). The latter, "shortly after arrival", was exposed to harsh punishment - "burned alive" (در آنجا اورکمز بیگ ذوالقدر از نزد المه آمدن بود سوزانیدند) (37, p.1203). [The causes of this event are detailed in the source «Tezkireyi-Şah Təhmasib» (11). According to this source, "Managing Tabriz, Ulema Tekeli became grossly abuse his powers: entrapped best Tabriz horses, took magnificently woven and decorated with the Shah's tent, plundered and ravaged residents ... Then Shah ordered to seize Ulema and bring to him. However, Ulema ran away." Moreover, "he had a close friendship with the Ottoman vizier Ibrahim Pasha," Ulema even made a proposal to Pasha: "Eastern territories are vacant, almost all Qizilbashs are with me, and if Pasha will move to the East, then I'll steer the country. Thus, Pasha becomes the ruler of Khorasan, Iraq, Azerbaijan,

Fars¹⁴, while paying an annual tribute to the Sultan" (11, p.83). Source confirms the of Ulema Tekeli's incitement to Sultan Selim to march on Azerbaijan; events associated with the combined forces of the Ottoman Sultan and Ulema and they are reflected in "Tarikh-i-alemaray-i Abbasi" (5, p.165-171). Even, when Tahmasib I directs ambassadorial mission composed of Hussein Khan, Muntеше Sultan and Abdullah Khan Elaldy to the Sultan with the following letter: Give us Ulema, and we will issue you Seref Bek, he was rejected. Ottomans explained their refusal saying that "the Ulema swore them fealty" (11, p.84). So, this insult to the Shah from Ulema Tekeli was to some extent justified]. We can cite as an example a "sad" story of Dengiz bek Rumlu that will be described in details below, and so on.

Safavid envoys in "Tarikh-i-alemaray-i Abbasi"

The diplomacy reaches its special blossom at Shah Muhammad Khuda-Bandah and Shah Abbas I. The period of Shah Abbas was a whole era, which is closely associated with the name of Iskander Bek Munshi and reflected in the work of this major representative of the Turkic court historiography of Azerbaijani Safavid dynasty, who began his service during Shah Mohammed Khuda-Bandah reign. The Turkman envoys were of particular interest of the time, who was directed by the Shah Abbas I in a different, in particular, the European countries, the names and the activities of some of them were also reflected in the work of the famous chronology. In light of the abovementioned, we would like to say a few words about the life and work of Munshi, the author of the famous work on the history of the Azerbaijani state of Safavids "Tarikh-i-alemaray and Abbasi" (History of Abbas decorating the world) (5, 6, 36). British scientist, Toronto University Professor, R. Savory indicates in his research, "Iskander Bek, his full name Iskender Bek Al-Shahir bi Munshi was born in 1560, died supposedly in 1632. The author began his career as an accountant, but soon he left this session by switching to *insha* (clerkship, writing). He was appointed secretary of the Shah and quickly rose to the rank of munshiyi-azım. The work of the historian describes the whole history of the Safavids, since the origin of the dynasty, the reign of Ismail I, Tahmasib I, Muhammad Khuda-Bandah and ending by the reign of Shah Abbas I. However, Savory researcher indicates nothing about the origin of

¹³ In detail see: F.Sümer. Safevi devletinin kuruluşu ve gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerinin rolü. Ankara, 1976, c. 57-62.

¹⁴ The spread table of the said "beglarbeks, which united into Azerbaijani vilayyet" is presented in «Tadhrikat Al-Muluk» (28, p.100-105).

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Munshi, calling him a "Persian" court historian (32, p.130-131). Iskender Bek Turkman "Munshi" (1560/61 - 1633/34) originated from Azerbaijani seminomadic Turkman tribe. In the XV century, this tribe entered into tribal unions Garagoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu, and in the XVI century, it united the tribes Pornak, Mosullu, Baharly, Bayandur that have fallen in the service of the Safavids. It is difficult to say to what tribe exactly Munshi belonged. With regard to his birth date, the different scholars also put forward different versions¹⁵. Great role of the main vizier of Shah Abbas I was in the promotion of young Iskender, the distinguished Azerbaijani leader etimadud-dövlə Hatam Bek Ordubadi¹⁶ whom Munshi later in his work gave an excellent review¹⁷. Qazi Ahmad in his "Treatise on Calligraphers and Artists"¹⁸ assigned appreciation of activities and abilities Munshi. He also noted that some time in the beginning of his career, Iskender Bek worked as a bookkeeper, and therefore have skills in the preparation of books on accounting (16). This information, incidentally, coincides with the data of Professor Savory. In 1626 Munshi took part in the war campaign of Shah Abbas I to Baghdad, and in 1631 (3 years before his death in 1634) - the marsh of Shah Safi to Baghdad. It should be noted, that in the work along with the other sources used "Ahsan ut-Tawarikh" of Hasan bek Rumlu (b. in 1530).

It is interesting to note that the work Iskender Bek Munshi presented an extensive list of the

closest persons to the Shah and state-administrative apparatus, in other words, lists qizilbashi tribes, which have a unique value. These lists were reviewed and studied by several researchers: V.Minorsky (28), O.Efendiyev (24), I.Petrushevsky (20), F.Summer (12), etc. The work presents 2 lists of qizilbashi tribes dating back to the time of death of Shah Tahmasib I (1576) and at the time of death of Shah Abbas I (1629). According O.Efendiev and I.Petrushevsky, it turns out that "in the first list of 114 emirs enumerated only 72 by names, and 42 names are not shown. Out of the 72 emirs only 61 were Turkic, and the non-Turkic - 11" (24, p.219). While, according to recent studies of historian Z.Bayramly, the first list of Iskender Bek Turkman (1576), including 114 emirs, only 84 people were shown by names. Out of them, 72 Emirs were of Turkic origin, and only remaining 12 were Talysh, Lurs, Kurds (3, p.63). As to the second list (1628), B. Minorsky referring to the annals of Iskender Bek Munshi notes that when Abbas I «of all the 89 emirs, 74 still belonged to qizilbashi tribes, and just 15 ones were gulams" (28, p.18-19). But I.P. Petrushevsky indicates that "35 out of 90 emirs were kzylybashi emirs" (20, p.109). In fact, in "Tarikh-I alemara-yi Abbasi" total number of emirs represented not 90, but 92. Moreover, the Z.Bayramly noted that the number of these Turkic emirs was 54, and not 35 as by I.P. Petrushevsky (3, p.65). Thus, we can conclude, that the majority of the higher positions and close to the governors by the Shah Tahmasib I, as well as by Shah Abbas I, were occupied by Turks. As can be seen, except the chronicles of important historical events, the elite of the Safavid court, in particular of Shah Abbas I, were described in the work, and ambassadors and envoys were chosen from them, since at that time a separate diplomacy institution as such had not yet been formed. The vast majority of them had Turkic origin, as "natives of Turkman tribes", and envoys, as it is known, Shahs entrusted them specific confidential information. Thus, according to Y.M.Mahmudov, no letters sent by Akkoyunlu Sultans and Safavi Shahs, never had descriptions of military plans, for purposes of secrecy, as great probability the of intercept mail by Ottoman soldiers existed (18, p.132). According Sh.F. Farzaliev, the letters noted mostly common phrases; the basic information was transmitted later verbally by envoys, that certified the shah's highest trust to them (4, p.199). Frankly, it could be added, that in this respect there was a certain well-organized system of diplomatic missions in the Safavid court yard, because a certain group of emissaries were sent to the East (Egypt, India, Turkey, etc..), another group - in Western and Eastern European countries, etc. For example, in "Tarikh-i alemara-yi Abbasi" in the

¹⁵ Unlike R.Savory, A.A.Rahmani (22, p.12), I.P.Petrushevsky (20, p.32), N.Falsafi, like most researchers define his birthdate of 1560-1561, Miklukho-Maklay (p. 168-193), and others, Bregel mark it as 1561-1562 years. In fact, based on the data of the work "Tarikh-i alyamara-yi Abbasi", you can set that as Iskender Munshi completed this work at the beginning of 1629, pointing at the end of the work that he has reached the age of 70, then, based on this we can assume that his date of birth is determined by the years 1560-1561 (5, p. 5).

¹⁶ They were bound to one another the whole life through. Those warm and friendly relations Munshi preserved with the son of the late Hatem bek, Mirza Abu-Talib khan Ordubadi who was appointed the next great vizier after his father passed away.

¹⁷ Iskender Munshi about Hatem bek: "(Shah – N.A.) appointed a clever, sobersides, highly moral and worthy Hatem bek Ordubadi to the highest position (vizier – N.A.) and authorized him a title of Etimadud-dovle"(6, p.824).

¹⁸"Iskender bek magnificently mastered different types of runic writing, differed with perfectness of his handwrite and excellent writing speed, and in setting documents, decrees, letters he was undefeatable" (16).

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narration of the departure of the ambassadors to the Indian, Rumi and the Deccan sultans (6, p.949; 36, p.513) reported repeated visits of Zeynal bek Bigdeli Shamlu [he also headed the embassy mission to Georgia (6, p.1296-1297)], as an authorized ambassador to India, as well as visits to hereditary ambassadors of Dervish bek and his son Muhammad Ali bek. During his last diplomatic mission Dervish Bek, appointed ambassador to Deccan dies. Describing those events, Iskender Bek pointed out: "Together with seids of Qazvin Maragha and tribal members Shamlu, Dervish Bek, mulazim of the Shah's stirrups, was sent to the governor of Deccan Ahmadenkerina [Ahmadnagar – N.A.], Nizamshah by name. However, he died in Shiraz, and the mission was entrusted to his son, Muhammad Ali Bek" (6, p.1691). In this connection, it draws attention to the narration by the author other ambassadorial mission to India: "After leaving Jalairids, it is already three years since the ruler of India, Jalaluddin Mohammad Akbar left the worldly earth and the receiver of his worthy father was his eldest son, Mohammed Selim¹⁹..." [We'll add that the first diplomatic mission to the Palace of Great Moguls was organized in 1559 on the occasion of congratulations Akbar Shah, it was headed by Sayyid Bek and was accepted by Akbar Shah. The second mission went there in 1565 (1, p.116-117)]. When the problem arose of urgent sending the Embassy to India and whom to entrust this honor, "His Highness has collected The Big Counsel, and one by one all suitable candidates were considered. At the end the choice fell on kyzylbashi tribe's mirza, the Emir of high rank, Ali Sultan Yadyger Talish ... He had no match in capabilities and elocution. Therefore, the Shah chose his name, entrusting the latter delivery of letters of his condolences to the deceased as well as congratulations with the coming to power of the new ruler, written with great love." But the

¹⁹ Representatives of Nizam Shahs, Muslim dynasty of sovereigns of Akhmandagar state (1490-1637) established by Malik Ahmad. In 1576 they were exposed to Moguls invasion and, the state was included into their empire (See in: K.E. Bothworth. Muslim dynasties. Translated by P.A.Gryaznevich. M.:1971, p.253). Bravely resisted Moguls' armies, but in 1637 finally lost their independence. During Shah Akbar I (1556-1605) diplomatic contacts still existed between Safavids and Great Moguls. In the net, the relations had peaceful character except *Kandagar issue*. During Shah Abbas I in 1595 Kandagar was expanded by Moguls (Agalarov M.Z., XV-XVI əsrlərdə Azərbaycan beynəlxalq münasibətlər sistemində. Dissertation summary. Baku, 2013, p.21).

ambassador, meanwhile, started organizing a decent preparation for a planned such an important visit. Fifty noble men boarded thoroughbred horses, wearing precious belts, and solemnly set off for Kandahar road. Among the valuable gifts were: 50 Arab, Georgian and *bayati* horses, expensive weapons brought from Russia, bedspread, made from the skins of silver fox, fifteen hundred articles of gold, clothing made of velvet, silk and satin, embroidered with gold and silver thread, fabric from Europe and China, etc., etc. (6, p.1405-1406).

Among the ambassadors, "specialized" on Europe, Mehdigulu Bey Turkman is worth mentioning, the very emissary who was sent at the behest of the Shah with the response mission to the Rudolph II of Hapsburgs' court, accompanied by Tektander. He was one of the most popular persons in the courtyard and enjoyed a special arrangement by Shah Abbas. His name is often found in "Tarikh-i alemara-yi Abbasi", where it is reported that Mehdigulu was instructed to draw up peace treaties and various official documents (6, p.825). Except the ambassadorial missions to Hapsburg courtyard, which were mentioned above, Mehdigulu Bek confided sending many secret messages to other European countries as well. For example, a letter of Shah Abbas I to the Polish King Sigmund III Vasa can be found in Warsaw in the political archives. It is known that King Sigmund III was famous as a mad lover of art, including carpet weaving. In 1601, he sends Stefan Muratovich to the Safavid lands to order carpet with the images of the royal heralds, though according to many historians, this expedition had political as well as commercial purposes (14, p.191). In a response letter Abbas I offers friendship and cooperation to the Polish king. According to Polish researchers this letter was delivered by Mehdigulu Bek Turkman to Sigmund III in 1605 (35; 14, p.191).

One of the eminent ambassadors of that time was notable yuzbashi Denghiz (Deniz) Bek Rumlu, mostly sent for European countries, and the last time, returning from Spain, he came to the court of Shah just at the moment of arrival Spanish king ambassadors to Isfahan, consisting of several Vatican padres, Christian priests and eminent scientists. The name of the Ambassador is related the tragic episode at the last stage of his life, which is mentioned in many sources. So, the British scientist-orientalist E. Brown (1862-1926), indicating the arrival of the Spanish mission to the court of Shah Abbas with expensive gifts, noted that there with them was Denghiz bek.²⁰ Then he

²⁰Let's note that in the "History of Don Juan the Persian" by Oruj Bek Bayat, the ambassador arrived

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quotes a passage from the "Tarikh-i alemara-yi Abbasi" by Iskender Munshi, which represented "the most reliable description" of this event: "The latter (Denghiz Bek – N.A.) incurred the displeasure of the Shah and was immediately sentenced to death in the most rude form, not allowing any opportunity to explain or justify; Shah then explained the Spaniards, that went that way because of treason acts, disrespect and insolence that bek has shown during the mission, for example: 1.unsealed letter with the royal seal, unveiling its content [showed it to Buzra who was the governor of all European ports - Brown omitted this point – N.A.]; 2.put on mourning clothes on the death of the Queen of Spain (which is contrary to the laws kyzylbashi servants); 3.profitteered from letter to the Pope from the Shah, which he gave to the merchant, to impersonate him, and with this transaction made him a decent profit ..." (25, p.6-7). The last reason is not as detailed and vividly described by the author as it was in the original at the Munshi: "His Highness wrote a letter to the Master of the Christian world and the Vicar of Christ on Earth and sent it to Deniz Bek. Deniz Bek also handed a letter to one merchant, and took a fee from him, charged him, calling himself Deniz Bek, to bring this letter to the European courtyard (*Firangistan darülxilafəsi*), while using it, and in order to capitalize on "(6, vol.II, p.1544-45). Further Brown brings according to Munshi the main 4. accusation of Denghiz Bek by Shah: "But, - concluded the Shah, - the root cause of his sentence contained in the inexcusable behaviour that Ambassador provided his companions, accompanying him, annoyed them since some of them converted to Christianity and stayed in Europe to escape from his tyranny, so that such excessive zeal in the name of Islam demanded the very punishment that he had got "(25, p.7). In fact, these 3 reasons headed with the fourth up in the last paragraph of Munshi called "The decree on errors of Deniz Bek, for which he suffered punishment" in "Tarikh-i alemara-yi Abbasi." Turkish researcher J.Aydogmushoglu adds here the fifth cause of punishment associated with the 50 bales of pure silk, presented to the King of Spain without any Padishah's permission. Moreover, in fact, according to R.P. Mathew, the King was given 8-10 bales, so it is possible that there occurred an act of theft (10, p.173). Here we can make a small clarification, that the effect of this was done on the initiative of another member of

the diplomatic mission, Antonio de Guvea, but the responsibility for what he did with Denghiz bek in any way is not removed. Anyway, the fate Denghiz bey so scared de Guvea that the latter did not dare to appear at the royal court, he left the Isfahan October 21, 1613, accompanied by two monks. It is noteworthy that Brown presents, comprising certain aspects of fraud in retelling Munshi on the data of the following works - "Appendices of Riza Qulu Khan to "Rauzat as-Safa" and the general history of Persia, made up to 1858 "- indicating that the above cited episode was almost exactly copied from the very minor changes to the "Tarikh-i-alyamara and Abbasi," except for one important, but it is, according to the author, "senseless alteration" of the last reasons of punishment. Namely: "Shah Abbas said that the main guilt of the ambassador was the following: several persons had intended to convert to Islam, and to move to Persia, but the Persian Ambassador has managed them so obscene that they repented of their intention and turned to Christianity, stayed in their country "(25, p.7). According to Brown's conclusion, "Riza Qulu Khan did not want to stir up the idea that the Persian Muslims might have converted to Christianity. Anyway, the above shows how some episodes of history can be transmitted in different ways by different authors (which is characteristic mainly for different compilation of works or authors, biased covering certain events), and at the same time what kind of value the written source by Munshi presents to us.

Imamgulu Bek Pakize Turkman held the important place among those envoys referred to in "Tarikh-i alyamara-yi Abbasi". His mission to Moscow Munshi described in the period of great unrest and turmoil when Muhammad Khuda-Bandah reigned: "Turkman Ambassador Imamgulu Pakize was appointed as an Ambassador to the Russian Tsar. Going to the royal court, he went on the ship in Gilan and with the values and gifts was sent by the sea "(36, p.507; 6, p.938-939). Imamgulu Khan was directed to Spain and Portugal with important visits. So, T.Najafli in his article devoted to the Safavid relations with these countries, based on the information of the Turkish researcher R.Kılıç that during R.Shirly's stay in Madrid Safavid Ambassador Imamgulu Khan came who was sent to Madrid with the Spanish ambassador Louis Pereira de la Kerda.²¹ Along with other valuable gifts he had brought 200 bales of silk to the king as a present. Safavid Ambassador came with a message from the Shah:

in Isfahan was under the name of Hussein Ali Bek, however this information does not coincide with data given by Munshi.

²¹The episode when Imamqulu khan Pakize Turkman accompanied Luis Pereira de la Perda back to Spain was also described by Y.M.Mahmudov (8, p.286).

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"In case Spain declares war on Turkey, then she will be given the full right to export Safavid goods conducted by the trade route Ormuz-Lisbon" (10, p.172). A special place in this list should be given to Hussein Ali Bek Bayat, the one who together with R.Shirly headed the first official diplomatic mission under the Shah Abbas I to courtyard of Hapsburg Rudolf II and belonged to the Shah's family ambassadors representatives. In 1599 Hussein Ali Bek was commissioned by the head of the largest ambassadorial delegation that departed in May of the said year for meetings and negotiations with the Pope, the Venetian Republic, Germany, England, France, Spain, the Duchy of Tuscany, the Scottish King, Polish and Scandinavian sovereigns. He and his brother Sultan Ali bek Bayat were still at the court of the Safavid Shah Muhammad Khuda-Bandah and descended from a noble Azerbaijani tribe Bayat, which was a part of the qizilbashi union. They were personal envoys of Shah Khuda-Bandah, Hamza Mirza and Abbas. But the most prominent representative of this stem was the nephew of Hussein Ali Bek, the son of Sultan Ali Bek, Oruj bek Bayat or as it is more commonly referred to in historical scholarship, Don Juan the Persian - a name he took, going on a diplomatic mission to the court of the Spanish monarch and at the end of his mission he suddenly decided to convert to Christianity and never was back to homeland. He participated in many diplomatic missions to European countries. His name is not listed in the work of Iskender Bek Munshi, but Oruj Bek is known by the work "The History of Don Juan the Persian" of three books that glorified him. Perhaps, it would be appropriate to conclude our narration with the remarkable statements from this trilogy: "Now we have 32 clans of noble families ... having a huge advantage in the country. Let's start with Ustajlu - chief of the clans, the majority of them are favorite servants of the Shah, and they always hold high and honorable positions by him. Shamlu - great butlers of Spain... Then there are Afshars: people with those names, in most cases, are the governors and ministers of justice. Then there are Turkmans who descend as warlords, princes and generals, as they are great soldiers. Bayat's family - the noblest family and ancestry, and all of them, as we would say in Spain, are the Dukes ... Harmandalu - we would call Marquises. Zulkadarlu - Dukes is the clan of valiant in battle and very brave men ..." (17, p.31).

Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing, the following conclusions could be done. Development of the Azerbaijani-Turkish diplomacy, the expansion of

relations between Azerbaijan and the medieval Europe, as well as numerous visits to its territory by Europeans contributed: 1. The threat of the Ottoman Empire to Europe and a desire to take certain diplomatic steps; 2. penetration of Portuguese economy to India in XV-XVI centuries, which increased the interest to the Middle East; growth of trade and economic relations in connection with the Moscovite companies. If at the beginning XV century the Ottoman threat to Europe was staved via victory of Amir Timur over Bayazid Blitz (1405), then at the end of XV, in XVI, and even in the first half of XVII century the Sublime Porte was forced to consider the ever-growing diplomatic ties of Aqqoyunlu states, later Safavids with European countries and share forces among them. It should be noted that European authors have played not the least in representing Aqqoyunlu and Safavids as "Persian states" (Clavijo, Jenkinson, De Alessandri, Chardin, et al.), and the Ottoman sources in context of frequent armed clashes covered those events biased often calling them «Əcəm dövləti» [so-called territory of a non-Arab population] (1, p.29), although «Tarikh-i aləmarayi Abbasi» pointed out that ever since the ascension to the throne, "Ismail and Qyzylbashes always fought for the throne and the kingdom of Azerbaijan" (6, p.57). Further, as to the issue on the development of the Safavid diplomacy at the turn on the edge of XVI-XVII centuries, and casting light on the matter on the basis of «Tarikh-i aləmarayi Abbasi» Iskenber Bek Turkman, noted that the specificity of this case was, as mentioned, the institute of diplomacy had not yet been formed, and all trustworthy people in the annals, with the rare exceptions, were called ambassadors. So, we had to check the events associated with the names of certain messengers alongside with the episodes described by other European, Turkish and domestic sources. Thus, that the most outstanding representatives of ambassadorial missions abroad during XVI-XVII centuries, headed Mehdigulu Bek Turkman, Dengiz Bek Rumlu (in English historiography in some cases, it occurs as a Dengiz Bek Shamlu), Imamgulu Bek Pakize Turkmans, Hussein Ali Bek Bayat, Zeynal bek Bigdeli Shamlu, Dervish bek Shamlu and his son Mohammad Ali Bek, Yadyger Sultan Ali, so on in majority were descendents of the Turkic tribes. From the annals of Iskender Bek Munshi it revealed that at the turn of the XVI-XVII centuries the whole galaxy of diplomats consisting mainly of the Azerbaijani-Turkic nobility played prominent role in the management of foreign relations in the Safavid state.

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