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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CRIMEAN KHANATE AND THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN STATE DURING THE REIGN OF DEVLET I GIRAY AND MEHMED II GIRAY IN *MÜHIMME DEFTERS**

Abstract

Mühimme defters have a special place among all the archival material inherited from the Ottoman Empire. Recording copies of the decisions made in the Imperial Council, the highest administrative organ of the state, these *defters* contain important information not only about the domestic affairs of the Empire but also about its foreign policy. This study examines the relations between the Crimean Khanate and the Polish-Lithuanian State as reflected in *mühimme defters* from 1551 to 1584. Border disputes, annual payments made or not made by Poland to the Crimean Khanate, diplomatic relations, exchange of ambassadors, and the residence of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray in Poland were some of the main issues reflected in *mühimme defters*.

Keywords: Crimean Khanate, Ottoman Empire, Cossacks, Tribute, *mühimme defters*

INTRODUCTION

Relations between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Crimean Khanate go back to the early years of the Khanate. Friendly relations that Hacı I Giray (1441–66), founder of the Crimean Khanate, had with the Polish government are detailed in Polish chronicles of the time.[1]

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[1] Jan Długosz, *Roczniki, czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego*, Book 12 *(1445–1461)*, 256, 385, 419; Book 12 *(1462–1480)*, 131–3, 182, ed. Krzysztof Baczkowski *et al.*, prep. of Latin text Danuta Turkowska and Czesława Pirożyńska,

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Upon Hacı I Giray's death, a fierce fight broke out among his sons for the Crimean throne. Following a policy of leveraging this conflict, which also involved the Genoese, to establish control over the coasts of the Black Sea, Mehmed II brought important cities in the Crimean Peninsula, such as Kefe (Caffa), Azak (Tanais) and Mangub, under direct Ottoman control, and turned the Crimean Khanate into a vassal state. This made the Ottoman Empire an important third actor in relations between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Crimean Khanate. During the reign of Mengli I Giray (1466–1515), soon after the Khanate became an Ottoman vassal state, Bayezid's son Mehmed, who was in Kefe at the time, served as a mediator in talks between Lithuania and Crimea.[2] Naturally, relations between the Crimean Khanate and the Kingdom of Poland started to be mentioned in Ottoman documents.

Ottoman archival materials preserved to the present day are divided into two main groups: *evrak* (papers) or *defter* (books), depending on their origin.[3] Materials currently kept in the Presidential Ottoman Archives and the Archives of the Topkapı Museum are classified on this basis. The word *evrak*, derived from Arabic, means sheet, book page, paper, and an official document processed by a government agency. The term *defter*, of Greek origin, on the other hand, is used to refer to collections of *evrak* bound together to form a book in Islamic and Turkish bureaucracy. The Ottoman bureaucracy, influenced by the Ilkhanate, kept systematic records in the form of *defter*. Decisions made by the Imperial Council and the Treasury bureaucracy, in particular, were recorded in *defters*.[4]

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transl. into Polish Julia Mruk, translation verification Jerzy Wyrozumski and Krzysztof Ożóg (Warszawa, 2009).

[2] Kazimierz Pułaski, *Stosunki z Mendli-Girejem – chanem Tatarów perekopskich (1469–1515). Akta i listy* (Kraków–Warszawa, 1881); Documents: 34, pp. 232–3, 36, p. 235, 37, p. 236.

[3] Classifying archive documents into two as *evrak* and *defter*, Boris Nedkov notes that the originals of the documents were very important, and what was kept in the archives might be copies or drafts. See *id.*, cited in Mübühat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili (Diplomatik)* [The Language of Ottoman Documents (Diplomatic)] (Ankara, 2013), 10–11.

[4] Nejat Göyünç, "Defter", Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (hereinafter *TDVİA)*, 9, 88–90; Bernard Lewis, 'Daftar', *Encylopedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, 5–6; İskender Türe-Salim Kaynar, *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşiv Rehberi* [A Guide to Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives] (İstanbul, 2017), 19.

In Ottoman archive records, one of the earliest documents on the relations between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Crimean Khanate is a document from the era of Mehmed I Giray (1515–23). In the document, which must have been written during the Belgrade campaign (1521) of Süleyman I (1520–66), the Ottoman ruler ordered the Crimean Khan and his forces to conduct a raid into Poland. In response, Mehmed Giray wrote a letter refusing the order by Suleiman I, explaining that a peace treaty was signed with Poland in return for 15 thousand florins and hostages and that if the conditions of the peace treaty were violated, they could kill Evliya Mirza, son of Devletek Bey from the Shirin tribe who was in the hands of the Poles, and put the Khanate in trouble by freeing Sheikh Ahmet Khan, the archenemy of the dynasty.[5] As this Ottoman archive document from 1521 shows, documents kept by the Ottoman bureaucracy can shed light on different aspects of the relations between Poland and the Crimean Khanate and provide clues regarding the Crimean khans' thinking on relations with Poland.

In the correspondence between the Ottoman Empire and Poland, on the other hand, issues concerning the Crimean Khanate were first mentioned at a later date. A letter sent in 1533 by Ibrahim Pasha, the Grand Vizier at the time, to Sigismund I the Old shows that Poland had asked that its issues with the Crimean Khanate be mentioned in the *ahidname-i hümayun*[6] to be signed with the Ottoman Empire. Ibrahim Pasha rejected this request by saying that, although Sahib I Giray (1532–51) was crowned by Suleiman I and was like a son to the sultan, the Crimean khan was still an independent ruler with a country and state of his own.[7] Despite Ibrahim Pasha rejecting

[5] Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi-Evrak (TSMA-E), 434/55. Almost all archival materials kept at Topkapı Palace were transferred to the Presidential Ottoman Archives.

[6] Consisting of the Arabic word *ahd* and the Persian word *name*, *Ahidname-i Hümayun* meant a document that contained the terms of an agreement and signatures of two sides, in other words, treaties with other countries. See Fehmi Yılmaz, *Osmanlı Tarih Sözlüğü* [Dictionary of Ottoman History] (İstanbul, 2010), 22; Mübühat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili* [The Language of Ottoman Documents], 163. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk translates *ahidname-i hümayun* into Polish as *list przymierny*. See Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th–18th Century), an Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames' and Other Documents* (Boston–Leiden, 2000), 3.

[7] Hacer Topaktaş, H. Ahmet Aslantürk, *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Dönemi Osmanlı-Leh İlişkilerine Dair Belgeler (1520–1566)* [Documents on Ottoman-Polish Relations during

this request, Sahib I Giray was mentioned in the *ahidname-i hümayun* of 1533.[8] By 1539, the author sees that Poland's complaints regarding the Crimean Khanate were taken into consideration by the Imperial Council, which asked Sahib I Giray to stop Tatar raids into Poland,[9] and after this date, the Crimean Khanate and Tatar communities became the main topics in the correspondence between Poland and the Ottoman Empire.

Defters kept by the Ottoman central government prior to *Tanzimat* (before 1839) are those belonging to *Divan-ı Hümayun* and *Bab-ı Defteri,* that is to say to the Imperial Council and the Treasury. The *mühimme defters* on which this study is based are registers that kept copies of the decisions made in the Imperial Council,[10] the Ottoman state apparatus's highest administrative and judicial organ. *Mühimme defters* also contain copies of *kanunnames* [laws], *adaletnames* [decrees], orders sent to state officials such as *beylerbeyis* [governors], *sancakbeyis* [district governors] and *qadis* [judges], *name-i hümayuns*[11] [imperial letters] sent to rulers such as the Crimean khan, Voivode of Transylvania and the Sharif of Mecca, and *ahidname-i hümayuns* [imperial

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the Reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566)] (İstanbul, 2014) (hereinafter *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Dönemi*), Doc. no. 8, 56–7. Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Archiwum Koronne Warszawskie (hereinafter AGAD AKW), dział dokumentów tureckich (hereinafter dz. tur.), t. 35, k. 67, no. 78. For a Polish summary of the document, see Zygmunt Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich. Dokumenty do dziejów Polski i krajów ościennych w latach 1455–1672* (Warszawa, 1959), no. 31, 45–6. The document does not mention Sahib Giray by name, but there is no question that it refers to him. The word made out to be *değmeleri?* in the document, with some hesitation, is probably *dikmeleri* in the sense of crowning someone.

[8] Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, Doc. no. 13, 231, Doc. no. 14, 233.

[9] *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Dönemi*, Doc. no. 22, 87–8 [AGAD AKW, dz. tur., t. 64, k. 68, no. 140]. For a Polish summary of the document, see Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*, Doc. no. 52, 64.

[10] In the Ottoman Empire, Divan-ı Hümayun or the Imperial Council was an organisation that resembled contemporary cabinets, where important state affairs were discussed and decided, including military, legal, and financial affairs. See Yılmaz, *Osmanlı Tarih Sözlüğü*, 136–7.

[11] Letters sent by Ottoman sultans to rulers of other states, as well as to the rulers of political units that enjoyed special privileges within the Ottoman Empire, such as the Crimean Khanate and Wallachia, were called *name-i hümayun* or imperial letters. Zeynep Tarım Ertuğ, 'Nâme-i Hümâyûn', *TDVİA*, Annex–2 (Ankara, 2019), 345–6.

treaties].[12] In this context, copies of the imperial letters sent to the Poland--Lithuania and the Crimean Khanate are also found in *mühimme defters*. The oldest *mühimme defter* we have access to is dated 1544, kept in the Archives of the Topkapı Palace Museum. However, almost the entire collection of *mühimme defters* is kept in the Presidential Ottoman Archives. For the present study, *mühimme defters* dated 1551 to 1584 were examined, and records concerning the relations between the Crimean Khanate and the Polish-Lithuanian State were identified and evaluated.[13]

There were two main reasons for selecting the period from 1551 to 1584, which corresponds to the reigns of Devlet I Giray (1551–77) and Mehmed II Giray (1577–84). The first is that researchers have access to an uninterrupted series of *mühimme defters,* which constitute the main archival source of the present study, for these years. The second reason is that the Ottoman Empire and Poland-Lithuania had friendlier relations in this period compared to the seventeenth

[12] Feridun M. Emecen, 'Osmanlı Divanının Ana Defter Serileri: Ahkâm-ı Mîrî, Ahkâm-ı Kuyûd-ı Mühimme, Ahkâm-ı Şikâyet' [The Principal Series of Registers of Ottoman Divan: Ahkâm-ı Mîrî, Ahkâm-ı Kuyûd-ı Mühimme and Ahkâm-ı Şikâyet], *Osmanlı Klasik Çağında Hanedan, Devlet ve Toplum* (İstanbul, 2011), 111–57; İskender Türe-Salim Kaynar, *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşiv Rehberi* [A Guide to Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives], 22–9; Mübahat Kütükoğlu, 'Mühimme Defteri', *TDVİA*, 31 (Ankara, 2020), 520–23; Suraiya Faroqhi 'Mühimme Defterleri' EI², vii (Leiden–New York, 1993), 470–2.

[13] Imperial letters sent by Ottoman sultans to European rulers from 1545 to 1696 and recorded in *mühimme defters* were studied in a MA thesis by Aylin Dengiz Ökke which also included letters sent to the Polish-Lithuanian State. Aylin Dengiz Ökke, *Mühimme Defterlerinde Kayıtlı Avrupalı Hükümdarlara Gönderilmiş Nâme-i Hümayunlar (1545–1696*) [Imperial Letters Sent to European Rulers and Recorded in *Mühimme Defters* (1545–1696)], unpublished MA thesis, Marmara University, Institute of Turkic Studies (İstanbul, 2020), 607–731. The present study uses imperial letters to Poland after checking them against original copies. *Mühimme defters* were examined to identify the letters sent to Crimean khans. Some of the *mühimme defters* have been studied in master's theses by Presidential Ottoman Archives specialists and academicians. *Mühimme defters* of 3, 5, 7, 12, 82, 83, 85, 91, etc. were edited by the specialist of Presidential Ottoman Archives, see *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri 966–968/1558–1560*, ed. by Nezihi Aykut-Cevdet Küçük *et al.* (Ankara, 1993); *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri 975–976/1567–1569*, ed. by Hacı Osman Yıldırım, Vahdettin Atik *et al*. (Ankara, 1998). Most of the *mühimme defters* published as MA thesis could be reached via the internet page of Council of Higher Education of Türkiye: https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezSorguSonucYeni.jsp.

century.[14] This, in turn, made it possible for Poland to raise its complaints regarding the Crimean Khanate directly with the Ottoman government. The Crimean Khanate, on the other hand, responded to these complaints before the Imperial Council and voiced complaints of its own regarding Poland.

I
TAXES, GIFTS OR FEES?

During the reigns of Devlet I Giray (1551–71) and his son Mehmed II Giray (1577–84), one of the most important issues between the Crimean Khanate and the Poland-Lithuania was the annual payments made or not made by these states to the Khanate. Following the Battle of Blue Waters of 1362, Lithuania annexed southeastern Ruthenia lands around Podolia and Kiev. Nevertheless, it continued to pay tribute to Golden Horde rulers for regions it captured until the fifteenth century.[15] During the reign of Mengli I Giray, a proposal was made for a tax payment of three *kuruşes* per person for everyone residing in Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia, but it never came to be. However, regardless of whether they were called gifts or tributes, annual payments began during the reign of Mengli I Giray. The issue of tributes continued to be contested during the reign of Sahib I Giray.[16] As Dariusz Kołodziejczyk points out, naming the annual payments to be made to the Crimean Khanate was a point of contention in the correspondence between the Ottoman Empire and Polish-Lithuanian State. Ottoman sources used the term 'taxes', whereas the Poles preferred the term *żołd,* which denoted a payment made to soldiers.[17] In *yarlyks* or edicts sent to the Kingdom of Poland, on the other hand, Crimean Khans

[14] See Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 118–57; Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, '1795'e Kadar Osmanlı-Leh İlişkilerinin Karakteri Üzerine Bazı Tespitler', *Türkler*, ix, ed. by Hasan Celal Güzel-Kemal Çiçek (Ankara, 2002), 679–85.

[15] Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania. International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th–18th Century). A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden–Boston, 2011), 5, 7.

[16] Ibid., 37–8, 43; Doc. no. 10, 586. In the Polish proposal made at the time of Mengli I Giray emphasis on the military cooperation against Moscow is apparent as well. Pułaski, *Stosunki z Mendli-Girejem*, Doc. no. 46, 247.

[17] Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 129.

referred to these payments as *bölek hazinesin*.[18] Philologist Faysal Okan Atasoy explains the phrase *bölek hazinesin* in the *yarlyk* sent by Gazi Giray in 1592 to Poland as *gifted goods*.[19]

Another issue that needs to be noted is that in treaties made with Poland, the Imperial Council bureaucracy prefers the phrase "customary payments".[20] In almost all the *mühimme defters* from the period under study, the Ottoman bureaucracy used the term taxes when referring to the annual payments made by Poland-Lithuania to Crimea.[21] In the imperial treaties sent to Poland-Lithuania, on the other hand, the phrase *adetler* or 'customary payments' was used, showing that the concerns of the Polish government were taken into consideration. In copies that were kept in Istanbul, on the other hand, the Ottoman bureaucracy used the term *virgü* or taxes.[22] One of the earliest

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[18] *Kırım Yurtına ve Ol Taraflarga Dair Bolgan Yarlıglar ve Hatlar* [Edicts and Letters in Crimean Tatar 1520–1742], i, ed. by Vladimir Vladimirimoviç Velyaminov-Hüseyin Feyzhanov, Turkish edn by Faysal Okan Atasoy (Ankara, 2017), *Yarlıglar*, Doc. no. 4, 98.

[19] *Kırım Yurtına ve Ol Taraflarga Dair Bolgan Yarlıglar ve Hatlar*, ii, Index (Ankara, 2017), 203–4. *Bölek* – things that are wrapped, gifts, presents. *Bölek hazinesi* – valuable goods that are gifted. *Bölek selam* – greetings meant as a gift, or gifts sent as a greeting.

[20] Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, Doc. no. 15, 237–40; Doc. no. 17, 249–53; Doc. no. 21, 272–7.

[21] A sample phrasing was as follows: "kadîmü'z-zamândan ilâ hâze'l-ân memhûr olan yiğirmi beş bin guruş virgünizi" or "the twenty five thousand *kuruşes* in taxes that were levied on you from ancient times to the present". Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Bâb-ı Asâfî Divan-ı Hümâyûn Sicillatı Mühimme Defterleri [Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives, The Sublime Porte and Imperial Council Sicils, Mühimme Defters, hereinafter BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d.], no. 35, 145–6, order 373; Aylin Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 683.

[22] Similar disagreements existed regarding the naming of the annual payments made by Voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia to the Crimean khans. Sergean Osman argues that this was a gift or protection money rather than being a tribute or *jizya*, whereas Hakan Kırımlı argues that they are more properly called taxes. Moreover, Sergean Osman notes that Tahsin Gemil, an eminent Romanian researcher of Early Modern Black Sea region historian, also translates the term *virgüle*r as *'fixed gifts'*. Kırımlı, on the other hand, refers to the annual payments made by Poland as taxes or tribute. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, one of the most prominent names in Ottoman historiography, also refers to these payments as taxes. See Sergean Osman, 'Did the Crimean Khans Collect tribute (Harâc or Hazine) from Moldova and Wallachia?', *Studia et Documenta Turcologia*, 2 (2014), 121–3; Hakan Kırımlı, *Geraylar ve Osmanlılar, Kırım Hanlık Hânedânın Osmanlı Devleti'ndeki Hikâyesi* [Girays and Ottomans: The Story of the Ruling Dynasty of the Crimean Khanate Within the Ottoman Empire] (İstanbul,

documents in which the Imperial Council bureaucracy used the word *adetler* instead of *virgü* is from 1539.[23]

In a treaty he sent to Mengli I Giray on 5 September 1513, King Sigismund I specified the annual amount to be paid as 15 thousand florins. This amount was to be paid in two equal instalments, one half by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the other half by the Kingdom of Poland. The Polish-Lithuanian State requested military assistance in return for the payments and was insistent about it. This information about the annual payments was repeated in treaties made during the reign of Mehmed I Giray as well, which may indicate that the annual payments had been institutionalised.[24]

The Crimean bureaucracy used the phrase *bölek hazinesin* in *yarlyks* sent to Poland but described it to the Ottomans as "taxes levied by the late Mehmed Giray".[25] In a letter sent to the Ottoman sultan, the Polish government explains that the annual payments made to the Crimean Khanate are in return for cooperation in the campaigns against Moscow and the Germans, who were enemies of Poland.[26] Here, the Polish government is obviously explaining the Polish term *żołd*. The Crimean Khanate did not request payment for the years it was

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2022), 147; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* [Ottoman History], iii, Part 2 (Ankara, 2019), 33–4.

[23] *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Dönemi*, Doc. no. 22, 87–8 [AGAD AKW, dz. tur., t. 64, k. 68, no. 140]; for a Polish summary of the document, see Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*, Doc. no. 52, 64.

[24] Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, Doc. no. 10, 586; Doc. no. 15, 616. See also the similar solutions in the other *ahdnames* from the reign of King Sigismund I: Doc. no. 17, 631, Doc. no. 20, 658; *Kırım Yurtına ve Ol Taraflarga Dair Bolgan Yarlıglar ve Hatlar* [Edicts and Letters in Crimean Tatar 1520–1742], Yarlıglar, i, no. 1, 89–94. I believe it should be like that the 4500 florins to be paid in 1507 by Poland for the needs of the soldiers in the castle of İslam Kerman should be treated separately from the annual payment in question. See Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, Doc. no. 9, 566–79. For the amount to be paid and the reason for the payment, see 578.

[25] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966–968/1558–1560)*; T.C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, ed. by Nezihi Aykut *et al*., Osmanlı Arşivleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları (Ankara, 1993), order 951, 424.

[26] The explanation was as follows: "The payment being made by Poland to Tatar Khans is in return for their services in wars against enemies like Moscow and Austria, having fought together with the kings of Poland". BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 145–6, order. 373; Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 683.

at war with Poland and conducted major raids into Polish lands.[27] Mehmed II Giray notes that this payment was made in cash and in fabrics of different kinds, totalling thirty thousand florins. In the same order, Mehmed II Giray refers to an edict by Suleiman I to the effect that raids can be conducted into Polish lands if the Polish government fails to make these payments.[28] The author was unable to confirm the existence of this edict. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Ottoman Empire viewed these payments from Poland to Crimea as mandatory or even as a form of tax. This view is also supported by the fact that, in the Ottoman Empire, taxes levied on people who raised sheep and goats were called *adet-i ağnam*.[29]

Mühimme defters contain many sometimes conflicting records regarding the chronology of the payments made or not made. In chronological terms, the first record on this issue is from 1560, in which Devlet I Giray notifies the Imperial Council that Poland has made its payments.[30] By the year 1568, however, the situation was different. There are three different records about the issue. These records show that the Polish government stopped making payments after 1560, and in 1568, it paid only for the current year. Moreover, before the Polish ambassador brought the payment to Crimean lands, Polish Cossacks carried out a major attack on Tatar communities.[31] Eventually, the issue remained a matter of debate well into 1570. Devlet I Giray, explaining the issue to the Imperial Council, first stated that he was not seeking a payment that 'violated ancient customs',

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[27] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 14-1, 518–19, order 723; 408–9, order 575; Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 631.

[28] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 33, 121, order 245.

[29] Fehmi Yılmaz, *Osmanlı Tarih Sözlüğü*, 16; Ziya Kazıcı, *Osmanlı'da Vergi Sistemi* [The Ottoman Tax System] (İstanbul, 2005), 147–50. Another piece of evidence that supports this view is found in a Hammer's famous book on Ottoman history. Hammer notes that in a letter sent to the Habsburg King, Murad III talks about Poland paying taxes to Crimean khans. See Joseph Von Hammer-Purgstall, *Devlet-i Osmaniye Tarihi* [*History of the Ottoman Empire*], transl. Mehmet Ata, v (İstanbul Hijri, 1332), 37.

[30] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966–968/1558–1560)*, order 951, 424.

[31] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975–976/1567–1569). Özet-Transkripsiyon-İndeks* [*Mühimme Defteri No. 7 (975–976/1567–1569). Summary-Transcription-Index*], iii, ed. by Hacı Osman Yıldırım-Vahdettin, Atik-Murat Cebecioğlu, and Hasan Çağlar-Mustafa Serin (Ankara, 1999), order 2741, 403; order 2742, 403–4; order 2770, 427–8; order 2771, 428–9.

and secondly, that he was not asking for taxes to be paid for the year when a major raid by Crimean Tatars took place into Polish lands.[32] By 1573, the Crimean side kept insisting that payments for seven years were still not made.[33] In 1577, on the other hand, Poland made a payment to the Crimean Khanate, but it is unclear whether this covered all or part of the missing payments.[34]

According to records in *mühimme defters*, the Crimean Khanate complained that payments were not made. However, contemporary Russian sources record that Poland sent, at the very least, eight thousand gold coins in cash and valuable goods worth another eight thousand gold coins to Crimea in July 1563.[35]

A letter sent by Mehmed II Giray to the Imperial Council soon after his accession to the throne shows that an agreement was reached with Stephan Bathory regarding the annual payment. An agreement was reached after negotiations between Crimea and Poland regarding the missing payments, which covered twelve years, according to Mehmed II Giray. After explaining that Poland did not have the resources to pay the accumulated taxes for twelve years, the Polish emissaries offered to pay three years' taxes and an additional twenty thousand florins. Crimean officials accepted this offer, which the delegation promised would be accepted by the king as well. After the emissaries returned, three thousand *kuruşes* and three silver cups arrived from the Polish government, and the Crimean Khanate accepted

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[32] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 14-1, 518–19, order 723; 408–9, order 575; Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 629–32. The point that payments were not to be made for the years when Tatars carried out major or smaller raids into Poland was repeated during the reign of Sahib Giray as well. Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 84, Doc. no. 27, 710. Abrahamowicz provides the summary of a letter from the year 1571, sent by Selim II to King Sigismund Augustus, which states that payments are not to be made for the years in which Tatar raids took place. Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*, Doc. no. 210, 203.

[33] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 22, 71–2, order 147. Hieronim Lippomano, the Venetian ambassador to Poland, has also witnessed Devlet Giray requesting from Poland the annual payment of 30 thousand Hungarian gold coins. *Relacye nuncyuszów apostolskich i innych osób o Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, i (Berlin–Poznań, 1864), 282.

[34] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM. d. 30, 156, order 370.

[35] A.A. Novoselyskiy, *XVII. Yüzyılın Birinci Yarısında Moskova Devleti'nin Tatarlarla Mücadelesi* [The Conflict between the Tsardom of Muscovy and Tatars in the First Half of the 17th Century], transl. Kemal Ortaylı, ed. by Erhan Afyoncu-İlyas Kemalov (Ankara, 2011), 13.

the situation. When Crimea thought peace was achieved between the two states, Tatar communities along the Dnieper were attacked by Polish Cossacks.[36] News of the attack arrived in Crimea together with the three thousand *kuruşes* and three cups. Because of this attack, Mehmed II Giray refused the gifts and the money.[37]

In 1578, Mehmed II Giray brought another complaint before the Imperial Council, saying that Poland was not paying its taxes.[38] The Ottoman government took action upon receiving this complaint by Mehmed II Giray. Having made great efforts to establish peace between the Crimean Khanate and Poland after the accession of Stephan Bathory to the Polish throne, the Ottoman government sent Süleyman Çavuş to Poland. Negotiations carried out by Süleyman Çavuş resulted in a decision on the part of Poland to send thirty-five thousand florins to the Crimean Khanate. Süleyman Çavuş recommended that the Crimean Khanate take the necessary measures to ensure the security of the party carrying the payment, which was to set off for Crimea on 6 or 7 September 1578. Süleyman Çavuş noted that the Polish government could secretly organise the Cossacks and have them seize the money during transfer.[39] Süleyman Çavuş was sent to Poland again in September 1581 to resolve the issue of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray, and to ensure that Poland made the annual payment to the Crimean Khanate.[40] This is the last record of annual payments found in *mühimme defters* from the period under study.

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[36] The term *Leh Kazakları/Polish Cossacks* which was used by the Ottoman government in the *mühimme defters*, indicates the military bands and foragers gathered around the Dnieper castles like Cherkasy, Kiev, Kaniów, and Bratslav. See also, Serhii Plokhy, *The Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford–New York, 2001), 18–20.

[37] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 33, 121–2, order 245.

[38] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 34, 133–5, order 285 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 676–80.

[39] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 254, order 643. For an account of the problem of annual payments from Poland to the Crimean Khanate based on Polish sources, see Kazimierz Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski z Turcją za Stefana Batorego* (Warszawa, 1986), 84, 85–7, 94. The core of the problem was that the Crimean side demanded regular annual payments regardless of whether military support was provided that year or not.

[40] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 46–7, order 92 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 695–7.

II
BORDER CONFLICTS: MUTUAL RAIDS OF PILLAGE

Records kept in *mühimme defters* provide valuable information about the chronology and nature of the military conflicts between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Crimean Khanate. From the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, Christian Cossacks appeared in the border regions between the Ottoman Empire-Crimean Khanate block and the Polish-Lithuanian State in Eastern Europe, and Tatar Cossacks appeared around Dnieper and Akkerman (Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi). Attacks by these communities, which made a living out of raids and conflict, caused permanent tensions in border regions.[41] Records show that skirmishes along the border constituted most of the military activity that took place. We also have information about major raids conducted with the participation of the Crimean Khan or his son. The author noticed gaps in the chronology of attacks recorded in *defters*. For example, *mühimme defters* from the period under study contained no record of the attack carried out by Crimean Tatars to Poland in 1558. However, a letter sent by Suleiman I to Poland in response to an earlier letter shows that the Ottoman bureaucracy knew about this attack.[42]

Another thing that needs to be considered for the period 1551–84 is that the Grand Duchy of Moscow caused headaches for its neighbours by following irredentist policies in Eastern Europe. When the Khanate of Kazan came under the control of Moscow in 1552 and the Astrakhan Khanate in 1556, the Crimean Khanate focused its resources on this front. Similarly, the Polish-Lithuanian State fought against Moscow in the Livonian War. Both Poland and the Crimean Khanate had to focus on the threat posed by Moscow. Nevertheless, attacks by Cossack groups in the border regions between Poland and

[41] On the appearance of Tatar Cossacks in border regions, see Alper Başer, 'Bucak Tatarları (1550–1700)' [Budjak Tatars (1550–1700)], unpublished PhD thesis (Afyonkarahisar, 2010), 19–27. For the causes and economic aspects of the attacks carried out from Poland into Turkish-Tatar lands and against Tatar nomads, as well as the role of Habsburg supporters, see Andrzej Dziubiński, 'Polsko-litewskie napady na tureckie pogranicze czarnomorskie w epoce dwu ostatnich Jagiellonów', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, ciii, 3 (1996), 53–87.

[42] *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Dönemi*, Doc. no. 101, 234–5 [AGAD AKW, dz. tur., t. 184, k. 69, no. 353]; Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*, Doc. no. 158, 158–9. Abrahamowicz dates the document to September 1557, whereas according to Topaktaş and Arslantürk, it is from April 1558.

Crimea were a constant problem. These skirmishes along the border sometimes evolved into large-scale battles as well. Taking advantage of the fact the Ottoman Empire's military focus was on the Iranian front and Sahib I Giray was preoccupied with the Khanate of Kazan and the Nogays, Polish landlords intensified their attacks against Tatar communities along the Dnieper and on the fortress of Ochakov.[43] The killing of Sahib I Giray in 1551 and the accession of Devlet I Giray to the throne as the new khan also offered notables in the border regions of Poland ample room for manoeuvre. Upon ascending the throne, Devlet I Giray first took action against Poland. The new khan prepared for a major raid into Poland in January 1552 and was in a military campaign against the Russians (Ruthenians) in February.[44] When the threat posed by Moscow grew, and Kazan fell into Russian hands, Devlet I Giray made peace with Sigismund August.[45]

The records for 1558 also contain information about Dmytro Vyšnevec'kyj. This Cossack leader, who had been operating in the Dnieper region for a long while, joined the forces the Grand Duchy of Moscow sent to Crimea in 1558 over the Dnieper River and the Black Sea, and marched to Or Qapi (Perekop) and its vicinity. These forces probably aimed to attack Tatar nomads in the region, but eventually went their separate ways. When Polish Cossacks started to retreat over Sonice, they were ambushed by Tatar forces, and most were taken prisoners.[46]

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[43] Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 89–90, 92–93.

[44] Abid Yaşaroğlu, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Koğuşlar 888 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1a-260a tahlil ve Transkrip*) [*Mühimme Defteri* no. 888 at Koğuşlar Section of the Library of Topkapı Palace Museum (1a-260a analysis and transcript)], unpublished MA Thesis, İstanbul University (İstanbul, 1995), order 22, 7–8; order 223, 102. Polish sources report that Devlet Giray attacked in August and September of 1551, and captured the city of Bratslav. Marek Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska XVI wieku*, ii: *Lata 1548–1575* (Oświęcim, 2018), 79–81. The *mühimme defteri* in question, on the other hand, records that Devlet Giray made preparations in January 1552 for a campaign, and was on a campaign in February. Given that Devlet Giray Han established full control over Bakhchysarai on 2 October 1551, the date in the *mühimme defteri* seems to be accurate. See Özalp Gökbilgin, *1532–1537 Yılları Arasında Kırım Hanlığı'nın Siyasi Durumu* [The Political Status of the Crimean Khanate from 1530 to 1537] (Ankara, 1973), 36.

[45] Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 92.

[46] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966–968/1558–1560)*, order 323, 147. This order sent to the district governor of Akkerman does not mention Dmytro Vyšnevec'kyj by name, but the date mentioned in the document matches with his activities.

Dmytro Vyšnevec'kyj continued to operate in Azak and Kuban, which indicates that the defeated Polish group may have been acting independently of Vyšnevec'kyj. Vyšnevec'kyj made an alliance with Circassian tribes in 1559, and continued to cause trouble for the Ottoman government and the Crimean Khanate. Upon receiving intelligence, in August 1560, that the famous Cossack hetman would arrive via the Dnieper River with four thousand chaika boats and a large number of musket-wielding soldiers to attack the fortress of Cankerman, Devlet I Giray sent his son Mehmed Giray to meet the enemy. Ottoman sources are silent on whether this attack took place or not.[47]

The Polish ambassador who was in Istanbul in 1564 complained about Akkerman Tatars who supposedly left for a campaign against Moscow, but ended up raiding Bar and its vicinity. Upon receiving this complaint, the Ottoman government sent an imperial letter to Devlet I Giray, asking for an explanation for the attacks and noting that the friendship between the two states remains intact. The letter also ordered the Khan to punish people who violated the treaty, release non-Muslim prisoners, and return their properties.[48] Devlet I Giray's letter to the Imperial Council in response to this complaint was summarised in an imperial letter sent to Poland in June 1565. Devlet I Giray claimed that the attacks on Bar and its vicinity were carried out by Akkerman and Özi Cossacks and denied any responsibility. After making this explanation, he voiced his own problems. According to Devlet I Giray, Çerkes Kerman (Cherkasy), Kiev (Mankerman) and Bratslav Cossacks, all subjects of Poland, had arrived via the Dnieper River and raided Tatar communities along the Dnieper, along with the tribe of Takladı Mirza, taking thirty to forty prisoners in the process.

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[47] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966–968/1558–1560)*, order 1390, 616. Dmytro Vyšnevec'kyj's activities have been the subject of detailed studies. The present study focuses on orders that are directly about the Crimean Khanate. See Yücel Öztürk, 'Dimitriy İvanoviç Vişnevetskiy ve Faaliyetleri' [Dmytro Vyšnevec'kyj and His Activities], *SDÜ Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 9 (2003), 95–140; Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, 'Un condottiere lithuanien du XVIe siècle: Le Prince Dimitrij Višneveckij et l'origine de la Seč Zaporogue d'après les Archives ottomanes', *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, x, 2 (1969), 258–79.

[48] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564–1565)*; T.C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, ed. by Hacı Osman Yıldırım *et al.*, 1, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı Yay (Ankara, 1995), order 97, 76, order 180, 121.

The Polish Cossacks who carried out these attacks also attacked Tatar soldiers returning from the Moldavia campaign, killing forty to fifty Tatar soldiers, and then killed ten people and stole eight to nine thousand sheep between Akkerman and Cankerman. Finally, the same group of Cossacks have attacked merchants bringing fur from Moscow to Istanbul both on their way to and from Moscow. In the final attack, the merchants were killed, and the thirty to forty carts of goods they had with them were plundered. Devlet I Giray sent a list of the goods looted to Istanbul and wrote that the Polish Cossacks in question continued their raids. The Ottoman government conveyed the complaints of the Crimean Khan to the Polish government and requested that damages be paid and the perpetrators punished.[49]

The year 1568 was one in which Polish attacks on border regions intensified. An order sent to the district government of Akkerman in June shows that 'Pan Laski' attacked Tatar communities in and around Cankerman, taking many prisoners, and Tatars attacked Poland in response.[50] Overwhelmed by attacks against Tatar communities by Polish raiders, who arrived aboard chaika boats via the Dnieper River, Devlet I Giray recommended to the Ottoman government that a fortress be built at Hoş Geçid.[51] Before October of the same year, Devlet I Giray raised his complaints with the Ottoman government one more time regarding attacks that he claimed were carried out by Cossacks and rulers of Polish cities on the border, such as Çerkes Kerman, Wilno, and Bratslav. More specifically, he complained that the women and children of Tatar nomads were taken prisoners, and their animals were plundered. According to the Khan, 20 to 30 thousand animals were stolen, and 40 to 50 Tatar women and boys were taken prisoners. The Khan, who was obviously facing criticism from the Crimean society, informed the Imperial Council that if these attacks were not stopped and taxes due to Crimea were not paid, a major

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[49] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564–1565)*, order 1245, 569.

[50] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975–976/1567–1569). Özet-Transkripsiyon-İndeks*, ii, ed. by Hacı Osman Yıldırım, Vahdettin Atik-Murat Cebecioğlu, and Hasan Çağlar-Mustafa Serin (Ankara, 1999), order 1551, 188. According to Polish sources, on the other hand, Crimean Tatars were the aggressors, Polish landlords and Cossacks pursued them. See Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska*, ii, 234–5.

[51] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975–976/1567–1569). Özet-Transkripsiyon-İndeks*, iii, ed. by Hacı Osman Yıldırım, Vahdettin Atik-Murat Cebecioğlu, and Hasan Çağlar-Mustafa Serin (Ankara, 1999), order 2741, 403.

raid would be conducted into Poland. The Ottoman government sent another letter to the King of Poland, conveying the complaints of the Khan, and requested that a solution be found to the issues of Cossack attacks and taxes.[52] A simultaneous letter sent by the Imperial Council to the Crimean Khan said that if the Kingdom of Poland does not return the Tatar prisoners and fails to meet other conditions set by the Khan, they were allowed to conduct a raid into Poland.[53]

Records from 1570 also describe the Polish side as the aggressors, as was the case two years ago. According to correspondence from September, attacks on Tatar communities along the Dnieper and Crimean and Turkish merchants on their way to Moscow, originating from Çerkes Kerman, Bratslav, Kaniov, and Mankerman continued. According to Devlet Giray Khan, goods worth from forty thousand to seventy thousand florins were plundered in these attacks, which took place four or five times a year, in addition to a large number of animals stolen, and four or five hundred tents of Tatar families were taken as prisoners. This latest group of Tatars were taken prisoners on their way from Crimea to Akkerman.[54]

In 1572, the Crimean Khanate took action in order to take advantage of the political process that began following the death of Sigismund II Augustus. In June 1573, Devlet I Giray asked permission from the Ottoman government to conduct a major raid into Poland, explaining that Poland was not paying taxes for seven years, attacks by Polish Cossacks continued, and they were about to replace the deceased king with someone from Moscow. The Imperial Council told the Khan that he was allowed to raid Poland if attacks on the Muslim population continued, taxes were not paid, and someone from Moscow became the new king.[55]

Polish magnates on the border and the Cossack groups serving them had also taken advantage of the situation. Around the same time that Devlet I Giray asked permission from the Ottoman government for a major raid into Poland, more than four hundred Polish Cossacks

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[52] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* [*Mühimme Defter No. 7*], iii, order 2770, 427–8.

[53] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, iii, order 2771, 428–9.

[54] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM. d. 14-1, 518–19, order 723; 408–9, order 575 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 629–32. This order in the *mühimme defter* is probably the document summarised in Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*, Doc. no. 208, 200–1.

[55] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 22, 71–2, order 147.

attacked Crimean merchants in the vicinity of Akkerman, killed a large number of them, and took off with seven hundred heads of cattle. Ottoman soldiers who pursued the attackers also suffered casualties.[56] On the other hand, a record from September 1573 shows that the fortress of İslam Giray (İslam Kerman) on the Dnieper was subject to constant attacks by Poles who arrived aboard chaika boats over the river. Upon Devlet I Giray's request, the Ottoman government sent two galiots to help defend the fortress of İslam Giray, but Polish attackers also captured these galiots. The Imperial Council then sent a letter to the Voivode of Yazlucağı, asking for the ships to be returned.[57] Moreover, two additional galiots equipped with weapons and artillery were sent under the command of Nasuh Reis to defend the region between Cankerman and Akkerman.[58] The Polish government argued that perpetrators of these attacks were not Polish subjects, that the attacks might have been carried out by groups affiliated with the Grand Duchy of Moscow or communities living in the region not affiliated with any particular state, and the Crimean Khan had the power to punish those groups who dwelled in the region and might have carried out the attacks. After responding to the Imperial Council's complaints about the attacks, the Polish government went on to argue that the Bey (local governor) of Bender, along with Tatar communities in the region, attacked Polish lands, taking close to 40 thousand prisoners and stealing a large number of animals, asked that the prisoners and the stolen property be returned and the perpetrators punished. The Imperial Council rejected the Polish government's explanation, stating that perpetrators were of Polish origin and had to be punished.[59]

In 1574, a major raid was conducted into Poland under the command of Alp Giray, the son of Devlet I Giray. The raid ended in abject failure, with Alp Giray and his men seeking asylum from the Voivode of Moldavia. Rulers of the Polish regions that were raided made preparations for a counterattack against Moldavia, as they thought it was the voivode who had instigated the attacks.

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[56] *Ibid*.

[57] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 23, 1, order 1.

[58] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 23, 2, order 3.

[59] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 23, 90–1, order 182 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i* Hümayunlar, 642–3.

The Imperial Council asked the Voivode of Moldavia to treat Alp Giray with respect and transfer him to Crimean lands safe and sound and ordered Devlet I Giray to carry out a preventive raid into Poland to stop an attack on Moldavia.[60] *Mühimme defters* do not contain any information on whether the raid conducted by Alp Giray, which failed, was initiated upon the request of the Voivode of Moldavia. However, in 1575, Crimean forces did carry out a major attack on Poland upon the request of the Ottoman government. In a letter sent in response to the complaints of the Polish government, the Imperial Council expressed its discontent not with the attack carried out by Tatar forces but with the attacks on Akkerman, Cankerman, Bender and Tatar lands by Polish Cossacks in Çerkes Kerman and the five fortresses in its vicinity. The Council said that these attacks needed to be stopped, as the Crimean Khan wanted to take revenge for the attacks on Tatar communities by conducting a major raid into Poland. The Imperial Council stated that, for the time being, permission was not granted for this raid, but action would be taken if attacks continued, threatening the King of Poland.[61] That this threat was insufficient to stop Cossack attacks was made clear by the Cossack attack on the fortress of İslam Kerman. The attack on İslam Kerman, carried out at a time when Mübarek Giray was fighting groups called the 'ominous Russians' in Azak with Crimean and Nogai Tatar forces, was repelled with much difficulty. This attack, which took place after the decision to make preparations for a campaign against Moscow in support of Stephan Bathory, the new Polish king, raises the suspicion that Moscow had provoked the Zaporozhian Cossacks in the border regions against the Ottoman-Crimean block. The Crimean forces advancing on Moscow turned back upon hearing of this attack, which supports this view.[62]

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[60] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 26, 253, order 727; 254, order 731; 272, order 781. According to the aforementioned records, the attack led by Alp Giray Sultan was carried out upon the request of the Ottoman government. Ottoman records have it that this campaign, which ended in the defeat of Alp Giray, took place in 1574, whereas according to Polish records, it took place in 1575. Polish records also say that the Tatar attack was led by Adil Giray. See Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska*, ii, 244.

[61] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 29, 33–4, order 77 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 658–61.

[62] Bâb-ı Asâfî Divan-ı Hümâyûn Sicillatı Mühimme Zeyli Defterleri [The Sublime Porte and Imperial Council Sicils, Addenda to Mühimme Registers], d. 3, 292, order 738.

Skirmishes along the border also continued in the final year of Devlet I Giray. Before 5 February 1577, the elderly Khan of Crimea complained to Istanbul again about attacks on Tatar lands carried out by Cossacks of Mankerman and Çerkes Kerman. The Imperial Council conveyed the complaints of the Crimean Khan to Poland, noting that Crimean Tatars would be granted permission to raid Poland if the attacks continued, which would result in great destruction around the vicinity of the fortresses mentioned.[63]

In May 1577, the sons of the Khan conducted a major raid into Polish lands together with Akkerman Tatars. According to the Polish side, peace was made when the senior envoy of Devlet Giray arrived, and talks were held, upon which the Polish government delivered the taxes to the ambassador. In the meantime, the small envoy of the Crimean Khan also arrived. This envoy also brought positive news from the Crimean Khan, and the two envoys departed to return to Crimea, along with the Polish government's envoy to the Khanate and the taxes they paid. Before the Crimean envoys could cross the border, however, the news arrived that the sons of the Khan had carried out a surprise attack on Polish lands. The Kingdom of Poland sent a letter of protest to the Ottoman government, denouncing that the attack caused significant damage to Polish lands. According to the Polish side, this attack was carried out when Polish forces were busy fighting the enemy, and in collaboration with the enemies of Poland. Poland requested the return of the prisoners taken and animals stolen in this raid. When the Imperial Council asked the Crimean Khan to explain why he attacked *lands under our protection*, the Khan answered as follows. When Mehmed Giray, the son and heir of the Khan, was making preparations for an attack on Moscow, Moscow sent his envoy to the Crimean Khan with a large treasure to make peace. When Moscow's envoy, carrying the treasure, approached the Crimean border, Polish thugs and Cossacks ambushed the envoy, killing the merchants travelling with him and plundering the treasure and the merchants' cargo. Then, Mehmed Giray, who was near the border at the time, carried out the attack without seeking permission neither from Devlet I Giray, his father nor from the Ottoman sultan. According to the Ottoman government, the perpetrators of the attack

[63] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 29, 144–5, order 355 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 662–3.

were the Cossacks and residents of the fortresses of Mankerman, Kaniów and Çerkes Kerman. The Bey of Akkerman has warned Polish rulers repeatedly about the attacks by the Cossacks and residents of these fortresses, but the attacks were not stopped. The Imperial Council stated that its own forces or the forces of the Crimean Khan could punish these Cossacks, but it was the responsibility of the King of Poland who ascended the throne with Ottoman support, to stop these attacks.[64]

According to a complaint written by Devlet I Giray before his death and conveyed by the Imperial Council to the Polish government in July 1577, Mehmet bin Mustafa and his brother Osman were attacked by people described as Polish thugs in rural Dnieper. One hundred horses, 100 sheep, 300 black sheepskins, wagons of goods, and 150 florins belonging to the merchant brothers were plundered. The attack was carried out by Ostrogski (?), a Polish magnate. The same document also provides an account of how Şeyh İbrahim and his son Murtaza were attacked years ago by the Poles, which resulted in the death of Şeyh İbrahim and his son Murtaza being kept as a prisoner in Lwów/Lviv. The Imperial Council requested the return of the prisoners and the plundered goods.[65]

Following Mehmed II Giray's accession to the throne, the Poles launched a major attack. The attack, which must have occurred before December 1577, involved more than a thousand rifle cavalry. Targeting the Tatar communities along the border, the attack resulted in the killing of many Tatars, and about two thousand people were taken prisoners, including clergymen, women, and boys. Crimean rulers were caught off guard because they had thought peace was made with the Polish-Lithuanian State, and suffered great losses as a result. Based on information given by Polish envoys and his translators, Mehmed II Giray argued that the attack was carried out with the blessing of the new King Stephan Bathory, and asked for permission to punish Poland. The Khan was very angry because of the attack and wrote to the Ottoman government that the three thousand *kuruşes* and three silver cups sent by Stephan Bathory for peace were returned.

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[64] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 30, 156, order 370, 204–5, order 483. For skirmishes in 1577, see Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 50, 53, 54–7.

[65] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 31, 68–9, order 174. The leader of the attack is defined as a Polish knyaz.

Attacks originating from Polish lands were not limited to Tatar communities in the border regions along the Dnieper; they also targeted the Voivode of Moldavia and lands that were under direct Ottoman control, such as Akkerman and Bender. The Ottoman Imperial Council permitted the Crimean Khanate to attack Poland to teach the Polish government a lesson.[66]

That the Crimean raid permitted by the Imperial Council did take place is made clear in an imperial letter sent to Stephan Bathory in April 1578. The Polish government, not knowing that the Ottoman government had given permission to the Crimean raid, or ignoring that fact, attributed the attack to growing ties between Moscow and Crimea and asked the Ottoman government to intervene and direct the Crimean forces to the Moscow front. The Imperial Council reminded the Polish government that the Cossacks of Çerkas Kerman, Bratslav, Kaniów and Dnieper had attacked Tatar communities along the Dnieper, as well as Moldavia and rural Akkerman. As a result of these attacks, sheep farms that used to have hundreds of thousands of sheep were now on the brink of extinction, and the fortress of İslam Kerman faced constant attacks. According to the Imperial Council, peace would be made between the two states, and the problem would go away if the attacks were stopped and annual payments were made to the Crimean Khanate.[67]

Before August 1578, the Crimean forces attacked Polish lands again. The attack targeted the region called the Russian lands of Poland, which was under direct Polish control. The Polish government sent a letter of protest to the Ottoman government to denounce the attack, which resulted in many locals being taken prisoners and animals being driven away. In a letter to Istanbul, the Kingdom of Poland wrote in detail that Tatars attacked despite a peace deal, which stipulated that the Polish side would pay twenty-five thousand *kuruşes* in taxes. According to the Polish government, this attack was a result of the friendly ties between the Crimean Khanate and Moscow, as also evidenced by the fact that Mehmed II Giray imprisoned the Polish envoy sent to Crimea. Regarding the attacks on Tatar communities and lands under direct Ottoman rule, the Polish government made the following explanation. According to the Polish government, perpetrators

[66] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 33, 121, order 245.
[67] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 34, 133–5, order 285.

of the attacks on Tatar and Ottoman lands were different groups of people who lived in the border regions between Moscow, Crimea, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire, and it was not possible to stop these attacks because these groups kept fleeing to lands under the Muscovite rule. Finally, the Polish government complained about the attacks by Akkerman Tatars on Polish lands and people.[68]

Before September 1578, probably about the same time when the Kingdom of Poland was complaining to the Ottoman government about attacks by Akkerman Tatars, five or six thousand Akkerman Tatars left under the leadership of Tatar Cossack leaders such as İsa Koca, Bakay Agha, and Tusay Agha, saying they would strike the Duchy of Moscow. The District Governor of Akkerman, realising that this group of five or six thousand Tatar Cossacks would strike Poland, notified the Imperial Council. The Ottoman government reminded Mehmed II Giray that there was peace between Poland and the Ottoman Empire, trying to prevent any harm to Polish lands.[69] Despite warnings by Istanbul and direct intervention by Mehmed II Giray, however, Akkerman Tatars did carry out their attack. The Imperial Council sent orders to the Crimean Khan and the District Governor of Bender to return the prisoners taken from Poland during the attack, but these orders were met with opposition from Akkerman Tatars. The Imperial Council insisted on the return of the prisoners despite the opposition.[70] Our sources are silent on whether the prisoners were actually returned.

Before 31 March 1579, Mehmed II Giray complained one more time to the Ottoman government about attacks by Polish Cossacks, whom he described as the Cossacks of Bratslav, Mankerman, Çerkes Kerman and Kaniów. He wrote that Duke Konstantin, the leader of these Cossacks, ignored the attacks, did not stop thugs, and failed to ensure border security. The Ottoman government conveyed the complaints of the Khan to Poland in an imperial letter dated 31 March.[71] Attacks continued despite this warning. Mehmed II Giray left the Crimean Peninsula, upon the request of the Imperial Council, to join the Iranian

[68] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 145–6, order 373.

[69] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 256, order 646.

[70] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 257, order 649, 280, order 683.

[71] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 36, 158, order 438. According to information found in order 441, on page 159 of the same register, Konstantin was the son of Stefan, the previous Voivode of Moldavia.

Campaign. The departure of a significant portion of the Crimean forces made it easier for Polish Cossacks to carry out their attacks. Apparently concerned that the attacks would continue, Mehmed II Giray tasked, before leaving Crimea, his son Murad Giray with protecting the Polish border. Tasked with protecting the Tatar communities along the Dnieper, Murad Giray notified the Ottoman government of an attack by Oryszowski (?), a Polish commander, on the fortress of İslam Kerman and asked for help.[72]

Mühimme defters are silent on skirmishes along the border from 1579 to 1582. Likely, the Ottomans' use of Crimean Tatar forces on the Iranian front and Poland's use of Cossack communities on the Muscovite front minimised border conflicts. In 1582, a merchant named Mahmud, sent from Istanbul to bring supplies from Moscow to meet the needs of the palace, was attacked in the vicinity of the fortress of Cherkas Kerman, and Polish Cossacks plundered the sable, squirrel and ermine furs, horses, and other valuables he had with him. Moreover, another hundred and fifty people from the delegation and the group of merchants accompanying them were killed.[73] In August of the same year, this time, the *starosta* of Çerkas ambushed the treasure sent by Poland to Crimea and killed a large number of merchants accompanying the treasure. Then, he attacked Tatar communities along the Dnieper.[74]

III
RECORDS ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Mühimme defters also contain information on the diplomatic relations between Poland and the Crimean Khanate, attempts at forming an alliance, peace treaties signed, and the exchange of envoys. The earliest record containing information on diplomatic relations is found in an imperial letter sent to the Kingdom of Poland in May 1568. According to this record, Devlet I Giray told the Ottoman government that the

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[72] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 42, 501–2, order 2001, 2005, 503, order 2007. The Polish commander's name was written in two different ways, so it could be read as Ororski or Orski.

[73] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 47, 192, order 448 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 701.

[74] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 48, 64–65, order 180; *44 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* [*Mühimme Defteri No. 44*], ed. by Mehmet Ali Ünal, İzmir 1995, order 188, 106 or 85–86 in the published text.

envoy he sent to Poland had been detained for more than three years, which is to say since 1565, and asked for help for his release. The Imperial Council conveyed the Khan's request to the King of Poland, asking for the envoy to be released.[75] Another letter sent to Poland in October of the same year repeats the information that Poland had been keeping the Crimean envoy as a prisoner for three years. Notably, in the summer, following the first imperial letter, the Kingdom of Poland sent an envoy to Crimea. This envoy, sent by Poland along with a year's payment, was not enough to solve the problems. For Polish Cossacks from Mankerman, Çerkes Kerman and Bratslav carried out large-scale attacks against Tatar communities along the Dnieper.[76]

During the famous Astrakhan Campaign of 1569, when the Crimean Khanate had focused on the Muscovite front, diplomatic relations between the Khanate and Poland were strained because of the detention of envoys by both sides,[77] and because of the attacks carried out by Polish Cossacks against Tatar communities along the Dnieper, which increased in intensity over time. The first thing that comes to mind is that Polish Cossacks took advantage of the fact that Crimean forces were far away from the peninsula, but another possibility is that Moscow had provoked the attacks. An imperial letter sent to Poland in September 1570 narrates the diplomatic process and problems between Crimea and Poland. The letter summarises Devlet I Giray's response to Poland's complaints, which the Imperial Council had previously conveyed to the Crimean Khanate, and makes it clear that Devlet I Giray released the Polish envoy in Crimea without further

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[75] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* [*Mühimme Defteri No. 7*], iii, order: 2742, 403, 404.

[76] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* [*Mühimme Defteri No. 7*], vii, order: 1551, 188; iii, order: 2770, 427–28.

[77] The Polish envoy detained by the Crimean khan was Aleksander Władziczka. Jędrzej Taranowski went to Crimea to discuss the release of the ambassador with the support of the Ottoman administration and witnessed the famous 1569 Astrakhan Campaign. See, *Podróże i poselstwa polskie do Turcyi, a mianowicie: Podróż E. Otwinowskiego 1557, Jędrzeja Taranowskiego komornika j. k. m. 1569, i Poselstwo Piotra Zborowskiego 1568*, ed. by Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (Cracow, 1860), 59; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve İdil Boyu (1569 Astarhan Seferi, Ten_İdil Kanalı ve XVI–XVII. Yüzyıl Osmanlı-Rus Münasebetleri)* (Ankara, 2011), Supplement VI: *Andrey Taranowski'nin Lehistan-İstanbul-Or Kapısı-Azak ve Geri Lehistan Yolculuğu*, 46, 48. I would like to thank Natalia Królikowska for sharing this information with me.

delay, as a result of pressure from the Ottoman government. According to Devlet I Giray, no attacks occurred against Poland after the Astrakhan Campaign. Secondly, Devlet I Giray explains the detention of the Polish envoy in Crimea during the Astrakhan Campaign as follows:

> When we were previously ordered to march on Astrakhan, we had to stay there for five to six months, and the reason for detaining the ambassador until our return was that some Cossacks affiliated with Poland had arrived via the Dnieper and harassed Tatar communities. They were allowed to stay in a town together with their servants and contrary to the claims, have not been imprisoned or blinded. They were then released safe and sound.[78]

The Khan explains that the Polish envoy was detained as some security against attacks by Cossacks affiliated with Poland, the rumours that he was blinded were not true, and finally, the envoy was returned safe and sound. In return, Devlet I Giray complained that the Polish Cossacks carried out constant attacks, and the envoys he sent to Poland were killed.

The last record regarding the exchange of envoys and related events during the reign of Devlet I Giray is from 1577. Before May 1577, the senior envoy of the Khan went to Poland to request the annual payment. The senior envoy had successful talks, and the two governments came to an agreement. Before the senior envoy left Poland, a small envoy [*internuncius*][79] from the Crimean Khanate arrived in Poland. This small envoy has probably brought the news that Devlet I Giray accepted the agreement. Despite the success of the negotiations between the two states, when Polish Cossacks plundered the gifts sent by Moscow to the Crimean Khan, Devlet I Giray's sons carried conducted a major raid into Polish lands. This, in turn, prevented achieving the desired peace between the two states.[80]

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[78] "Mukaddemâ Ejderhân seferi emr olundukda beş-altı ay eğlenmek mukarrer olmağın, seferden avdet olunmaya, elçinizi alıkonulmakdan garaz Leh'e tâbi' ba'zı Kazaklar Özi suyu ile gelüp ahâlî-i Tatar'a zarâr etmek içün idi. Âdemleri ve hidmetkârlarıyla bir kasabada huzûr üzre sâkin olup habs ve a'mâ kalınmışdır didükleri gayr-ı vâkı'dır. Bu cânibden irsâl olundukda sağ ü sâlim gönderilmişdir", BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 14-1, 408–9, order 575 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 629–32.

[79] For envoys and their status see Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 452–9.

[80] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 30, 204–5, order 483.

Another aspect of diplomatic relations is the issue of an alliance between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Crimean Khanate against the Grand Duchy of Moscow. Russian historiography has long argued that there was an anti-Moscow alliance between Poland and the Crimean Khanate during the reign of Ivan IV.[81] The records we examined contain information about this issue as well. When Moscow took Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan in 1556 under its control during the reign of Ivan IV and then attempted to expand toward the Baltics with the Livonian War, the idea of an alliance between the Polish-Lithuanian State and the Khanate naturally emerged. Upon the request of the Polish King's envoy to Istanbul, the Crimean Khan was ordered, in August 1565, to send Tatar forces to help Poland in its fight against the enemy.[82] However, this attempt at forming an alliance was not successful. Devlet I Giray complained that the Polish side did not take action despite the calls for a joint military campaign against Moscow.[83]

When the author looks at the records on peace agreements between Poland and the Crimean Khanate, the picture emerges is as follows. In 1560, Poland made the annual payment described as a tax in Ottoman sources, and the two states made peace. In a letter sent to the Ottoman government, Devlet I Giray noted that the peace made with Poland was conditional on Cossacks of Akkerman and other Tatar Cossacks not harassing Poland and asked for help on this issue. The Imperial Council, in turn, ordered the District Governor of Akkerman to make sure that Tatar Cossacks were kept under control as per the agreement between the two states.[84] Information provided by Devlet I Giray clarifies that the agreement between the

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[81] Novoselyskiy, *XVII. Yüzyılın Birinci Yarısında Moskova*, 11–12; Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, *Istorıya Gosudarstva Rossıyskogo*, ix (Sankt Peterburg, 1821), 37. Similar arguments were repeated in Soloviev's book as well. Sergei M. Soloviev, *History of Russia*, x: *The Reign of Ivan the Terrible, Kazan, Astrakhan, Livonia, the Oprichnina and the Polotks Campaign*, ed., transl. and with an introduction by Anthony L.H. Rhinelander (Academic International Press, 1995), 148. It is obvious that, there was not as much cooperation as Russian historians claimed, see Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 90–101.

[82] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 5, 30, order 71.

[83] *Kırım Yurtına ve Ol Taraflarga Dair Bolgan Yarlıglar ve Hatlar* [Edicts and Letters in Crimean Tatar], i, no. 2, 94–6.

[84] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966–968/1568–1560)*, order 951, 424.

Crimean Khanate and Poland was still in place in 1565. However, the agreement between the two states failed to prevent attacks by Akkerman and Cankerman Cossacks on the fortress of Bar and its vicinity, and on the Polish side, attacks by Bratslav, Çerkes Kerman and Mankerman Cossacks on Tatars along the Dnieper.[85]

On the other hand, a document from September 1570 contains one of the strangest records on the diplomatic relations between Poland and the Crimean Khanate. In a letter sent to Istanbul, after stating that a peace agreement was made between Poland and the Crimean Khanate, Devlet I Giray complained to the Ottoman government that the Polish envoy bribed the clerk who was putting the deal on paper, having him amend the terms of the agreement in Poland's favour. The Ottoman government described this claim as strange and did not take it very seriously, and recommended the Crimean Khanate to keep the peace with Poland.[86]

In the first months of Mehmed II Giray's reign, at a time when peace was thought to be made between the Crimean Khanate and Poland, the Polish side carried out attacks, according to the Crimean Khan, and prevented peace.[87] According to Marek Sobieski, the Polish envoy sent to Istanbul, who reached the Ottoman capital in February, Taranowski was sent as an envoy to Crimea upon the request of the Ottoman Sultan, and care was taken to avoid doing anything that could disturb the peace, but the Crimean Khan imprisoned the Polish envoy and collaborated with Moscow. Taking Poland's requests into account, the Ottoman government had the Crimean Khan release the Polish envoy and return the prisoners taken and animals stolen from Poland, preventing the alliance with Moscow. Moreover, Mehmed II Giray was ordered to conduct a raid into Moscow, and the preference was made explicit for peace between the two sides when Poland paid its taxes. The most important reason for the Ottoman government's preference for reconciliation, as the contents of the letter sent to the Khan make clear, was the desire to use the Crimean forces on the Iranian front.[88]

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[85] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564–1565)*, order 1245, 234.

[86] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 14-1, 518–19, order 723. On this event, see Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 100.

[87] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 33, 121, order 245.

[88] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 32, 370, order 664; BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 34, 133–5, order 285.

To resolve the matter quickly, the Imperial Council tasked Süleyman Çavuş with releasing the Polish envoy and transferring him to Poland. Then, after informing the Polish side of the latest developments, the Council requested Poland to make the annual payments and keep the peace between the two governments.[89] Before November 1578, Süleyman Çavuş sent to the King of Poland with the Tatar envoy and the detained Polish envoy to make a new draft treaty.[90]

IV
THE ISSUE OF ALP GIRAY AND SELAMET GIRAY PRINCES (SULTANLAR) BETWEEN POLAND-LITHUANIA AND THE CRIMEAN KHANATE

A succession system that did not delineate definitive successors, interventions by tribal aristocracies, and inter-tribal rivalries caused chronic fighting over the throne, internal strife, and rebellions in the Crimean Khanate. The fights between Sahib I Giray and İslam I Giray and between Mengli I Giray and Nur Devlet after the death of Hacı I Giray in 1466 are some examples of conflicts between members of the dynasty. During these conflicts, members of the Giray dynasty who found themselves in a difficult position or were defeated usually sought asylum from the Polish-Lithuanian State. Examples include Nur Devlet, who fled to Lithuania after being defeated by Mengli I Giray,[91] and Fetih Giray and Şahin Giray, who fled to Poland in the eighteenth century.[92] Fighting among the sons and brothers of Mehmed II Giray also expanded to involve Poland and was reflected in *mühimme defters*.

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[89] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 33, 369, order 758 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunla*, 675–6.

[90] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 35, 362, order 920 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 686–7. According to Polish sources, the Polish envoys detained by the Crimean Khanate returned to Poland in August 1578, see Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 84.

[91] Pułaski, *Stosunki z Mendli-Girejem*, Doc. no. 7, 203–4, Doc. no. 21, 217.

[92] On Şahin Giray's flight to Poland, see İzzî Süleyman Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi. Osmanlı Tarihi 1157–1165/1744–1752) (İnceleme-Metin)* [History of İzzî. Ottoman History 1157–1165/1744–1752] (Critique-Text)], ed. by Ziya Yılmazer (İstanbul, 2019), 526–30; BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 153, 67, order 205; 177, order 673. For Fetih Giray's flight to Poland, see BOA, Hat-ı Hümayun 2/55; Władysław Konopczyński, *Polska a Turcja 1683–1792* (Warszawa, 2013), 155.

The Ottoman government attributed the fighting among the brothers and sons of Mehmed II Giray to provocations by some groups from the Noghay tribes. Two groups fought a battle because of these provocations, and Cihan Giray, one of the brothers of Mehmed II Giray, was killed.[93] After this murder, Alp Giray and Selamet Giray, the other brothers of the Khan, fled Crimea. Their flight ended in the fortress of Çerkes Kerman. The first record on this issue in *mühimme defters* is dated 23 April 1581. The document first states that Polish Cossacks captured the brothers of the Khan, but towards the middle of the text, the word *iltica* is used to describe the event as one in which the Khan's brothers sought asylum from Poland voluntarily. Poland is then asked to hand over the fugitive brothers to Süleyman Çavuş, who was previously sent to Poland with an imperial letter.[94] On the other hand, an order sent to the Voivode of Moldavia states that the brothers crossed the Polish border to avoid the upheaval in Crimea but were captured by Polish leaders on the border. In other words, the event was described as being taken prisoner rather than seeking asylum.[95]

On the other hand, in an effort to calm the waters, the Ottoman government sent an order to Alp Giray and Selamet Giray in June 1581, asking them to return to Crimea. The Imperial Council then sent Hüseyin Çavuş to Poland with orders to return the fugitive brothers to the Khan. Moreover, the Voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia were ordered to help facilitate the process.[96] The Ottoman government wanted the brothers to return to Crimea, but Alp Giray and Selamet Giray asked Polish rulers that they either be released or sent to Istanbul. In return, they promised to keep up the peace with Poland once they ascended the throne.[97]

According to an order dated 2 September 1581, Mehmed II Giray sent Baheddin Bey to report the latest developments to Istanbul. After that, Süleyman Çavuş, directly appointed by the Imperial Council,

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[93] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 42, 265, order 824, 295, order 906.

[94] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 248, order 555. Polish historians wrote that the fugitive brothers were captured while trying to escape to Istanbul, see Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, 104–5; Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 108.

[95] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 42, 121, order 417.

[96] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 42, 295, order 906.

[97] Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 108.

and Receb Divan, appointed by the Khan, were tasked with taking the fugitive brothers from the fortress of Çerkes Kerman and delivering them to Crimea. The Ottoman government also asked the Khan to issue an *istimaletname*[98] to try and earn the trust of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray.[99]

Another imperial letter sent to Stephan Bathory, the King of Poland, on the same date shows that the Imperial Council now had more precise information about the emergence of the issue of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray. According to this letter, following the killing of Cihan Giray, Mehmed II Giray's brothers fled Crimea and sought asylum in different places. Alp Giray and Selamet Giray were on their way to Istanbul when Christian Cossack groups in the region captured them. Hearing of this incident, *starosta* of Çerkes Kerman Mikhail took action, and after fierce fighting, took Alp Giray and Selamet Giray from the hands of the Cossacks and brought them to Çerkes Kerman. According to the Ottoman government, the rebel brothers were still kept as prisoners in the fortress of Çerkes Kerman as of September 1581. In this process, both the imprisoned brothers and Mehmed II Giray sent letters to Istanbul about the issue. The Imperial Council asked Süleyman Çavuş, who had previously mediated to resolve the issues between Poland and Crimea, to also deal with this issue. Süleyman Çavuş was sent to Poland, accompanied by one of the closest aides of the Khan. The Polish government was asked to make sure that the brothers of the Khan were delivered to Süleyman Çavuş and the Khan's aide, and ensure their security until they arrived in Crimea. The Ottoman government also informed the King of Poland that the peace between Poland and Crimea would end if the brothers were not returned and the annual payments were not made.[100] According to Marek Plewczyński, Alp Giray and Selamet Giray asked for asylum near the Dnieper River, and Jan Oryszowski, the commander of the

[98] The word *istimâlet* means placating or attracting someone, and *istimâletnâme* means a pardon for a crime. In Ottoman terminology, policies used by the Empire to attract non-Muslim communities, in particular, were also described using this term. *Kubbealtı Lugatı* [Kubbealtı Dictionary] (İstanbul, 2008), 1473; Yılmaz, *Osmanlı Tarih Sözlüğü*, 291.

[99] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 45, order 91.

[100] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 46–47, order 92 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i* Hümayunlar, 695–7.

Zaporozhian Cossacks, accepted their request.[101] This is in keeping with the record in *mühimme defters* that Mikhail, *starosta* of Çerkas Kerman captured the brothers after fierce fighting with the Zaporozhians. The fight probably took place because the Zaporozhians did not want to hand the rebel brothers who sought asylum with them to the *starosta* of Çerkes Kerman.

Alp Giray kept up his correspondence with the Ottoman government while in Poland. It is obvious that this correspondence was made possible with the permission of the Polish government. İslam Giray, who would later succeed Mehmed II Giray, also supported the fugitive brothers. The Imperial Council told Alp Giray that he was pardoned and ordered him to return to Crimea, resume his position as the heir, and participate in the Iranian (Demirkapı) Campaign in the spring. On the other hand, Süleyman Çavuş and Receb Divan continued making preparations for their journey to Poland. In this regard, the District Governor of Bender was told to arrange for a translator to assist Süleyman Çavuş.[102]

Around the same time, the Alp Giray and Selamet Giray issue also became controversial in Poland. Some in the Royal Council recommended supporting the brothers by making an alliance with them or returning them in return for the cancellation of the annual payments, whereas King Stephan Bathory and Jan Zamoyski thought that postponing the issue would be the better course of action because of the ongoing war with Moscow. Eventually, assurances were given to the Ottoman Empire, and the idea of sending the brothers to Istanbul was accepted.[103]

In November 1581, Süleyman Çavuş was ordered to bring the fugitive brothers to Istanbul, not Crimea.[104] On the other hand, Sahib Giray and Fetih Giray managed to escape to Yambol, where İslam Giray resided, and the Ottoman government allowed them to stay in Yambol.[105] Because of the delay in the arrival of the brothers

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[101] Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska*, iii, 90; Kazimierz Dopierała, on the other hand, contrary to Marek Plewczyński, writes that Alp Giray and Selamet Giray were taken prisoners by the Zaporozhians. Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 108.

[102] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 47, order 93; 48, order 94; 49, order 99.

[103] Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 108–110.

[104] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 212, order 455.

[105] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 63, order 641.

Alp Giray and Selamet Giray in Istanbul, Osman Çavuş was also sent to Poland, in late February or early March of the year 1582, after Süleyman Çavuş. The imperial order delivered by Osman Çavuş asked the Polish government to send the brothers to Istanbul without delay, and make the annual payment to Crimea.[106]

By April 1582, Alp Giray and Selamet Giray were about to set off for Istanbul, and orders were sent to the Voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia to facilitate their trip.[107] Problems continued within the Khanate despite resolving the Alp Giray and Selamet Giray issue. Selamet Giray, who was asked to stay with İslam Giray, disappeared together with his brother Fetih Giray. According to the Ottoman government, the brothers most probably aimed to take asylum in Poland. To prevent this from happening, officials along the border, that is to say, the Voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia and *qadis* on the road to Silistra and Bender were sent orders to capture the brothers.[108] Despite these efforts, however, Istanbul received reports that Selamet Giray and Fetih Giray had reached the rural Dnieper.[109] Thanks to Ottoman intervention, opposition within the Crimean Khanate came to a temporary end in 1582. Alp Giray, on the other hand, would take revenge on Mehmed II Giray two years later, and eliminate him with the cooperation of the Ottoman government. The issue of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray is important in that it shows how Poland was a country to seek asylum from for the losing side in a civil war in the Crimean Khanate.

CONCLUSIONS

This study used edicts in the *mühimme defters* to analyse the relations between the Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania. According to records in the *mühimme defters*, one of the main issues in the relations between the Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania was the issue

[106] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 46, 357, order 826 / Dengiz Ökke, *Nâme-i Hümayunlar*, 701.

[107] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 47, 73, order 183–4. Alp Giray and Selamet Giray departed for Istanbul on 18 March 1582, together with Hieronim Filipowski, Poland's envoy to the Ottoman Empire, see Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne*, 119–20.

[108] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 48, 233, orders 649, 650.

[109] BOA, A.DVNS.MHM, d. 48, 307, orders 907, 908.

of taxes. The evolution of the annual payments and its perception by the Ottoman administration, Crimean Khanate, and Poland-Lithuania is examined for the first time in the light of the *mühimme defters*. The issue of taxes had its roots in the annual payments requested for the Ukrainian cities left for Lithuania as the Golden Horde disintegrated. Gaining stability during the reign of Mengli I Giray, the Crimean Khanate took action for these payments to be resumed. On the other hand, the Polish-Lithuanian State tried to make the annual payments dependent on two primary conditions. The first was military cooperation against the Grand Duchy of Moscow. The second was the prevention of attacks by Tatars affiliated with the Crimean Khanate. In this regard, Poland seems to have made the Khanate accept that annual payments would not be made in years when the Tatar attacks occurred. These annual payments were described as taxes in internal records kept by the Imperial Council in Istanbul and as regular payments in correspondence with Poland. On the other hand, Crimean Khans referred to the annual payments as *bölek hazinesi* or valuable gifts.

According to the records in *mühimme defters*, Cossack communities thought to be affiliated with the Kingdom of Poland had concentrated in and around the fortresses of Çerkes Kerman, Mankerman, Bratslav and Kaniów. Polish Cossacks gradually increased their attacks on merchants and vulnerable semi-nomadic Tatar communities near the Polish border and the fortress of Özi. As a result of these attacks, Tatar nomads had to move away from the shores of the Dnieper River and relocate to safer areas. The Crimean Khanate's and Ottoman Empire's trade in Eastern Europe was dealt a significant blow. Tatar attacks, on the other hand, were carried out by Bender and Özi Tatars and by the Crimean Tatars. The author knows that at least some of these attacks were carried out with the knowledge and permission of the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, this study contributed to the chronology of mutual border incursions and raids.

The Crimean Khanate and Poland occasionally exchanged envoys. Both the Crimean Khanate and Poland resorted to the practice of detaining the other side's envoy from time to time. Both states expressed a desire for an alliance against Moscow in their diplomatic relations, but these efforts did not produce the desired level of cooperation.

Polish border officials captured Alp Giray and Selamet Giray as they were trying to flee Crimea after internal fighting in the Khanate, which began in 1581. The author is not able to say anything definitive

on whether they were trying to take asylum in Poland or the Ottoman Empire. The continued residence of Alp Giray and Selamet Giray in Poland has been a subject of correspondence between the Crimean Khanate, Poland and the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, the Polish government sent the two brothers to Istanbul, yielding to Ottoman pressure.

Finally, this study reveals that the Ottoman sources are among the primary sources of the relations between the Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania, and it is necessary to consult the Ottoman archives to understand how the relations between the two states looked, especially from the Crimean front.

transl. Nova Translation

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