

opción

Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

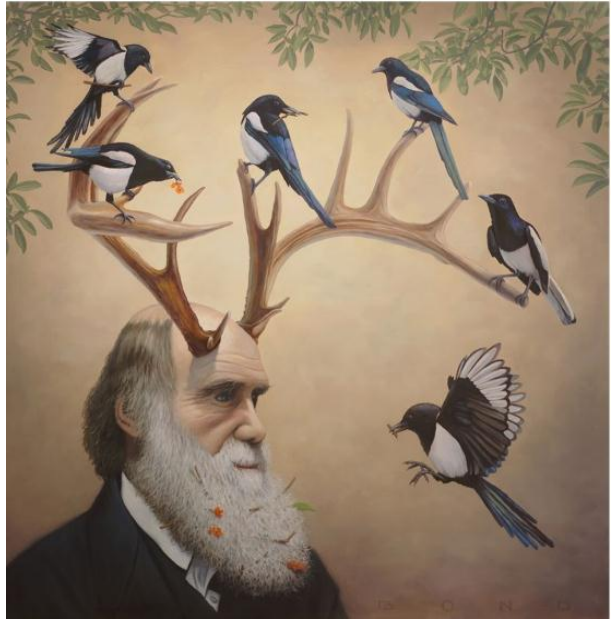
Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

22

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1537/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



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Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

The Causes of the Astrakhan Campaign of 1569

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the causes of the Astrakhan campaign of 1569 via the historical-genetic method in combination with a systematic approach and system analysis. The research showed that the active policy in the third quarter of the XVI century, on the one hand, led to the approval of the Moscow state at the estuary of Volga and strengthening of its position in the North Caucasus. In conclusion, the clash of political, economic and ideological interests of the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian state, the Crimean Khanate and the Moscow State led to the outbreak of a military conflict.

Keywords: Campaign, Astrakhan, War, Volga-to-Don, Channel.

Las causas de la campaña de Astrakhan de 1569

Resumen

El estudio tiene como objetivo investigar las causas de la campaña de Astrakhan de 1569 a través del método histórico-genético en combinación con un enfoque sistemático y un análisis del sistema. La investigación mostró que la política activa en el tercer cuarto del siglo XVI, por un lado, condujo a la aprobación del estado de Moscú en el estuario del Volga y al fortalecimiento de su posición en el Cáucaso del Norte. En conclusión, el choque de intereses políticos, económicos e ideológicos del Imperio Otomano, el estado polaco-lituano, el kanato de Crimea y el estado de Moscú llevaron al estallido de un conflicto militar.

Palabras clave: Campaña, Astrakhan, Guerra, Volga-a-Don, Canal.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Astrakhan campaign in 1569 became one of the research problems, understanding of reasons and purpose of which led historians to the opposite conclusions. It should be noted that the concept of the Russian historian of the XIX century Smirnov continues to prevail in domestic historiography. According to this concept, being a vassal of the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate did not pursue an independent foreign policy; both states equally wanted historical revenge: oust Moscow from the Volga and not to admit its political supremacy in Eastern Europe. At the same time, Western European scholars noted the independence of political line of the Crimean khans and the lack of interest of Port in participating in processes that took place in the post-hord period space in the VI century (KURAT, 1961).

The difference in approaches to understanding the designated problem was largely due to the source basis: the first ones built their observations mainly on information from Russian-speaking sources, and the second ones attracted Ottoman acts to the analysis. These circumstances are as a justification for the attempt to analyze the argumentation and conclusions of predecessors and the need to turn to the study of campaign to Astrakhan, carried out in 1569 by the Ottoman state together with the Crimean Khanate. The essence of the research subject dictates its goal: try to identify the causes of the first Russian-Turkish war and the degree of Istanbul and Bakhchisarai interest in the results of the campaign. International relations in Eastern

Europe in the third quarter of the XVI century are the object of research (KARAMZIN, 1998).

2. METHODS

The most universal historical genetic method became the basis of the study. It was aimed at analyzing international relations in Eastern Europe in the third quarter, including analyzing the development of relations between the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate and the Moscow State, their essence and nature. The research of features of political contacts between states, the degree of Istanbul and Bakhchisaray interest in reconquering Astrakhan required the use of special methods of historical science, in particular, comparative-historical (CASALE, 2010).

The use of this method allowed to reconstruct the picture of heterogeneous development of relations between the states of interest to us, largely due to the political ambitions of rulers and their environment. The attempt to combine these methods with a system approach and system analysis allowed to consider nature and essence of political contacts of the Ottoman Empire with the Crimean khanate as one of elements of the system of international relations in Eastern Europe and the Middle East in the post-hord period (BÄCHTOLD, 1951).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In 50-60-ies of the XVI century, there have been significant changes in the balance of political forces in Eastern Europe. In 1551 a new Khan – Devlet-Giray ascended the Crimean throne, whose name is associated with the foreign policy of the Crimean khanate independent from the Ottoman Sultan in the post-hord space. It bore plans for weakening and subjugation of the Crimean Khanate, the transfer of power in Bakhchisarai to the Nogai protege. But these intentions remained unfulfilled because of the truce with King Sigismund II Augustus that was coming to an end and real possibility of renewal of the conflict and intervention of the Ottoman Empire in it. From two possible directions of foreign policy (southern and western), Tsar Ivan IV preferred the priority implementation of tasks in the western direction: he started a war with Livonia (KURAT, 2015).

Although the government supported the continuation of active actions against the Crimean Khanate. The decision of the king objectively led to the dispersal of military forces, because they constantly had to take into account cool relations with the Crimea. The transfer of the Livonian Order under the protectorate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland in 1561 meant the cessation of the Baltic state existence. Sweden and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania demanded Ivan IV to withdraw troops from the Livonian territories seized by them, but they were refused. In 1562 the situation worsened on the southern borders of the Moscow state: King Sigismund II persuaded the Crimean Khan to raid the southern outskirts of the

Russian lands (BURDEJ, 1962: KAYACAN, 2018: LIMA, MENDES & PAIVA, 2018).

Under these conditions, the capture of Polotsk city was used by the Russian side as a reason for the departure of the Embassy in 1563 to Devlet-Girey in order to induce the khan to conclude a Russian-Crimean treaty and break the Polish-Crimean union. The entry of the Crimea and the Ottomans into the war was extremely undesirable: the need to fight on two fronts could prove disastrous for the Russian state. Shortly before the dispatch of Ambassador Athanasius Nagov, in 1562, the king ordered to demolish Psel city, which served as a springboard for the invasion of the Crimea in the previous decade. This act of goodwill did not provoke a reciprocal desire for union.

All these concessions to the Crimean side reflect the degree of the Russian tsar interest not just to neutralize, but to establish allied relations with the Crimea and to concentrate on continuing the Livonian war. The position of Bakhchisarai was determined not only by obligations of the treaty with Poland. It was influenced by the situation in the North Caucasus, and fears of a possible war with Moscow after the conclusion of the last peace in Livonia, and fears for the throne (DONNERT, 1980: OSIPOV, KUDRYAVTSEV, KOPTEV, IERMAKOV & BLIZNEVSKAYA, 2018).

At the considered time, the North Caucasus, divided into many principalities and fiefdoms, was engulfed in an internecine struggle between supporters of prince Temryuk Aydarovich, on the one hand,

and Walia, Prince Psheapshok Kaitukin, on the other hand. This struggle for power was in the hands of the Russian state. Having firmly established itself in the Volga estuary, it took steps to strengthen positions in the North Caucasus. Providing in the years 1562-1563. at the disposal of Ivan IV's father-in-law – Temryuk and Domanuk's brother-in-law, 500 archers and 500 Cossacks under the command of G. Pleshcheyev, the Astrakhan voivodes fulfilled the task of mastering the Sonsky cracks (i.e., passes of the Central Caucasus Range, which facilitated relations with Georgia) (RÜHL, 1992).

If the operation succeeded, control over the North Caucasus route would have passed into the hands of Moscow throughout its length, which affected the interests of Ottoman Turkey. Indeed, apart from its trade significance, this road, which connected the Black Sea coast with Derbent (Demirkap), was also of a military transport nature, which could become the key to successful military operations against Safavid Iran (KUSHEVA, 1963).

The second, no less serious reason that prompted the Ottoman Empire to take action against the strengthening of Russia in Desht-and-Kipchak, including the reconquest of Astrakhan, was the need to fulfill duties of Caliph – the defender of all Muslims. One of the tasks that Sultan-Caliph needed to solve was to ensure the security of the Hajj road. Because of border conflicts with the Uzbek khan Abdullah, the Iranian shah blocked the road for pilgrims arriving from Turkestan. The Ottoman Empire could also be reached via the northern route, passing through Astrakhan, the territory of Kabarda and Dagestan. But

this road was under the control of the Russians: in 1567 on the bank of the river Terek (at the estuary of the Sunzha river), a fortress was built. The way to Astrakhan and Derbent for the Turkestan merchants and pilgrims was closed. The construction of the Russian fortress was considered by the Ottoman Empire as a direct encroachment on its territory (INALCIK, 1948).

The third reason that made the Ottoman Sultan decide on the Astrakhan campaign was the interest in Astrakhan, which was an important commercial hub and the Caspian port, which daily received ships from Shirvan, Iran and the Middle East. It is enough to note that the daily turnover of Astrakhan bargaining was 1000 gold. In addition, the pilgrims' appeals indicated that it would not be difficult to take Astrakhan, this task would be handled by insignificant forces, the backbone of which should be the army of the Crimean Khan and the Nogai cavalry. Moreover, the possession of Astrakhan made it possible to have an advantageous strategic position in relation to the potential enemy of the Ottoman Empire Safavid Iran (NOVOSEL`SKIJ, 1948).

It should be noted that in the Russian historiography two diametrically opposed opinions about the campaign to Astrakhan were developed. According to the first, Sultan Suleiman stated that the Ottoman state always lived in peace with Moscow and there was nothing to divide, that the annexation of Kazan and Astrakhan khanates was a matter of the Russian sovereign and the Ottoman sultan never claimed the given territories. According to the second, Suleiman was extremely interested in Astrakhan, but at that time the Ottoman

Empire was engaged in a war against Hungary and Persia. The assertion about the war against Persia is puzzling, as since 1555 the Ottoman Empire was at peace with Safavid Iran, the conflict between them broke out only in 1578.

According to H. Inaldzhik, even before 1563, the Ottoman sultan hatched a plan for reconquering Astrakhan. It seems that this was due to the emergence of towns of the Grebensky Cossacks in the river Sunzha. In order to secure himself from the West and concentrate forces in the North, in 1562 sultan made an alliance with Austria. According to the researcher, sultan simply could not put up with the fact that on the lands that belonged to him rightfully, the treacherous Russian tsar repaired his will. However, in 1564 the campaign to Astrakhan did not take place. The Crimean Khan played a significant role, who understood that the presence of Ottoman troops in the Crimea would increase the influence of the Ottomans in the region and that he would have to bear all the hardships of a campaign. Also, Crimean Khan wanted to extract maximum material benefit from the diplomatic and military confrontation between Lithuania and Moscow, forcing them to send the treasury in maximum volumes.

Devlet Giray Khan sought from Ivan IV the rejection from the conclusion of peace with Sigismund II. He believed that signing of a peace agreement and rapprochement of Moscow with Lithuania would create favorable conditions for starting a war against the Crimean Khanate. Khan was also concerned about the increasing rapprochement between Ivan IV and Temryuk, the appearance of a fortress on the

river Terek in 1567 and the prospect of turning the Russian tsar into a neighbor. All this could complicate the raids on Kabarda, cause a departure from the Ottoman Empire of the Circassians and turn the Crimean Khanate into an object of the Russian conquest.

Polish-Lithuanian diplomats followed the tactics of weakening the Russian state with the hands of Crimeans, pushing them to raid on the Russian lands. Ivan IV sought to achieve a peace agreement with the Crimea and made concessions: in 1566 he handed over a certificate of consent to pay the Magmet-Kireevskiy funerals. The retaliatory step of Devlet-Girey was the rejection of the demand to return the Tatar Muslim yurtas – Kazan and Astrakhan. From 1566, the warming began in relations of the Crimea with Moscow: Devlet-Girey refuses to make a trip to the Russian suburbs. However, in September 1566, Sultan Suleiman died and the throne passed to his successor – Selim II, in which the vector of the foreign policy of the empire from the north-west direction was replaced by east and north-east.

The main reason for the activation of the Ottoman Empire in the Eastern European region was the numerous addresses of Central Asian sovereigns and pilgrims. At the beginning of 1568, the ambassador of the Khiva ruler, Haji Mohammed Khan, arrived in Istanbul with a letter in which he spoke about the traditional friendly relations of the Khiva khanate with the Ottoman Empire and complained about the closure of the road by Russians, various bans on pilgrims and merchants, and asked the Ottoman ruler to open Astrakhan road. To which sultan responded in two letters. On February 14, 1568 the

Sultan's decree was issued, in which the ruler of Kafa Jafer was informed about the beginning of military operations against Astrakhan. The development of the international situation in the first half of 1568 made inevitable the military conflict between the Ottomans and the Russian state and the involvement of the Crimean Khan.

Astrakhan campaign in 1569, domestic historians consider the Crimean-Turkish aggression (or treacherous invasion) in relation to the Moscow State. Turkish researchers proceed from the fact that this campaign was not directed against the Moscow state since both the Kazan and Astrakhan khanates were part of the Islamic world and became Russian only for the last 10-15 years.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The clash of political, economic and ideological interests of the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian state, the Crimean Khanate and the Moscow State led to the outbreak of a military conflict, which became famous both as the Astrakhan campaign of 1569 and as the first Russian-Turkish war. The reason for the war was the appeal of the Khiva ruler Haji Mohammed Khan with a request to open the Astrakhan road for pilgrims and merchants. The Astrakhan campaign of 1569 was not due solely to religious factor and it was not limited to the manifestation of the aggressive policy of Ottoman Turkey. The primary role in an organization was played by economic and geopolitical factors, change in the foreign policy orientations of Port

under Sultan Selim II. Astrakhan, due to its geographic location, opened up opportunities for closer contacts with the North Caucasus and the Middle East, and the Caspian city was also considered as a springboard for future wars with Iran.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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**UNIVERSIDAD
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Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 35, Especial No. 22 (2019)

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.

Maracaibo - Venezuela

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