

**Poland-Lithuania, the 1683 relief expedition
to Vienna and the crusading movement**

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Philip James, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: _____

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Abstract

This thesis explores the stimuli and internal processes which brought an army from Poland-Lithuania, led by King Jan III Sobieski, to the relief of Vienna in 1683, posing in addition the question of whether this expedition merits consideration as part of the crusading movement.

Previous examinations of crusading in early modernity, which have not included these events within the scope of their study, have reached the conclusion that the true end of the movement should be dated to the late sixteenth century.

Meanwhile, existing studies covering the relief expedition have rarely progressed beyond examining it as a military exercise, failing to fully appreciate or missing entirely the streak of religious motivation which underpinned the assistance provided by the *Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów* (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). Those works in English have, moreover, frequently displayed deficiencies in their understanding of the unique political system and culture of that polity.

Working primarily through epistolary and diaristic evidence, this thesis offers the first detailed, anglophone, *Rzeczpospolita*-centric study of the background to and events of the relief expedition. It refines our understanding of the roles played in the political system by the elected monarch and the *szlachta* (the powerful noble class of the *Rzeczpospolita*); examines the impact of French, Imperial and Brandenburg-Prussian diplomacy; reassesses the events of the 1681 and 1683 *Sejmy* (parliaments), the former broken without issuing legislation through the exercise of the *liberum veto*, the latter successfully concluded; and brings the religious characteristics of the resulting relief expedition into the foreground. Moreover, it demonstrates that, at least in one previously overlooked part of Christendom, engagement with both the mechanisms and the ideology of crusading remained possible on a society-wide level as late as the final decades of the seventeenth century.

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Abbreviations

- Acta 1677-79* *Acta quae in archivo ministerii rerum exterarum Gallici [...] ab anno 1677 ad annum 1679*, ed. by Kazimierz Waliszewski, *Acta Historica Res Gestas Poloniae Illustrantia*, 5 (Kraków: Akademii Umiejętności Krakowskiej, 1881)
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- Kątski Marcin Kątski, 'Diarium Artilleriae Praefecti' in *ARJ*, pp. 580-615
- Kochowski Wespazjan Kochowski, *Commentarius belli adversum Turcas ad Viennam, et in Hungaria Anno Christi 1683 gesti ductu & auspiciis Serenissimi ac Potentissimi Joannis III. Regis Poloniarum* (Kraków: Gorecki, 1684)
- Morstina *Listy Jana Andrzeja Morstina*, ed. by Stefania Ochmann-Staniszevska (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002)
- PSB *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, ed. by Władysław Konopczyński and others, 52+ vols (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności and Polska Akademia Nauk, 1935-)
- Talenti *Polonia e Curia Romana: Corrispondenza del Lucchese Tommaso Talenti segretario intimo del Re di Polonia con Carlo Barberini protettore del regno (1681-1693)* ed. by Gaetano Platania (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2004)
- Theiner *Vetera Monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, ed. by Augustin Theiner, 4 vols (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1860-64)

Glossary of frequently used Polish terms

Singular	Plural	Description
<i>aukcja</i>	–	An augmentation of the armed forces through the raising of new units.
<i>buława</i>	–	A type of mace, the symbol of rank of a <i>hetman</i> .
<i>deliberatoria</i>	–	Royal letter sent to the senators, soliciting their advice.
<i>hetman</i>	<i>hetmani</i>	The leading military offices in the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> . Four in total, two each from the Crown and Grand Duchy. The Grand <i>Hetmani</i> were the senior, Field <i>Hetmani</i> the junior.
<i>hiberna</i>	–	Tax levied on the royal estates, used for the expenses of the army whilst in winter quarters.
<i>izba poselska</i>	–	Lower chamber of the <i>sejm</i> , sitting place of the <i>posłowie</i> .
<i>kasztelan</i>	<i>kasztelanowie</i>	Holder of a <i>kasztelania</i> , appointed for life by the monarch.
<i>kasztelania</i>	<i>kasztelanie</i>	An office which normally conveyed a junior secular senatorial rank upon the holder. The three <i>wyróżnieni</i> (distinguished) <i>kasztelanowie</i> of Kraków, Wilno and Troki, were exceptions to this rule, sitting amongst the most senior <i>wojewodowie</i> in the order of precedence. Originally a governorship of a castle and its surrounding area, although this aspect of the role was now largely ceremonial.
<i>komput</i>	–	List of units of the regular army of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> , funded by taxation levied on the <i>województwa</i> and <i>ziemie</i> .
<i>konstytucja</i>	<i>konstytucje</i>	Primary legislative output of <i>sejmy</i> , providing the formal record of the resolutions taken there.
<i>kwarta</i>	–	Tax levied on the royal estates, sufficient to pay for the upkeep of a small permanent military force.
<i>legacja</i>	–	Royal instruction to the <i>sejmiki przedsejmowe</i> , in which the king set out his perception of the problems facing the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> , to which the <i>sejmiki</i> were expected to respond through the instructions given to the <i>posłowie</i> elected

		there. Accompanied by, and often mistaken for, the <i>uniwersał</i> , a formulaic chancellery document setting the assembly dates of the <i>sejmiki przedsejmowy</i> and <i>sejm walny</i> .
<i>pacta conventa</i>	–	Contract detailing the obligations of the monarch towards the <i>szlachta</i> , which each new monarch was obliged to sign as a precondition of their elevation to the throne.
<i>poseł</i>	<i>posłowie</i>	Member of the <i>izba poselska</i> , elected to represent their region of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> at <i>sejmiki przedsejmowe</i> .
<i>pospolite ruszenie</i>	–	Feudal <i>levée-en-masse</i> of the <i>szlachta</i> .
<i>propozycja od tronu</i>	–	Speech given on behalf of the monarch, setting the agenda for the <i>sejm</i> in its early days. Normally echoed and substantially restated the points of the <i>legacja</i> .
<i>Rzeczpospolita</i>	–	The Polish-Lithuanian state. Shorthand for <i>Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów</i> (Commonwealth of Both Nations).
<i>sejm</i>	<i>sejmy</i>	Bicameral legislative body of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> , comprised of the <i>izba poselska</i> and senate. Sometimes referred to as the <i>sejm walny</i> (general <i>sejm</i>).
<i>sejmik</i>	<i>sejmiki</i>	Assembly of the <i>szlachta</i> of a <i>województwo</i> or <i>ziemia</i> .
<i>sejmik przedsejmowy</i>	<i>sejmiki przedsejmowe</i>	Regional assembly held prior to the <i>sejm</i> , during which <i>posłowie</i> were elected and given instructions on behalf of the <i>szlachta</i> whom they represented.
<i>sejmik relacyjny</i>	<i>sejmiki relacyjne</i>	Regional assembly held after the <i>sejm</i> , during which <i>posłowie</i> reported on the events of the <i>sejm</i> , and the <i>szlachta</i> decided whether to approve the decisions taken there.
<i>skrypt do archiwum</i>	<i>skrypty do archiwum</i>	Legislative document produced during <i>sejmy</i> , the contents of which were to remain unpublished until put into execution, since they contained sensitive information, frequently relating to diplomatic and military matters.
<i>starosta</i>	<i>starostowie</i>	Holder of a <i>starostwo</i> , appointed for life by the monarch.

<i>starostwo</i>	<i>starostwa</i>	One of several types of administrative subdivision of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> , each granting the holder economic rights.
<i>subsidium charitativum</i>	–	Poll tax volunteered by the <i>szlachta</i> , employed for the raising and upkeep of armies in time of war.
<i>szlachcic</i>	<i>szlachcice</i>	Individual member of the <i>szlachta</i> .
<i>szlachta</i>	–	The noble class of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> , possessing the right to participate in <i>sejmiki</i> and royal elections, as well as exemption from most forms of taxation.
<i>wojewoda</i>	<i>wojewodowie</i>	Holder of a <i>województwo</i> . Appointed for life by the monarch.
<i>województwo</i>	<i>województwa</i>	The primary administrative division of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> . Also the related office, which conveyed a senior secular senatorial rank upon the holder. Originally a governorship of the associated region, although this aspect of the role was now largely ceremonial.
<i>wotum</i>	<i>wota</i>	Formal response given by a senator to the <i>propozycja od tronu</i> , in the presence of both chambers of the <i>sejm</i> .
<i>ziemia</i>	<i>ziemie</i>	An administrative division of the <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> . Although in most cases subdivisions of <i>województwa</i> , many <i>ziemie</i> possessed the historic right to hold their own <i>sejmiki</i> .

Introduction

This thesis examines the intersection between the unique political culture, religious outlook and legislative process of Poland-Lithuania in the late-seventeenth century and the elongated tail of the medieval crusading movement. In particular, it focuses upon the alliance negotiated in the *sejm* in the spring of 1683 between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I (1658-1705), as well as the relief force which Poland-Lithuania subsequently sent to Vienna in the summer of that year to assist in breaking the Ottoman siege.

When one reads the words which King Jan III Sobieski (1674-96) wrote to Pope Innocent XI (1676-89) and to his wife, Maria Kazimiera, respectively in the days following the Christian victory at Vienna: 'We came, we saw, and God has conquered'¹ and 'This is an army truly resembling that which the great Godfrey [de Bouillon] led to the Holy Land'², it should become clear that at the very least, there are 'crusading' threads which might be pulled at. Examination of the crusading credentials, so to speak, of the expedition which the *Rzeczpospolita* sent to assist in the relief of Vienna in 1683 has remained a particular focus of this thesis throughout its lifespan; it is a central feature especially of the final chapter, and by no means neglected elsewhere. Upon delving more deeply into the unique society which produced this expedition however, it became increasingly clear that there was another significant gap in the existing literature which this study might contribute towards filling. The Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 has been the subject of extensive historical study, disseminated in both scholarly and popular publications. The contribution of Poland-Lithuania to the wider Christian relief effort, however – at least prior to the conjunction of the army from the *Rzeczpospolita* with the forces of the other contributing Christian princes upon the banks of the Danube – has been curiously overlooked in anglophone scholarship.

¹ Jan III Sobieski, King of Poland to Pope Innocent XI, Vienna, 14 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 386-7), p. 386.

Venimus, Vidimus et Deus Vicit.

² Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Queen of Poland, from the Tents of the Grand Vizir nr. Vienna, 13 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 376-82), p. 382.

C'est une armée véritablement ressemblante, que le grand Godred menait à la terre Sainte.

There remains an absence of what one might term a *Rzeczpospolita*-centric study of the relief expedition which Poland-Lithuania sent to Vienna in 1683, covering not only the expedition itself, but also the political manoeuvrings, religious outlook and legislative process within the *Rzeczpospolita* which led to the sending of this force. Whilst there have been several studies which have touched upon these elements to some degree, each has done so only in passing, either because they are short syntheses of work originally published in other languages, or because their primary foci have lain elsewhere. Although frequently providing excellent examinations of their central topic, such studies have never offered more than a heavily-abridged version of events which were taking place in the *Rzeczpospolita*; their grasp of the nuances of concepts unique to Poland-Lithuania (and moreover the importance and implications of these concepts) are patchy, and they frequently display a dependence upon the narrow range of sources most closely related to their main narrative. These works will be examined in more detail shortly.

This thesis, then, represents an attempt not only to re-examine the Polish relief expedition to Vienna – providing a detailed exploration, for the first time, of whether it merits consideration as part of the crusading movement – but also to better contextualise that expedition, and the alliance with the emperor which triggered it, within the *sui generis* environment of the late-seventeenth century *Rzeczpospolita*. With this in mind, it is necessary here to provide a review of the relevant scholarly literature divided into two sections, the first covering works which have examined the crusading movement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the second comprising studies which have discussed the Polish relief expedition to Vienna and its historical background.

Crusading in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

Any review of crusading scholarship on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries should start in one place only, with Norman Housley's landmark 1992 study, *The Later Crusades: From Lyons to Alcazar, 1274-1580*. Although not the first work to suggest the continuation of the crusade into the late-medieval and early-modern periods, Housley's study was the first, and remains the only, attempt to produce a holistic study of each of the myriad forms, theatres and institutional

underpinnings of the later crusading movement, tracing each to their eventual denouement.

By the early sixteenth century, Housley argues, the movement had reached a low ebb. Abuses associated with the offering of indulgences, a practice which had emerged from and remained inextricably linked to the crusading movement, had come under sustained criticism from church reformers. Catholicism would be supplanted as the dominant faith in many regions of Christendom by the various Protestant churches which emerged in the image of reformers such as Luther and Calvin. As a result, many of these areas, including Britain and Scandinavia, as well as parts of the Baltic, the Low Countries and the Holy Roman Empire, were irrevocably lost to the crusading movement.³

The movement nevertheless survived the criticism it had received in those parts of Christendom which remained Catholic. Indeed, powered in part by a renewed sense of Catholic self-confidence following the initiation of the Counter-Reformation, it even saw a resurgence in the Mediterranean in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, with Housley detecting the presence of both the ethos of crusading, as well as the mobilisation of its traditional mechanisms, amongst the participants in the naval league of Catholic powers which defeated the Ottomans at Lepanto in 1571.⁴ The resurgence was to prove brief, however, and Lepanto was to mark the last major victory of the crusading movement. Momentum was swiftly lost in the face of disputes between the allied Christian powers and a startlingly rapid Ottoman recovery. The failed Moroccan expedition of Sebastian I of Portugal, which ended in his defeat and death at the battle of Alcazar in 1578, marked the conclusion of crusading as a practical exercise.⁵

For Housley, the wars of the 1570s finally demonstrated to the Catholic world that crusading had lost its practicality as a means of fighting wars against the Ottomans, whilst any lingering chance of another revival was suppressed by the long period of relative military disengagement in the Mediterranean which followed, as the attentions of both Catholic Europe and the Ottoman Empire were

³ Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274-1580: From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), pp. 373-80, 414-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 138-42.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-5.

drawn by intra-faith conflicts.⁶ Whilst what he terms 'practical crusading' reaches its end around 1580, he nonetheless notes the survival of a corpus of associated attitudes, practices and beliefs at least into the seventeenth century.⁷

Housley's view remains largely unchanged in his concluding remarks to his chapter entitled 'The Crusading Movement, 1274-1700' in the 1995 *Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*. Here, he sounds a note of caution:

The survival into the seventeenth century of crusade indulgences and church taxes is poorly documented but undoubtedly occurred, for example during the Veneto-Ottoman struggle for Crete (1645–69), the second siege of Vienna (1683), and the Holy League of 1684–97. There is for historians of the crusades a fascination in tracking down ever-later examples of crusade preaching, individuals assuming the cross, and grants of indulgences for fighting, and more generally in tracing the expression of crusading ideas and sentiments into modern times. This fascination is easily understood and it forms a legitimate field of enquiry, so long as we accept that the crusading movement, with its connotations not just of acquiescence but of broad-based popularity and support, had long since come to an end.⁸

The only major exploration of crusading in the seventeenth century, Géraud Poumarède's 2004 monograph *Pour en finir avec la Croisade: Mythes et Réalités de la lutte contre les Turcs aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, has reached broadly the same conclusion as Housley.

His study, which focuses predominantly upon France and Venice, argues that whilst crusading rhetoric and anti-Ottoman sentiments remained commonplace even within seventeenth-century Catholicism, warfare against the Ottomans – the primary form which crusading had taken in the sixteenth century – had largely become '*banalisé*', or stripped of its religious component, by the seventeenth. Genuine and active engagement with crusading ideology can no longer be found on a national or international level; it had instead become solely the preserve of that small fraction of the noble classes of Christendom who volunteered to sail

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-50.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 454-6.

⁸ Norman Housley, 'The Crusading Movement 1274-1700' in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. by Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford: OUP, 1995), p. 290.

with the Knights of Malta, or who sold their services as mercenaries in the armies of those states which bordered the Ottoman Empire. Notably, engagement and enthusiasm had faded almost entirely at the highest level of society – amongst rulers – as well as amongst the general populace.⁹

In his concise treatment of the seventeenth century in his 2006 book, *Contesting the Crusades*, Housley incorporates the broad thrust of Poumarède's thesis, seeing no conflict with his own idea that the crusading movement had reached its true end around 1580.¹⁰

Poumarède's arguments are indeed largely convincing in the case of his chosen examples of France and Venice. It is less clear, however, that his conclusions are applicable to the entirety of Catholic Christendom. Poumarède's own work reveals structural reasons unique to both of these states which prevented widespread engagement with crusading ideas during warfare with the Ottomans. In the case of Venice, by the seventeenth century its armies were largely formed of mercenaries, predominantly drawn from the states of Protestant Northern Europe. For such men, the idea of engaging with Papist crusading ideas would have been nothing short of anathema.¹¹ France provides an even more problematic choice of example. It fought very few wars with the Ottomans. Indeed, uniquely amongst Catholic powers, *détente* with the Ottoman Empire formed a cornerstone of the foreign policy of the French monarchy throughout almost the entirety of Poumarède's chosen period, as a counterweight to the power of the Habsburgs of the Holy Roman Empire and Spain. As a result, not only did the Houses of Valois and Bourbon routinely suppress the crusading impulses of their own populace, they even sought, through diplomacy and subterfuge, to hamper the efforts of other states who might wish to fight against the Ottomans.¹² As this thesis will make clear, this pattern very much held true in 1683.

⁹ Géraud Poumarède, *Pour en Finir avec la Croisade: Mythes et Réalités de la Lutte contre les Turcs aux XVI^e et XVII^e Siècles* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004), pp. 383-617.

¹⁰ Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Blackwell: Malden, 2006), p. 141.

¹¹ Poumarède, pp. 529-617.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 383-429.

Poumarède's work does not sufficiently demonstrate why the latent rhetoric of crusading which he freely acknowledges was still circulating within Catholicism in the seventeenth century could not find active, genuine and widespread expression in places without these unique obstructions. Furthermore, his study almost entirely excludes those regions within Catholic Christendom, such as the Balkans, parts of the Holy Roman Empire, and Poland-Lithuania, which themselves bordered the Ottoman Empire. It is in precisely these places – where the Ottoman threat appeared potentially existential, and where the inhabitants were themselves obliged to bear the brunt of the frequent conflicts against the 'common enemy of Christendom' which took place in the seventeenth century – that evidence for the survival of an active form of crusading is most likely to be found.

It should be noted that *Pour en finir avec la Croisade* does contain a short examination of the events of 1683 in a crusading context, although Poumarède's approach is a long way short of comprehensive. Whilst he examines the role played by the papacy in the wider Christian conflict with the Ottomans during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, he offers no examination of the motivations of Polish-Lithuanian or Imperial participants in this conflict equivalent to that which he performs elsewhere in his study for the (substantially less numerous) French and Venetian combatants in wars with the Ottomans. Even on his chosen ground, Poumarède's argument somewhat misses the mark. He argues that the role of Pope Innocent XI, as merely the guarantor of the alliance in 1683 between Poland-Lithuania and the emperor and the broader alliances which incorporated Venice and Russia in subsequent years, was emblematic of the increasing marginalisation of the papacy in both the conflict with the Ottomans, and in international diplomacy more generally. He compares this state of affairs unfavourably to the Holy Leagues of 1538 and 1571, where the papacy had been a full contracting party in the alliances. Although he acknowledges in passing that papal diplomacy played a role in the formation of the 1683 alliance, he undersells – or perhaps was not aware of – quite how vital that role was.¹³ Moreover, the conveniently linear narrative of declining papal influence which results fails to appreciate the impact of the particular circumstances which differentiated the

¹³ Ibid., pp. 275-305.

alliance of 1683 from those of the sixteenth century. The alliances of 1538 and 1571 had been formed primarily to conduct naval operations in the Mediterranean, where geographic proximity made direct papal contributions to the efforts of Catholic Christendom particularly viable. The alliance of 1683 and its successors, on the other hand, saw the largest deployments of men and resources – by an order of magnitude – take place on land in Central and Eastern Europe, where for reasons of distance, indirect financial contributions offered the most practical means for the papacy to provide the majority of its assistance.¹⁴ Papal contributions, it should be noted, were not necessarily any less visible because of this shift in approach. In 1683, for example, the share of the papal subsidies which was allotted to Poland-Lithuania was used in part for a levy of Zaporozhian Cossack mercenaries, who subsequently fought under papal insignia.¹⁵ Moreover, a recent financial study by Peter Rauscher, far from presenting a picture of steady decline in the role of the papacy, has argued that the annual contribution (as a percentage of total Imperial military expenditure) which Innocent XI made to the Imperial war effort alone in 1683 and the years which followed – to say nothing of the contributions he also made to the war efforts of Poland-Lithuania and later Venice – exceeded by multiples the annual papal contribution during Imperial wars against the Ottomans earlier in the seventeenth century.¹⁶ One might even be tempted to suggest that that the role played by Innocent XI – that of a guiding spirit and valuable source of financial assistance – represented something of a return towards the role which the papacy had most often played in the early centuries of the crusading movement. Direct papal participation in conflicts against Muslim powers had, after all, been a relatively late innovation.

The Polish relief expedition to Vienna and its historical background

As stated above, there is something of a dearth of research on the Polish relief expedition in anglophone scholarship, either in the form of detailed studies of the

¹⁴ As Poumarède himself acknowledges, papal galleys continued to play a role in the Mediterranean theatre despite the outlay for the land war, assisting the Venetian war effort in the Morea. p. 301.

¹⁵ Opizio Pallavicini, Papal Nuncio to Poland-Lithuania, to Alderano Cybo, Papal Secretary of State, Warsaw, 9 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2099, pp. 393-5).

¹⁶ Peter Rauscher, 'Defence and Expansion. Emperor Leopold I, Pope Innocent XI and Financing the Wars Against the Ottoman Empire in the Late 17th Century', in *Innocenzo XI Odescalchi: Papa, Politico, Committente*, ed. by Richard Bösel and others (Rome: Viella, 2014), pp. 167-184 (p. 183).

expedition and the background to it, or as part of modern, academic biographies of Sobieski. The most recent example of the latter is F.C. Anstruther's translation of the research of Otton Laskowski, published in 1944 as *Sobieski, King of Poland*, which includes a brief and broadly passable, albeit rather dated, summary of the background to and events of the expedition to Vienna.¹⁷ To the best of my knowledge, no examples of the former have been published.

A few chapters are devoted to Polish-Lithuanian affairs during the pontificate of Pope Innocent XI in Ludwig von Pastor's monumental 16-volume *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*. This work was translated into English as *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, where the relevant sections comprise part of volume 32. Taken in totality, von Pastor's work is unquestionably a phenomenal work of scholarship, and his treatment of the political background in the *Rzeczpospolita* to the Viennese expedition and the role played by papal diplomacy offers valuable insights, drawn from material unearthed in the Vatican archives. Given the astonishingly broad scope of his study, however, it would be unrealistic to expect a narrative without flaws. The brisk treatment which von Pastor by necessity accords to these events naturally leads to oversimplifications, and, on occasion, outright factual errors. Moreover, his interpretations are dominated almost exclusively by the perspective of the Papal Nuncio to the *Rzeczpospolita*, Opizio Pallavicini. His account also displays evidence of being influenced by the predilection towards pessimism regarding Sobieski's character and intentions within the Papal Curia, a result – at least in part – of a failure in Rome to fully grasp the implications of the increasingly-constrictive structural limitations placed upon the Polish monarch by his own electorate over the course of recent decades, and therefore a misguided expectation that he was capable of acting with the freedom and autonomy of other contemporary Catholic rulers.¹⁸

¹⁷ Otton Laskowski, *Sobieski, King of Poland*, trans. by Fay Carmichael Anstruther (Glasgow: Polish Library, 1944), pp. 125-34. There have, it should be noted, been more recent non-scholarly biographies of Sobieski, notably a self-published effort by Miliadiades Varvounis from 2012, which at points verges upon thinly-veiled anti-Islamic polemic, and thus merits neither a full reference nor a bibliographic entry here.

¹⁸ Ludwig von Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, trans. by Frederick Ignatius Antrobus and others, 40 vols (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1899-1953), XXIII, pp. 117-51.

In his 1950 chapter covering the reign of Sobieski in *The Cambridge History of Poland*, Otto Forst de Battaglia provides a short synthesis in English of the research contained in his 1946 German-language biography of that monarch. His examination in this chapter of the lead-up to the relief expedition to Vienna is particularly spartan however, with the events of the two years prior covered in little more than three pages. In these efforts at abridgement, his narrative is prone, to an even greater degree than that of von Pastor, to material oversimplification and error.¹⁹

Thomas Mack Barker, in the early chapters of his 1967 monograph, *Double Eagle and Crescent: Vienna's Second Turkish Siege and its Historical Setting*, provides a brief but wide-ranging summary of the historical background to the Siege of Vienna, in which he covers a period of decades and touches upon the roles played by France, the Papacy, the non-Habsburg polities of the Empire and others, alongside that of Poland-Lithuania. It is unmistakable, however, as the title of his work indicates, that the central theme of his work remains the Imperial Habsburg-Ottoman confrontation. The contributions of the *Rzeczpospolita* to this struggle, however valuable they may have been in 1683, ultimately remain a peripheral concern. This is reflected both in Barker's use of a limited range of sources for affairs in the *Rzeczpospolita* – he relies heavily upon Forst de Battaglia's German biography of Sobieski – and in the particular strengths and weaknesses of his narrative when discussing events which took place there. When examining interactions between Sobieski and the Imperial court, the role played by the Imperial Resident, Johann Christoph Zierowsky, in promoting an alliance between the two, and the impact which the proxy war in 1681 and 1682 between the emperor and sultan along the southern border of Poland in Habsburg Upper Hungary (roughly contiguous with modern Slovakia) had upon the mindset of the Polish monarch, Barker's account of the events which led to the relief expedition is perceptive. Elsewhere, however, inaccuracies and meaningful omissions creep in.²⁰

¹⁹ Otto Forst di Battaglia, 'Jan Sobieski, 1674-96' in *The Cambridge History of Poland*, 2 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1950), I, pp. 532-556 (pp. 545-9).

²⁰ Thomas Mack Barker, *Double Eagle and Crescent: Vienna's Second Turkish Siege and its Historical Setting* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1967), pp. 47-53, 106-7, 113-5, 122-5, 138-42, 157-9, 302-4.

Barker's subsequent treatment of the Polish relief expedition is similarly patchy. His account of the final approach to Vienna, following the conjunction on the banks of the Danube with the relieving forces sent by other Christian princes, is highly detailed. Prior to this point, however, events are only sketched out. In terms of the religious aspects of the expedition, he notes in passing Sobieski's visit to the Black Madonna at Częstochowa, and the ceremony in Kraków on the Feast of St. Lawrence (10 August), a few days prior to the king's departure, as well as the spiritual preparations made prior to the battle itself, although no further analysis of their significance is offered. Moreover, between the departure from Kraków and arrival at Vienna instances of religious practice are unmentioned in Barker's account, as are the ongoing efforts within the *Rzeczpospolita* to ensure divine favour for the expedition.²¹

John Stoye, in his 2000 book, *The Siege of Vienna*, the second edition of a work first published in 1964, takes a similar approach to Barker in his treatment of affairs in the *Rzeczpospolita*, which exist on the periphery of his work focusing on events at Vienna. He offers only a brief summary of what occurred in Poland-Lithuania prior to the army's departure for Vienna, focusing almost exclusively on the course of the alliance negotiations and subsequent military preparations. Even here, the deficiencies are at points material. He fails, for example, to grasp that the limitations of the political system of the *Rzeczpospolita* meant that Sobieski was unable simply to put the terms provisionally agreed with Leopold in the autumn of 1682 before the *sejm* for their confirmation.²²

In discussing the events of the relief expedition, Stoye, like Barker, acknowledges the king's visit to Częstochowa and the ceremony held on the Feast of St. Lawrence, and notes in addition that Sobieski departed Kraków on the Feast of the Assumption, but no further investigation is offered into the significance of these events, and other instances of religious engagement are missed entirely.²³

The corpus of relevant works in Polish is, as one might expect, both larger and of a substantially higher quality. Two works which have focused in detail upon the

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-319.

²² John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), pp. 67-72, 129-31.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-41, 159-66.

events of the relief expedition and its historical background stand out as meriting particular mention:

The first is Kazimierz Konarski's 1914 monograph, *Polska przed odsieczą wiedeńską w roku 1683* (Poland before the Viennese relief in 1683), which, whilst somewhat dated in style, nonetheless remains an exceptionally valuable study of events in the *Rzeczpospolita* during the years preceding the expedition to Vienna.²⁴ Konarski provides a perspicacious treatment of the shift in Sobieski's international political alignment from France towards Austria, the trigger for which came in the summer of 1682, although he perceives that it had its roots several years prior. His detailed accounts of the events of the *sejmy* which took place during this period contain countless valuable insights drawn from archival material, including several *sejm* diaries produced by participants which remain unedited and unpublished over a century later. These are supplemented throughout his work with regular drawings from French, Austrian and Papal diplomatic correspondence. He also provides what remains the most detailed study of the political literature produced by the royal court and its opponents in the lead-up to the 1683 *Sejm*. Despite its many merits, Konarski's work does contain occasional flaws. He suggests that the negotiations between Sobieski and Zierowsky in the autumn of 1682 took place publicly rather than in secrecy, missing entirely the fact that Sobieski needed to prevent knowledge of these negotiations from leaking, since his right to negotiate alliances on behalf of the *Rzeczpospolita*, granted by the 1678-9 *Sejm*, had lapsed with the collapse of the next assembly in 1681.²⁵ His understanding of the role played by Brandenburg diplomacy throughout this period has since been superseded by more recent research, whilst his suggestion that Sobieski sought an Imperial marriage for Prince Jakub as a price for the alliance during the 1683 *Sejm* – a suggestion frequently echoed in contemporary rumours and repeated by more recent historians – does not stand up to scrutiny of all the available evidence. When the king became aware of his wife's ongoing efforts to push for a matrimonial alliance between the houses of Sobieski and Habsburg through back channels, he

²⁴ Kazimierz Konarski, *Polska przed odsieczą wiedeńską w roku 1683* (Warsaw: E. Wende, 1914), pp. 78-102, 122-201, 216-24.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-7, 159.

considered them to be potentially damaging to his own intentions to secure a simple, mutually beneficial military alliance with the emperor.²⁶

The second of these works is Jan Wimmer's excellent 1983 monograph, *Wiedeń 1683: Dzieje kampanii i bitwy*. The primary focus of this work, as the author's choice of subtitle, 'a History of the campaigns and of the battle' might be taken to indicate, is to examine the Ottoman siege, Imperial defence and Polish relief of Vienna as military exercises.²⁷ Nevertheless, across several of the earlier chapters of his work, Wimmer also demonstrates a depth of understanding of the political background to the expedition within the *Rzeczpospolita*, the political groupings which were operating there, the motivations of Sobieski and other persons of influence, and the course of events of the 1681 and 1683 *Sejmy*, which is paralleled only by that of Konarski.²⁸ Like Konarski, Wimmer makes use of an extensive range of diplomatic correspondence, as well as several *sejm* diaries in manuscript form.

Wimmer's treatment does contain a few small imperfections. As with Konarski, a fuller understanding of the diplomatic activities of Brandenburg can be obtained elsewhere, albeit only in a work published subsequently. His discussion of the negotiations which took place between Sobieski and Zierowsky in the autumn of 1682 provides little insight into the precise nature of the proposed alliance framework which was agreed on a provisional basis at this stage. This in turn leads to a misconception about when the idea of involving the pope as the guarantor of the alliance arose; Wimmer first mentions the idea as an apparent makeshift to resolve disputes between the Polish-Lithuanian and Imperial negotiators during the negotiations at the 1683 *Sejm*.²⁹ In fact, the pope's involvement in some form had been envisaged even at this earlier stage. Like Konarski, he erroneously suggests that Sobieski and Maria Kazimiera were aligned in pressing for an Imperial marriage for Prince Jakub during the spring of 1683, when in fact the impetus came from the Queen alone.³⁰ Nevertheless, I freely acknowledge here

²⁶ Francesco Buonvisi, Papal Nuncio to the Holy Roman Emperor, to Pallavicini, Vienna, 16 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1674, pp. 271-3).

²⁷ Jan Wimmer, *Wiedeń 1683: Dzieje kampanii i bitwy* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1983), pp. 217-39, 279-344.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-96, 125-45.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-32

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

the considerable debt which my own treatment of the political background to the relief of Vienna – particularly the course of events during the 1681 and 1683 *Sejmy* – owes to the earlier work performed by these two scholars.

There is one area, however, where the assessment provided in this thesis differs fundamentally from those of Konarski and Wimmer. Where they view the Polish relief expedition to Vienna as a product purely of political and military considerations, I seek to demonstrate that religious considerations were also a motivating factor behind the decision of the *Rzeczpospolita* to take action against the Ottomans alongside the emperor in 1683. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate this divergence in approach is through our differing treatments of the *skrypt do archiwum*, the ‘secret’ (i.e. unpublished) document drawn up in the 1683 *Sejm*, and subsequently placed in its archives, which detailed the resolutions taken by that assembly to counter the Ottoman threat.

In addition to these resolutions – upon the number of troops to be raised, their term of service, the means of funding their levying and maintenance, specific provisions regarding military discipline and so on – the *skrypt do archiwum* contains several passages which encapsulate the envisaged conflict with the Ottomans in starkly religious terms. The inclusion of such passages in this document, which codified the foreign policy of the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1683, has significant implications for our understanding of religious climate which surrounded the resulting expedition to Vienna. Konarski, however, limits himself to presenting only a short excerpt from one of these passages, without offering meaningful further comment upon the sentiments expressed therein, whilst the attention of Wimmer rests exclusively upon the raw military-political content of the document. The significance of this choice of language is only now being brought to light.³¹

Likewise, when Wimmer moves to a discussion of the events of the relief expedition to Vienna, his account – although painstakingly researched – is largely one of marches, manoeuvres and logistics, reflecting the steady rationality of the modern military historian. His examination of instances of mass religious practice, despite the prominence accorded to them in some contemporary sources, is

³¹ Konarski, p. 200; Wimmer, pp. 143-5.

spartan. Although he briefly mentions several of the major examples which took place in advance of and during the expedition to Vienna, including the royal visit to the Jasna Góra monastery at Częstochowa on 24 July; the mass celebrated by the papal nuncio at Wawel Cathedral on 10 August, prior to Sobieski's departure from Kraków; the visit to the sanctuary at Piekary Śląskie on 20 August; and the mass held at Tulln on 8 September, he offers little in the way of details, and no comment upon the deeper significance of such events. Moreover, his list is not comprehensive; a number of other instances go unmentioned.³²

Zbigniew Wójcik's monograph, *Jan Sobieski, 1629-1696*, which was also first published on the tricentenary of the expedition to Vienna, before receiving a second edition in 1994, is less comprehensive in its approach to the events of 1683 than the works of Konarski and Wimmer. Although Wójcik's work remains the standard Polish-language biography of that monarch, his treatment of the political background to the expedition to Vienna is brief, and at points contains significant oversights and inaccuracies.³³ His account completely misses, for example, the negotiations which Sobieski and Leopold conducted behind closed doors in the autumn and winter of 1682 to establish a framework agreement for a Polish-Imperial alliance, which the representatives of Leopold I would propose to the *sejm* when that body assembled the following year. For Wójcik, the alliance sprung from a simple and unsolicited cry for help from the emperor in the spring of 1683. Moreover, he suggests that Sobieski pushed for an Imperial match for Prince Jakub as the price of the *Rzeczpospolita's* assistance.³⁴ In terms of the other events of the 1683 *Sejm*, he provides relatively little in the way of detail, which leads at points to disorientating leaps of logic. His account also displays a flexibility with chronology which serves at points to obfuscate the reader's sense of cause and effect. For example, in his summary of the events of the *sejmiki przedsejmowe*, the regional assemblies of the *szlachta* (nobility) which gathered prior to the 1683 *Sejm* during the winter months of 1682/3, Wójcik describes the vast majority of participants as having responded 'either indifferently or

³² Wimmer, pp. 210-5, 279-344.

³³ Zbigniew Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski, 1629-1696*, 2nd edn (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994), pp. 307-316.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 314-5.

negatively to the monarch's appeal³⁵ to consider how the *Rzeczpospolita* should respond to the Ottoman threat. However, in the early weeks of the *sejm* itself – which was comprised, it should be noted, of men elected in these same *sejmiki* – he describes the voice of one dissident senator as having been 'drowned in the general anti-Turkish and pro-royal atmosphere of the *sejm*'.³⁶ No explicit explanation is given for this apparent volte-face, whilst the only evidence he provides which might be taken to explain such a shift in attitudes properly dates from subsequent weeks.

Whilst Wójcik chooses to title his chapter covering the relief expedition to Vienna with Sobieski's aforementioned words to the pope, 'Venimus, Vidimus et Deus Vicit', his treatment of prominent examples of religious practice which took place prior to and during the expedition is again somewhat sparing. Indeed, many instances are missed entirely.³⁷ It should be acknowledged, however, that where he does offer more detail – in discussing the spiritual preparations made by both commanders and soldiers in the days and hours prior to the battle with the Ottomans on 12 September – he goes further than most scholars in recognising that these held genuine meaning for the participants, rather than having taken place as a mere formality or curiosity.³⁸

The decades since the tricentenary in 1983 have seen the publication of several works which have shed new light upon various aspects of the expedition to Vienna and its background. Amongst these, the following have been particularly useful in the production of this thesis:

Andrzej Kamieński's 2002 monograph, *Polska a Brandenburgia-Prusy w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Dzieje polityczne*, provides an examination of diplomatic relations between the *Rzeczpospolita* and Brandenburg-Prussia in the second half of the seventeenth century. Kamieński's research, which makes extensive use of the correspondence of the diplomatic personnel of the elector who operated in the *Rzeczpospolita*, provides a valuable corrective to earlier understandings of the

³⁵ Ibid., p. 311.

ustosunkowała się bądź obojętnie, bądź negatywnie do apelu monarchy.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 314.

utonął jednak w ogólnej antytureckiej i prokrólewskiej atmosferze sejmu.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 317-22.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 322-33.

role played by Brandenburg-Prussia both in the breaking of the 1681 *Sejm*, and the successful conclusion of the parliamentary session in 1683.³⁹

Robert Kołodziej's meticulous and systematic 2014 study on the functioning of the *sejm* during the reign of Jan III, "*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, is invaluable for the new insights and greater context which it provides into the events of the 1681 and 1683 *Sejmy*.⁴⁰ Kołodziej has since complemented this study with a journal article and a chapter in Dariusz Milewski's 2016 edited volume, *Król Jan III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1674-1683*, which explore aspects of this same broad topic in greater detail.⁴¹ Jarosław Stolicki's chapter in this same volume, which traces anti-Ottoman propaganda in the years 1676-1683, provides a valuable examination of Sobieski's shift away from – then back towards – the active pursuit of an Ottoman war during this period.⁴²

Utilising material drawn from several archives in Kraków, Michał Rożek's short 2008 monograph, *Zwycięstwo: Jana III Sobieskiego pod Wiedniem*, begins the process of shedding light upon the importance of those instances of mass religious practice which took place both in that city and in the army, prior to and during the relief expedition to Vienna. Rożek's narrative leaves the reader with a clear impression of the conscious effort which was made to tie the expedition into the particular history and traditions of Polish Catholicism. It details the special devotion displayed towards the Virgin Mary on several occasions during the course of the expedition, as well as the focus which was placed upon the veneration of saints of both local and regional significance during the religious gatherings which were organised in Kraków to offer spiritual assistance to the expedition. Rożek's research also reveals a valuable trove of evidence for the

³⁹ Andrzej Kamieński, *Polska a Brandenburgia-Prusy w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Dzieje polityczne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2002), pp. 199-244

⁴⁰ Robert Kołodziej, "*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2014).

⁴¹ Robert Kołodziej, 'Prawo do protestu w praktyce sejmowej i sejmikowej w czasach Jana III Sobieskiego', *Biblioteka Epoki Nowożytnej*, 4 (2016), 71-96; 'Sejmy z lat 1676-1683 na tle funkcjonowania staropolskiego systemu parlamentarnego w czasach Jana III – próba bilansu' in *Król Jan III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1674-1683*, ed. by Dariusz Milewski (Warsaw: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2016), pp. 59-71.

⁴² Jarosław Stolicki, 'Propaganda antyturecka w latach 1676-1683' in *Król Jan III Sobieski*, ed. by Milewski, pp. 17-33.

equally prominent connections which were also being drawn at the time of the expedition with the wider crusading movement. It does so, however, almost in passing; whilst these connections are there to be teased out, they receive little to no comment; the focus of his work ultimately lies elsewhere.⁴³

Finally, one should mention the series of studies which have offered greater insight into the activities of several of the leading figures within the *Rzeczpospolita* during the period in question. These include Michał Komaczyński's 1995 biography of the Queen, *Piękna królowa: Maria Kazimiera d'Arquein-Sobieska*;⁴⁴ Marek Wagner's 2000 biography of the *Rzeczpospolita*'s senior military commander in 1683, *Stanisław Jabłonowski: kasztelan krakowski, hetman wielki koronny*;⁴⁵ Konrad Bobiatyński's 2008 biography of the leading Lithuanian oppositionist and military commander, *Michał Kazimierz Pac – wojewoda wileński, hetman wielki litewski. Działalność polityczno-wojskowa*;⁴⁶ Mariusz Sawicki's 2016 study on the rise of the Sapieha family, who would come to replace the Pac family as the dominant force in Lithuanian politics, *Dom Sapieżyński 1666-1685. Droga do hegemonii w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim*;⁴⁷ and Jarosław Pietrzak's chapter in the aforementioned volume edited by Milewski, which traces the corresponding weakening in the position of the Radziwiłł family in the Grand Duchy.⁴⁸ Considerably older, but still valuable, is Ernest Deiches' 1894 study on the fall of the leading French partisan in the *Rzeczpospolita*, Jan Andrzej Morsztyn.⁴⁹

Thesis structure

⁴³ Michał Rożek, *Zwycięstwo: Jana III Sobieskiego pod Wiedniem* (Kraków: Petrus, 2008), pp. 14-32.

⁴⁴ Michał Komaczyński, *Piękna królowa: Maria Kazimiera d'Arquein-Sobieska* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1995), pp. 140-161.

⁴⁵ Marek Wagner, *Stanisław Jabłonowski: kasztelan krakowski, hetman wielki koronny* (Warsaw: Mada, 2000), pp. 50-85.

⁴⁶ Konrad Bobiatyński, *Michał Kazimierz Pac – wojewoda wileński, hetman wielki litewski. Działalność polityczno-wojskowa* (Warsaw: Neriton, 2008), pp. 387-416

⁴⁷ Mariusz Sawicki, *Dom Sapieżyński 1666-1685. Droga do hegemonii w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim* (Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2016), pp. 180-223, 247-55

⁴⁸ Jarosław Pietrzak, 'Wobec Króla i Rzeczypospolitej. Radziwiłłowie w pierwszym dziesięcioleciu rządów Jana III Sobieskiego' in *Król Jan III Sobieski*, ed. by Milewski, pp. 90-117.

⁴⁹ Ernest Deiches, *Koniec Morstina. Studium historyczne z czasów Jana Sobieskiego* (Kraków: Nakład Dwutygodnika Ilustrowanego "Świat", 1894), pp. 40-97.

In short, this thesis seeks to answer the question of whether the motivations and internal processes which led the *Rzeczpospolita* to ally with the emperor in the spring of 1683 – resulting in an army from the *Rzeczpospolita* contributing to the relief of Vienna later that year – as well as the manner in which the relief expedition was conducted have been properly understood.

The structure of this thesis is predominantly chronological, an approach which is supported not only by the nature of the original evidence, the regular – normally weekly – correspondence of several leading protagonists and observers of the events in question, and, for the final chapter, a combination of epistolary and diaristic sources, but also by the central thrust of the argument put forward – a detailed examination of a single decision-making process from genesis to first fruit – as well as by the lack to date of any sufficiently detailed chronology of the events discussed here in the extant anglophone literature.

The main body of this thesis is divided into four chapters:

The first provides a brief summary of the period immediately preceding the election of Jan III Sobieski and the early years of his reign, covering the period between 1672 and 1681 and touching primarily upon the geopolitical situation facing the *Rzeczpospolita*, as well as the difficulties which the monarch encountered with internal opposition, each of which is vital for a proper contextualisation of the events of 1681-3. It also sets out the challenges posed by the unique political system of the *Rzeczpospolita* and the workings of its legislative body, the *sejm*, through a detailed examination of the circumstances which triggered the breaking of its 1681 session, resulting in the loss of all new legislation which had been agreed. It ends with an exploration of Sobieski's fears in the period between the collapse of the 1681 *Sejm* and the summer of 1682 regarding the increasing levels of assistance being provided by the Ottomans to the Protestant rebels in the Imperial province of Upper Hungary, as well as the gradual rapprochement with Emperor Leopold which these fears prompted.

The second focuses on the period between the late-summer of 1682 and the opening of the *sejm* the following January, including the sudden intensification of the threat which the Ottomans appeared to pose to the *Rzeczpospolita* as a result of the collapse of the Imperial defences in Upper Hungary, the resulting secret

negotiations between Sobieski and the emperor upon a provisional framework agreement for an alliance which the emperor would then propose to the Commonwealth during the forthcoming *sejm*, and the breach in relations between Sobieski and Louis XIV of France, before concluding with examinations of the shifts in the political landscape within the *Rzeczpospolita* since the 1681 *Sejm*, and the events of the *sejmiki przedsejmowe*, the regional assemblies held prior to the *sejm*, in which the *posłowie* who would comprise that body were elected.

The third covers the events of the Warsaw *Sejm* of January-April 1683, including the alliance negotiations conducted between a deputation from the *sejm* and the emperor's representatives in the *Rzeczpospolita*; Sobieski's outmanoeuvring of the opposition provided by the adherents of France, led by Louis XIV's ambassador, the Marquis de Vitry, and the Crown Grand Treasurer, Jan Andrzej Morsztyn; and the eventual decisions taken by the *sejm* both to ally with Leopold and to commit the *Rzeczpospolita* to a self-described holy war against the Ottoman Empire

The final chapter begins with a very brief summary of the period between the conclusion of the *sejm* in April and Sobieski's departure from Warsaw in July. It turns then to examine the events of the expedition to Vienna up to the relief of the city, albeit with the focus placed more on matters spiritual than military. In particular, it seeks to bring fully into the foreground the pattern of religious devotion which surrounded the expedition, both within the army and at home in the *Rzeczpospolita*, as well as highlight the conscious efforts made to tie it into the wider crusading movement.

It should be noted that unabridged editions of several important letter collections have only been published in recent years: the most prominent examples being the letters exchanged by Nuncio Pallavicini with the Papal Curia in Rome and with Francesco Buonvisi, his counterpart in Vienna, which form part of the ongoing *Acta Nunciaturae Polonae* editorial project, and the letters of the royal secretary Tommaso Talenti to the Cardinal-Protector of Poland, Carlo Barberini, edited by Gaetano Platania.⁵⁰ These recent publications permit fresh insights which were

⁵⁰ *Opitius Pallavicini (1680-1688)* ed. by Maria Domin-Jačov, *Acta Nunciaturae Polonae*, 34, 8+ vols (Rome and Kraków: Institutum Historicum Polonicum Romae, 1995-); *Polonia e Curia Romana: Corrispondenza del Lucchese Tommaso Talenti segretario intimo del Re di*

unavailable to previous generations of scholars, or at least considerably more difficult to obtain, not least because a significant proportion of these letters – which covered sensitive diplomatic matters – were originally written partially or fully in cipher.

Even so, the process of reconstructing an accurate chronology is made all the more difficult by the dispersal of our sources in various places across the *Rzeczpospolita*, outside of the relatively brief periods during which the *sejm* was gathered (to say nothing of their correspondents, who were often located outside of it). The fact that information which was known in one part of the *Rzeczpospolita* was not necessarily known at the same time in another, whilst it seems obvious in principle, has frequently proven challenging to account for in practice. It has only been through a patient and careful reconstruction of the events in question that it has been possible to bring to light and correct certain omissions or misconceptions which exist in previous studies.

Although a chronological structure has been applied to this study, there have nevertheless been several questions which have particularly shaped and guided my thinking in the writing either of individual sections or the whole work:

- What impact did the structural limitations within which Sobieski was obliged to operate by his own electorate have upon his actions?
- How were events within the *Rzeczpospolita* shaped by shifts in the international political situation?
- What was the nature of the role played by the Papacy and its agents?
- Why did opposition to a Polish-Imperial alliance within the *Rzeczpospolita* fail in 1683?
- Did the decision of the 1683 *Sejm* to commit the *Rzeczpospolita* to a confrontation with the Ottoman Empire have a religious component?
- Does the Polish relief expedition to Vienna merit inclusion as a true part of the crusading movement?

This last point in particular requires a little more elucidation, since the question of how one defines crusading has been much contested, and, as the studies of

Polonia con Carlo Barberini protettore del regno (1681-1693) ed. by Gaetano Platania (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2004).

Housley and Poumarède laid out earlier in this introduction have demonstrated, there is clearly a distinction to be drawn by the seventeenth century between the existence of 'true' crusading, and the existence merely of an associated corpus of sentiments and beliefs. With this in mind, a three-part threshold is applied in this work, each aspect of which must be met before the conflict under discussion merits consideration as a true form of crusading.

Firstly, it should be possible to demonstrate a structural connection between the conflict in question and the wider crusading movement through the mobilisation of the mechanisms which underpinned the movement in previous centuries. Here, one might include:

- Participants holding a conception of papal sanction and oversight for the conflict.
- The receipt of papal funding by participants through the *decime*, through other levies on church property, or more directly through gifts from the papal treasury.
- The promulgation and take-up of indulgences in connection with the conflict; the presence of indulgences *in articulo mortis* (in the event of death) for those who actually fought would strengthen this particular connection immeasurably.

Secondly, it should be possible to find evidence of genuine emotional or ideological connections to the wider crusading movement; an understanding amongst those who participated both directly by fighting and indirectly through the offering of spiritual support, that the conflict in which they were engaged formed part of that continuum. In some instances, these might be quite overt; elsewhere, they might be supplemented by others which more subtle. For example:

- Participants taking the Cross.
- The drawing of direct connections between the actions of those who fight in the conflict – or perhaps even those of the enemy – and examples or paradigms from the crusading past.
- Engagement with crusade preaching.

- Participants, both direct and indirect, demonstrating particular conscientiousness towards religious practice during the course of the conflict.
- The incorporation of an element of pilgrimage into the conflict.
- The finding of means, however abstract, to connect the conflict in question to the Holy Land.

Finally, it does not suffice to find evidence of engagement on the two previous points merely amongst individuals or small groups. Engagement with crusading mechanisms and ideology must find expression in broad, collective action, on a national or international basis.

Chapter 1 – Historical background and the 1681 Sejm

This chapter begins with a brief summary of the key events of the early years of the reign of Jan III Sobieski, touching upon both the positioning of Poland-Lithuania on the international stage and internal developments, before demonstrating in more detail the challenges posed by the unique political system of the Rzeczpospolita through an examination of the failure of the 1681 Sejm. The final section traces Sobieski's increasing discomfort at the apparent waxing of the Ottoman threat in late 1681 and early 1682, prompted in particular by their influence upon Imre Thököly and his rebel forces in Imperial Upper Hungary, and the efforts which he made to improve his relationship with the emperor as a result.

The Ottoman War of 1672-6 and the early reign of Jan III Sobieski

Upon the outbreak of war with the Ottoman Empire in 1672, Poland-Lithuania stood, as it had for generations, at the frontier of Christendom – the community of Christian states (*respublica Christiana*) which, although riven by religious schism since the early sixteenth century, were nonetheless still considered by many contemporaries to be bound together by religious and cultural ties. Although this form of self-identification was slowly eroding by the late-seventeenth century, gradually replaced by the emerging modern secular conception of Europe, this process was by no means uniform. The belief in the existence of a *respublica Christiana* was particularly persistent in those states which lay along the borders of this community with the Islamic world.¹

Poland-Lithuania, of course, shared a large part of its eastern and southern borders with states which did not form part of this community of Christian states. To the east lay the Tsardom of Russia, whose Orthodox faith had always rendered its inclusion within the *respublica Christiana* suspect at best.² The two states had avoided conflict since the agreement of the Truce of Andruszów in 1667, which had seen the *Rzeczpospolita* provisionally concede large tracts of territory to

¹ Janusz Tazbir, 'Poland and the Concept of Europe in the Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries', *European Studies Review*, 7 (1977), 29-45 (pp. 31, 40).

² Pärtel Piirimäe, 'Russia, The Turks and Europe: Legitimations of War and the Formation of European Identity in the Early Modern Period', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11 (2007), 63-86 (pp. 76-7).

Russia, including the *województwa* of Smoleńsk and Czernihów, as well as half of Kijów *województwo*. No permanent peace treaty had been signed as yet, however.³

Moving clockwise, the south-eastern borderlands of the *Rzeczpospolita* in Kijów and Braclaw *województwa* were inhabited by Cossacks, operating under their own nominated leaders. The Cossack Hetmanate in Left-Bank Ukraine – the lands to the east of the Dnieper, roughly contiguous with the part of Kijów *województwo* which was conceded at Andruszów – was effectively a Russian protectorate. The Hetmanate in Right-Bank Ukraine – roughly contiguous with the remainder of Kijów *województwo* as well as that of Braclaw – was subject to a three-way competition for influence between the *Rzeczpospolita*, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Further southwards along the Dnieper lay a functionally independent Cossack state, the Zaporozhian Sich.

Beyond the Cossacks, on the shores of the Black Sea, lay the Crimean Khanate – Tatar in ethnicity, Islamic in faith. The Giray dynasty which ruled in the Khanate were themselves vassals of the Ottoman Sultan. Despite the buffer provided by the Cossack-occupied lands, conflict between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the Crimean Khanate was at points endemic. Tatar raids frequently penetrated deep into the interior of the *Rzeczpospolita*, whilst Poland-Lithuania sought to induce the Cossacks to harry the territory of the Khanate.

Moving clockwise once again around the borders of the *Rzeczpospolita*, the *województwa* of Podole and Ruś shared their southern frontier with the Ottoman vassal principalities of Moldavia and Transylvania. Although possessing sizeable Christian populations and native rulers, Moldavia, Transylvania and neighbouring Wallachia were held on a short leash by the sultan, effectively disqualifying them from inclusion in the *respublica Christiana*. The Dniester and Prut rivers which crossed Moldavia offered direct routes for an invasion of the *Rzeczpospolita* from Silistra *eyalet*, the strip of Ottoman-held territory along the western coast of the Black Sea. The only portion of its southern frontier which the *Rzeczpospolita* could consider relatively secure lay further westwards still, where the remainder of Ruś *województwo*, as well as that of Kraków, bordered upon the territories of the

³ Brian L. Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe, 1500-1700* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 151.

Hungarian Crown, a part of the hereditary Habsburg possessions of the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I.

During the summer of 1672, Sultan Mehmed IV (1648-87) launched a full-blown invasion of the *Rzeczpospolita*, escalating a pre-existing proxy war between Poland-Lithuania and the sultan's vassals, the Crimean Khanate and the pro-Ottoman Cossack leader, Petro Doroshenko. The Ottoman invasion was well-timed. The *Rzeczpospolita* was riven by internal strife between the pro-Imperial courtly faction around King Michał I Korybut Wiśniowiecki (1669-73) and his Habsburg bride, Eleanor of Austria, the half-sister of Emperor Leopold, and a powerful pro-French faction amongst the magnates of the *Rzeczpospolita*, which included the state's leading military commander, the Crown Grand *Hetman*, Jan Sobieski. In this confrontational political climate, the establishment strength of the *Rzeczpospolita*'s armed forces had been kept intentionally minimal; as a result, the Ottoman forces met with little effective resistance. The undermanned fortress of Kamieniec (now Kamyanets-Podilskyi, Ukraine), theoretically the centrepiece of the *Rzeczpospolita*'s defences along its south-eastern border, was forced to surrender, and the main Ottoman force advanced as far as Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine). Although Sobieski was able to contest the incursions of Tatar raiding parties which pushed further into the heart of the *Rzeczpospolita*, he was in no position to challenge the main Ottoman force. In these circumstances, Wiśniowiecki felt compelled to sue for peace. The resulting Treaty of Buczacz (now Buchach, Ukraine), agreed in October 1672, would see the *Rzeczpospolita* surrender large swathes of territory in the south-eastern *województwa* of Podole, Braclaw and Kijów.⁴

When the terms of this treaty were presented before the *sejm* in the spring of 1673, they were deemed so punitive that the assembly refused to ratify them, opting instead to implement a substantial augmentation of the army and to resume the war. Under the command of Sobieski, these forces were able to partially reverse the disasters of the previous year. The year's campaigning culminated in a major victory, with the storming of the Ottoman camp at Chocim (now Khotyn, Ukraine) on 11 November. Whilst Sobieski hoped to follow up the victory with the recovery of nearby Kamieniec, on the opposite bank of the

⁴ Davies, p. 156.

Dniester, the withdrawal of the Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*, Michał Kazimierz Pac, with the largest part of the army of the Grand Duchy weakened his forces, and the onset of winter eventually forced him to disengage.⁵

Meanwhile, on the day before the battle, the unfortunate Wiśniowiecki had died at Lwów at the age of only 33. When the *szlachta* of the *Rzeczpospolita* gathered in the early months of 1674 for the *sejm konwokacyjny* (convocation *sejm*) and *sejm elekcyjny* (election *sejm*) which would elect his successor, it quickly became clear that despite a wide field of candidates, only two men had a realistic chance of success. The first was the dispossessed Duke Charles V of Lorraine, whose nomination was promoted by Emperor Leopold through his ambassador in Poland, Christoph Leopold von Schaffgotsch; the second, despite demands from the pro-Imperial camp for the exclusion of 'Piasts' – candidates who were citizens of the *Rzeczpospolita* – from consideration was Sobieski, whose popularity amongst the *szlachta* had been significantly bolstered by his victory at Chocim, and who had succeeded in gaining the backing of the ambassador of Louis XIV of France (1643-1715), Toussaint de Forbin-Janson, Bishop of Marseille, as well as the Papal Nuncio to Poland-Lithuania, Francesco Buonvisi. A passionate speech by the *Wojewoda* of Ruś, Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski, advocating for his old comrade-in-arms, was instrumental in tilting the balance in Sobieski's favour. Whilst the Lithuanian faction led by Michał Kazimierz Pac and his cousin, the Lithuanian Grand Chancellor Krzysztof Zygmont initially continued to resist his election, their reluctant compliance was purchased with French money, and Sobieski was elected king on 21 May 1674.⁶

Sobieski would immediately return to the front lines following his election, forgoing for two years the *sejm koronacyjny* (coronation *sejm*), where he would be expected to nominate his replacement as Crown Grand *Hetman*, apparently with the aim of preserving as much influence as possible over the army in the interim.⁷ With the worst of the crisis seeming to have passed, however, the sense of unified purpose which had underpinned the *Rzeczpospolita*'s military successes in 1673 dissipated. Although Sobieski was able to check further Ottoman and

⁵ 'Michał Kazimierz Pac', in *PSB*, XXIV, p. 725; Davies, pp. 156-7.

⁶ Barker, p. 48; Wagner, pp. 52-3; Pietrzak, pp. 96-9.

⁷ Wagner, p. 53.

Tatar incursions into the *Rzeczpospolita* with the diminished forces which were made available to him in the years which followed, he was unable to achieve much of substance in his efforts to fully reverse the losses of 1672.⁸

It was against this backdrop that Sobieski would formalise his ties with Louis XIV, binding himself on a personal level with the French monarch through the Treaty of Jaworów (now Yavoriv, Ukraine) in June 1675. By this treaty, Sobieski committed himself to make peace with Mehmed IV, whilst Louis would exert his diplomatic influence at Constantinople on his behalf in order to secure favourable terms for the *Rzeczpospolita*. Given the meagre forces which the *Rzeczpospolita* was willing to afford him, it had evidently become clear to Sobieski that a favourable settlement was unlikely to be obtained by military means alone. Louis, for his part, hoped that a Polish-Ottoman treaty might free the sultan's hand for a war against Leopold, if the Ottoman ruler could be convinced to break the existing twenty-year Truce of Vasvár (1664). An Ottoman invasion of the emperor's eastern possessions would force him to reduce his current contribution to the anti-French coalition which had formed in response to Louis' attack on the Dutch Republic in 1672. Once peace with the Ottomans was concluded, Sobieski intended to turn his focus to the Baltic theatre and launch an attack upon the territory of the Elector of Brandenburg and Duke of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm I (1640-88), with the aim of restoring the *Rzeczpospolita's* sovereignty over Ducal Prussia, a position which it had been forced to cede to Brandenburg-Prussia at the conclusion of the so-called 'Little' Northern War (1655-60) by the terms of the Treaty of Oliwa (1660). Like the emperor, Friedrich Wilhelm was also part of the anti-French coalition; as a result, Louis was willing to provide Sobieski with financial subsidies for this enterprise.⁹

Louis also hoped that Sobieski could be persuaded to commit himself to pursue a similar policy of aggression towards Leopold. On this point, however, the Polish monarch proved elusive. The treaty would include a clause which doubled the promised French subsidies in the event that the *Rzeczpospolita* became involved in a war with the emperor, and Sobieski was willing to consent to the passage

⁸ Davies, p. 157.

⁹ Barker, pp. 50-1; Robert I. Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558-1721* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 200; 'Jan III Sobieski', in *PSB*, X, p. 416.

through the *Rzeczpospolita* of French communications and financial assistance to the Protestant rebellion against the emperor in Upper Hungary (roughly contiguous with modern Slovakia). He would even agree to revive the *Rzeczpospolita*'s ancient pretensions upon Imperial Silesia. Ultimately though, he ensured that the treaty was carefully worded so that he was not obliged to cross the line into open hostility towards the emperor.¹⁰

Sobieski's actions here might be taken to suggest an understanding, even at this early stage of his reign, of the inherent tension between his elevated new role and his long-standing attachment to Louis and to France. When he was merely a leading member of the *szlachta*, he had the freedom to follow his strongly French cultural sympathies – and his French-born wife, Maria Kazimiera de la Grange d'Arquien – into supporting French interests in the *Rzeczpospolita*. Now though, whilst he might feel a sense of obligation towards the man who had been his benefactor and whose financial outlay had enabled his election, and whilst he might hope to extract further benefits from the relationship in the short-to-medium term, he had become the monarch of a commonwealth whose interests as regards foreign policy were ultimately more closely aligned with those of its neighbour, and Louis' great enemy, Leopold. Where the French monarch saw the Ottomans as a distant tool to be leveraged in service of his own interests in Western Europe, for both the emperor and for the *Rzeczpospolita*, each of whom shared a border with the 'common enemy', the Ottoman threat was potentially an existential one. Whatever aversion Sobieski might have felt regarding Leopold as a result of the emperor's opposition to his election, he could not afford to risk causing irreparable damage to their relationship when circumstances might one day compel them to work together.¹¹

A truce was eventually agreed with the Ottomans in October 1676. A large Ottoman invasion force led by Ibrahim Şeytan stalled in front of Sobieski's fortified camp at Żurawno (now Zhuravno, Ukraine), and after a stand-off lasting several weeks, the two sides reached terms. The *Rzeczpospolita* would provisionally regain a part of the territory lost by the terms of Buczacz, although a full settlement was to be deferred until detailed negotiations for a permanent

¹⁰ Barker, pp. 50-1; 'Jan III Sobieski', in *PSB*, X, p. 416; Pastor, XXIII, p. 49.

¹¹ Barker, pp. 50-1.

peace could take place at Constantinople. The Ottomans would instead turn their attentions eastwards to contest the growing influence of the Tsardom of Russia in Right-Bank Ukraine.¹²

During the spring of 1677, the *sejm* gave its consent to further dialogue with the sultan with the aim of concluding a peace treaty based upon the terms negotiated at Żurawno. Jan Krzysztof Gniński, the *Wojewoda* of Chełmno, was appointed ambassador and sent to Constantinople to lead the negotiations with the Ottomans on behalf of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Upon his departure, Gniński was given instructions to petition for the return of a part of Podole and Ukraine, including the retention by the *Rzeczpospolita* of the fortresses of Bar, Międzybóž (now Medzhybizh, Ukraine), Jazłowiec (now Yazlovets, Ukraine) and Czarny Ostrów (now Chornyi Ostriv, Ukraine). As a last resort, he was to conclude peace on the terms agreed at Żurawno, with the *Rzeczpospolita* retaining only Biała Cerkiew (now Bila Tserkva, Ukraine) and Pawołocz (now Pavoloch, Ukraine).¹³

In the meantime, events conspired against Sobieski's planned actions against Brandenburg-Prussia in the Baltic theatre. During the course of the 1677 *Sejm*, word of Sobieski's plans – as well as the urgings of the new French ambassador, Sobieski's brother-in-law, François-Gaston de Béthune-Sully, Marquis de Chabris, who pressed Sobieski on Louis' behalf to act openly against Leopold in Upper Hungary – reached the ears of the ministers of the emperor and elector. These ministers worked together to neutralise either eventuality, utilising their supporters within the *sejm*, including the *Wojewoda* of Wilno (now Vilnius, Lithuania) and Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*, Michał Kazimierz Pac and the *Wojewoda* of Bełż and Crown Grand *Hetman*, Dymitr Jerzy Wiśniowiecki, to impose a reduction in the standing armed forces of the *Rzeczpospolita* and to secure the renewal of its treaties with their respective masters. Although Sobieski would use the promised French subsidies to raise his own private troops, and would conclude an alliance against Friedrich Wilhelm in August of that year with Sweden – another French strategic partner in the region – any hopes of concerted action were dashed by a combination of the reverses which his erstwhile allies had

¹² Ibid., p. 51.

¹³ Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Podole pod panowaniem tureckim: Ejalet Kamieniecki 1672-1699* (Warsaw: Polczek, 1994), pp. 86-7.

suffered on land in its Pomeranian possessions and at sea on the Baltic at the hands of the elector and his Danish allies, as well as the independent actions of *Hetman* Pac, who moved the Lithuanian army to obstruct the passage of an invasion force from Swedish Livonia through the Lithuanian Duchy of Żmudź into Ducal Prussia. In such unfavourable circumstances, the king opted not to commit his forces.¹⁴

Whilst he was pursuing his interests in the Baltic, Sobieski also sought to mollify his French patron by secretly permitting Louis' agents to recruit mercenaries from amongst the newly demobilised troops of the *Rzeczpospolita* during the summer of 1677. These men would fight alongside the rebels in Upper Hungary in their struggle against the emperor, led by the leading magnate and Knight of Malta, Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski. Sobieski was once again careful to avoid the perception that he was initiating open hostilities with the emperor, although the presence of Lubomirski's forces in Upper Hungary nonetheless generated a litany of protestations from both Vienna and the pope in Rome.¹⁵

Ultimately, Sobieski's tacit acceptance of French diplomatic and Polish mercenary activity in Hungary; his actions in raising private troops in the Baltic theatre without the approval of the *sejm*; and the suspicion amongst some magnates that his interest in Ducal Prussia ultimately held the purpose of carving out a principality and an independent power base for his eldest son, Prince Jakub – enabling Sobieski to then stabilise the succession to the Polish throne upon Jakub during his own lifetime – would all combine to trigger the emergence of serious opposition to his rule. Sobieski would definitively abandon his policy along the Baltic and in Upper Hungary in the spring of 1678, giving orders for the disbandment of his private troops as well as the prevention of the passage of further mercenary forces through the Carpathians to assist the Hungarian rebellion. Nevertheless, in July-August 1678, a group of opposition magnates including the two Grand *Hetmani*, Pac and Wiśniowiecki, conspired with imperial agents to deprive Sobieski of his throne and supplant him with his main competitor in 1674, Charles of Lorraine, now the second husband of Michał

¹⁴ Barker, pp. 51-2; 'Sobieski', in *PSB*, X, p. 416; 'Pac', in *PSB*, XXIV, p. 726; Frost, *Northern Wars*, p. 200.

¹⁵ Barker, p. 51; 'Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski', in *PSB*, XVIII, p. 12.

Korybut Wiśniowiecki's widow, Eleanora of Austria, who remained popular in the *Rzeczpospolita* from her time as queen. Although this plot was ultimately unsuccessful, opposition to Sobieski's rule continued to bubble beneath the surface.¹⁶

Meanwhile, Gniński's efforts to negotiate a favourable settlement from the Ottomans had proved fruitless. Arriving in Constantinople in June 1677, he was forced to wait several months for an audience. In the interim, the oral promise given by Ibrahim Şeytan at Żurawno to support an adjustment of the terms agreed there which would benefit the *Rzeczpospolita* had been rendered worthless by his fall from favour, triggered by his failure to dislodge the forces of Russia and its Cossack allies from Czehryń (now Chyhyryn, Ukraine) that same summer.¹⁷ When Gniński was finally able to conduct negotiations with senior Ottoman officials, led by the new Grand Vizir Kara Mustafa Pasha, throughout the autumn and winter of 1677-8, he found them unwilling to make any territorial concessions.¹⁸ An exchange of negotiators between Mehmed IV and Tsar Feodor III (1676-82), and the implicit threat that a Russian-Ottoman peace could lead the Ottomans to once again turn their forces against the unprepared *Rzeczpospolita*, prompted Gniński towards hastening his negotiations and acceptance of the Ottoman conditions.¹⁹

Gniński received the Ottoman text of the treaty, ratifying the terms agreed at Żurawno, on 13 April 1678. The *Rzeczpospolita* was to retain possession of Biała Cerkiew and Pawołocz, but no other territory in Podole or Ukraine; the final delimitation of the new border was to be established at a later date by commissioners appointed by the two contracting parties.²⁰ The Polish ambassador, however, was held as a hostage in the Ottoman Empire throughout the summer and autumn of 1678 whilst Kara Mustafa conducted a new campaign against Czehryń, as surety for the evacuation of the garrisons which Sobieski had placed in the Podolian and Ukrainian fortresses of Bar, Międzybóž, Niemirów (now Nemyriv, Ukraine) and Kalnik (now Kalnyk, Ukraine) two years prior, following the conclusion of the truce at Żurawno. After the withdrawal of those troops in the

¹⁶ 'Pac', in *PSB*, XXIV, p. 727; Wagner, pp. 73-5; Wimmer, p. 72.

¹⁷ Kołodziejczyk, p. 90.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 91

¹⁹ Kołodziejczyk, p. 91; Stoliczka, p. 24.

²⁰ Kołodziejczyk, pp. 92-4.

course of September and October, he was finally permitted to depart homewards in November.²¹

Both internal and external matters came to a head when the *sejm* gathered again at Grodno in the Grand Duchy on 15 December 1678. Through the *propozycja od tronu*, given on 3 January 1679, Sobieski set out the necessity of ratifying the peace with the Ottoman Empire – a course of action which had been approved by a senate council the previous April – as well as offering a lengthy analysis of the mistakes he deemed had led to this point, foremost amongst which was the decision taken two years prior to reduce the armed forces when the peace was not yet firm.²²

Sobieski's actions over the past two years likewise came in for sharp criticism in the *wota* of leading oppositionists such as Michał Kazimierz Pac.²³ The debates which followed were riven by violent disputes between royal supporters and the opposition, which began to subside only following the presentation by the newly returned Gniński of his formal report of the negotiations with the Ottomans over the course of 9-10 February. His words, describing the haughty treatment suffered by his embassy and the implacability of the Ottomans in negotiations over the hoped-for concessions, galvanised anti-Ottoman opinions amongst those present, creating a strong desire for retaliation.²⁴

Sobieski would harness this in a speech *od tronu* on 28 February, in which he set out his new vision for the foreign policy of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Whilst the treaty would have to be ratified, ambassadors should be sent to other Christian rulers seeking to build a coalition for a future offensive war against the Porte, whilst conditional taxes for the army should be passed, enabling the *Rzeczpospolita* to fight in the event that an alliance could be secured, or it found itself attacked.²⁵

The eventual legislative output of the 1678-9 *Sejm* corresponded closely with Sobieski's proposals. The *skrypt do archiwum* relating to financial, military and

²¹ Kołodziejczyk, pp. 94-6; Stolicki, pp. 24-5.

²² Stolicki, pp. 25-6.

²³ Bobiatyński, p. 388.

²⁴ Kołodziejczyk, p. 96; Stolicki, p. 26; Zbigniew Wójcik, 'King John III of Poland and the Turkish Aspects of His Foreign Policy', *Türk Tarih Kurumu: Belleten*, 44 (1980), pp. 659-73 (p. 667).

²⁵ Kołodziejczyk, p. 97; Pietrzak, p. 106; Stolicki, pp. 26-7

diplomatic affairs, although it reduced the size of the army now that the state was at peace, also envisaged a major *aukcja* in the event of an Ottoman war. The king was also accorded the right to summon the *pospolite ruszenie* in the event of an emergency, and to dispatch the proposed ambassadors, whilst a deputation was appointed to sign any international agreements which arose as a result.²⁶ A fifteen-year extension to the Truce of Andruszów with the tsar was also ratified, providing greater security along the eastern border of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and, it was hoped, a foundation upon which to build an alliance.²⁷

Jan Andrzej Morsztyn, the Crown Grand Treasurer and a leading French partisan, was dispatched to the court of Louis XIV. Morsztyn's visit was profitable on a personal level – he bound his interests even more closely with those of Louis XIV, purchasing estates and receiving titles in France as well as French citizenship – but Louis would remain tactfully non-committal upon Sobieski's proposals.²⁸ Although the French monarch had, in recent months, agreed a series of treaties at Nijmegen (1678-9) ending his war with the anti-French coalition and gaining substantial amounts of territory in the Spanish Netherlands and along the western frontiers of the Empire as a result, his focus remained upon securing further acquisitions along the borders of France.²⁹

Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski and Jan Gniński, the *Wojewoda* of Czernihów (son of the ambassador to the sultan) were sent to Moscow, where, despite the renewal of the Andruszów truce and Feodor III's ongoing war with the Ottomans, they found him unexpectedly ambivalent towards the proposed alliance. Although the tsar was willing to engage in negotiations, his interest extended only as far as the concessions he might extract as a price of entry. In particular, he remained keen to secure formal recognition of Russia's sovereignty over Kijów, which it continued to occupy in violation of the terms of the truce, as part of any formal attachment. The negotiations collapsed by the end of November 1679.³⁰

²⁶ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 480.

²⁷ Davies, pp. 176-7.

²⁸ 'Jan Andrzej Morsztyn (Morstin)', in *PSB*, XXI, p. 812; Wimmer, p. 74

²⁹ John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714* (London: Longman, 1999), pp. 159-60.

³⁰ Bobiatyński, p. 394; Davies, p. 176; Stolicki, p. 28.

The Lithuanian magnate Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł – like Béthune, a brother-in-law of the king – was sent as ambassador to Vienna, Venice and Rome, which he had already visited on an unofficial basis in 1677-8 for the purpose of examining the prevailing moods in those places on Sobieski's behalf. The proposal for an offensive alliance against the Ottomans found little favour in Vienna. Whilst Radziwiłł's engagement in disputes over ceremonial at the imperial court certainly did not help matters, the obstacles which he faced would have bedevilled the most gifted negotiator. The Imperial treasury had been drained by the demands of the recently concluded war with France, and the emperor was unwilling to commit himself to an offensive alliance, which would require him to break the existing Truce of Vasvár with the sultan, whilst uncertainty still lingered over France's future intentions. A somewhat more positive outcome was achieved in Rome, where Innocent XI committed, in the event that the Ottoman war was resumed, to provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with a subsidy of 500,000 florins, as well as the proceeds from the imposition in Italy of the *decime* (papal tenth), a method of fundraising which had originated in the early stages of the crusading movement and had remained intimately connected with it in the centuries since. Ultimately, however, both the pope and emperor retained strong suspicions about whether Sobieski was truly intent on pursuing an Ottoman war, given that his *volte-face* in foreign policy was still fresh.³¹

By the end of 1679 however, the emperor had at least been persuaded of the merits of making a counter-proposal – through his resident in the *Rzeczpospolita*, Johann Christoph Zierowsky – of a defensive league which would activate in the event of Ottoman aggression, an outcome for which Pope Innocent XI had long been advocating through his nuncios, Buonvisi – who had since moved to take up the post at Vienna – and Francesco Martelli, who had replaced Buonvisi at Warsaw. Such an alliance would provide for the mutual defence of the two nations without necessitating the violation of the existing treaties with the Ottomans. Sobieski himself recognised the value of a defensive league, even though Louis XIV would be almost certain to view any agreement which could free

³¹ Barker, p. 107; Pietrzak, pp. 106-7; Stolicki, p. 28; ANP VI, p. 5, n. 3.

Leopold's hand to contest further French activity in the Empire as a betrayal of Sobieski's professed attachment to his interests.³²

The Imperial counter-offer was discussed at an assembly in January-February 1680 of the deputation approved by the Grodno *Sejm*, where it met with significant resistance. The French ambassador, Béthune, worked underhand on behalf of his master, stoking up suspicions that Sobieski was once again acting merely in furtherance of his own interests by advocating for a defensive league, rather than the offensive league which had been agreed in principle by the Grodno *Sejm*, and that he would surely extract some tangible personal benefit from the emperor as a result. With the opposition of the assembly to the defensive league clear, Sobieski himself having been on the receiving end of *ad hominem* attacks from some of its members as they gave their opinions, and some of those present even contemplating the imposition of further restrictions on royal power, the king felt he had little option but to bring the assembly to an abrupt close without securing its support.³³ Attempting to conclude a defensive alliance in the present climate would have been an act of political suicide.

In the aftermath of the assembly, the proposal of an offensive league was revived in negotiations between the two monarchs. Despite his ongoing concerns about entrusting himself to Sobieski, Leopold now showed himself at least theoretically willing, although the preconditions which he set – the involvement of the tsar and his own successful conclusion of a non-aggression pact with France – meant that the negotiations dragged along for several months without any realistic hope of success.³⁴

In July 1680, during what proved to be one of Béthune's final audiences with Sobieski – Louis' order recalling him to France, triggered by his perception that Sobieski was slipping out of the French sphere of influence, was already en-route³⁵ – the Polish monarch expressed his growing frustrations regarding his

³² Barker, pp. 107, 113.

³³ Barker, p. 113; François-Gaston de Béthune-Sully, Marquis de Chabris, French Ambassador to Poland-Lithuania, Warsaw, 16 February 1680, 'Relation de ce qui s'est passé dans la convocation de Varsovie commencée le 11 Janvier et finie le 3 Fevrier 1680' (*Acta 1677-79*, pp. 349-57).

³⁴ Barker, pp. 114-5.

³⁵ Louis XIV, King of France to Béthune, Fontainebleau, 27 June 1680 (*Acta 1677-79*, pp. 448-9).

relationship with France. He lamented how his actions in support of French interests had almost cost him his throne, with no tangible benefit to himself, whilst the King of England, Elector of Bavaria and Duke of Hannover had all received large sums of money from Louis not for providing assistance to him, but merely in order not to actively oppose him. More concerning still to Sobieski was the favour which Louis appeared to be showing to their former mutual enemy, Elector Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg-Prussia, who retained a strong enmity towards Sobieski.³⁶ The decision of the emperor and Dutch Republic to conclude peace with France at Nijmegen had left their coalition partner Friedrich Wilhelm – who was still at war with Sweden, a French ally – isolated on the international stage. Faced with the threat of French military intervention, he had been obliged, via the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (1679), to surrender his conquests in Sweden’s continental possessions. In the aftermath, he decided that his interests would be better served by aligning himself with France. Through a secret treaty, he secured himself a French guarantee of protection from attack and an annual pension of 100,000 *livres*. Amongst the concessions the elector made in return was an agreement on joint action in a future election in the *Rzeczpospolita*.³⁷

One might also read a lingering suspicion that Béthune had been the root of the opposition during the assembly of the previous winter into Sobieski’s complaints not only of ‘neglect’ (*négligé*) but of ‘maltreatment’ (*mal traicté*) at French hands, although he did not enter into specifics with Béthune upon this point. Queen Maria Kazimiera – who had long since lost her affection for Louis over what she perceived to be the mistreatment and belittlement of her father, the Marquis d’Arquien, at the French court, and who was seeking to form an attachment with the imperial court in the hope of securing the marriage of her eldest son, Prince Jakub, with Archduchess Maria Antonia, the daughter of Leopold, along with a Silesian duchy for the Marquis – had not been shy of levelling such an accusation against the French ambassador even in the moment. Sobieski, in order to gain Béthune’s assistance in his attempts to quell the worst of the opposition, had chosen the path of tactful silence at that time.³⁸

³⁶ Konarski, pp. 79-80.

³⁷ Konarski, pp. 78-9; Derek McKay, *The Great Elector* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), pp. 241-2.

³⁸ Komarzyński, pp. 143-4; Béthune to Louis, Pilaszkowice, 20 July 1680 (*Acta 1677-79*, pp. 446-8); ‘Convocation’ (*Acta 1677-79*, pp. 349-57).

The summer of 1680 also saw the arrival of demands from Constantinople to proceed with the delimitation of the new border in Podole and Ukraine. When the commissioners of the two sides gathered at the end of August, disputes began almost immediately. The Ottoman side demanded the inclusion of Potok (now Zoloty Potik, Ukraine), Zbaraż (now Zbarazh, Ukraine), Podhajce (now Pidhaitsi, Ukraine), Buczacz and Wiśniowiec (now Vyshnivets, Ukraine) within their new borders, although the Poles were able to demonstrate that the sultan had withdrawn voluntarily from these places in 1672, since they were rightfully part of Ruś *województwo*, not Podole. Polish attempts to minimise the loss of territory were likewise thwarted; in the end, the new border was largely drawn in accordance with that of Podole *województwo*, with two exceptions. Despite protests from the commissioners of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and a referral to Constantinople for clarification, the Ottoman commissioners were ordered to annex Czortków (now Chortkiv, Ukraine) and Łyczkowce (now Lychkivtsi, Ukraine) into Ottoman Podole. Given the present weakness of the army, the *Rzeczpospolita* was in no position to contest. Whilst the delimitation of Podole was concluded in mid-October, that of Ukraine had to be postponed due to the lateness of the season.³⁹

The *deliberatoria* to the senators and *legacja* for the *sejmiki* were dispatched on 10 September and 22 October 1680 respectively, formally marking the beginning of royal preparations for the forthcoming *sejm*, the opening of which was set for 14 January 1681. Sobieski's primary consideration in these letters was the acquisitiveness of the Ottomans, which had been demonstrated previously during the embassy of Gniński, had been confirmed by the events of the delimitation of Podole, and was anticipated once again when the resumption of the delimitation of Ukraine was demanded. Through the latter, Sobieski warned the *szlachta* that he anticipated a state of war and sought a resolution in the approaching *sejm* on how best the *Rzeczpospolita* should respond to the waxing threat along its south-eastern frontier.⁴⁰

³⁹ Kołodziejczyk, pp. 97-101; Stolicki, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁰ Stolicki, pp. 29-30; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 27 November and 4 December 1680 (ANP I, N. 50 and N. 62, pp. 52-3 and 67-71); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 4 December 1680 (ANP I, N. 52, pp. 54-5).

The departure of Béthune had, meanwhile, been followed in September 1680 by the return of Forbin-Janson, now Bishop of Beauvais, who was parachuted in for the duration of the approaching 1681 *Sejm* in an attempt to repair fraying Franco-Polish relations, as well as to facilitate the transition of the new permanent ambassador, Louis-Nicolas l'Hôpital, Marquis de Vitry, who arrived the following month without familiarity with either the language or the people of importance.⁴¹ Beauvais spent six weeks with the royal couple, extracting all their grievances against France. Together, he and Vitry wrote to France urging Louis to mollify the royal couple with the long-awaited dignities for the Marquis d'Arquien.⁴² While they waited for a response, there would be a third major change in the foreign diplomatic personnel in the *Rzeczpospolita* in short order, with Opizio Pallavicini succeeding Martelli as papal nuncio in November.

At the beginning of January, news arrived at the royal court of a provocative new step taken by Friedrich Wilhelm, who had arranged the marriage of his younger son, Prince Ludwig Leopold Hohenzollern with his ward, the Lithuanian heiress, Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna. Not only was Sobieski deprived of the hope of marrying Ludwika Karolina to his own son, Prince Jakub, but Hohenzollern possession of the massive estates in Lithuania of the Birże line of the Radziwiłł family, which Ludwika Karolina had inherited from her father – the elector's cousin, Bogusław Radziwiłł – and now brought with her as a dowry, would also facilitate Friedrich Wilhelm's interference in the internal affairs of the *Rzeczpospolita*.

The elector took this step with French support. The winter of 1680-1 saw the negotiation of a new secret treaty between Louis and Friedrich Wilhelm; the two monarchs strengthened their ties through a full defensive alliance. In return for a commitment to assist France in the event of war, the annual pension of the elector was tripled to 100,000 thalers. In Polish affairs, he received a promise that France would exert its influence in the matter of the Radziwiłłówna-Hohenzollern marriage and the fate of Ludwika Karolina's estates, whilst the agreements on

⁴¹ Konarski, p. 83; As noted by Hamish Scott, this was not an uncommon occurrence. Louis XIV's ambassadors might possess some Latin, but would learn the vernacular language of their post upon their arrival, if at all. Hamish Scott, "Diplomatic culture in old regime Europe" in *Cultures of Power in Europe during the Long Eighteenth Century* ed. by Hamish Scott and Brendan Simms (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), pp. 58-85 (p. 66).

⁴² Komarzyński, pp. 144-5.

mutual defence would apply in the event of an attack on his territories by the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁴³

Sobieski, who already suspected French cooperation with the elector in this matter, had this confirmed by the manner in which news of the marriage arrived. A letter from the elector informing him of the planned nuptials, dated 20 October and ostensibly delayed by storms at sea, bearing a record of receipt in Warsaw by the Resident of Brandenburg, Wichert, on 3 January, was subsequently passed to him by Beauvais and Vitry on 6 January, the eve of the wedding. The king perceived that the timing of the letter's arrival, and its arrival in French hands, were no accident, and angrily responded to the ambassadors that the elector may as well not have informed him at all. The content of letter made the elector's confidence in French support for the marriage explicit.⁴⁴ Unsurprisingly, when Beauvais presented the Polish royal couple with Louis' concessions, which had arrived at almost the same time, their response was less than effusive, and they evaded any commitment. The ambassadors would subsequently complain to France that they had entrusted with two such contradictory missions. The chances of Beauvais had not been helped, moreover, by the fact that Louis' offer had been half-hearted. Although the Marquis d'Arquien would be elevated to the rank of Duc, conditions were attached which would allow Louis to continue to hold the actual granting of the title in suspense indefinitely. Moreover, there was to be no guarantee of French non-aggression against the emperor, which might facilitate the desired Polish-Imperial offensive alliance.⁴⁵ A subsequent audience in February failed to change Sobieski's mind, and he suspended all further negotiations of this nature until after the conclusion of the 1681 *Sejm*.⁴⁶

On 14 January, the *sejm* was convoked in the Royal Castle at Warsaw. After 19 arduous weeks of discussions, it would be broken without the implementation of any new legislation. Much of the main body of this thesis will focus upon the subsequent *sejm* of January-April 1683, in which the *Rzeczpospolita* took the remarkable decision to agree an offensive and defensive alliance against the

⁴³ Kamieński, p. 203; McKay, p. 243.

⁴⁴ Kamieński, p. 202; Konarski, pp. 80-1.

⁴⁵ Barker, p. 115.

⁴⁶ Konarski, pp. 85-6, 93.

Ottomans with the emperor; a resolution which had the potential to obligate the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* to leave their own frontiers exposed in order to move to the assistance of the emperor's capital, Vienna. In order, however, to grasp how truly extraordinary and exceptional this outcome was, it should be viewed in the context of the ill-fated conclusion of this, the preceding *sejm*. The remainder of this chapter will provide an exploration of the events of the 1681 *Sejm*, leading into an examination of the impact this would have on Sobieski's foreign policy going forward. Beforehand, however, it is necessary to first permit a brief digression to examine the unique political structure of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the late seventeenth century which allowed the breaking of a *sejm* to come to pass.

The political system of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the late seventeenth century

Whilst much of the Christian world had tended, albeit generally in a limited manner, in the direction of autocratic rule during the early-modern period, Poland-Lithuania had evolved in the opposite direction.⁴⁷ The foundation of the *Rzeczpospolita* by the Union of Lublin (1569), which had marked a further incremental tightening of the relationship between the Kingdom of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania by uniting the *Sejm* of the Kingdom and the *Seim* of the Grand Duchy as one body, was followed only three years later by the extinction of the male line of the Jagiellonian dynasty with the death of Zygmunt II August (1548-72).⁴⁸

The *szlachta* of the new *Rzeczpospolita* gathered for a series of *sejmy* – *konwokacyjny, elekcyjny, koronacyjny* – to establish his successor.⁴⁹ Previous elections had generally taken the form of the acclamation of the previous king's

⁴⁷ Ian Green, 'The Development of Monarchies in Western Europe c.1500-1800', in *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context, c.1500-1795*, ed. by Richard Butterwick (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 39-57 (pp. 47-50).

⁴⁸ Robert I. Frost, "'Ut unusquisque qui vellet, ad illum venire possit". Nobility, Citizenship and Corporate Decision-making in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1454-1795' in *What Makes the Nobility Noble?: Comparative Perspectives from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Jörn Leonhard and Christian Wieland (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), pp. 142-163 (pp. 143).

⁴⁹ Robert I. Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania*, 1+ vols (Oxford: OUP, 2015-), pp. 332-3.

nominated heir, frequently *vivente rege*, in return for the new monarch confirming the *szlachta* in their previously-accorded rights and privileges; now however, with no clear successor in place, the gathered electorate took this opportunity to permanently alter the relationship between the ruler of the *Rzeczpospolita* and his subjects. Before the winning candidate could be crowned, they would be obliged to swear to uphold a *pacta conventa*, a new bill of rights which protected the privileges of the *szlachta* and limited the monarch's own power and prerogative. Two clauses of the *pacta conventa* of 1572 would combine to play a particularly prominent role in the further development of the political culture of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. First, the king was obliged to consent, at the point of his accession, to the free election of his successor. Second, he was required to recognise that his subjects had the legal right to withdraw their allegiance from him if he violated any of the terms of their agreement.⁵⁰ With the right to freely elect their monarch guaranteed by these two clauses, over the course of the century which followed the *szlachta* would leverage each new election to make additions and modifications to the *pacta conventa*, further securing and extending their privileges. As a result, by the late seventeenth century, the *szlachta* was unusually large for a noble class, and stretched further down the social totem pole than most – by Western European standards it would have encompassed all social classes from the minor landed gentry upwards, perhaps as much as 6 to 10% of the total population of the *Rzeczpospolita*. It had also become increasingly dominant in political matters, with the balance of legislative power within the *Rzeczpospolita* coming to reside firmly with the *sejm*, rather than with the king.⁵¹

The *sejm* itself had a bicameral structure. The membership of the upper chamber, the senate, was comprised of the Roman Catholic bishops and secular regional

⁵⁰ Jacek Jędruch, *Constitutions, Elections, and Legislatures of Poland, 1493-1993: A Guide to their History* (New York: Hippocrene, 1998), p. 84; Frost, “*Ut unusquisque*”, pp. 158-9. These rights were jealously guarded. It was the fears of the magnates regarding the first of these rights, amongst other perceived violations, which had driven the opposition to Sobieski in 1678-80.

⁵¹ Frost prefers an estimate at the lower end of this range, perhaps 6-8%, although he allows that the percentage grew over time. “*Ut unusquisque*”, pp. 142, 144; Jędruch prefers an estimate of 10%, p. 24. It is to be hoped that the forthcoming second half of Frost's landmark *Oxford History*, intended to cover the period 1569-1815, will shed considerable further light for an anglophone audience on all the processes merely touched upon in this paragraph.

administrators of the *Rzeczpospolita*, the *wojewodowie* and *kasztelanowie*, as well as ten leading ministers of state, five each from the Kingdom of Poland and from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: the Grand Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Grand Marshal, the Court Marshal and the Grand Treasurer. The individuals who held these posts were appointed for life by the king, except in the event of their elevation to a more prestigious post or their impeachment, and were generally drawn from a small number of magnate families, who because of their wealth formed a *de facto* upper-class within the *szlachta*, although legally speaking they remained part of it. The lower chamber, or *izba poselska*, was comprised of *posłowie* elected by their peers from amongst the ranks of the *szlachta* at the regional *sejmiki przedsejmowe* prior to the biennial sessions of the *sejm walny*. *Posłowie* were provided with instructions on behalf of their constituency, and after attending the session of the *sejm walny* were expected to return to their regions to participate in *sejmiki relacyjne*, where they would inform their electorate about the proceedings of the session, in order that the decisions taken there might be implemented, amended or outright rejected on a local level.⁵²

The position of the king within such a system was a complex one. He undoubtedly remained the single person of greatest influence within the *Rzeczpospolita*. The formal powers of the monarch included the right to set the agenda for the deliberations of the *sejm* through the *legacja* sent to the *sejmiki przedsejmowe* and the *propozycja od tronu* in the early days of the assembly itself.⁵³ Moreover, the distribution of offices and royal lands lay within the gift of the king, which he could leverage to strengthen the ranks of his own supporters, and attempt to disrupt the cohesion of the opposition.⁵⁴

Beyond the formal levers of power, he also possessed numerous opportunities for informal action, including the deployment of his supporters at *sejmiki* in order to influence the choice of *posłowie* and the content of their instructions. These activities, along with respect for the royal office and the personal prestige and financial resources of the monarch, normally guaranteed him the support of the majority of the *posłowie*, which invariably allowed him to secure the election of a

⁵² Jędruch, pp. 100, 125-6.

⁵³ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 203.

⁵⁴ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 310; Kołodziej, '*Sejmy*', p. 63.

sympathetic *Sejm* Marshal, who was responsible for setting the agenda and steering the debates of the *izba poselska*.⁵⁵ Although the king thus retained considerable ability to shape the deliberations of the *sejm*, and even to propose and advocate for particular policies through his supporters there, he was ultimately required to rule by consensus rather than decree.

The king was not alone in being able to exert significant influence in the *sejm* however. A significant proportion of the *posłowie* were aligned to individual magnates through bonds of friendship, family ties, or client relationships, frequently underpinned by economic dependency. This was particularly true in Lithuania, where *sejmiki* were subordinated to magnates to a much greater extent than in the Crown. In the early part of the reign of Sobieski, this was true above all of the Pac family, who dominated numerous *sejmiki* in the Grand Duchy. The ability to ensure the election of sympathetic or entirely subordinate *posłowie* presented opposition magnates with considerable opportunities to obstruct royal policy.⁵⁶

In recent decades, further innovations in the legislative process within the *sejm* had made even the limited form of rule which Polish monarchs were able to exercise increasingly challenging. The principle of seeking unanimous consent on new legislation had deep roots in the *Rzeczpospolita* as a means of preserving the interests of its disparate regions. Analysis of the *konstytucje* Nihil Novi (1505) has demonstrated that in its early form, unanimity was understood as the need to obtain the approval of each *województwo* or *ziemia*, through the collective consent of the *posłowie* that had been sent by its *sejmik* to the *sejm*. Whilst an individual *poseł* might object, a consensus remained possible if their colleagues were willing to give their approval. As a result, throughout the sixteenth and into the early seventeenth century it was not common, but not unheard of either, for *sejmy* to separate without the adoption of new legislation due to irreconcilable differences between interest groups.⁵⁷ The second quarter of the seventeenth century, however, saw an increasing conviction that the principle of *nemine contradictione* (without contradiction) should be interpreted literally. The 1652

⁵⁵ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 176, 311, 313; Kołodziej, 'Sejmy', p. 65.

⁵⁶ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 342, 398.

⁵⁷ Kołodziej, 'Prawo', pp. 71-2; Urszula Kosińska, 'Wstęp', *Biblioteka Epoki Nowożytnej*, 4 (2016), 5-12 (pp. 6-7).

Sejm saw the right of protest of an individual *poseł* recognised for the first time, when the objection of Władysław Siciński to the proposal to extend its deliberations beyond the six-week term permitted by the *pacta conventa* was accepted by *Sejm* Marshal Andrzej Maksymilian Fredro, who refused to recognise any further debate as valid.⁵⁸ The requirement that any new *konstytucja* should be read three times in joint sessions of the senators and *posłowie* as part of the process of concluding a *sejm*, left all the legislation which had already provisionally been agreed upon in a state of limbo, without possessing force of law.⁵⁹

The threat of an objection of this nature, expressed in the *sejm* through the words '*liberum veto*' or '*wolnego nie pozwalam*' ('I freely forbid'), was swiftly adopted by the opposition as a tool in the political struggle, providing them with a tool to counteract the purchase of influence by the royal court and secure concessions in the *sejm* through the exertion of pressure upon its deliberations. Although Jan II Kazimierz (1648-69) repeatedly contested the legality of the *liberum veto* and sought to restrict its usage, and although actual breakings of *sejmy* remained relatively rare at this time, his reign saw the gradual acceptance of its place within the legislative process of the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁶⁰

The short reign of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki saw a further escalation in the usage of the *liberum veto* in the factional struggle, both by the court and the opposition, as well as the first instance of what amounted to the breaking of a *sejm* before the expiry of the normal six-week term, when Jan Aleksander Olizar Wołczkiewicz lodged a protest with a week remaining of the *sejm koronacyjny* in 1669, before departing from Kraków, removing any hope of a withdrawal of the protest which would allow legislative activity to continue.⁶¹ By the reign of Sobieski then, the strict interpretation of *nemine contradicente* had become firmly established.

⁵⁸ Kołodziej, 'Prawo', pp. 71-2; Kosińska, p. 7.

⁵⁹ Jędruch, pp. 117-8; Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 422.

⁶⁰ Jędruch, pp. 118-9, 121-3; Kołodziej, 'Prawo', pp. 72-3; Kosińska, p. 7.

⁶¹ Kołodziej, 'Prawo', p. 73. He notes, however, that many of the *posłowie* remained in Kraków until the conclusion of the six-week term, hoping for his return. p. 85

The act of raising a protest was not, in itself, a guarantee of its efficacy. The most important factor in a protest being deemed valid was the possession of support amongst the other people present. A lone *poseł* raising a protest or leaving the deliberations had little chance of succeeding in halting the deliberations. At least one colleague, and likely several, was needed to ensure that the protest was upheld. If a given protest was deemed to be valid, the *sejm* would then transition to a state of *passivitas*, in which deliberations could continue, but no legislation could be approved. Most valid protests still resulted in a compromise being reached, through which the protestor and their supporters were persuaded to withdraw their objection. The opprobrium that those who broke the deliberations would face remained a significant psychological barrier. Whilst public opinion considered the right to protest indisputable, actually causing a *sejm* to break was widely considered as an evil deed, and even the prospect of this outcome could result in an unrepentant protestor being subjected to threats of physical violence. If the protest was sustained in spite of this obstacle, however, the *sejm* would remain suspended, as in 1669, in a state of *passivitas* until the expiry of the six-week term, or the term of any agreed extension, at which point it would conclude without legislative output.⁶² It merits noting, conversely, that the absence of a protest did not necessarily indicate that support for a project was universal. The absence of active objection during the final reading of new legislation was considered sufficient to indicate consent.⁶³

The intersection of this emphasis upon the preservation and extension of ‘golden’ individual liberty and the emerging culture of resident diplomacy in the final decades of the seventeenth century was to have a further deleterious effect which could – and with increasing frequency in the course of the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did – bring the legislative process of the *Rzeczpospolita* to its knees. As Hamish Scott has noted, the period between the 1670s and 1720s saw most European states establish permanent and continuous diplomatic relations with each other, at the highest levels of ambassador or envoy.⁶⁴ The *Rzeczpospolita* was no exception. Already by the reign of Sobieski, France – the leader in this development in diplomatic culture – employed a permanent

⁶² Kołodziej, ‘Prawo’, pp. 79, 83, 86; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 440, 444-5, 450.

⁶³ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 413-4.

⁶⁴ Scott, p. 70.

ambassador there, whilst Austria, Brandenburg and Sweden maintained permanent or semi-permanent representation of a lower level in the form of residents, who were well placed to assist the ad hoc missions of more senior diplomats. Many of these men developed a deep familiarity with the workings of the state and close ties with key individuals.⁶⁵ The Imperial Resident at this time, Johann Christoph Zierowsky, a regular attendant at court, was a member of the nobility of neighbouring Silesia and able to converse in the vernacular. Although not a permanent resident, the elector had routinely deployed Johann von Hoverbeck, who was half-Polish, on diplomatic missions to the *Rzeczpospolita* since 1631.⁶⁶ The Papacy also possessed permanent representation on the ground, as it did in all Catholic states, through the presence of its nuncio, who was tasked not only with representing the pope in diplomatic affairs, but also with acting as a conduit between Rome and the clergy in religious matters. A constant presence and familiarity with key actors allowed foreign diplomats to compete with the king and great magnates in party-building, purchasing the services of groups of senators or *posłowie* who could advocate for policies deemed beneficial to the interests of the foreign power in question, or lobby against those which were considered detrimental.⁶⁷ The expansion in the use of the *liberum veto* gave foreign diplomats a useful last resort when, despite their attempts to steer the *Rzeczpospolita* towards a more favourable course of action, the *sejm* appeared poised to approve legislation which threatened the interests of their master. If a sympathetic *poseł* could be found, who was willing to raise and sustain a protest in return for the right inducements, and influential individuals from amongst the ranks of one's supporters could be persuaded to lend their support to this action, such an outcome could be thwarted through the breaking of the *sejm*. Precisely such a situation arose in May 1681 when, after nineteen arduous weeks of debate and numerous extensions which had stretched the session far beyond the normal six-week term, the *sejm* finally appeared poised to reach a successful conclusion.

⁶⁵ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 392; Scott, p. 78.

⁶⁶ Kamieński, p. 382.

⁶⁷ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 346.

The 1681 *Sejm* and its aftermath

The 1681 *Sejm* opened on 14 January. Sobieski, in his *propozycja od tronu* three days later, did not raise the subject of the Hohenzollern-Radziwiłłówna marriage, keeping his focus upon the Ottoman threat to the south-eastern frontier of the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁶⁸ An attempt to revive the negotiations for an offensive alliance with the emperor swiftly proved abortive, however. The nuncio held a conference on the subject with Zierowsky in January, but the Imperial side – increasingly concerned about the actions of Louis XIV, who was aggressively pursuing his euphemistically-termed *réunions* (in reality annexations provided with a thin veneer of legal precedent) along the western borders of the Empire, and still sceptical about the immediacy of the Ottoman threat, given that the Truce of Vasvár would not expire for another three years – demurred from any commitment on that front.⁶⁹

As in 1678-9, the early weeks of the *sejm* were quickly consumed by contentious disputes. Foremost amongst these was the threat which Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna's marriage was perceived to pose to the territorial integrity of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Several of the senatorial *wota* contained strong criticism of the actions of the elector, and attempts were made to include Radziwiłłówna's estates in the list of vacancies to be distributed by the king. Various potential means of resolving this issue were discussed both in the *sejm* and behind closed doors in an extended series of negotiations involving Sobieski, Hoverbeck, Pallavicini, Beauvais and Vitry. Amongst the solutions proposed was the royal purchase of the estates, although ultimately, no solution acceptable to all parties was found in either forum.⁷⁰

In truth, these diplomatic negotiations only heightened tensions further. On 11 February, Hoverbeck declared in a private audience with the monarch that all hostile actions against the Hohenzollern were doomed to failure, as a result of the agreement which the elector had concluded with Louis XIV. Despite the attempts of the French ambassadors to reassure the Polish royal couple of their master's goodwill, this naturally deepened their frustrations towards France; in an

⁶⁸ Kamiński, p. 203.

⁶⁹ Konarski, p. 91; Lynn, pp. 162-4; Stolicki, p. 32.

⁷⁰ Kamiński, pp. 203-5, 207-8; Konarski, p. 88.

audience at the end of the month, they informed Beauvais and Vitry that they would take all possible measures to 'expel [the elector] from Poland and from Prussia'. Hoverbeck, who was notified of this declaration by his French colleagues, as well as other confrontational remarks made by Sobieski in the presence of his informants, would write to Berlin on 8 March that Sobieski intended, under the pretext of a war against the Ottomans, to gather an army and take revenge on the elector. The electoral representative was instructed to continue his discussions with Sobieski's close relative, the Bishop of Warmia, Michał Stefan Radziejowski in the hope that with his mediation, a negotiated settlement might be found and Sobieski's compliance in the matter of the Radziwiłłówna estates purchased. Indeed, these efforts which would continue throughout the duration of the 1681 *Sejm*. Nevertheless, Sobieski's words, which brought to mind the events of the late 1670s, would cast a long shadow in the mind of Friedrich Wilhelm.⁷¹

Aside from the debates over the properties of Radziwiłłówna, the early weeks of the *sejm* also saw sharp attacks against the Crown Grand Treasurer, Jan Andrzej Morsztyn, whose extended stay and purchase of property in France in the course of his aforementioned embassy gave rise to suspicions about the nature of his attachment to Louis XIV, and the degree of his loyalty to the *Rzeczpospolita*, which derailed the deliberations for an extended period of time.⁷²

The two chambers reunited for joint deliberations on 21 February, but it was only the public audience of a Russian embassy on 3 March, who bore instructions to conduct negotiations upon an offensive league against the Ottomans, that brought a greater degree of focus to the proceedings of the *sejm*. Debates on this subject consumed much of the next three weeks, with the most persistent resistance coming from the Lithuanian *posłowie*. Ultimately, the strength of anti-Ottoman hostility amongst the assembled *szlachta*, prompted by the maltreatment which they perceived the *Rzeczpospolita* to have received over the past several years, drove the emergence of a consensus in favour of a Russian alliance and a new Ottoman war. The breakthrough was finally reached on 25 March. Although one of the *posłowie* from the Crown, Stefan Stanisław Czarniecki,

⁷¹ Kamieński, pp. 206-7, 208-9. These negotiations would take place through the mediation of Sobieski's kinsman Michał Stefan Radziejowski, the Bishop of Warmia.

⁷² Konarski, pp. 88-9

attempted to protest against a new war, the attitudes of the majority placed sufficient pressure on Czarniecki and his supporters to oblige them to back down, and the *sejm* gave its approval in principle to an offensive alliance with the tsar.⁷³

Hoverbeck, meanwhile, had been working amongst the leading military figures of the *Rzeczpospolita* to protect his master against any possible diversion of its military efforts. On 22 March, he was able to report that he had extracted commitments on this matter from the two Crown *Hetmani*, Dymitr Jerzy Wiśniowiecki and Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski, as well as Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*, Michał Kazimierz Pac, whose attachment to the interests of the elector had been renewed through an extravagant gift in the early days of the *sejm*.⁷⁴ At this stage, Hoverbeck does not appear to have envisaged the breaking of the *sejm*. Instead, he worked together with the French ambassadors, hoping, during the necessary next stages of war preparations in the *sejm* – the debates upon the size of the *aukcja* to be implemented, and the imposition of new taxation measures to pay for it – to introduce wording into any proposed legislation which would prevent Sobieski from withdrawing from an Ottoman war, or from undertaking any other.⁷⁵

Privately, however, Beauvais and Vitry were already considering the possible necessity of breaking. Concerned that an offensive alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the tsar might smooth the path to the previously mooted defensive alliance with the emperor, which their master had given them firm instructions to prevent, they held discussions with Jan Andrzej Morsztyn and Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski to identify potential candidates for a breaker from amongst the *posłowie*. Needing a senator who could exert his influence to support a possible protest, they engaged the *Wojewoda* of Poznań, Krzysztof Grzymułtowski – who, like Pac, had already received an expensive gift in return

⁷³ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, p. 415; Konarski, pp. 94-5.

⁷⁴ Bobiatyński, pp. 400-1; Kamiński, pp. 210-1. Pac had received a golden goblet from Hoverbeck worth 3,000 ducats.

⁷⁵ Kamiński, p. 211.

for his services in the *sejm* from the elector – in return for a pension of 6,000 *livres*.⁷⁶

The *sejm*, meanwhile, sent deputations to the foreign diplomats present, seeking clarification on the support which their masters would provide to the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event of a new war with the Ottomans. Publicly, Hoverbeck offered electoral support, promising military assistance on the terms established by the Treaty of Welawa-Bydgoszcz (1657). Beauvais and Vitry informed the deputation that whilst Louis XIV would always give the *Rzeczpospolita* and its monarch signs of his affection for them, they had no instructions regarding a new Ottoman war, and thus could not engage further on this matter. Nevertheless, the vague statement that the ambassadors had made in the course of their aforementioned private negotiations with Sobieski – that Louis would provide greater military assistance in the event of an Ottoman war than any other Christian monarch – appears to have been leaked to the *sejm*, probably in the hope of extracting a firmer declaration on the matter.⁷⁷

The Papacy gave its enthusiastic support, with the nuncio informing the representatives of the *Rzeczpospolita* that Innocent XI remained willing to provide the 500,000 florins in subsidies, along with the proceeds from the *decime* in Italy, which he had promised in 1679. The deputation sent to Zierowsky, however, received fundamentally the same answer which the Imperial Resident had given Pallavicini two months prior. The emperor remained interested in a defensive alliance, but the resident possessed no instructions regarding the negotiation of an offensive alliance.⁷⁸

In spite of the muted diplomatic response, the *sejm* proceeded with discussions on the size of the *aukcja* for a new Ottoman war. On 2 April, the Crown *komput* was set at 36,000 men; a few days later, that of Lithuania was set at 12,000.

⁷⁶ Kamieński, p. 206; Konarski, p. 94; Toussaint de Forbin-Janson, Bishop of Beauvais and Louis-Nicolas l'Hôpital, Marquis de Vitry, French Ambassadors to Poland-Lithuania, to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 21 March 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 120-3).

⁷⁷ Kamieński, p. 211; Konarski, pp. 96-7; Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 1 April 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 126-8).

⁷⁸ Konarski, pp. 95-7.

Supplemented by Cossacks and other auxiliaries, as well as the electoral contingent, the army was to total 60,000.⁷⁹

The *sejm* then moved on to discuss the highly contentious matter of the extraordinary poll tax which would pay for the raising and maintenance of the new troops. Reaching a consensus even on the necessity of implementing such a tax was not a given. The principle of a poll tax, levied upon every inhabitant of the *Rzeczpospolita*, sat fundamentally at odds with the liberty of the normally tax-exempt *szlachta*. Indeed, for this reason, it was termed a *subsidium charitativum* (voluntary contribution) to the state. Although the precedent for such a tax was well-established – it had been levied on a few occasions in recent decades, in response to national emergencies – the *sejm* granted it only with reluctance, and even then, only for relatively short, fixed terms out of a fear of establishing a precedent of regular taxation upon the *szlachta*. There was a second stage to these negotiations, however, which was the source of an even greater share of the contention. Whilst the *subsidium charitativum* was in theory a poll tax, in practice it was assessed upon each *województwo* and *ziemia* as a total sum which accorded to the number of people living within the region, to be repartitioned amongst the inhabitants of each region at the *sejmiki relacyjne*. With no census data available upon which to base accurate calculations of the numbers of inhabitants in each region, the initial split of the amount to be levied was derived from population estimates, which were in turn based, at least in part, upon the declarations of the *województwa* and *ziemie* themselves. The imprecise nature of this data opened the door for lengthy debates in the *sejm*, driven largely by naked self-interest, as the representatives of the various *województwa* argued over which estimates should be preferred, and whether they required further adjustment for greater (perceived) accuracy, with each seeking to diminish the tax burden upon themselves and their electorate at the expense of the other parts of the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁸⁰ In essence then, any decision to go to war required the representatives of the *szlachta* who sat in the *sejm* not merely to commit themselves and their fellows to face the perils involved – it was they who would

⁷⁹ Konarski, p. 97.

⁸⁰ Anna Filipczak-Kocur, 'Poland-Lithuania before Partition' in *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c.1200-1815*, ed. by Richard Bonney (Oxford: OUP, 1999), pp. 443-479, (pp. 444, 457-9); Jędruch, pp. 362-3; Konarski, p. 97.

comprise the bulk of the armed forces – but also to agree to pay something approximating their fair share of the costs.

The efforts to reach an agreement on the *subsidium charitativum* absorbed several weeks of debate. In the early stages, on 16 April, Grzymułtowski arose to speak, asking the monarch to confirm ‘against whom this war is directed’. Perceiving the need to quell the suspicions that the army could be used against Brandenburg, Sobieski called the Crown Vice-Chancellor to the throne, who gave a lengthy answer on his behalf, detailing the king’s desire for an Ottoman war, a Russian alliance, and friendly relations with the elector. Publicly, Grzymułtowski felt obliged to apologise, explaining that his words had been misunderstood. Privately, the supporters of the elector urged Hoverbeck not to put faith in Sobieski’s words.⁸¹

With a joint delegation having been sent to seek a final approval of the alliance from Feodor III, Sobieski – in another speech *od tronu* given in early May by the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski – requested that the *sejm* should appoint a deputation of senators and *posłowie* with plenipotence to ratify the agreement if the tsar’s answer had not been received by the end of their deliberations. Perhaps in the hope of smoothing the course of the still-ongoing negotiations over the *subsidium charitativum*, he also proposed that if the tsar refused to give his assent, or made this conditional upon the fulfilment of additional demands – such as recognition of Russian sovereignty in the territories which it currently occupied in violation of the Andruszów truce – an offensive war should be avoided, and the combined *komput* increased only to 32,000 men, which would be sufficient to defend the border of the *Rzeczpospolita* should excessive Ottoman demands in the course of the anticipated delimitation of Ukraine make this necessary. He also took the opportunity to attempt once again to dispel the suggestion that he had any intention to use these troops for a purpose other than in the event of a war with the Ottomans.⁸²

The *skrypt do archiwum* through which the *Rzeczpospolita* gave its approval to the war effort against the Ottomans, the financial measures to pay for it, and the

⁸¹ Kamieński, p. 212; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 324-5; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 16 April 1681 (ANP II, N. 344, pp. 42-6). Kołodziej quotes from a *sejm* diary here.

⁸² Konarski, pp. 97-8; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 416, pp. 105-8).

requested deputation to ratify the alliance with Russia, was provisionally approved during the deliberations of 14-16 May. The *sejm* now appeared poised to conclude successfully; aside from the final readings of all agreed legislation, only various matters of local importance, placed in the instructions of the *posłowie* by individual *sejmiki*, remained to be settled.⁸³

In recent days however, the ambassadors of both Brandenburg and France had received orders which led them to trigger the breaking of the *sejm*.

With the *sejm* now appearing poised to end with the approval of a major new levying of troops, but without a final ratification of the Russian alliance which would constrain the use of those forces, and, moreover, with no agreement having yet been reached between Friedrich Wilhelm and Sobieski on a financial settlement which might reset their relationship along a more positive course, the repeated declarations which the Polish monarch had made in the *sejm* regarding his intention to fight against the Ottomans proved insufficient to assuage the concerns of the elector that Sobieski was once again planning an attack on his territories. In a letter of 14 May, Friedrich Wilhelm definitively informed Hoverbeck of the necessity of thwarting Sobieski's intentions with the assistance of his supporters in the *sejm*.⁸⁴ Beauvais and Vitry, meanwhile, received new instructions from Louis XIV dated 25 April. Louis now considered an offensive alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and Russia by itself – even if it did not lead to a defensive alliance with the emperor – to be detrimental to his strategic interests, since it would be certain to draw Ottoman attention away from making a renewed assault on the emperor's eastern frontier, a policy which French diplomats were advocating for in Constantinople. This would in turn leave Leopold with a free hand to crush the Protestant rebellion in Upper Hungary and to contest Louis' *réunions* along the western borders of the Empire.⁸⁵

⁸³ Konarski, p. 98.

⁸⁴ Kamieński, pp. 207, 212.

⁸⁵ Louis XIV to Beauvais and Vitry, Saint-Germain, 25 April 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 138-9). Cf. Louis' earlier instructions on this subject, in which he expressed a favourable attitude to a Russo-Polish offensive alliance: Louis XIV to Beauvais, Versailles, 28 November 1680 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 75-6); Louis XIV to Beauvais and Vitry, Versailles, 5 December 1680 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 78-9).

The first public manifestation of the decision of Brandenburg and France to break the *sejm* came during the deliberations of 22 May. With the latest extension to the session due to expire that evening, Władysław Przyjemski, a *poseł* from Wielkopolska, arose and protested against any further extension to the deliberations. Przyjemski, who was a known adherent of Grzymułtowski as well as a confidant of Béthune during his time in Poland, and who had previously spent time in the service of Louis XIV as a musketeer, then departed immediately from the chamber, going into hiding in Warsaw. His protest was supported and found to be valid, and the *sejm* now entered a state of *passivitas*. Deliberations continued until nightfall. Although a new extension could not legally be agreed in his absence, and the *sejm* should thus end that evening, the estates nevertheless agreed that they would meet again the following day, entrusting the *Sejm* Marshal with bringing Przyjemski to the session.⁸⁶

Assisting in this undertaking, Pallavicini would play an instrumental role in securing Przyjemski's return. After working throughout the night amongst the friends of the *poseł*, the nuncio eventually located him on the morning of 23 May. Negotiations were opened between the king and Przyjemski, with Sobieski employing a combination of inducements and threats, promising him the first vacant office in Poznań *województwo* in return for withdrawing his protest, whilst also disseminating the rumour amongst the *posłowie* that Przyjemski's protest had been financially motivated. Eventually, the *poseł* was persuaded to return to the *sejm* a few hours before nightfall, restoring it to its normal state of *activitas* and consenting to its extension until nightfall the following day.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, suspecting that the elector was the ultimate originator of Przyjemski's actions, Sobieski hurriedly sought to reach a settlement with Hoverbeck, sending Radziejowski to him with a commitment to forget past insults and return to a state of friendship with Friedrich Wilhelm, as well as to argue no further regarding the monetary sum which the elector would provide. With the instructions of his

⁸⁶ Kamieński, p. 212; Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 428, 443-4, 454; Konarski, pp. 98-9.

⁸⁷ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 444, 447-8, 454; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 27 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 469, pp. 159-63).

master clear, however, Hoverbeck remained firm in his course, and Sobieski's last-ditch efforts here would prove insufficient to save the *sejm*.⁸⁸

Two hours before the end of the session on 24 May, Przyjemski arose once again to protest against both a further extension and the holding of deliberations under candlelight, giving as his reasons that in nineteen weeks of discussion, all that had been achieved were high taxes which he deemed unlikely to be gathered in time to support the army during the coming summer, a few private *konstytucje*, and the impoverishment of his fellow *posłowie*, who would be obliged to bear the costs of their extended stay in Warsaw. This time he remained steadfast in the face of the king's entreaties to reconsider. After informing the assembled that he would return and restore the chamber to *activitas*, allowing a successful conclusion to the *sejm*, if all outstanding matters were resolved in the present day's session. With that, he once again departed from the chamber.⁸⁹

In his absence, those who remained in the chamber were left with little option but to attempt to find resolutions upon the outstanding matters. The labour continued past nightfall, with the *sejm* working in complete darkness in order not to violate the conditions set by Przyjemski. Deliberations finally concluded around midnight, but Przyjemski did not return as he had promised. When the majority, deeming that Przyjemski's conditions had been met, sought to end the *sejm* with the adoption of the agreed *konstytucje*, one of the *posłowie* from Wilno, Stanisław Kazimierz Dąbrowski, refused to allow this, on the basis that Przyjemski had not returned to the chamber restore to a state of *activitas*, so the decisions taken in the previous hours could not legally be approved. His actions were supported by his patron the *Wojewoda* of Wilno, Michał Kazimierz Pac, who declared loudly that in seeking to circumvent Przyjemski's *veto*, he perceived a desire to 'put chains on *szlachcic* freedom'. In the turmoil that followed, Sobieski found himself with little option but to suspend deliberations until the afternoon of 26 May, in

⁸⁸ Kamieński, p. 213.

⁸⁹ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 87, 335, 432, 435, 444, 454-5. The last of Przyjemski's complaints was calculated to draw considerably sympathy amongst the assembled. Many amongst the *posłowie* were not rich men, and they could only expect to be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm*. Even this partial reimbursement would only be received in arrears when they reported upon the outcomes of the *sejm* at their local *sejmik relacyjny*. Jędruch, pp. 124-5.

the hope that cooler heads might prevail, and Przyjemski might again be persuaded to return.⁹⁰

This time, such hopes were in vain. Przyjemski, who had already departed Warsaw on horses owned by Grzymułtowski, could not be found. Sobieski, Pallavicini and others instead worked amongst the senators and *posłowie*, seeking to build a consensus for the interpretation that his absence did not constitute a valid protest. When the *sejm* gathered again on 26 May, almost all the assembled – notably including Przyjemski’s colleagues from the *sejmik* at Środa – expressed their willingness to continue the deliberations. Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, the *Sejm* Marshal, likewise favoured such an interpretation, and was willing to direct them. Led by Dąbrowski, the *posłowie* from Wilno refused to allow this interpretation, demanding that Przyjemski’s right of protest be respected. They were willing to concede only in return for the issuance of a *konstytucja* which guaranteed that the continuation of deliberations after the departure in protest of a *poseł* was an unprecedented and exceptional event, necessitated by the threat of a new war with the Ottomans, and the prospect of an alliance with Russia. Such an outcome would effectively codify the right of protest – hitherto an unwritten law – within the political system of the *Rzeczpospolita*. A further innovation of this nature in the development of the *liberum veto* was more than the king and his supporters were able to consent to. Efforts were made to appeal to Pac, who had remained strategically absent from the deliberations that day, but the *wojewoda* remained unrepentant. The 1681 *Sejm* had reached its final impasse. At around an hour past midnight on the morning of 27 May, the participants formally took their leave of the king, who was seen to weep at the result.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Bobiatyński, p. 405; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 443-4, 449, 455; Kołodziej, ‘Prawo’, p. 79. Bobiatyński and Kołodziej both quote here from a *sejm* diary.

⁹¹ Bobiatyński, p. 405; Kamieński, p. 213; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 422, 438-9, 455; Konarski, p. 100; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 28 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 475, pp. 170-2). Bobiatyński assigns additional motives to the decision of Pac to uphold the breaking of the *sejm*, beyond his attachment to the interests of the elector. He notes Sobieski’s promotion of the Sapieha family as rivals to Pac hegemony in the Grand Duchy (a conflict which had almost led him to a duel with the Lithuanian Grand Treasurer, Benedykt Paweł Sapieha, on 1 May), as well a fear that Sobieski was plotting his assassination as a means of easing his path to absolute rule, or that of his eldest son, Prince Jakub, to the Polish throne. pp. 403, 407. See also Sawicki, pp. 193-5.

In reality, the breaking of the *sejm* did not cost the *Rzeczpospolita* the offensive alliance against the Ottomans which had been negotiated with the Russian ambassadors, for it soon became clear that Feodor had never truly intended to conclude it. In the days which followed the breaking, rumours began reaching Warsaw via both Venice and Kijów that the tsar had concluded a treaty with the Ottomans (the Treaty of Bakhchysarai) several months prior, ending their five-year war. The rumours were confirmed by the arrival of an official report from Samuel Proski, the Polish Resident in Constantinople, and subsequently in an audience with the ambassadors of the tsar in mid-June. The negotiations with the *Rzeczpospolita* had merely been a ploy to strengthen Feodor's hand.⁹²

Although the Russian alliance was never truly on the table, there was nevertheless a substantial cost to the collapse of the *sejm*. The agreement to increase the armed forces – viewed as a necessary precursor to any successful attempt to contest Ottoman demands during the anticipated delimitation of Ukraine – had now been lost, along with the financial arrangements which would have paid for the raising of these new troops and the upkeep of both the new and pre-existing formations. Moreover, there were fears that when the sultan and Grand Vizir learned of the aggressive actions which the *sejm* had once again been contemplating, combined with the weakness of the defences of the *Rzeczpospolita* as a consequence of its breaking, they would respond to this provocation by launching a new invasion, particularly now that their hands had been freed by the treaty with the tsar. Sobieski had little option but to send amelioratory messages to Constantinople, along with instructions to Proski to dissemble away rumours of the armaments and the Russian alliance which the *Rzeczpospolita* had planned.⁹³

The climate of mingled fear and disappointment in Warsaw in the immediate aftermath of the breaking inevitably prompted questions regarding in whose interests the demise of the *sejm* had been brought about. It was obvious to contemporaries, given the identity of the individuals involved, that the enmity of

⁹² Konarski, p. 102; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 28 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 477, pp. 174-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 478, pp. 175-6).

⁹³ Konarski, p. 104; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 27 May 1681 (ANP II, N. 469, pp. 159-63); Tommaso Talenti, Private Secretary of Jan III Sobieski, to Carlo Barberini, Cardinal-Protector of Poland-Lithuania, Warsaw, 28 May 1681 (*Talenti*, pp. 65-7).

the elector had been a driving force, and Sobieski arranged for the hijacking of the correspondence of Hoverbeck in the immediate aftermath, in the hope of obtaining conclusive proof. Ultimately, however, in the present perilous state in which the *Rzeczpospolita* found itself, Sobieski could not afford an open breach with Friedrich Wilhelm. In the course of the summer of 1681, Sobieski reopened their negotiations, seeking to confirm the elector's willingness to provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with the owed and promised reinforcements in the event of a war with the Ottoman Empire, as well as to reach a final resolution of their outstanding differences. Alongside a renewed attempt to reach terms on a financial settlement through which he would guarantee his protection to Ludwika Karolina's estates, he also explored the possibility of strengthening the ties between the two rulers through the marriage of Prince Jakub with a daughter of the elector. These negotiations bore only partial fruit. Friedrich Wilhelm reaffirmed his commitment regarding military assistance, and Sobieski provisionally indicated his willingness to issue a document guaranteeing the property of Ludwika Karolina, even going so far as to have it drawn up. However, the two sides remained too far apart on the financial terms of the agreement – Sobieski having once again increased his demands following his brief willingness to compromise during the final days of the *sejm* – for a comprehensive settlement to be reached, and negotiations subsided again by the autumn. The elector, meanwhile, rewarded several of his key supporters handsomely for their efforts in the *sejm*. Grzymułtowski received a further present of 1,000 thalers in cash. Przyjemski, meanwhile, was awarded a pension at the beginning of 1682, once the scandal over the breaking of the *sejm* had begun to subside.⁹⁴

Suspicion also fell upon France. On the basis of statements which Przyjemski had made during their negotiations on 23 May, Sobieski alleged publicly that Brandenburg had collaborated with Béthune, the former French ambassador, and the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski to trigger the break, also implicating Grzymułtowski, Pac, and Stefan Stanisław Czarniecki of involvement.⁹⁵ Zierowsky,

⁹⁴ Kamieński, pp. 215-6, 218-20, 221-2; Konarski, pp. 99-100.

⁹⁵ Kamieński, pp. 215-6; Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 27 May and 6 June 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 142-3 and 147). Despite Przyjemski's claims regarding Wielopolski's involvement, and the fact that royal suspicions were deepened by the discovery of a letter from Przyjemski to the Crown Grand Chancellor in the intercepted package of Hoverbeck, asking for his assistance in justifying the breaking of the *sejm*, there is some evidence for

meanwhile, was quick to publicise the involvement instead of the present French embassy, alongside Friedrich Wilhelm, Pac, Grzymułtowski and Wielopolski.⁹⁶ Further rumours suggested that Przyjemski had received 3,000 ducats from Morsztyn for his role in the breaking.⁹⁷ Sobieski would maintain his stance publicly. In private, however, he swiftly reached a conclusion which was closer to that of Zierowsky. He was, after all, inescapably aware that Beauvais and Vitry had been supporting the actions of electoral diplomacy during the *sejm*. As Kamieński has noted, the hijacking of the letter of the French embassy informing Louis XIV of the collapse of the *sejm* – even though it had been sent by courier rather than the regular post – is instructive as to the suspicions held by the Polish monarch.⁹⁸

Ultimately, however, Sobieski trod the path of tact with regard to French involvement. In the immediate aftermath of the failed *sejm*, he was no more able to sustain a breakdown in relations with Louis than he was with Friedrich Wilhelm. Although he was coming to believe ever more firmly that his own interests had diverged from those of Louis, he once again resumed negotiations with the French ambassadors during the summer of 1681 upon the subject of the personal relationship between the new monarchs. Before he was willing to commit to any new treaty, however, he insisted upon the inclusion of two new clauses which would give him greater flexibility of action in the perilous situation which the *Rzeczpospolita* now found itself. The first would permit him to secure an alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor without first requiring permission from Louis, in the event that the *sejm* demanded it, or the *Rzeczpospolita* found itself attacked by the Ottomans. The second related to French assistance to the Protestant rebels in Upper Hungary, who were now led by Imre Thököly. During

suggesting that the chancellor was accused in error. In March, he had studiously avoided offering the French ambassadors any of his adherents as a potential breaker of the *sejm*, excusing himself through his attachment to the interests of the royal court. Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 21 March 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 120-3). Przyjemski would subsequently apologise to Wielopolski for involving him in this affair. Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 451.

⁹⁶ Kamieński, p. 216; Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 30 May 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 144-6).

⁹⁷ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 347; Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 26 July 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 157-60).

⁹⁸ Kamieński, pp. 215-6; Sobieski would only reveal his conviction that the French embassy had been directly involved in the breaking in the summer of 1682. The first record of Sobieski's revival of these accusations is contained in a letter of Beauvais (now returned to France) to Vitry, Paris, 17 July 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 242-3).

the summer of 1681, the rebel leader was beginning to court the assistance of the pashas of the Ottoman eyalets along the borders of Upper Hungary. Although Sobieski had withdrawn his tacit support for the recruitment of mercenaries on behalf of the rebels in 1678, he had remained willing to consent to the passage of French communications and financial support to the rebels through the *Rzeczpospolita* whilst it seemed that the rebels were little more than a thorn in the side of the emperor. Now though, he insisted upon the right to prevent further commerce of this nature through the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event that the Ottomans acted openly in support of the rebels in the future.⁹⁹

Before departing entirely from discussing the events of the 1681 *Sejm*, the comments of Kołodziej upon the reasons for its breaking, viewed within the context provided by the other *sejmy* of the reign of Jan III, merit touching upon here. After noting the deterioration in the functioning of the *sejm* during the reigns of Jan II Kazimierz and Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki, he argues that the heightened level of Ottoman threat provided a unifying force in the first half of the reign of Sobieski; of the six *sejmy* in the years 1676-1685, only that of 1681 was broken. It was one of only two – along with that of 1683 – which took place in a period of durable peace, when fear of the Ottoman threat was somewhat diminished. As we shall examine in the remainder of this chapter and the next, the level of danger which the Ottomans appeared to pose increased markedly between these two *sejmy*. By contrast, as the Ottoman threat receded following the relief of Vienna, and the *Rzeczpospolita* and their allies moved onto the offensive, the failure of a *sejm* bore less immediate implications of military catastrophe. Combined with the diminishing health and authority of the king, the *sejmy* of the second half of his reign saw a return to the pattern which had emerged under previous monarchs, with only two of the six *sejmy* after 1685 concluding with the adoption of *konstytucje*.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Beauvais and Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 26 July 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 157). Cf. the arguments here with those of Konarski, p. 123, who recognises the same change in Sobieski's mindset towards the Hungarian rebellion, but suggests it occurred over a much shorter period of time, beginning only in the second half of 1682.

¹⁰⁰ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 485; Kołodziej, 'Prawo', p. 94; Kołodziej, 'Sejmy', pp. 67-8.

The gradual rapprochement between Sobieski and Leopold

The first test of Sobieski's new stance towards the Hungarian rebels came at the beginning of September. A recent passage of rebel troops through the southern borderlands of the *Rzeczpospolita*, assisted by sympathetic Poles in Kraków *województwo*, had allowed the rebels to outflank the Imperial defences in Upper Hungary and strike from an unexpected direction. Zierowsky and Pallavicini appealed vociferously for Sobieski to take action. The Polish monarch responded by ordering the arrest of several individuals who were considered to have been complicit, as well as the guarding of the vital mountain pass through Stryj (now Stryi, Ukraine) and Skole, which formed part of the private estates of his family, in order 'to impede all suspicious commerce and communication'.¹⁰¹ As yet, however, Sobieski does not appear to have taken the further step of expressly forbidding French traffic into Hungary.¹⁰²

In the autumn of 1681, Sobieski moved with his court from Warsaw towards his private estates in Ruś *województwo* near the south-eastern frontiers of the *Rzeczpospolita*, from where he would be well-placed to observe the activities of both the Ottomans along the frontier in Podole and Thököly's rebels in Upper Hungary, and could respond promptly to the crystallisation of any potential threat by taking command of the standing Polish army which was encamped nearby at Trembowla (now Terebovlia, Ukraine). He would remain in that region for the rest of 1681 and almost all of 1682.¹⁰³

Louis' response to Sobieski's demands arrived towards the end of September. The French monarch made the concessions regarding Sobieski's independence in foreign policy which the Polish monarch had desired, albeit with some reticence. Louis offered no concessions in his stance, however, towards the personal

¹⁰¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 September 1681 (ANP III, N. 732, pp. 114-7), p. 115.
impedire ogni commercio e communicatione sospetta.

¹⁰² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 13 August, 27 August and 10 September 1681 (ANP III, N. 684, N. 706 and N. 732, pp. 70-1, 95-7 and 114-7); cf. Sobieski to Kraków *województwo*, Pilaszkowice, 1 September 1681 (ANP III, A. 4, pp. 372-3).

¹⁰³ From this point until the return of Sobieski to Warsaw for the *sejm* in January 1683, there is a delay of approximately 7-10 days between events taking place at the Polish court in Ruś *województwo*, and their being reported in the letters of Pallavicini, who remained in Warsaw for the duration. This is reflective of the distance between these two parts of the *Rzeczpospolita*.

demands of Maria Kazimiera, whose chagrin towards France only deepened in October as a result of the disgrace which her sister, the Marquise de Béthune, had been subjected to at the French court following her decision to delay her return there from Poland, in contravention of Louis' orders. As a result, whenever Vitry – now left as the sole French ambassador in Poland following the departure of Beauvais – sought to raise the matter over the course of the next year, Sobieski repeatedly demurred from formally committing himself.¹⁰⁴

On the other hand, he still made no move as yet to forbid the French passage of money and communications into Hungary in the way which he had done with the pro-Rebel activities of his own citizens. Thököly had in fact united his forces with those of the Pashas of Temeşvar (now Timișoara, Romania) and Varat (now Oradea, Romania), as well as the Prince of Transylvania, Mihály I Apafi, during that same month. However, the fact that the pashas were not acting on behalf of the sultan in a formal capacity, the lack of activity of the combined anti-Habsburg force due to the disunity and competing interests of the commanders, and the subsequent new armistice between Thököly and the emperor in December, all allowed Sobieski to walk, for a little while longer, the tightrope between his concerns about the potential consequences for the *Rzeczpospolita* of Ottoman involvement in Hungary and his unwillingness to trigger an open breach with Louis. The instability which French partisans within the *Rzeczpospolita* could yet cause led him to refrain from cutting the French pipeline into Upper Hungary, at least until clear evidence of joint activity between the Hungarian rebels and the sultan might make it absolutely necessary.¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, in late October 1681, having been prompted by Pallavicini to contemplate whether the recovery of Kamieniec might be possible in the event that the sultan launched a full invasion against the emperor in Hungary, as reports of Ottoman preparations on the Danube seemed to suggest was increasingly likely during the 1682 campaigning season, Sobieski would respond by reviving the earlier proposals for an offensive alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor. In fact, what the Polish monarch envisaged was a triple alliance, which

¹⁰⁴ Louis XIV to Vitry, Fontainebleau, 21 August 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 170); Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów and Stryj, 19 September and 16 October 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 171 and 174). Cf., by way of an example, Vitry's report of 16 January 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 185-7).

¹⁰⁵ Barker, p. 120; Stoye, pp. 20-1.

would also include the tsar.¹⁰⁶ Sobieski was optimistic that Feodor could still be dissuaded from finalising his peace with the sultan, as he had not yet ratified the terms of the Treaty of Bakhchysarai which had been agreed at the start of the year; indeed, the Polish monarch had recently dispatched an envoy to Moscow for this purpose, under the pretext of preparing the ground to convert the Truce of Andruszów into a perpetual peace.¹⁰⁷ To Pallavicini's dismay, however, this proposal looked little different than those which had been made on previous occasions to no positive outcome. Moreover, Sobieski's proposal envisaged that the contingents to be provided by the *Rzeczpospolita* would be paid for in large part by further papal subsidies, on top of those already promised during the 1681 *Sejm*.¹⁰⁸

With little confidence that such a proposal would achieve a different outcome to those which had come before it, Pallavicini opted to pass it on to his counterpart in Vienna only informally, to explore whether the emperor could at least be persuaded to consider the central pillar of Sobieski's proposal, an offensive league between the two powers.¹⁰⁹ As expected, Buonvisi replied that it had gained little traction with the emperor, whose interest was above all in negotiating a defensive alliance, which would allow him to transfer troops to the west in order to contest Louis' ongoing *réunions* along the Rhine – French forces were currently subjecting the Spanish-held fortress of Luxembourg to a heavy bombardment¹¹⁰ – safe in the knowledge that the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* would be available to move to his assistance in the event that the sultan opted to break the Truce of Vasvár. Without a defensive alliance firmly in place, he was unwilling to contemplate an

¹⁰⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 860, pp. 231-3); Sobieski's proposal, the precise dating of which is uncertain, can be found as: 'Ioannis III regis, quid de foedere cum imperatore contrahendo a nuntioque proposito sentiat, expositio', Jawórow?, before 24 October 1681 (ANP III, A. 13, pp. 385-6).

¹⁰⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 September 1681 (ANP III, N. 765, pp. 146-8); The tsar saw through this pretext. Fully intent on ratifying the peace with the Porte, he dismissed the envoy, Stanisław Niewieściński, to avoid giving the sultan the impression that he was negotiating in bad faith by also contemplating a resumption of the war in alliance with Poland-Lithuania. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 4 February 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1078, pp. 86-7).

¹⁰⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 860, pp. 231-3).

¹⁰⁹ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 8 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 866, pp. 236-9); Pallavicini had already asked Buonvisi to prepare the ground for a forthcoming proposal at the same time as he prompted Sobieski. See Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 11 October 1681 (ANP III, N. 812, pp. 185-6).

¹¹⁰ Lynn, p. 165.

offensive one, fearing that if word reached the Ottomans of the content of such negotiations, war would surely follow. He would be left alone, facing pressure on two fronts, with the Poles under no obligation to come to his aid.¹¹¹

Although Pallavicini had pressed Sobieski to modify his overture into something which the emperor would be more likely to accept, in truth, there was little else that Sobieski could propose in the present circumstances. Despite his personal belief in the merits of a defensive alliance, Sobieski was simply in no position to commit to it in the final months of 1681.

The *skrypt do archiwum* from the 1678-9 *Sejm* which had previously provided for the funding of the armed forces of the *Rzeczpospolita* had expired with the opening of the 1681 *Sejm*. Without the implementation of the additional funding measures which had been agreed there, the standing armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* were gradually wasting away below even their present meagre establishment strength.¹¹² Although some of the *sejmiki relacyjne* had voted to implement the agreed *subsidium charitativum* despite the breaking of the *sejm walny*, this was by no means true of all, and the army was otherwise sustained only by the *kwarta* and *hiberna* taxes upon the lands of the crown, which, although they were a firmly-established part of the financial system of the *Rzeczpospolita*, yielded insufficient funds to pay for the maintenance of more than a couple of thousand troops.¹¹³ In truth, Poland-Lithuania was barely in a position to be able to defend itself in the event of an attack, let alone to move – as a defensive alliance would obligate – to the assistance of the emperor without leaving the *Rzeczpospolita* utterly defenceless against a second Ottoman force or the raiding of the Crimean Tatars. The rebuilding of its armies which would be necessary to fulfil the terms of

¹¹¹ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Sopron, 26 October, 29 November and 28 December 1681 (ANP III, N. 845, N. 912 and N. 980, pp. 214-6; 288-90 and 347-50).

¹¹² *Skrypty do archiwum* were valid only until the next *sejm*. Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, p. 479. The nuncio would discuss in detail the problems which the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* had been facing since the failure of the 1681 *Sejm* in a letter of the following year, at which point the problem had worsened still further. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1600, pp. 201-3).

¹¹³ Filipczak-Kocur, pp. 444, 458; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 July 1681 (ANP III, N. 637, pp. 24-6), p. 25. Pallavicini would report that:

Some *sejmiki* have not wanted to resolve upon this point, but have deferred it to another time, others have rejected it, [and] some have consented. (Alcuna dietina su questo punto non ha voluto risolvere, ma l'ha rimesso ad altro tempo, altre l'hanno rigettato, alcune hanno condesceso).

a defensive alliance could only be implemented with foreign subsidies or the agreement of new financing arrangements in the *sejm*, which was not due to sit again for over a year, in the early months of 1683.

As unappealing as Sobieski's proposal was – it certainly raised Pallavicini's suspicions that Sobieski was angling merely to reap the rewards of the labour and money of others – it was in truth the only means of putting a force into the field against Kamieniec during the campaigning season of 1682 without exposing the *Rzeczpospolita* to an unpalatable degree of risk by fighting the Ottomans undermanned and without allies.¹¹⁴ Even if an alliance on the optimistic terms proposed by Sobieski had been accepted in Vienna and Rome, it would have been very difficult to secure its implementation. The lapsing of the *skrypt do archiwum* of the 1678-9 also deprived him of the right which it had accorded him to form alliances. He would need to seek the approval of the senators for the holding of a new *sejm* ahead of the normal two-year schedule, in which such matters could be negotiated by the *Rzeczpospolita*. If approval for a new *sejm* could be secured, its outcome would of course be subject to the normal vicissitudes of fortune.

If nothing else, however, the negotiations of the winter of 1681-2 would at least see a step towards the gradual softening of relations between Sobieski and Leopold, which hinted that co-operation between the two monarchs might be possible in the future. In November, Sobieski had received a letter from Thököly and the Hungarian rebels, soliciting the king's advice on whether they should look to secure aid from the sultan himself during the coming campaign, or instead seek an accommodation with the emperor. Sobieski, despite his concerns that the pacification of Upper Hungary might lead the Ottomans to turn their attention towards the *Rzeczpospolita* instead, wrote in response condemning the path of resorting to Ottoman aid and praising that of mending his relationship with his liege. The Hungarians indicated that they would follow his advice, whilst Sobieski

¹¹⁴ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 860; pp. 231-3); Indeed, Pallavicini, in his frustration, would produce a memorandum for the king proposing an *aukcja* of the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* to 30,000 men, to be funded through the *subsidium charitativum*, which could be supplemented by 16,000 Cossacks mercenaries to be raised with papal money, in order to attempt the recovery of Kamieniec. 'Opitii Pallavicini memorandum, quod opes, ut triginta milium copias unum tantum per annum sustentari possint, necessarias refert', Warsaw, before 5 November 1681 (ANP III, A. 14, pp. 386-7). Of course, neither an *aukcja* nor a new imposition of the *subsidium charitativum* could occur outside of a *sejm*.

would secretly inform the Imperial Resident and papal nuncio of all that had passed, in order that the emperor might enter negotiations with full awareness of Thököly's intentions, and might make whatever preparations he felt necessary.¹¹⁵

For now, however, although Sobieski's actions since the autumn favouring the interests of the emperor over those of Thököly's rebels were favourably received at Vienna and would certainly have a positive effect upon the gradual thawing of the previously frosty relationship between the two monarchs, the rapprochement could only go so far without the curtailment of the passage of French assistance through the *Rzeczpospolita* into Upper Hungary. Moreover, Sobieski and Leopold remained too far apart at this time in their conceptions of how a potential alliance against the Ottomans might function to bridge the remaining personal differences between them.¹¹⁶ By the spring of 1682, discussions on this subject had once again subsided.

Given the cautiously positive steps made in his relationship with the emperor, it was a great displeasure to Sobieski that a flurry of Frenchmen passing to and from the residence of the French ambassador during January 1682 seemed to herald a new intensification in Louis XIV's assistance of Thököly's rebels. Sobieski's irritation was only exacerbated by the fact that his cooperation in these activities was simply assumed rather than expressly sought. In the first instance, he chose to make no formal protest, instead complaining in private to the former commander of the French-paid Polish mercenary forces in Upper Hungary, Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, whom he could be sure would report his annoyance to the Marquis de Vitry.¹¹⁷ The arrival in the *Rzeczpospolita* of a new French agent, du Vernay-Boucault, tasked with conducting Louis' negotiations with the Hungarian rebels and with Transylvania and bearing the character of envoy to the latter, would draw further private complaints from the Polish monarch in mid-March, this time to the leading French partisan, Crown Grand

¹¹⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 891, pp. 267-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, 19 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 896, pp. 273-4).

¹¹⁶ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Sopron, 29 November 1681 (ANP III, N. 912, pp. 288-90).

¹¹⁷ Vitry, French Ambassador to Poland-Lithuania, to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 16 January 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 185-7).

Treasurer Jan Andrzej Morsztyn.¹¹⁸ Louis' agents, however, showed no inclination to change course.

By the beginning of April, with the campaigning season approaching and little to indicate that Thököly and his followers intended to permanently lay down their arms, as they had claimed to him that they would in November, Sobieski was becoming increasingly concerned that they intended to explore the other option of seeking the assistance of the Ottoman Sultan. Moreover, both the papal nuncio and the Imperial Resident, in their letters from Kraków, were now regularly haranguing him on behalf of the pope and emperor respectively to cut the French pipeline into Upper Hungary. Sobieski would respond by calling Zierowsky to the court at Jaworów,¹¹⁹ where, in the final days of April, Sobieski would hear out his protestations in person, apparently in order to create the pretext for sending Jan Krzysztof Gniński (now Crown Vice-Chancellor) to inform Vitry that he could no longer permit the passage of French communications and financial aid into Hungary. In a subsequent private audience which Vitry was able to obtain, Sobieski would reinforce the message, requesting the ambassador's assistance also in persuading du Vernay-Boucault to withdraw from the residence he had taken up at Niemirów in Ruś *województwo*¹²⁰ (now Nemyriv, Ukraine), only a short distance from the main residence of the court at Jaworów, which made the king appear all the more culpable of involvement in French activities.¹²¹

A little more than a month later, in early June, rapid developments in the strategic situation compelled Sobieski to take further action. In the intervening weeks he had received letters from Proski in Constantinople, informing him that the Ottomans had made substantially larger preparations for the 1682 campaigning season than for the previous year, and that Sultan Mehmed IV had named the Pasha of Budin (now Buda, Hungary) as commander-in-chief in Hungary. He had also received a messenger from Thököly, Petér Faygel, who sought to exculpate his master for acts of plundering which some of his people had carried out within the borders of the *Rzeczpospolita* itself, in the estates of the Crown Court

¹¹⁸ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 14 March 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 197-8).

¹¹⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 8 April 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1212, pp. 219-20).

¹²⁰ Not to be confused with the aforementioned Niemirów in Podole.

¹²¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 6 May 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1279, pp. 282-3); Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 1 May 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 211-4).

Marshal, Mikołaj Hieronim Sieniawski.¹²² The final straw for Sobieski, however, appears to have been his receipt of information that Thököly – following a visit to Budin for a conference with the pasha – had delivered a declaration of his intention to break the armistice to the emperor at Vienna, leading Sobieski to the unavoidable conclusion that Thököly was on the cusp of entering the field alongside the sultan’s forces.¹²³ Through his personal secretary, Abbot Andrzej Chryzostom Załuski, Sobieski now informed Vitry with greater firmness that neither his conscience nor the interests of his Kingdom permitted him to allow any further passage of French correspondence and aid to the Hungarian rebels through Poland; in accordance with this resolution, the closure of the vital mountain pass into Upper Hungary through Stryj-Skole to French traffic was now made explicit.¹²⁴ The king’s message concluded with the somewhat vague assurance that he had no intention of engaging himself with Louis’ enemies, but suggested that the French monarch should not find it strange if he sought to maintain cordial relations with all those who might provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with support in the event of an Ottoman attack.¹²⁵

When Vitry finally secured a private opportunity to discuss Załuski’s declaration with Sobieski three weeks later, towards the end of June, both his attempts to persuade the Polish monarch that an Ottoman invasion of Hungary was ultimately in the interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*, since it would distract the Ottomans from attempting any undertaking against Poland, and his unconvincing protestation that French aid could and would be kept separate from that given by the Ottomans, were to fall on deaf ears. Sobieski informed him again that it would hurt his conscience to allow the passage of further support to the Hungarian

¹²² The contents of Proski’s letters, dated 12 April 1682, are recorded in Pallavicini to Cybo, 3 June 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1327, pp. 329-31). Sobieski’s audience with Faygel is recorded in Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 June 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1367, pp. 366-7).

¹²³ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 12 June 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 223-4). Sobieski’s information regarding the termination of the armistice may actually have pre-empted the event taking place. Pastor, XXXII, p. 134, gives 24 June as the date of its breaking, whilst Barker, p. 155, suggests the break took place about 21 June.

¹²⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 12 June 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 223-4). Although Załuski would hold out the theoretical olive branch that French agents could use other passes into Upper Hungary which did not pass through the private estates of the king, in reality, both parties would have known that this was not a realistic possibility. In a dispatch to Louis XIV of 17 April 1682, Vitry had described the use of the king’s passes as an ‘indispensable necessity’. (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 205-7).

¹²⁵ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 12 June 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 223-4).

rebels, since Thököly was on the cusp of uniting openly with the Ottomans, and explained his fears that if this alliance proved victorious in Upper Hungary, or if the emperor opted to sacrifice that region as the cost of securing a renewal of the Truce of Vasvár with the sultan in order to better contest Louis XIV's *réunions* in the Empire, the *Rzeczpospolita* would then be left exposed to an Ottoman invasion on two fronts; not merely across the existing frontier between the two states in Podole, but also through its almost-entirely unfortified southern border with Upper Hungary, towards Kraków and the Wisła. Although duty compelled him to challenge Sobieski's interpretation of the situation, even Vitry could not deny the legitimacy of the Polish monarch's concerns.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, news of Sobieski's hardening stance towards French support of the Hungarian rebels meant that the Polish monarch was being viewed with increasing favour at the Imperial court. Indeed, by the middle of June 1682, Buonvisi would write of his perception that the recent correspondence between the king and the emperor had been so positive that an alliance might easily be built upon it.¹²⁷ Moreover, the threat which Louis posed to the Western frontiers of the Empire seemed to be receding following the withdrawal of French forces from the siege of Luxembourg in March of that year.¹²⁸ The prospects for a consensus between Sobieski and Leopold on how to deal with the Ottoman threat had never been better. All that was needed now was a spark which would push them once again to open negotiations.

¹²⁶ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 3 July 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 229-34).

¹²⁷ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 15 June 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1363, pp. 363-4).

¹²⁸ Lynn, p. 165.

Chapter 2 – The lead-up to the 1683 Sejm

This chapter begins by examining the rapid escalation of the Ottoman threat to the Rzeczpospolita in the late summer of 1682 caused by the failure of the Imperial defences in Upper Hungary, and the resulting formulation of a draft agreement by Sobieski and Zierowsky for an alliance between the Rzeczpospolita and the emperor. It also explores the fracturing of the relationship between Sobieski and Louis XIV over the former's prohibition of the passage of French aid to Thököly's rebels through the Rzeczpospolita, before ending with analyses of the political landscape of the Rzeczpospolita as it stood prior to the 1683 Sejm, and of events in the sejmiki przedsejmowe held prior to the gathering of that assembly, in the winter of 1682-3.

The Imperial collapse in Upper Hungary

The event which would prompt Sobieski to return once again to the idea of pursuing an anti-Ottoman alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor was, a touch paradoxically, the catastrophic and embarrassing failure of the Imperial defences in Upper Hungary. Towards the end of July 1682, rumours began reaching Sobieski's court at Jaworów that the Hungarian rebel forces of Imre Thököly had succeeded in surprising and capturing the recently constructed Imperial fortress at Kassa (now Košice, Slovakia), located a little to the south of the city, and that his forces had subsequently invested the city itself.¹ Sobieski's initial response to the arrival of these rumours was apparently heated. He wondered how Thököly had been able to capture the fortress, given that his forces were relatively small and comprised mostly of cavalry, accusing the Imperial forces of negligence and a lack of application, particularly since he had warned them of the imminent peril to Kassa some weeks prior.² His concerns

¹ The fortress fell on 20 July 1682. Barker, p. 138.

² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1463, pp. 74-5). The initial reports which reached Pallavicini by way of Kraków suggested that the fortress had fallen swiftly by assault. See Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 29 July 1682 (ANP V, N. 1443, pp. 57-9). If similar reports came to the king at Jaworów, this might explain why his criticism of the apparent failings of the Imperial forces was quite as stinging as it appears to have been. In a later letter to Pallavicini, Buonvisi would state that the fortress had in fact fallen as quickly as it did as a result of treachery. See Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 10 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1470, pp. 79-81).

were manifold: he feared that Thököly would place the fortress into the hands of the Ottomans, given the dearth of rebel infantry from which to form a garrison; that the capture of such a vital fortress so early in the campaigning season would surely embolden Thököly and his Ottoman allies to seize other Imperial strongholds in Upper Hungary, particularly Szatmár (now Satu Mare, Romania), whose lines of communications had effectively been cut due to the loss of the fortress; and finally, that the proximity of Kassa to the southern border of the *Rzeczpospolita*, combined with the lack of effective fortifications protecting this previously unthreatened frontier, meant that the heart of his own realm now lay exposed to Ottoman incursions.³

Vitry, the French ambassador, would report to Louis XIV that his chief rival, the Imperial Resident, Zierowsky – newly returned to Jaworów from a period spent in his own estates in Silesia – had been ridiculed for these failings by the king.⁴ Whether this represents accurate reporting or simply wishful thinking on the part of the ambassador is unclear. What is certain, however, is that within a few days of the first arrival of these rumours – and entirely unbeknownst to Vitry – the interactions between Sobieski and the Imperial Resident would paint a very different picture. Zierowsky, having observed a discussion at court about the present situation in Hungary in which Sobieski had lamented that his fellow participants ‘will have regard for their neighbour for the first time, only when everything which was previously there will have been lost’,⁵ secured a private audience with the king in the final days of July. In that meeting, he would probe the monarch’s sentiments further, asking him to clarify whether his earlier statement meant that he desired to conclude an alliance with the emperor. The king replied that ‘I do not only desire it from your master, but also request it’.⁶ Zierowsky conveyed the king’s message promptly to the emperor, seeking further

³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1460 and N. 1463, pp. 71-2 and 74-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 5 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1464, pp. 75-6).

⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 6 July 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 240).

⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1460, pp. 71-2), p. 71.

Tunc primum vicina respicientur, ubi omnia prius perdita fuerint.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

non tantum id a Dominatione V[est]ra cupio, sed et rogo.

instructions on whether and in what manner he should proceed. He also wrote to Warsaw to inform the papal nuncio of this success.⁷

Perhaps emboldened by the positive tenor of this conversation, Zierowsky also sought a public audience from the Polish monarch whilst he waited for a response from Vienna. Receiving this on 3 August, he once again raised the subject of the French pipeline of assistance for the Hungarian rebels, presenting the king with a new petition on behalf of the emperor, which expressed surprise that the king continued to permit these activities which were so clearly detrimental to Hungary and to all Christendom, lamenting in particular the continued presence of du Vernay-Boucault so near to the Polish court. After discussing the matter with his council, Sobieski resolved to send Vice-Chancellor Gniński to the French ambassador to once again press him to oblige du Vernay-Boucault to withdraw to Warsaw. Vitry again remained unmoved, expressing surprise at the 'blind complaisance' shown to the Imperial court in this matter, and claiming moreover that he had no authority over du Vernay-Boucault, whose orders came from Louis XIV alone. The following morning, du Vernay-Boucault himself arrived at Jaworów. Meeting with Gniński, he demonstrated that he retained the character of French envoy to Transylvania through the production of recent letters from Louis bearing this title, and declared to the vice-chancellor that he would not depart without receipt of an express order written and signed by the king's own hand, which he could present to Louis as evidence that his rights as a minister had been violated. This was evidently not given, and du Vernay-Boucault returned to his residence at Niemirów, set upon remaining. A further offer from Sobieski on 6 August of a passport to facilitate his onward passage into Transylvania likewise had no effect upon his resolve. Sobieski informed Zierowsky that he still hoped that a solution could be found without his needing to resort to the use of force. He remained keen to avoid outraging Louis XIV unnecessarily if he could avoid it, particularly given that any alliance with the emperor would need to be agreed in the *sejm*, where Louis of course wielded significant influence. Nevertheless, he privately indicated to the resident that he did not intend to extend his protection to du Vernay-Boucault, and that if the resident wished to intercept his communications

⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

with Hungary and seize any money or letters which were sent, he would allow this.⁸

Zierowsky was understandably dissatisfied at the less-than-comprehensive actions which the king had taken against du Vernay-Boucault, fearing that the strength of the French minister's network within the *Rzeczpospolita* would make it impossible to disrupt his activities without Sobieski's direct intervention. He nonetheless set to his task, which would soon prove considerably more successful than he anticipated. The king, for his part, would continue to tread his cautious course, resisting the resident's requests for further action against du Vernay-Boucault, and giving the appearance of favourably hearing out the French minister's reasons for remaining at Niemirów, without, however, withdrawing the permission which he had covertly granted to Zierowsky.⁹

In the interim, news had reached Jaworów on 6 August confirming beyond all doubt that the fortress at Kassa had fallen to the Hungarian rebels, as well as suggesting that a considerable Ottoman force had joined them before the city on 27 July.¹⁰ Vitry could only lament the effect which these reports had had upon the opinions which circulated within the Polish court. Although he continued to try to persuade people that Ottoman involvement in Hungary was ultimately beneficial to the *Rzeczpospolita*, and that a man who had defended his own territories as ineptly as the emperor could not be trusted to come to the assistance of his neighbours, the alarm caused by the increasing proximity of the Ottoman threat and the lack of means with which to resist them was causing increasing numbers to place their hopes upon extracting aid from Leopold, in preference to Louis' own

⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 12 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1474, pp. 83-5); Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 249-52).

⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 and 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1488 and N. 1506; pp. 96-7 and 114-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1507, pp. 116-7). Pallavicini, writing without the benefit of hindsight, described Sobieski's actions at this time with regard to du Vernay-Boucault in rather less charitable terms than they are presented here.

¹⁰ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 249-52). The Pasha of Budin would only arrive before Kassa on 11 August per Barker, p. 138. Whether this report refers to the arrival of a separate Ottoman advance force, or represents a premature rumour of the pasha's arrival, is ultimately unclear.

vague promises of assistance which Beauvais and Vitry had brought with them on their arrival in the *Rzeczpospolita* the previous year.¹¹

Attitudes towards the Hungarian rebels at the Polish court would harden even further by mid-August, as news reached Jaworów of their activities following the fall of the fortress at Kassa. Thököly's forces had already appeared before Eperjes (now Prešov, Slovakia), even closer to the Polish border, which had quickly surrendered. Meanwhile, a force of around 1,000 rebels under the command of Thököly's cousin and lieutenant, István Petrőczy, had entered the town of Spiska Sobota (now Spišská Sobota, Slovakia) in Polish Spisz, a cluster of exclaves within the County of Szepes in the Kingdom of Hungary, which had been engaged to Poland in 1412 and had remained in Polish possession ever since, currently forming part of the estates of the Crown Grand Marshal, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski. Petrőczy's forces had pillaged that place, before barricading the Catholic priests and leading burghers inside the church and setting the building on fire along with the rest of the town.¹²

Moreover, three recent letters which had come into the possession of Sobieski appeared to suggest that Thököly's intentions towards Polish Spisz were not limited merely to raiding, but eventually to the reassertion of Hungarian sovereignty in the region as part of his vision for a Hungarian state independent from Habsburg rule. In the first two, addressed by Thököly to the king himself and to the royal official in the region, the rebel leader sought redress for the alleged mistreatment of Protestants at the hands of the officials of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the county, and requested that the king should consent to the return of Protestant clergymen, and permit freedom of worship for Protestants. In the third, a circular letter which Thököly had published and sent to the thirteen counties which constituted Upper Hungary – including Szepes – he commanded their inhabitants to mount on horseback to join the rebel forces, and threatened

¹¹ Barker, p. 115; Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 249-52).

¹² Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 14 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 255-6). Similar reports reached Pallavicini, albeit containing less detail. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1488, pp. 96-7); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 19 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1490, pp. 99-100). Meanwhile, the *deliberatoria* sent by Sobieski to the senators on 22 August indicates that Petrőczy's troops had subsequently seized four additional towns in the region and had established quarters there. *ARJ*, pp. 1-4; cf. n. 66.

them with iron and fire if they refused his summons.¹³ Thököly's proud words, combined with the damage done in Polish Spisz, aroused the anger of Sobieski and the senators who were present at Jaworów, all the more so because it was believed that Thököly would not have dared to take such provocative steps against the *Rzeczpospolita* without having first received a clear indication of Ottoman support for his actions. Vitry was to feel the force of the king's ire; he would report that Sobieski's first words to him after receiving this information were:

You see well now, Monsieur, that the war which is being waged presently in Hungary is not so strongly to the advantage of Poland as you wish to persuade us, since the malcontents [i.e. rebels] already begin to insult us, which they would not dare to do if they were not pushed and supported by the Turks.¹⁴

The king would also respond directly to Thököly, warning him not to meddle in the affairs of the *Rzeczpospolita*.¹⁵ The following week, however, he was to receive a further letter from the rebel leader, pressing him to write to the Ottoman commander-in-chief, the Pasha of Budin, to ask for his assistance in ensuring that peace would be faithfully observed and Ottoman raids would not violate the territory of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Sobieski made no response, opting instead to

¹³ Pallavicini notes the existence of these letters in his report to Rome of 19 August (ANP V, N. 1488, pp. 96-7), in which it is implied that all three had been forwarded to him from the royal court at Jaworów. He would later dispatch copies of the first two letters to Rome, see: Imre Thököly to Sobieski, Košice, 30 July 1682 (ANP V, A. 3, pp. 366-8); Imre Thököly to Andrzej Ludwik Moszyński, Royal Official and Governor in Polish Spisz, 7 August 1682 (ANP V, A. 5, pp. 368-70), although does not appear to have done so with the third, the letter which Thököly had published in Hungary. Fortunately, although Pallavicini provides us with little in the way of details, the contents of this letter also appear to have been well-known in Vienna, and can be reconstructed, at least partially, from an account provided by Buonvisi. See Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 17 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1480, pp. 88-9).

¹⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 14 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 255-6), p. 256.

Vous voyez bien à présent, Monsieur que la guerre qui se fait présentement en Hongrie n'est pas sy fort à l'avantage de la Pologne que vous nous le vouliez persuader, puisque les mescontens commencent deja de nous insulter, ce qu'ils n'oseroient pas faire s'ils n'y estoient poussez et soustenus par les Turcs.

¹⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1488, pp. 96-7).

transfer a few hundred troops into Polish Spisz in order to impede any further activity of this nature in the region, either Ottoman or Hungarian.¹⁶

Given Sobieski's clear – and not unwarranted – belief that Ottoman muscle underwrote all Thököly's recent actions, it should perhaps not surprise that behind closed doors, Zierowsky was apparently confident of reaching an agreement in principle with the Polish monarch upon an alliance against the Ottomans for the forthcoming year. Now in receipt of a response from the emperor, who approved of the king's design in general terms and instructed Zierowsky to commence detailed negotiations, the resident had obtained a secret audience with the king and queen, as well as two men whose presence the king had requested: the Crown Vice-Chancellor, Jan Krzysztof Gniński – the king's frequent collaborator in foreign affairs – and the Crown Field *Hetman*, Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski, who was now the leading military figure in the *Rzeczpospolita* after the king himself following the death of the Crown Grand *Hetman* Dymitr Wiśniowiecki the previous month. With both these men indicating their willingness to support and promote an alliance, Zierowsky asked Sobieski to enter with him into a discussion about the precise form which this might take, in order that he could present a draft set of terms for Leopold's approval. Sobieski committed to do so shortly, once he had taken some time for further deliberation and reflection. In the meantime, it was agreed that these negotiations should be treated as a matter of the utmost secrecy; besides those who had been present, the only person within the *Rzeczpospolita* who appears to have been made aware of what was transpiring was the papal nuncio in Warsaw.¹⁷

As August progressed, the developing situation in Upper Hungary seemed to pose an ever-greater threat to both negotiating parties. Rumours were reaching the *Rzeczpospolita* of the arrival of the forces of the Pasha of Budin before Kassa, which had taken place on 11 August, and of the surrender of the city itself two days later. Meanwhile, the reluctant Prince of Transylvania, Mihály I Apafi, who

¹⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1506; pp. 114-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1507, pp. 116-7); Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 21 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 258).

¹⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1505, pp. 112-4). Cf. *Talenti*, pp. 135-59 for the letters of the king's private secretary to Barberini in Rome from this period, which betray no awareness of what was afoot.

had been obliged into action by Ottoman pressure, had moved to blockade the Imperial garrison at Szatmár.¹⁸

A new envoy from Thököly, Valentin Nemessányi, arrived at Jaworów roughly a week before the end of August. The king commissioned Gniński to hear out the purpose of his coming, which he claimed was to exculpate his master from any involvement in the burning of Spiska Sobota. Sobieski was little inclined to hear out Nemessányi's excuses in person, and the Imperial resident, fearing that his stated purpose was merely a pretext to communicate in secret with Vitry and du Vernay-Boucault, petitioned that the king should have him guarded at all times, as was standard practice with Ottoman and Tatar envoys, a request which Sobieski granted.¹⁹

In the final days of August, news reached the Polish court which appeared to confirm that Thököly held designs upon the repatriation of Polish Spisz once he was master of Upper Hungary. The rebel leader had, it appeared, expressed his intention to recover the territory by repaying the money for which it had initially been pledged to Poland. Meanwhile, he had also started to put the machinery of government in place to support his rule over the thirteen counties which constituted that region, establishing a treasury at Kassa in order to lend an air of formality to the process of extracting the customary contributions and duties previously paid by those counties to the emperor.²⁰

Word also came to Jaworów that the Pasha of Eğri (now Eger, Hungary) had demanded the contribution of supplies from an unnamed town within Polish Spisz. Viewed through the prism of Thököly's apparent designs on that region, the pasha's actions would naturally have been feared to be merely the precursor to the rebel leader's forcible incorporation of the Polish exclaves into his nascent

¹⁸ Barker, p. 138; cf. Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1507, pp. 116-7) for the arrival of this news at Warsaw, by way of Kraków.

¹⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 2 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1517, pp. 125-6); cf. Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 September 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 261-3). Although Nemessányi's presence at Jaworów was known to the two French ministers, Vitry would report having been unable to engineer a meeting with the Hungarian envoy; he supposed that du Vernay-Boucault had experienced the same frustration.

²⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1533, pp. 140-1). The sum in question was 37,000 Prague (Bohemian) *groschen*. Whether Thököly had communicated his intention to Sobieski directly either by letter or by means of Nemessányi, or whether the king had been informed of it by a third party, is left unstated.

Hungarian state, enacted through the military assistance of his Ottoman allies. The small force which Sobieski had ordered to march towards Polish Spisz, whilst it might be sufficient to inhibit isolated raiding parties, was clearly incapable of countering a threat of this nature. With little other option immediately available to him, Sobieski now dispatched gifts to the Pasha of Budin, in the hope of securing his assistance in preventing any further violations of the territory of the *Rzeczpospolita*.²¹ At the same time, he once again wrote firmly to the rebel leader, emphasising the long detachment of Polish Spisz from Hungary, and warning him against any further attempts to propagate the practice of Protestant doctrine there.²²

Most threatening of all, however, were the latest reports coming from the East, which suggested that the Ottoman Grand Vizir, Kara Mustafa Pasha, intended to spend the winter in Belgrade, a choice which was strongly suggestive of an intention to campaign in Europe during the forthcoming year.

The draft agreement with the emperor

It was against the backdrop of these recent events that Sobieski and Zierowski would conduct the final stage of their negotiations upon a draft agreement in the early days of September, laying out the provisional terms of an alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor against the Ottoman Empire.²³

²¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 and 16 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1533 and N. 1553, pp. 140-1 and 159-60); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 16 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1555, pp. 161-2). With the benefit of hindsight, we know that this action of the Pasha of Eğri against Polish territory ultimately proved to be an isolated episode. There are two credible interpretations for this, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The first is that Sobieski's subsequent dispatch of gifts to the Pasha of Budin was indeed successful in achieving its aim. The second is that there had never, in fact, been any intention on the part of the Pasha of Eğri to violate Polish territory, with his actions having been the result of a simple – and quite understandable – misconception that the town in question was a possession of the Habsburg monarchy. The latter was certainly the opinion of many amongst the political classes at Warsaw when news of the pasha's actions reached that city, although Pallavicini, writing in the heat of the moment, was disdainful of such an interpretation, considering its advancement an act of wilful self-delusion on the part of those who were opposed to an Ottoman war.

²² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1533, pp. 140-1).

²³ Buonvisi and Pallavicini first report the arrival of rumours of Kara Mustafa Pasha's intentions at Vienna and Warsaw in letters to each other dated 7 and 9 September

This document envisaged an alliance which was both offensive and defensive in nature, with the forces of the *Rzeczpospolita* to campaign along the Dniester in 1683 with the goal of recovering the vital fortress at Kamieniec, whilst those of the emperor would campaign in Upper Hungary, with the eventual aim of recovering the major Ottoman-held fortress at Varat (now Oradea, Romania). The two forces, acting on either side of the Carpathians, would nonetheless be in close enough proximity that if the sultan threw the entirety of his forces against one contracting party alone, the other would be in a position to come to their assistance with some considerable part of their army. Otherwise, it was intended that the two forces would act separately.

For this purpose, it was agreed that the emperor would prepare a force of no less than 60,000 men, whilst the *Rzeczpospolita* would muster 40,000. In order that the alliance might appear to the Ottomans to be still firmer, the two parties would explore the possibility of the mutual exchange of some number of Polish cavalry for Imperial infantry, which would have the further advantage of shoring up the customary deficiencies of each army. In addition, it was envisaged that the emperor would provide to the *Rzeczpospolita's* present defect in artillery, which would be necessary for the capture of Kamieniec, in return for some as-yet-unspecified recompense.

Whereas in previous abortive discussions of an alliance with an offensive component between the two powers, Leopold had set the preconditions of his securing a non-aggression pact with France and of the involvement of the tsar as a third contracting party, no such preconditions were included in this draft agreement. The document expressed the clear belief that the active Ottoman support for the Hungarian rebels in the present year, and the Grand Vizir's anticipated residence at Belgrade during the coming winter, were sufficient to demonstrate that the emperor was already engaged in an Ottoman war. As a result, Sobieski and Zierowsky evidently felt that the time for such preconditions

respectively. See: ANP V, N. 1530 and N. 1535, pp. 136-8 and 143-5). At Jaworów, Sobieski and Zierowsky evidently heard the news of the Grand Vizir's plan sooner, and apparently with greater certainty, since it was treated as established fact and referenced as a motivating factor for the conclusion of an alliance between the emperor and the *Rzeczpospolita* in the text of the draft agreement, finalised by the two men on 6 September at the latest. This document is preserved in full as ANP V, A. 8, pp. 374-7. The means by which this information reached Jaworów are unfortunately left unstated.

had passed. Nevertheless, the draft agreement devoted considerable thought to the efforts which should be undertaken by the contracting parties to establish favourable conditions within the wider geopolitical landscape, in order to provide the alliance with the best possible chance of success.

Although it was acknowledged that the odds were slim, given the apparently insatiable nature of Louis XIV's territorial demands in the Empire and his repeated refusal of requests to offer any sort of guarantee of security to the states and cities which constituted it, it was agreed that efforts should nonetheless be redoubled to reach a permanent settlement of the French monarch's claims, or at least their temporary suspension with rights reserved. The worst that could happen was that Louis refused once again, but the potential benefit of freeing the emperor's hand to operate with all his forces along his eastern border, in the unlikely event that the French monarch proved willing to assent, would be more than worth the effort expended.

Moreover, it was agreed that both the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor should send missions to Moscow to explore whether Russia would be willing to join the alliance. As with the extraction of concessions from Louis, there were no illusions that Russian entry as a third participant would be an easy thing to secure, particularly given the instability that had wracked that country following the premature death of Tsar Feodor III in May 1682.²⁴ Nevertheless, the potential benefits were great, and it was hoped that even if direct Russian participation proved to be beyond reach, whoever was currently exercising power there might at least be persuaded to order the Zaporozhian and Don Cossacks which were subject to Russian influence to make an incursion into Crimea, which would serve in turn to pin down the sultan's Tatar vassals.

In order to facilitate the desired offensive Imperial campaign in Upper Hungary in the coming year, and to remove the threat which was currently posed to the southern borders of the *Rzeczpospolita*, every effort should be made to detach the Hungarian rebels from their present attachment to the Ottomans and to encourage them to return to obedience to the emperor, however difficult a

²⁴ For an account of the various crises which the Tsardom of Russia experienced at this time, see: Paul Bushkovitch, *Peter the Great: The Struggle for Power, 1671-1725* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), pp. 125-35.

rapprochement might appear. To this end, Sobieski offered his own services as a mediator between Leopold and Thököly. Meanwhile, feelers should be extended towards the Christian princes of Transylvania, Moldavia and Wallachia, held in vassalage by the sultan, to see if they could be persuaded to withdraw from their allegiance to him and lend their support to Christendom.

The possibility of a wider unified Catholic enterprise was also envisaged, although little more than a sentence was devoted to it, in the form of the suggestion that the Catholic maritime powers of the Mediterranean – the Papacy, Spain, Venice, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Knights of Malta – should be encouraged to provide a joint naval diversion. It was hoped – against hope – that France might also be persuaded to participate in this diversion. On the other hand, the involvement of Protestant powers was envisaged only where existing pacts and promises of assistance might be leveraged to oblige these parties into action. With eyes cast even further afield, it was proposed that letters should be written to the Safavid Shah of Persia, in the hope that a diversionary attack might be procured along the eastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire.

Meanwhile, the pope was prompted to give consideration to the provision of direct subsidies, as well as to the imposition of the *decime* throughout Italy, including the Spanish possessions of the Kingdom of Naples and Duchy of Milan, and that the proceeds would be granted entirely to the *Rzeczpospolita*. Papal assistance would also be required in extracting long-standing promises of financial assistance from other Catholic states.

Finally, both the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor would agree not to make a separate peace with the sultan without the consent of the other party, and, in order to ensure the firm observation of everything which would be agreed between them, there would be an exchange of oaths, in some as yet unspecified form, between the two rulers and the pope. Sobieski declared that he was personally willing to see an alliance formed on these terms and committed himself to make every effort to dispose the *Rzeczpospolita* to favour such a proposal during the forthcoming *sejm*.²⁵

²⁵ 'Ioannes III, rex Poloniae, foederis a Polonis cum imperatore faciendi forma' (ANP V, A. 8, pp. 374-7), p. 377. The part of the draft agreement discussing these oaths, the precise

The terms of the draft agreement were sent with all haste to Vienna for the emperor's approval, whilst Pallavicini, as the papal representative in the *Rzeczpospolita*, was also provided with a copy, along with the king's instruction to inform the pope of his willingness to commit on these terms. The nuncio was not, it is fair to say, without some initial concerns upon reading the document. Distressed in particular by the clauses considering the possibility of international action, he described the project as 'vast, grand and therefore extremely difficult to put into execution'.²⁶ The king's chosen messenger, the Bishop of Łuck, Stanisław Jan Witwicki, assured him that Sobieski was willing to make the alliance with the emperor alone, even if others could not be induced to participate, and emphasised that whilst the king desired that the broader international cooperation envisaged in the text of the draft agreement should be sought, he did not intend this as a precondition which might impede the execution of the alliance with the emperor if it could not be achieved. The nuncio, however, had been made wary by the failures of previous negotiations, and was not to be swiftly disabused of his concerns in this matter. In his next report, he would express his fears in more detail:

The larger and grander [the project for an alliance] is, the more it brings me suspicion. As I have written on other occasions, I doubt the sincerity of such propositions; the king seeming to me alien to the travails of war, and being moreover a great lover of glory, I fear that this appears to him to be maintained by the proposing [alone] of magnificent things, and that he is persuaded to make the world believe that he is always ready, and that the failure comes from others.²⁷

formulation of which would be the subject of much discussion in the forthcoming *sejm*, reads:

Garantiam Summus Pontifex aliique christiani principes ad hoc foedus requisiti suscipere et praestare poterunt, quod ipsum utriusque principis iuramento firmandum esset.

²⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 16 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1551, pp. 156-7), p. 157.
è vasto, grande e per ciò difficultosissimo a porsi in esecuzione.

²⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1567, pp. 171-2), p. 172.
quanto è più spazioso e grande tanto più mi reca sospetto. Come ho scritto altre volte, io dubito della sincerità di simili proposizioni, parendomi il Re alieno da travagli della guerra, et essendo per altro amatore grande della gloria, temo che le paia di mantenersela col proporre cose magnifiche, e che si persuada di far credere al mondo che lui è sempre pronto, e che il mancamento viene da altri.

Pallavicini's concerns were not limited merely to the sincerity of the king's intentions. He also feared that the proposal would fall at the first hurdle of securing the emperor's approval. Without full awareness of Zierowsky's instructions, he was still operating under the assumption that the emperor would consent only to a purely defensive alliance.²⁸ Moreover, he viewed the agreed financial terms as too heavily tilted in favour of the *Rzeczpospolita* for the emperor to accept, believing that the resident had given up too much by agreeing to the demands which Sobieski and Gniński had made during the negotiations regarding the receipt of the entirety of the *decime*.²⁹

Overhanging all these other concerns, however, was the need – as we have implied and as Sobieski himself made explicit in the text of the draft agreement – to conduct a more comprehensive set of negotiations with representatives of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the course of the *sejm*, which was due to meet during the coming winter. As we have observed, following the collapse of the 1681 *Sejm* and the expiry of the 1679 *skrypt do archiwum*, Sobieski no longer possessed the delegated right to negotiate alliances on behalf of the *sejm*. There could be no question of concluding the alliance without that assembly, nor even of simply presenting it with these pre-agreed terms, with the expectation that these would be given the seal of approval. Proposals of this nature would be perilous at any time; the *szlachta* could be expected to respond with vigour if it perceived that the king intended to violate its liberty by taking such an important decision without the involvement of the entire *Rzeczpospolita*. Writing to Rome, Pallavicini would call to mind the poignant example of Władysław IV – apparently still remembered widely within the *Rzeczpospolita* – who had made substantial preparations to wage war against the Ottomans in the mid-1640s in advance of informing the *sejm*. When Władysław eventually exposed his intentions, so Pallavicini recounted, the *sejm* had refused its consent and forced him to disarm

²⁸ Pallavicini's concerns upon this particular point only appear to have been assuaged towards the middle of October, after the receipt of assurances from Buonvisi that the emperor was willing in principle to agree an offensive alliance: Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 5 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1596, pp. 196-9).

²⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1567, pp. 171-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1572, pp. 176-8). These concerns would be echoed in Rome, where it was feared that Sobieski's demands for favourable financial terms were merely part of a ploy to secure new financial concessions from Louis XIV. Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 24 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1634, pp. 238-9).

and remain idle, simply on the basis that these preparations had been made without its knowledge, even though the value and worthiness of what Władysław had desired to undertake was fully recognised.³⁰ Sobieski had, of course, skirted dangerously close to the edge himself whilst pursuing his Baltic policy during the late 1670s, and his actions had come close to costing him his throne as a result.

At the present time, however, any attempt on the part of the king to bypass the *sejm* and make a firm commitment to an alliance against the Ottomans solely on the strength of his royal will would have been not only politically foolhardy, but pointless anyway. The dissipating strength of the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* currently made meaningful military action impossible. Even if the armies had been diligently maintained at their most recent establishment strength of 16,000 men, this number would be insufficient to meet the demands of an Imperial alliance. However, the lack of stable funding since the breaking of the 1681 *Sejm* had led to widespread desertion. Without the agreement of new funding measures in the *sejm*, the king had no ability to implement the augmentations to the army which would be necessary. There was no ready sum of public money available which was sufficient to meet the many deficiencies, whilst the *Rzeczpospolita's* lack of credit with the international banking community meant that there was no hope of meeting the needs of the army through borrowing. Although the *sejm* had been the graveyard of previous attempts to commit the *Rzeczpospolita* to action against the Ottomans, ultimately there could be no question of circumventing it.³¹

In the interim though, with the opening of the *sejm* still several months away, there were two very good reasons for both Sobieski and Zierowsky to keep the fruits of their negotiation a secret. The first was that in order to avoid the charge that the king had violated the liberty of the *szlachta* by acting without the knowledge of the *Rzeczpospolita*, it was important that any alliance proposal, if one might be forthcoming, should be perceived by the *szlachta* as having originated from the emperor alone. The second was that there was always the concern that France – as it had in 1681 – would foster opposition within the *Rzeczpospolita* to a proposed Ottoman war, particularly once it became clear that the intention was to fight such a war in alliance with the emperor. The longer that

³⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1600, pp. 201-3).

³¹ Ibid.

this intention could remain successfully concealed from French detection, the less time Louis and his ambassador would have to coordinate the preparation of effective opposition in the *sejm*.

As yet, Vitry had been able to perceive nothing of what had been discussed and agreed. During the period of secret negotiations between Sobieski and Zierowsky – the second half of August and early days of September – his focus had been drawn elsewhere by the efforts of the owner of the town of Niemirów, Wiktorzyn Stadnicki, *Kasztelan* of Przemyśl, to expel the French agent du Vernay-Boucault from his property, where the latter had been residing since the spring. This issue had first arisen in mid-August, with Stadnicki having apparently been prompted to demand the departure of du Vernay-Boucault as a result of the indignation felt by the local *szlachta* towards the latter's activities in Hungary. The French agent had responded to this ultimatum by asserting that the greatness of his master, and, if necessary, his own sword, would sustain him in that place. Stadnicki's demand drew protestations from Vitry over the dining table at court, although Sobieski would give these short shrift, observing wryly that du Vernay-Boucault and his people remained at Niemirów solely to stir up the affairs of both Hungary and his own realm, and that as he himself did not seek to disturb anyone else's affairs, he wished that he might be treated with the same courtesy. When Vitry responded that such an accusation could not be proven, the king jestingly proposed a bet of 30,000 *livres* on the matter, bringing the conversation to a swift close.³²

By the beginning of September, however, the affair had turned violent, with the *kasztelan* ordering the assault of du Vernay-Boucault's people in the streets of Niemirów. After further complaints from Vitry, the king would eventually intercede, ordering Stadnicki to halt his persecution and to present Vitry with an apology in person. Although he was responsible for this eventual reconciliation, there is circumstantial evidence, if nothing more concrete, to suggest that Sobieski had actually orchestrated Stadnicki's actions; a distracted Vitry would, after all, be less able to penetrate the secret negotiations taking place at court. The timing and duration of this affair, which maps perfectly onto the period of negotiations between Sobieski and Zierowsky, is itself suspicious. Moreover, these events should also be viewed in light of a statement made by Sobieski several

³² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1533, pp. 140-1).

months prior in May, in which he had asserted that he would not be held responsible for any misfortune which befell du Vernay-Boucault if he chose to remain at Niemirów against his royal wishes. Pallavicini, upon hearing of the king's words, had been under no illusion that an attack of precisely the same nature as Stadnicki's was the likely outcome if du Vernay-Boucault continued to refuse to depart, and that the person responsible for carrying it out would be sure to have acted with the tacit approval and protection of the king.³³

On the infrequent occasions that Vitry found himself in the presence of the Polish monarch in the period during and after the latter's negotiations with Zierowsky, the king was careful to keep him in the dark about his designs for an alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor by repeatedly emphasising his frustration with, and even contempt for, the lack of Imperial activity against the rebels in Upper Hungary. Through these exhibitions, which Vitry was all the more willing to deem genuine since they seemed so advantageous to the furtherance of French interests, Sobieski was able to delude him into believing that black was, in fact, white. Although the ambassador was aware of Zierowsky's efforts to advance what he considered his 'imaginary projects', he was dismissive of the resident's chances of success; his reports to Louis from around this time would repeatedly emphasise his confidence that Sobieski had no interest in allying with the emperor.³⁴

This did not mean, however, that Vitry found the king any more receptive to his ongoing attempts to persuade him that supporting the activities of the Hungarian rebels would be in the best interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Vitry had recently been equipped with new instructions by Louis XIV; the French monarch was now willing to offer Sobieski an annual pension of 100,000 *livres*, and had slightly softened his stance on the matter of the elevation of the Marquis d'Arquien – the

³³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1506; pp. 114-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 August 1682 (ANP V, N. 1507, pp. 116-7); Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 September 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 261-3); 'Wiktoryn Stadnicki', in *PSB*, XLI, p. 439. Cf. Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 13 May 1682 (ANP IV, N. 1289, pp. 291-2) for Pallavicini's earlier observation.

³⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, Radymno, Radymno and Stryj, 28 August, 18 September, 1 October and 5 November (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 259-60, 265-6, 267-8 and 275-6); The ambassador would remain in denial upon this point as late as December, when the arrival of Louis' instructions of 12 November made it abundantly clear to him that Sobieski's intention to form a Polish-Imperial alliance should no longer be questioned.

previous obstructions which allowed Louis to delay indefinitely were removed, but replaced with the caveat that the elevation would take place in a year's time to ensure Sobieski's compliance with his terms – in return for Sobieski permitting the resumption of French communication with the Hungarian rebels.³⁵ In view of the support which Thököly and his forces were already receiving from the Ottomans however, the prospects of persuading Sobieski to reverse course on the subject of Upper Hungary appeared so poor that Vitry was hesitant even to put Louis' new concessions forward for the Polish monarch's consideration. On the one occasion he mustered the confidence to do so, around the same time that Sobieski was finalising his negotiations with the Imperial Resident in early September, Sobieski simply found an excuse to evade the proposed conference. Over the next several weeks, the king would render himself virtually inaccessible to the French ambassador. Once his negotiations with Zierowsky were concluded, the king immediately moved the court from Jaworów to the queen's newly built property at Wysocko, which was so small that the French ambassador was obliged to reside a few miles distant at Radymno.³⁶

As that month lengthened, the bad news continued arriving from Upper Hungary. The garrison of the fortress at Fülek (now Fil'akovo, Slovakia) had mutinied against its commander after a siege of several weeks, surrendering to the combined forces of Thököly, the Pasha of Budin, and Apafi on 10 September.³⁷ A week following the fall of Fülek, the pasha presented Thököly with the *ahidnâme* (capitulation) drawn up by the sultan, formalising Mehmed's protection of the Hungarian rebels and Thököly's status as vassal ruler of Upper Hungary.³⁸

³⁵ Louis' new instructions, sent on 16 July (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 252-4), were dispatched in response to Vitry's report of 12 June (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 223-4), which had detailed the ambassador's conversation with the royal secretary, Abbot Załuski, in which Załuski had informed him of the closure of the pass through Stryj and Skole to French traffic.

³⁶ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 7 September 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 261-3).

³⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1570, p. 175); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1572, pp. 176-8). See also ANP V, p. 51, n. 2.

³⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 30 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1582, pp. 183-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 23 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1584, p. 188). Whilst it was known that the *ahidnâme* had been given at this stage, there appears to have been some initial uncertainty at Sobieski's court as to whether Thököly was to rule Upper Hungary, Transylvania or both. Any confusion had, however, been resolved by the following week. See Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7).

Sobieski observed the actions of the pasha with particular concern. The Ottoman commander had been reticent to personally accept the surrender of those places which the combined anti-Habsburg forces had captured; the citizens at Kassa had been instructed to deliver their instruments of surrender to Thököly as their new lord and conqueror. The king surmised that the Ottoman intention was to lull the Imperial court into believing that their actions did not constitute a breach of the Truce of Vasvár, and thus the onset of a new Ottoman war, since Ottoman forces had acted merely as auxiliaries, giving aid to the oppressed Hungarian rebels. If this proved successful, Ottoman forces would be sure to repeat the process the following year, assisting Thököly in pushing the borders of his new principality ever further westward.³⁹ Until he received word from Vienna, indicating the emperor's approval of the terms which his resident had negotiated and his intention to propose an alliance on this basis to the forthcoming *sejm*, Sobieski could not be certain that the pasha's actions would fail to achieve the anticipated effect.⁴⁰

The knowledge that the Ottomans had been diligent in ensuring the destruction of the captured Imperial fortifications in the new Hungarian principality only served to exacerbate the king's concerns about the situation. If it was deemed necessary, these acquisitions by proxy, made on behalf of the sultan's new Hungarian vassal, could be swiftly transformed into tangible ones. The threat which such an outcome would pose to the largely unfortified southern border of the *Rzeczpospolita* was unmistakable.⁴¹

Moreover, there were indications that the Ottomans intended to escalate their activity along the existing border with the *Rzeczpospolita* in Podole during the coming year. The king received a fresh report from Proski during the last days of September, informing him that the Ottomans intended to augment the fortifications at Kamieniec, and to push the Tatar colonies currently in the vicinity of Humań (now Uman, Ukraine) towards that place, to strengthen its defences

³⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7).

⁴⁰ Sobieski's fears drove at the truth. Around the same time the king was expressing these concerns during the final days of September, Buonvisi wrote to Pallavicini that the sole reason for hesitating in giving an affirmative answer to the alliance proposal was the illusion cherished at the Imperial court that war with the Ottomans might still be avoided. Vienna, 28 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1579, pp. 181-2).

⁴¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7).

and to turn the border regions of the *Rzeczpospolita* as far as Lwów into a desert.⁴² Meanwhile the Ottomans were already beginning to encroach upon the frontier further east in Ukraine, the delimitation of which had not yet been carried out, taking possession of and rebuilding various places which had been left ruined since Żurawno, notably including a settlement in the vicinity of Biała Cerkiew (now Bila Tserkva, Ukraine) which by the text of that treaty should belong to the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁴³

Most concerning of all, however, was Proski's report that the 'Banner of Muhammad' had been affixed to a staff and placed before the Gate of Felicity of the Topkapı Palace in Constantinople. This banner, which the sultan would customarily entrust to his chosen commander prior to their departure on campaign, was the clearest indication yet that the Ottomans were prepared to campaign openly and in full force during the forthcoming year. Moreover, grand military preparations were underway, and the sultan had made known his intention to spend the winter at Adrianople (now Edirne, Turkey). Proski, for his part, had been informed that he would be obliged to accompany the Ottoman court.⁴⁴

The widening breach with France

Vitry was finally able to obtain another audience with Sobieski in late September, where he informed the Polish monarch of the latest step which his master had taken in an effort to repair their relationship. The Comte de Guilleragues, Louis' ambassador at the Porte, had declared to the Grand Vizir that if Ottoman arms were turned against the *Rzeczpospolita*, France would provide it with whatever military assistance it needed to resist them. Sobieski responded to this news with courtesy, asking Vitry to pass on his thanks to Louis for the consideration which he showed for the interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*. The Polish monarch was not,

⁴² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 30 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1582, pp. 183-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 30 September 1682 (ANP V, N. 1584, p. 188).

⁴³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7).

⁴⁴ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7); cf. Rhoads Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800* (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 218, where this banner is instead identified as being a royal standard.

however, to be swayed from his pursuit of an Imperial alliance. When Vitry implied that as a *quid pro quo* for such gestures, Sobieski should remember his earlier commitment never to form bonds with Louis' enemies, the Polish monarch would once again respond evasively. Whilst he would never make commitments detrimental to Louis' interests, Louis must surely understand that the present state of the *Rzeczpospolita*, which would be unable to defend itself in the event of an Ottoman attack without substantial foreign aid, obliged him to maintain diplomatic channels with all the princes of Christendom, including the pope and the emperor.⁴⁵

As far as Sobieski was concerned, Louis' offer of assistance, scant as it remained in concrete details, could not compete with an Imperial alliance under the terms negotiated with Zierowsky in terms of the level of security which each would offer. The *Rzeczpospolita* would require prompt military assistance in the event of an Ottoman invasion, and France was half a continent away; if a French intervention was to be effective, it would need to have been planned in detail, well in advance. Yet Vitry, in reporting the declaration made by Guilleragues, remained every bit as unable to provide the Polish monarch with a coherent and comprehensive proposal for how his master intended to come to the assistance of the *Rzeczpospolita* as he had been on his arrival there almost two years prior. In light of the disturbing reports which Sobieski was receiving from Constantinople and Upper Hungary, he was understandably unwilling to stake the security of his country upon a nebulous promise of assistance from Louis, even one which the French monarch had caused to be made publicly at the Porte.

It was around this same time, during the waning days of September, that the permission which Sobieski had granted to Zierowsky at the beginning of August, allowing him to intercept du Vernay-Boucault's communications with the Hungarian rebels, suddenly bore fruit. The Imperial resident orchestrated the successful hijack of a pair of Hungarian couriers in the vicinity of Niemirów who had been returning from du Vernay-Boucault to Thököly, despoiling them of the packets and money which they carried. Finding that they carried an enciphered

⁴⁵ Vitry to Louis XIV, Radymno, 1 October 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 267-8).

letter from the French agent to the rebel leader, the resident worked to break the cipher over the course of the following week.⁴⁶

With Vitry now busily spreading rumours at court that Alberto Caprara, the Imperial ambassador to the Porte, was seeking to shift the entire Ottoman military machine from Hungary towards the *Rzeczpospolita*, Zierowsky prepared a measure of revenge.⁴⁷ When the king arrived back at Jaworów on 5 October, following a stay at Stryj, the resident sought and obtained a private audience with him that same day, presenting him with a petition which detailed, at some length, the circumstances of the interception and the contents of du Vernay-Boucault's letter, and ended with a request that the king should now expel the French agent from the *Rzeczpospolita*, in the interests of Christendom and of his friendship with the emperor.⁴⁸

Up to this point, Sobieski had sought to handle Imperial pressure for his intervention in the matter of the ongoing presence of the French agent quietly, by dispatching a member of his inner circle – either a minister of state or a royal secretary – to remonstrate with the French ambassador in private, following up with a personal audience if necessary. Now, however, faced with overwhelming evidence that at the very least, du Vernay-Boucault was continuing to flaunt his ban upon communication with Thököly and his rebels, and that in all probability he was also continuing to support them financially, and with his own concerns growing ever stronger that such activities were imperilling not only Imperial Hungary but even the *Rzeczpospolita* itself, the king now decided to make the matter public.

He would seize the opportunity presented by the arrival of Vitry at court that same day. Blissfully unaware of the contents of king's conversation with Zierowsky, the French ambassador had come to request an audience on behalf of du Vernay-Boucault. The French agent, perhaps operating under the illusion that the king's intercession on his behalf in the Stadnicki affair was an indication that

⁴⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7); du Vernay-Boucault to Thököly, Niemirów(?), (after) 7 September 1682 (ANP V, A. 7, pp. 373-4).

⁴⁷ Konarski, p. 123; Talenti to Barberini, Jaworów, 6 October 1682 (*Talenti*, pp. 150-2)

⁴⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 14 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1614, pp. 219-20); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 14 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1615, pp. 220-1). Zierowsky's memorial of 5 October can be found in full as ANP V, A. 11, pp. 385-8.

his stance forbidding French communications with the Hungarian rebels had weakened, now wished to seek the king's justice for the violence which had been done to the courier of Thököly, and for the theft of his own package. The king informed the French ambassador that he would willingly favour his colleague with an audience the following day.

When du Vernay-Boucault arrived at Jaworów for his private audience on the evening of 6 October, he waited for some time in the king's antechamber, where he noted that the Imperial Resident entered and departed the royal apartments several times, before he was eventually informed that the king desired Vitry's presence as well as his own. Once the ambassador arrived at court, the two Frenchmen were brought not into the king's private study, as they had expected, but into a large chamber, where they found that the entire court had been assembled. The Imperial Resident then entered the chamber, forcing his way through the gathered crowd until he reached Sobieski. After addressing the king formally, the resident then repeated essentially the same message which he had conveyed to him in private the day before, now appropriately dramatised for the benefit of the assembled audience. He passionately decried the crimes which du Vernay-Boucault had committed in supporting the Hungarian rebels, saying to the king that to permit the continuation of such communications – so prejudicial to Christendom and to his master, the emperor – would be a violation of the long-standing pacts between the two realms. Upon concluding his discourse, Zierowsky presented the king with a newly-prepared document which concisely summarised both his complaint and request for du Vernay-Boucault's expulsion, along with a copy of the deciphered letter, before retiring, still visibly animated, from the chamber.⁴⁹ Handing the documents to his chief secretary, Abbot Załuski, the king

⁴⁹ This second document can be found as ANP V, A. 12, pp. 388-9. Vitry also obtained a copy of the text, which he forwarded to Louis XIV. This version can be found in *Acta 1680-83*, p. 272. The differences between these two versions are minor. The document itself is perhaps best viewed as an abridgement of the memorial which Zierowsky had given to the king the previous day, now tailored for public consumption. Amongst the details which were stripped out in this document were the details of the hijacking itself. Neither the king nor Zierowsky was incentivised to allow such information to become public knowledge. However obvious it may have been to observers that the resident had orchestrated the hijacking, any acknowledgement that he had been directly involved in the act, rather than merely an implausibly fortuitous benefactor of it, would oblige the king to publicly censure the resident for his actions if he did not wish to tacitly admit his own involvement. Moreover, knowledge of precisely how this hijacking had been conducted could allow du

asked the two Frenchmen if they would permit the reading of these two documents in their presence. With their consent, Załuski read the letters aloud to the assembly, before turning to du Vernay-Boucault for a statement. The French agent boldly responded that he did not have to answer for his actions to anyone but his master, Louis XIV. When the king pressed him upon the evidence presented, stating that it clearly showed that he had held correspondence detrimental to the interests of Christendom, du Vernay-Boucault merely replied that Louis did not employ his ministers for such purposes. The king then brought the audience to a close, telling the two Frenchmen that he would inform them of his resolutions upon the charges levied by the Imperial Resident the following day.

On the morning of 7 October, Załuski brought them the king's decision. He began by declaring his master's chagrin at the public scene made by the Imperial Resident, which was claimed to have been as much of a surprise to His Majesty as it had been to the two Frenchmen. Nevertheless, having been presented with convincing proofs of du Vernay-Boucault's misconduct, he could no longer permit him to remain near his court, and near the border with Hungary. He was willing either to expedite du Vernay-Boucault's onward travel to Transylvania in whatever manner the Frenchman required, since he still bore the character of envoy to that principality, or to permit him to withdraw to Warsaw, where he could await further instructions from Louis. If he rejected either of these offers and instead remained at Niemirów however, the king disavowed responsibility for any further harm which might befall him, implicitly raising the prospect of a resumption of Stadnicki's persecutions. With his activities now a matter of public knowledge, and with the king providing no guarantee of his safety, the French agent now indicated that he was willing to withdraw to Warsaw.⁵⁰

Despite Sobieski's protestations of his ignorance of Zierowsky's intentions, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the two men had carefully orchestrated the events of du Vernay-Boucault's public audience on 6 October. The king's intention was, it appears, to present himself as having taken action against the French agent not because he personally wished to do so, nor out of a desire to thereby

Vernay-Boucault to take measures to better protect any future correspondence he might attempt to hold with the Hungarian rebels.

⁵⁰ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 9 October 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 268-71).

gain favour with the emperor, but because the public scandal caused by the resident's declamations simply left him with no other option. Ultimately, it seems the hope was to bring French assistance to the Hungarian rebels to a halt without creating the perception in the mind of Louis XIV, when word of what had come to pass reached him, that Sobieski himself was now openly hostile to French interests. This same consideration also appears to be reflected in the options he presented to du Vernay-Boucault on 7 October. Both a withdrawal to Warsaw or a move, with the king's full assistance, into Transylvania, represented a de-escalation – at least in terms of appearance, although not in the effect they would have upon du Vernay-Boucault's ability to provide active support to the Hungarian rebels – from the demands which Zierowsky had made the previous day for his expulsion from the *Rzeczpospolita*.

Zierowsky, meanwhile, was almost certainly no unwitting stooge in the king's efforts to give the appearance of treading a moderate course, in the hope of thereby avoiding triggering a complete break with Louis. In fact, he had every incentive to work with the Polish monarch towards this end. Although the interests of his master meant he could not permit any outcome which did not result in the severing of the pipeline of French assistance to the Hungarian rebels and the removal of du Vernay-Boucault from his residence near the border with Upper Hungary, the shared goal of the two men to see an alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor concluded during the forthcoming *sejm* was best served by obtaining such an outcome without obliging Sobieski to compromise his relationship with Louis any more than was absolutely necessary. If Louis were to reach the conclusion that Sobieski no longer had any sympathy for French interests, or, worse still, that he now willingly acted directly against them, the very real possibility existed that the French monarch would instruct Vitry to immediately begin stirring up opposition to his Polish counterpart with the intention of thwarting all of his plans in the *sejm*, even if he had no foreknowledge that an alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor might be amongst them. By working together, with Zierowsky playing the role of firebrand and drawing the enmity of France upon his own shoulders so that Sobieski's judgment against du Vernay-Boucault might appear to have been taken only under sufferance, they might hope to stave off this conclusion and its potentially ruinous consequences for a Polish-Imperial alliance for a little longer. Besides, Zierowsky

was risking little by doing so; French hostility towards the emperor and his representatives was already unrelenting.

In the weeks that followed, Zierowsky would continue his espionage efforts against du Vernay-Boucault, who proved slow in departing for Warsaw despite his commitment to do so. On 17 October, the resident came before Sobieski with a new petition, informing the king that he had intercepted two further couriers, bearing letters from Thököly and from Petér Faygel – now commander of the fortress at Kassa – as well as a courtier of the newly-minted Prince, who was returning from Niemirów. The contents of Faygel's letter made explicit, if there could still be any doubt, that the Hungarian rebels were still looking towards France for financial assistance, and that du Vernay-Boucault was expected to play the central role in facilitating this.⁵¹ Sobieski was unwavering in his stance that the continuation of such activities was detrimental to the interests of the *Rzeczpospolita* and of Christendom. He once again sent Abbot Załuski to remonstrate with Vitry, urging him to press his colleague to depart. After one further visit to Stryj at the start of November, at least ostensibly to take his leave of Sobieski, who had returned there in the interim, du Vernay-Boucault would at last depart towards Warsaw, finally bringing his stay near the border to an end.⁵²

By the middle of October, however, Sobieski was becoming increasingly apprehensive that the emperor had no real desire to ally with the *Rzeczpospolita*. He was still yet to receive any response from Vienna upon the draft agreement which had been forwarded for the emperor's consideration five weeks prior. By way of contrast, when Zierowsky had written to Vienna at the beginning of August, seeking instructions from the emperor on how he should engage with Sobieski's initial display of interest, Leopold's answer had arrived back at Jaworów within a fortnight. Pallavicini's concern, when he heard of the king's agitation, was such that he felt compelled to write to Buonvisi, his counterpart in Vienna, urging him to intercede, and suggesting that if a final answer was not yet possible, some

⁵¹ Petér Faygel, Commander of the Fortress of Kassa, to du Vernay-Boucault, Kassa(?), (before) 13 October 1682 (ANP V, A. 13, pp. 390-1).

⁵² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 28 October and 11 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1640 and N. 1666, pp. 242 and 265-6); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1641, p. 243-4); Vitry to Louis XIV, Stryj, 22 October and 5 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 279).

indication of the likely outcome should at least be given, 'because this silence is not interpreted positively here'.⁵³

The king's growing pessimism regarding this matter would not have been helped by the news he was receiving regarding the latest occurrences in Upper Hungary, where Hungarian rebels had once again used the border regions of the *Rzeczpospolita* to strike against Imperial targets from an unexpected direction. In late September, Petrůczy and his forces had left their quarters in Polish Spisz and marched across northern Upper Hungary towards Silesia, circumventing the Imperial lines by marching through Żywiec – part of the estates of the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski – before sacking and burning the Imperial town of Bielitz (now Bielsko-Biała, Poland) in the early days of October. Unlike in Polish Spisz, little physical damage appears to have been done within the borders of the *Rzeczpospolita*, but the affair was nonetheless a cause of considerable chagrin for Sobieski.⁵⁴ In this matter at least, the Imperial court demonstrated that it was capable of expressing its opinion promptly; only a week after news of the sack had reached Sobieski, Zierowsky had been informed of the displeasure of the Viennese court that the incursion had not been prevented. Pallavicini, for his part, was clear that there was little which Sobieski could have actually done to stop the rebels.⁵⁵ The route through Żywiec into Silesia had, after all, only been exposed to an incursion of this nature by the decision of the Imperial commanders to abandon the mining towns of central Upper Hungary following the fall of Kassa

⁵³ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 21 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1629, pp. 234-5), p. 235.

parché qui [...] non s'interpreta bene questo silentio.

This evidence directly contradicts Barker's assertion that Leopold quickly assented in principle. p. 142.

⁵⁴ The reports which reached Pallavicini simply suggested that no damage was done in the territory of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 14 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1614, pp. 219-20); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 14 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1615, pp. 220-1). On the other hand, Vitry, writing from the court at Stryj, would inform Louis that the Hungarians had attempted to raid a town owned by Wielopolski, but that they had been driven off with casualties. Vitry to Louis XIV, Stryj, 22 October 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 279-80). Meanwhile, the detail that this incursion was led by Petrůczy is provided in a letter of the Crown Grand Treasurer, Jan Andrzej Morsztyn to François de Pas-Feuquières, Comte de Rébénacq, French Ambassador to Brandenburg-Prussia, Warsaw, 19 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7).

⁵⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 28 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1640, p. 242). Sobieski had only received notice of the departure of Petrůczy's force from Spisz on 1 October, only a few days prior to their arrival in Silesia. Talenti to Barberini, Stryj, 1 October 1682 (*Talenti*, pp. 149-50). This clearly left him insufficient time to prepare an intercepting force in the vicinity of Żywiec, several hundred miles west of his present location.

and Fülek and to try instead to hold the line of River Váh over 100 miles to the west.⁵⁶ For Sobieski, still awaiting a response from the emperor upon the draft agreement, the apparent willingness of the Imperial court to scapegoat him for what was ultimately a failure of the Imperial defences must have been a source of deep concern.

It was only a month later, towards the middle of November, that Pallavicini finally received an indication from Buonvisi that the emperor intended to formally invite the *Rzeczpospolita* to form an alliance during the forthcoming *sejm*.⁵⁷ It was only now that the nuncio wrote at length on the subject to Rome, emphasising the necessity of providing the *Rzeczpospolita* with substantial papal subsidies for a period of several years as well as the *decime* from Italy – as envisaged in the draft agreement between the two monarchs – in order to soften any opposition which might arise in that assembly.⁵⁸

The emperor's formal response to the terms drawn up by Sobieski and Zierowsky would also reach the court at Stryj at almost the same time as Buonvisi's response arrived at Warsaw, approximately 10 weeks after Zierowsky had first dispatched the draft agreement to Vienna. Contrary to Sobieski's fears, Leopold accepted the terms of the draft agreement almost in their entirety, with the only significant point of disagreement being over the assignation of the *decime* and other papal subsidies to the *Rzeczpospolita* in their entirety. The emperor intended that these should instead be divided equally between the two contracting parties, an offer which was still generous given that he was required to raise the larger force.⁵⁹

The interminable wait for an answer had severely tested Sobieski's patience however, and the manner in which the campaigning season in Upper Hungary had concluded had stirred his long-standing mistrust of the emperor. In the wake of the fall of Kassa and Fülek, Sobieski had initially believed that the Pasha of Budin and his forces would remain with Thököly until the end of the campaigning

⁵⁶ Barker, p. 139.

⁵⁷ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 2 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1646, p. 247-9).

⁵⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1676, pp. 273-8). Buonvisi had already indicated to his counterpart in Warsaw that he had written to Rome of the need to give serious consideration to providing financial subsidies to the two contracting powers. Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 9 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1662, p. 260-1).

⁵⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 25 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1692, pp. 291-2).

season, in order to deny the Imperial forces any opportunity to recover the territory which had been lost.⁶⁰ In such circumstances, the decision of the Imperial commanders to remain on the defensive along the Váh for the remainder of the year would have at least been justifiable, if not exactly a refutation of the perception that they had hardly fought the most inspiring campaign. In a twist of irony, it was probably the aforementioned letter of Faygel, intercepted by the emperor's own representative Zierowsky, which laid bare the true state of affairs. The pasha had in fact departed for home with the majority of his forces shortly following the capture of Fülek, leaving only a small detachment behind to assist Thököly in harrying the Imperial forces, and leaving the Imperial commanders with a significant numerical superiority for the remainder of the campaign.⁶¹ In light of this new information, the failure of the Imperial commanders to pivot onto the offensive and attempt the recovery of the lost territory must have appeared to Sobieski to be nothing short of negligent. Moreover, in the early part of November, word began reaching him that Thököly had instead been accorded yet another armistice by the emperor. Still without any assent from Vienna at this stage, Sobieski seems to have been left with the impression that Leopold lacked the will to do what was necessary for the recovery of Upper Hungary, and that this armistice with Thököly was an indicator that he intended to give up the struggle and sacrifice the region as the price of a renewal of the peace with the sultan. His concerns appear to have been sufficiently strong that they even led him to the point of questioning his own desire for an alliance.⁶²

The arrival towards the middle of November of Leopold's favourable response to the draft agreement, coming as it did in the wake of these rumours of a new armistice, did not prove capable of prompting an immediate reversal of the doubts which had been growing in the mind of the Polish monarch. Indeed, two aspects of the emperor's reply initially prompted Sobieski to develop even deeper suspicions regarding his motives. As an addendum to the agreed terms, the emperor had inquired whether Sobieski would be willing to provide him with

⁶⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 October 1682 (ANP V, N. 1603, pp. 206-7).

⁶¹ Faygel to du Vernay-Boucault, Košice(?), (before) 13 October 1682 (ANP V, A. 13, pp. 390-1).

⁶² Both our sources who were present at the Polish court at this time agree on this point. Talenti to Barberini, Stryj, 3 and 8 November 1682 (*Talenti*, pp. 153-4 and 154-6). Vitry to Louis XIV, 5 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 275-6).

2,000 Polish troops – to be maintained at Leopold’s expense – who could move to supplement the isolated Imperial garrison of Szatmár, which the emperor could no longer assist directly due to the advance of Thököly’s forces. Sobieski, however, interpreted the emperor’s request as an attempt to deceive the Ottomans into believing that an alliance between the two Christian powers was already in effect, in the hope that the sultan would therefore agree to peace on terms more favourable to the emperor. If this succeeded, the Ottoman forces being mustered on the Danube would almost certainly be turned against the *Rzeczpospolita*, which would have to face the threat alone. With this fear in mind, he refused to grant Leopold’s request.⁶³ Moreover, the king’s fears of being left in the lurch were stoked by the fact that the emperor, having agreed to the armistice with Thököly, had not subsequently extended an invitation to him to mediate between them upon the subject of a lasting settlement, as the draft agreement which Leopold had just agreed to had stipulated. Sobieski summed up his frustrations in a long letter to Pallavicini, expressing in strong terms that ‘if greater fervour for the war is not seen from that side [i.e. Vienna], he will turn his intentions elsewhere’.⁶⁴

Over the course of the next few days, however, the king’s sense of perspective gradually returned. Zierowsky would write to Pallavicini that he had been able to remove some of the shadows from the king’s mind.⁶⁵ This left him better able to see the emperor’s approval of the draft agreement for the major step forwards which it truly was. Previous negotiations had never seen the two rulers agree upon the framework of an alliance. Sobieski’s subsequent actions suggest that whilst his concerns over these details were not necessarily eradicated, they at least receded into the background. In the face of the looming Ottoman threat, an Imperial alliance was undoubtedly in the best interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and it was therefore necessary to act in good faith towards this end, even if the fear lingered that this might not be reciprocated by the emperor.

⁶³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 25 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1692, pp. 291-2).

⁶⁴ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 25 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1698, pp. 304-5), p. 305.
se per cotesta parte non si vedrà maggior fervore alla guerra, volterà altrove le sue intenzioni.

⁶⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 25 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1692, pp. 291-2).

Sejm preparations

In the second half of November, the king moved the court from Stryj to Lwów, where he threw himself into the final stages of preparations for the dispatch of the *uniwersał*, setting the assembly date for the *sejmiki przedsejmowe* (16 December) and the *sejm walny* (27 January), as well as the *legacja*, the royal instructions to the *sejmiki* which would accompany it. Preparation of these documents had been underway since at least the beginning of November, as the responses of the senators to the king's *deliberatoria*, sent on 30 September, gradually trickled back to the court.⁶⁶ Their issuance, however, had been severely delayed by the illness of the Crown Vice-Chancellor, Jan Krzysztof Gniński.⁶⁷

The content of the *legacja* provided the *szlachta* with a summary of recent events beyond the borders, before laying out the principal questions which the king perceived that the *Rzeczpospolita* needed to resolve, in order that the *posłowie* nominated in the *sejmiki przedsejmowy* might be provided with appropriate instructions for the forthcoming *sejm walny*. In keeping with the expected character of this document, the king was very careful to refrain from putting forward his own preferred resolutions to these issues; as ever, it was necessary to avoid being seen to infringe upon the liberty of the *sejm* – as the legislative body of the *Rzeczpospolita* – to take such decisions freely. No mention was made of his desire see the *Rzeczpospolita* form an alliance with the emperor, since it would be necessary for Leopold, not Sobieski, to propose this matter to the *sejm*. Nevertheless, the king did everything possible, in setting the agenda for that assembly, to create the conditions for a proposal from the emperor to receive a positive hearing. He made it as clear as he felt able that he perceived both the preparations of the Ottomans along the Danube and the developing situation in Upper Hungary to pose a serious threat to the security of the *Rzeczpospolita* and

⁶⁶ Kluczycki includes a document which he asserts to be the pre-*sejm deliberatoria*, dated 22 August, in *ARJ*, pp. 1-4. Kołodziej has noted that this attribution is mistaken. Although certainly a royal *deliberatoria*, it was not the pre-*sejm deliberatoria* since it does not contain a proposal regarding the convening of the *sejm*. “*Ostatni*”, p. 16.

⁶⁷ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, pp. 16, 53-4. Vitry would note in two consecutive reports at the turn of November and December that he had been unable to obtain an audience with the king because of the resumption of these preparations. Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 27 November and 4 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 284-6 and 287-90).

indicated that the *posłowie* should come prepared to deliberate a vigorous response to these threats. He recommended that some form of measure should be taken to strengthen the defences of Kraków, indicated his concern that the route which Petróczy had used in his recent raid into Silesia might later be shown to the Crimean Tatars – recently called to arms by the sultan – who could thereby do serious damage within the borders of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and obliquely expressed that his own preference in life was to spend his time bivouacking in tents (i.e. on campaign) rather than languishing in royal palaces. He also expressed the need to remedy the shortfall in the funding of the army, which he asserted had caused the widespread desertions of the previous two years, as well as serious harm to the combat readiness of the Crown artillery.⁶⁸

Whilst Sobieski continued to work diligently despite his concerns to prepare favourable ground for an alliance proposal from the emperor during the forthcoming *sejm*, his initial outburst of frustration regarding Leopold caused considerable concern for Pallavicini, when he read the king's words late in November. Despite the reassurances he had received from Zierowsky, with no ability from his residence in Warsaw to perceive the subsequent flurry of activity which was taking place at the court in Lwów, the nuncio's fears intensified as November faded into December; he convinced himself that the king had no real desire for the Imperial alliance, and that his letter had been little more than an attempt to provide himself with a fig leaf for the inevitable collapse of alliance negotiations.⁶⁹ Pallavicini's growing pessimism in this matter was, in all probability, stoked by the fact that it was only during the intervening days that he had become aware – months after Vitry had informed the Polish monarch – of the declarations which Guilleragues had made at the Porte. This news was, it seems, being disseminated around Warsaw by the leading French partisan Jan Andrzej Morsztyn. Morsztyn had himself only recently been made aware of this news by du Vernay-Boucault – passing through Warsaw on his way to Gdańsk, where Louis had ordered him to reside following his withdrawal from the Hungarian border – leading him to lament in a letter to his frequent correspondent and handler, the

⁶⁸ The *legacja*, mislabelled as the *uniwersał*, can be found in *ARJ*, pp. 5-10. Cf. Kotodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 43-4, 45-6 on the expected content of these two documents.

⁶⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 2 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1705, pp. 308-10); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 2 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1710, pp. 316-7).

French diplomat François de Callières, that ‘Vitry has said nothing of it to me, and yet it is necessary to trumpet this throughout every corner of Poland’.⁷⁰ It would have been only too easy for Pallavicini to conclude that these two things must be connected; that Guilleragues’ declaration of Louis’ willingness to support the *Rzeczpospolita* militarily in the event of an Ottoman invasion had begun to draw Sobieski’s sympathies back towards France; and that negotiations with the emperor would once again prove abortive as a result.⁷¹ Even the arrival of the *legacja* in Warsaw on 3 December did not immediately dissipate the fears which had been growing in the mind of Pallavicini; it would be several weeks at least before the nuncio regained a measure of confidence that the king truly remained committed to the task at hand.⁷² In the interim, he would tend towards perceiving the king’s actions with an unwarranted degree of negativity.

In addition to his fears that Sobieski’s mistrust of the emperor might lead him to withdraw his support for an Imperial alliance, the nuncio was also preoccupied in the early part of December with how that same mistrust might be prevented from arising amongst the senators and *posłowie* of the *Rzeczpospolita* during the approaching *sejm*. Perceiving that there might be a way to ameliorate both concerns simultaneously, he wrote to Buonvisi that it would be beneficial for the emperor to give the *Rzeczpospolita* a guarantee that he would neither discuss nor

⁷⁰ Morsztyn to François de Callières, Warsaw, 28 November 1682 (*Morstina*, pp. 107).

M[onsieur] de Vitry ne m’en dit rien, et cependant il faudrait trompeter par tous les coins de la Pologne

⁷¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 2 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1705, pp. 308-10); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 2 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1710, pp. 316-7). Responding, Buonvisi would draw this connection most explicitly, although as his counterpart had been, he was hesitant to mention Sobieski by name:

I see that the beginning of the cooling amongst the Poles has originated from the threats which they suppose have been made by the Ambassador of France in Constantinople. (Vedo ch’il principio di tepidezza nei Pollacchi ha origine dalle minacce che suppongono essersi fatte dall’Ambasciatore di Francia a Costantinopoli).

Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 14 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1728, pp. 329-31), p. 330.

⁷² Pallavicini to Buonvisi, 9 and 16 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1722 and N. 1734, pp. 324-5 and 338-9). Buonvisi was quicker to regain his confidence in Sobieski than his counterpart in Warsaw. Upon receiving Pallavicini’s précis of the contents of the royal *legacja*, he perceived that the king remained committed to formation of an Imperial alliance in spite of his concerns regarding Leopold, replying that:

This king [...] has demonstrated his good intentions with the points sent to the *sejmiki*. (cotesto Re [...] ha dimostrato la sua buona intenzione con i punti mandati alle dietine).

Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 21 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1737, pp. 342-4), p. 343.

conclude peace with the sultan during the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm*. This would not only indicate the sincerity of the emperor's proposal to all who might doubt it but would also hopefully serve to focus minds upon the need to conclude the alliance negotiations with the haste which the situation demanded, rather than allowing deliberations in the *sejm* to meander in their usual manner, the ultimate aim being to ensure that the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* would enter the field promptly.⁷³

At Lwów, with the *uniwersał* and *legacja* now dispatched, the king began granting public audiences in the final days of November to the representatives of various foreign rulers, including the Imperial Resident and envoys from both the Crimean Khan and Russia.⁷⁴ It was only on 4 December that Vitry was able to obtain a private audience of his own with the king. By this point, Louis had been pressing him for several months upon the need to place his latest offer in front of the Polish monarch. This mandate had been emphasised with even greater vigour in the instructions dispatched since the end of September, when Louis had been made aware – most likely by his ambassador in Vienna, the Marquis de Sébévillle – of rumours that Sobieski had resolved himself to form a defensive alliance with Leopold, and that he had even made a proposition to Vienna urging that this should be concluded before the convening of the *sejm*, with the claim that that assembly would retroactively approve everything he had agreed.⁷⁵

⁷³ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 9 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1722, pp. 324-5).

⁷⁴ During his audience, Zierowsky delivered a new request from the emperor, seeking the Polish monarch's services as a mediator of a permanent solution to the long-standing rancour between himself and Louis XIV. See ANP V, A. 16, pp. 393-4. After considering for several weeks, Sobieski agreed to undertake the mediation in early January, appointing Jan Gniński, the *Wojewoda* of Czernihów, who was already in Paris, as an extraordinary envoy for this purpose. Vitry to Louis XIV, 8 January 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 305); Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 20 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1799, pp. 39-41). Louis subsequently refused the offer of mediation, on the grounds that he, Leopold and the states of the Empire had already resumed negotiations directly. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1954, pp. 232-4).

⁷⁵ Louis first informed Vitry of these rumours in his instructions of 30 September (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 275). They are unlikely to have originated in the *Rzeczpospolita*, given the care taken by Sobieski and Zierowsky to prevent any leak. The letters of Morsztyn to Callières contain no suggestion that negotiations had taken place prior to the middle of December (*Morstina*, pp. 104-9), whilst Vitry remained convinced into the winter of 1682 that no negotiations had taken place. Cf. n. 34. This leaves Vienna, where the same concerns over secrecy were not present, as the most likely source of the rumour, and thus Sébévillle as its most likely conduit, perhaps having received a garbled account of the negotiations conducted by Zierowsky in early September.

Vitry now finally acted upon his master's orders. After attempting to spin the events of recent months in Upper Hungary in the light most favourable to the interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*, he extended Louis' offer of a pension and the elevation of the Marquis d'Arquien, in return for Sobieski agreeing to look favourably upon French assistance to the Hungarian rebels. Sobieski responded by challenging Vitry's interpretation of events in Hungary, pointing out the imminent threat which the Ottomans now posed to Kraków, the multiple instances of damage which the Hungarian rebels had already done within his realm, and how their actions had demonstrated the vulnerability of the southern borderlands of the *Rzeczpospolita* to the "common enemy". He expressed once again his belief that Louis could not find fault with him for refusing to contribute to a war which was clearly so prejudicial to the interests of his own realm.⁷⁶ Vitry would report that in the course of their discussion, the king had mentioned to him that 'he could feel himself impelled by a motive of glory and of conscience to unite himself with the emperor through an offensive league, [and] that he could not believe that [Louis] might find fault with this design'.⁷⁷

Given Sobieski's diligence in recent months in ensuring that no word of his negotiations with Leopold reached the ears of French ambassador – or entered the wider public consciousness – this statement requires some explanation. A perfect understanding of the motivations behind the king's decision to speak in this manner is beyond our reach, given the limitations of the available evidence; Vitry is our only source for this interaction. One interpretation which stands out as particularly plausible, however, is that the king made this statement because he felt he had no other option, either because Vitry had mentioned the aforementioned rumours which had been reaching the ears of his master, or because similar rumours had reached the Polish court and Sobieski's own ears. Confronted with the possibility that Louis had already heard, or was soon to hear, that he was at the point of concluding a defensive league with the emperor, Sobieski could not afford to allow such suspicions to fester. Louis could be expected to respond by giving instructions to Vitry to prepare the strongest

⁷⁶ Vitry to Louis XIV, 4 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 287-90).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 289

il se sentirait poussé par un motif de gloire et de conscience de s'unir avec l'Empereur par une ligue offensive [...] [et] qu'il ne croyoit pas que Vostre Majesté pust blasmer ce dessein.

possible opposition to royal policy in the approaching *sejm*. Moreover, if Vitry chose to amplify the rumours that Sobieski had intended to bypass the *sejm* in concluding an agreement with the emperor, he might yet cause immeasurable harm to the prestige and position of the Polish monarch within the *Rzeczpospolita*. In such circumstances, it would have seemed like the lesser of two evils to give the appearance of being completely candid, admitting a sanitised version of the truth to Vitry in the hope that his royal word might serve as a corrective capable of subtly discrediting the rumours which were circulating.

It is worth emphasising that Sobieski's declaration bears the appearance of having been tailored to portray his dealings with the emperor in the light which Louis – and his own subjects – would find least offensive. His interest in an alliance, as Vitry seems to have understood it, was embryonic at most, perhaps even hypothetical, and certainly betrayed no indication that negotiations had already taken place; it thus served as an implicit refutation of Louis' perception that something had been or was near being concluded. Moreover, Sobieski portrayed himself as interested purely in an offensive alliance against the Ottomans, rather than the offensive-defensive agreement which had been discussed with Zierowsky. There was at least a chance that Louis would find the former advantageous, since it would oblige the emperor to commit himself fully in Hungary, leaving the French monarch with a freer hand to act in Germany. Vitry appears to have taken Sobieski at his word upon this point, responding that he 'saw nothing which might be more praiseworthy than this glorious project of [Your] Majesty'.⁷⁸

As for the offer of a pension, Sobieski explained that despite his strong feelings of obligation towards Louis, money could not persuade him to act in a manner counter to what he believed was necessary. Rather than taking the risk of unnecessarily giving offense to his former benefactor through an outright rejection of his proposals however, Sobieski chose instead to kick the matter into the metaphorical long grass provided once again by the demands of the d'Arquien family; he argued that it was unbecoming of his wife's royal dignity that the elevation of her father should come with conditions attached, and again cited the

⁷⁸ Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 4 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 287-90), p. 289.

je ne voyois rien qui fust plus digne de louange que ce glorieux projet de Sa Majesté.

present estrangement of the Marquise de Béthune from the French court. Vitry failed to perceive these justifications for the pretence which they truly were; the conclusion of his report found him clinging to the vain hope that Sobieski might come around to Louis' proposals after more time for reflection.⁷⁹

Louis, however, had already decided that the time had come to take a new tack in his policy towards Sobieski. In receipt of Vitry's report of the public mortification suffered by du Vernay-Boucault and the judgment which Sobieski had rendered subsequently, as well as new rumours from Sébéville in Vienna that Sobieski had petitioned Leopold to invest Prince Jakub as a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece, he had concluded – despite the best efforts of the Polish monarch to coax him into believing otherwise – that Sobieski had fully cast aside any lingering attachment to France and thrown in his lot with the emperor. Through his instructions of 12 November, which reached Vitry in the week following his failed private audience with Sobieski, Louis ordered his ambassador to begin secretly gathering around him an opposition party, capable of checking all the designs of the Polish monarch in the approaching *sejm*.⁸⁰

Having earned the enmity of his former ally, Charles XI of Sweden (1660-1697), through his *réunion* of the Palatinate of Zweibrücken – the hereditary territory of the Swedish Wittelsbach dynasty, which Charles himself had expected to inherit – and with his *réunions* and military annexations along his borders continuing to escalate tensions with Austria, Spain and the United Provinces, Louis had further strengthened his ties with the Elector of Brandenburg. A new treaty had been signed in January 1682, with Friedrich Wilhelm receiving a further increase to his pension – now 400,000 *livres* – in return for recognising France's recent acquisitions in the Empire.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 289-90.

⁸⁰ Louis XIV to Vitry, Fontainebleau, 12 November 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 291-3). The report in question was that of 9 October. Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 268-71). An offer of the Golden Fleece for Jakub was indeed sent to Warsaw in February 1683 and presented to Sobieski in a private audience. Sobieski, well aware that public knowledge of the offer would create the impression that an imperial alliance was sought for private interests rather than those of the *Rzeczpospolita*, deferred acceptance. Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1827, pp. 74-5).

⁸¹ Kamieński, pp. 224-5; McKay, pp. 244-5; Anthony F. Upton, *Charles XI and Swedish Absolutism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), pp. 94-5.

Louis therefore ordered Vitry to act in concert during the approaching *sejm* with the new envoy of the elector, Lorenz Georg von Krockow – appointed to replace Hoverbeck, who had died in April 1682 – when the envoy should arrive at Warsaw. Louis' intention was that together, Vitry and Krockow should impede any alliance which Sobieski might seek to form with either the emperor or the elector's long-standing rival, Charles XI. In order to support Vitry in his efforts, Louis would subsequently dispatch the funds which the ambassador would require to ensure himself of support, as well as a list of intended recipients.⁸²

The political landscape of the *Rzeczpospolita* at the end of 1682

The arrival of Louis' order for Vitry to shift into active but clandestine opposition to royal policy marks a natural point to include an examination of recent major changes which had occurred in the political landscape of the *Rzeczpospolita*, affecting the leading personnel in both the Crown and the Grand Duchy. These have been left to one side thus far to avoid overburdening an already complex narrative, but provide necessary context for an understanding of certain events which would take place prior to and during the new session of the *sejm* which was to open in January 1683.

The collapse of the 1681 *Sejm* had reinforced to Sobieski the necessity of ensuring the maximum possible support for his preferred policies, foremost amongst which would of course be the alliance with Austria and a new Ottoman war. In the Crown, the death in July 1682 of the Grand *Hetman* and *Kasztelan* of Kraków, Dymitr Wiśniowiecki, presented the king with the opportunity for a reshuffle in some of the senior offices of state, creating a series of vacancies, each of which could be leveraged in the hopes of strengthening the ranks of the royal party. He would focus his efforts on individuals with whom he had a previous working relationship, seeking to ensure himself of their attachment to himself and his interests.

First amongst these was the *Wojewoda* of Ruś, Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski, whom Sobieski had previously appointed as Crown Field *Hetman* in 1676. Following a

⁸² Louis XIV to Vitry, Versailles, 26 November 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 299-301); Memorial for Vitry, Versailles, 24 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 306-9).

period of close cooperation at the beginning of Sobieski's reign, the relationship between the two old military comrades had seen several rocky moments. The first of these had come at the 1677 *Sejm*, where Jabłonowski had revealed Sobieski's clandestine plans for an invasion of Ducal Prussia to a representative of the elector. On this occasion the threats of Sobieski, who was made aware of Jabłonowski's betrayal almost immediately, proved capable of returning the *hetman* to obedience.⁸³ Despite the severity of the trespass, cooperation between the two men was swiftly restored; Jabłonowski actively supported the provision of mercenary assistance to the Hungarian rebels in December of that year as well as its suppression when the king abandoned this policy the following spring, and played a crucial role in thwarting the magnate conspiracy aimed at dethroning Sobieski in the summer of 1678.⁸⁴ A second major breach occurred at the end of 1679, however; Jabłonowski's close cooperation with Maria Kazimiera whilst Sobieski suffered a long and serious period of ill health, combined with the distribution by the *hetman* of a large sum of money amongst the officers of the army, prompted concerns in the mind of the king that Jabłonowski was positioning himself as a competitor to Prince Jakub in a future royal election.⁸⁵ The relationship between the two men remained somewhat distant throughout 1680 and into 1681; although Jabłonowski had taken a moderate stance towards the royal policy of pursuing a new Ottoman war at the aforementioned assembly of the *sejm* deputation held in January-February 1680, and had given it his active support following the events of the delimitation of Podole, he also committed himself to Hoverbeck at the 1681 *Sejm* to prevent any diversion of the army against the territories of the elector.⁸⁶ From the autumn of 1681, however, observers noted a marked improvement in the relationship between the king and *hetman*, along with the resumption of their previous socialising. Upon the death of Wiśniowiecki, Jabłonowski's succession to the senior *butawa* was viewed as inevitable.⁸⁷

⁸³ Wagner, pp. 70-1.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-5.

⁸⁵ Konarski, p. 159; Wagner, pp. 76-7.

⁸⁶ Wagner, pp. 78-9.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

Another royal supporter, Mikołaj Hieronim Sieniawski – currently Crown Court Marshal – was expected to receive the vacant Field *buława*, whilst a competition was brewing over the marshalcy which Sieniawski would vacate. A residual degree of fear regarding Jabłonowski's growing influence, combined with the desire to leverage these appointments in order to extract the maximum possible political advantage, led Sobieski to delay a final declaration until the *sejm*, as well as to resist the desire of the *hetman* to obtain the marshalcy for his son-in-law, Rafał Leszczyński. Nonetheless, sufficient trust had been restored between the two men by the autumn of 1682 that Sobieski had involved Jabłonowski in his highly politically sensitive negotiations with Zierowsky.⁸⁸

A further prominent figure whose support the king made efforts to secure was Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, an influential figure from a leading magnate family, who was Leszczyński's main competitor for the post of Crown Court Marshal. Sobieski and Lubomirski had of course collaborated closely over the provision of mercenary assistance to the rebels in Upper Hungary in 1677-8. In 1681, with his candidacy backed by the king, Lubomirski had obtained the position of *Sejm* Marshal, where he worked with vigour throughout in pursuit of the planned Ottoman war and the alliance with Russia, albeit whilst pledging to the French ambassadors in private to resist the formation of any alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor.⁸⁹ In the autumn of 1681 there was some suggestion of a falling out between Lubomirski and the royal court, particularly the queen.⁹⁰ A year later, however, there were sure signs that he was rising again in royal favour; lacking the funds to compete with Leszczyński and Jabłonowski in a bidding war over the Court marshalcy, he had been granted a *starosty* by the king which would supplement his income.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁸⁹ Kołodziej, in his monograph on the *sejm* in the reign of Jan III, repeatedly highlights Lubomirski's diligent and energetic directorship of the *izba poselska* in 1681. "*Ostatni*", pp. 154-5, 176-7, 230, 445. Lubomirski's efforts to resume the deliberations following the second protest of Przyjemski strongly suggest he played no part in the breaking of the *sejm* by France and Brandenburg. Cf. Konarski, pp. 149-50 on this point, who suggests that Lubomirski had a deleterious effect on the *sejm*.

⁹⁰ Konarski, p. 150; Vitry to Louis XIV, Stryj, 16 October 1681 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 173-4).

⁹¹ Vitry to Louis XIV, Stryj, 15 October 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 278).

Meanwhile, the political scene in Lithuania had recently seen the unexpectedly sudden culmination of a struggle which had been ongoing since the beginning of Sobieski's reign. Upon his accession to the throne in 1674, Sobieski had inherited a situation in the Grand Duchy where control of several important administrative and military offices ensured that political opponents – the Lithuanian Grand *Hetman* and *Wojewoda* of Wilno, Michał Kazimierz Pac, and his cousin the Lithuanian Grand Chancellor, Krzysztof Zygmunt Pac – were sufficiently powerful to operate virtually independently of royal control.

In an attempt to assert his authority in Lithuania, Sobieski began almost immediately to establish and promote a group of royal supporters who would be capable of challenging Pac hegemony there. His efforts focused around two loci: his brother-in-law, the Lithuanian Vice-Chancellor and Field *Hetman*, Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł, and the two eldest of the four Sapieha brothers, the *Wojewoda* of Połock, Kazimierz Jan, and the Lithuanian Court Treasurer, Benedykt Paweł.⁹² In 1676, on the initiative of Sobieski, Benedykt Paweł was able to purchase the post of Lithuanian Grand Treasurer from Hieronim Kryszpin-Kirszensztein. Pursuing balance in his nomination policy between the Sapieha and Radziwiłł families, Sobieski appointed the younger half-brother of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł, Dominik Mikołaj, to the post which Sapieha vacated. This was followed in 1679 with the appointment of a distant Radziwiłł cousin, Stanisław Kazimierz, to the post of Lithuanian Grand Marshal, vacated following the death of Aleksander Hilary Połubiński, who in his final years had been a royal supporter and Sapieha ally.⁹³

The premature and unexpected death of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł in 1680 definitively destabilised the delicate ecosystem which Sobieski had sought to create amongst his supporters in Lithuania, although in truth the process had begun even before this point. The frequent extended absences of Michał Kazimierz from the Grand Duchy on diplomatic missions in the years prior to his death had left the Sapieha as the *de facto* leaders of the royal party there, prompting his supporters to attach themselves more closely with the Sapieha faction. Although Sobieski continued to pursue a policy of balance in the

⁹² Pietrzak, pp. 100, 102, 105; Sawicki, pp. 186, 196.

⁹³ Pietrzak, pp. 108, 111-2; Sawicki, pp. 217, 249-50.

distribution of the vacated offices – Kazimierz Jan Sapieha received the post of Lithuanian Field *Hetman*, whilst Dominik Mikołaj Radziwiłł received that of Lithuanian Vice-Chancellor – the political cohesion of the Radziwiłł family was immeasurably weakened by the death of Michał Kazimierz. Dominik Mikołaj quickly fell into disputation over a part of his half-brother's estate with his widow, the king's sister Katarzyna née Sobieska, even initiating legal proceedings. Stanisław Kazimierz, meanwhile, remained largely politically inactive. Both men generally followed the lead provided by the Sapieha family.⁹⁴ The lack of dynamic leadership within the Radziwiłł family following the death of his brother-in-law led Sobieski to place increasing reliance upon Kazimierz Jan and Benedykt Paweł Sapieha as counterweights to Pac influence. In the course of 1681, he lent his support to the successful efforts of Kazimierz Jan to have himself elected by the local *szlachta* as *Starosta* of Żmudź, breaking the dominance of the Pac family in what had, for the past 15 years, been the strongest bastion of their influence in the Grand Duchy.⁹⁵

The foundations upon which Pac hegemony had been built had already begun to crumble in the previous winter, when Krzysztof Zygmunt had suffered an incapacitating illness from which he would never fully recover, obliging his almost complete withdrawal from public life until his death in 1684.⁹⁶ In April 1682, however, the struggle between the Pac and Sapieha families for dominance in Lithuania was abruptly terminated as a result of the sudden death of Michał Kazimierz Pac.⁹⁷ In theory, the death of his long-standing political antagonist would provide Sobieski with the same opportunity – through the disposal of Pac's now-vacant *buława* and *województwo* – to strengthen the ranks of his supporters in the Grand Duchy as the near-contemporaneous death of Wiśniowiecki would offer him in the Crown. In practice, however, it left him facing a serious dilemma. As Field *Hetman*, Kazimierz Jan Sapieha was the natural successor to the Grand *buława*, whilst the *województwo* of Wilno was customarily assigned to the holder of that office.⁹⁸ If Sobieski were to appoint him to those offices, however, it would

⁹⁴ Pietrzak, pp. 109-10, 114, 116; Sawicki, pp. 180, 184-7, 251.

⁹⁵ Bobiatyński, pp. 397, 409; Sawicki, pp. 182-3, 251.

⁹⁶ Bobiatyński, pp. 398-9.

⁹⁷ Bobiatyński, pp. 411-3; Sawicki, p. 211.

⁹⁸ Sawicki, p. 191.

leave the Sapieha family in position which was arguably stronger than that of the Pac family had been upon his accession, since Kazimierz Jan and Benedykt Paweł would each hold one of the two most influential offices in Lithuania – Grand *Hetman* and Grand Treasurer – allowing them to exert control over both state finances and the army.⁹⁹ Moreover, having reached the pinnacle of the political hierarchy in Lithuania, and with royal service able to provide no further outlet for their ambitions beyond the pursuit of high office for their younger siblings, there would be little except past gratitude to keep them tied to Sobieski and his interests. The fact that the Sapieha family had already been left – by some margin – as the largest landowners in the Grand Duchy following the departures of recent years from the political chessboard only added to the king’s dilemma. As Sawicki has noted, even in 1690, after the king had spent the better part of a decade augmenting the estates of other Lithuanian magnate families so that they could compete with the Sapieha family for influence, the property owned by Kazimierz Jan and Benedykt Paweł exceeded those of any other family by an order of magnitude. The unparalleled opportunities for patronage and advancement within the Grand Duchy which they could now offer had already assisted them in adding a sizeable proportion of the former adherents of both Połubiński and Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł to the ranks of their supporters, a process which would be repeated on an even greater scale by their swift absorption – despite their previous bitter opposition – of the political apparatus of the Pac family virtually wholesale after 1682.¹⁰⁰

Although Sobieski was well aware of the risks which further promoting the interests of the Sapieha family could pose to his authority in Lithuania, should they decide to detach their interests from his, in truth, the timing of Pac’s death, so soon after that of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł, left him with little room for manoeuvre, and no realistic possibility of bypassing Kazimierz Jan’s candidacy. The elder generation of the Radziwiłł family was disfavoured, whilst Sobieski’s nephews Jerzy Józef and Karol Stanisław – the children of Michał Kazimierz and his sister Katarzyna – were too young to fill the gap. Several other potential appointees were tainted by their previous attachment to the Pac family. Even if

⁹⁹ Sawicki, pp. 217-8.

¹⁰⁰ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, p. 398; Sawicki, pp. 196-200, 215-7, 252.

Sobieski were to bypass Kazimierz Jan and appoint another of his supporters, not only would he be certain to earn himself the enmity of the Sapieha family, but whoever he chose as his new appointee would possess insufficient property and political sway to contest their influence in the Grand Duchy in the event of an open breach. As a result, Kazimierz Jan was granted the *województwo* of Wilno in May 1682. Although the king promised him the grand *buława* at the same time, he was still holding the confirmation itself in suspense at the end of 1682, in the hope, perhaps, of extracting the maximum political benefit, or even that a plausible alternative might somehow present itself.¹⁰¹

There was, of course, an additional layer to this snapshot of the political scene in the *Rzeczpospolita*, provided by the needs of foreign powers such as France, Austria and Brandenburg-Prussia to assure themselves of adherents who could protect their interests in the *sejm*. Political actors of all alignments and stations, up to and including the king himself, were willing to take money from foreign powers to advocate for or oppose certain policies, as and when these aligned with or ran counter to their own interests. At the end of 1682, however, the parties of all three of these foreign powers required varying degrees of replenishment.

The party of France was perhaps most in need of strengthening, given that it would soon be required to contest royal policy in the *sejm*. Morsztyn remained at its heart; aside from a sense of party solidarity, he remained bound to French interests by the assets which he held in France, as well as the enormous debts which the French embassy had incurred towards him, for which he was awaiting reimbursement from Louis; by 1682, these totalled 600,000 *livres*.¹⁰² Writing to Callières in mid-December, before word of Louis' decisive shift in policy reached him, Morsztyn commented scathingly upon Vitry's inactivity and complained at the lack of support received from France, ending his letter with the words: 'I will no longer play the fool without merit and without money'.¹⁰³ In a letter of the following day to Rébénacq, the French ambassador in Berlin, he was marginally more sympathetic towards Vitry's lack of action, writing that: 'Our party here is very weak and dispirited, as it is neglected by France. We do not even know

¹⁰¹ Pietrzak, p. 116; Sawicki, pp. 212-5.

¹⁰² Konarski, pp. 161-2.

¹⁰³ Morsztyn to Callières, Warsaw, 18 December 1682 (*Morstina*, pp. 109).

je ne ferai plus le fol sans mérite et sans argent

whether there is an ambassador of France here, but that is certainly not his fault'. He even contemplated the necessity of engaging the French supporters in the *Rzeczpospolita* with the elector, in order to prevent them from sliding into support for the interests of the emperor.¹⁰⁴

The weakness which Morsztyn perceived in the French party stemmed, at least in part, from the efforts of the royal court to strengthen the ranks of its own supporters. It is likely no coincidence that the two men who had received the largest French pensions in the previous *sejm* – Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski and Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski – had been amongst the primary recipients of royal favour. Although both men had continued to profess their attachment to the interests of Louis XIV to both Vitry and Morsztyn in the summer and autumn of 1682, the ambassador would note his suspicions at their growing closeness with the royal court – and, in the case of Lubomirski, with Zierowsky – in his reports to France.¹⁰⁵ As a result, Louis' instructions of 26 November, which informed Vitry of the dispatch of 40,000 *livres* with which to build a party in the forthcoming *sejm*, contained the caveat that the pensions earmarked for Jabłonowski and Lubomirski, 12,000 *livres* each, should be disbursed only if the ambassador could reassure himself of their loyalty. If not, he was permitted to use the money to win new supporters. Several others to whom Vitry had previously proposed paying pensions, including Sieniawski, who had received a large French pension during the 1681 *Sejm*, were now dismissed by the French monarch as being attached to the interests of Sobieski above those of France. Whilst it might have served Louis' interests to have such men on his payroll in order to assist Sobieski in making the right decisions for as long as the Polish monarch seemed generally favourable to French interests, they possessed little value to France now that he appeared set upon taking a hostile stance.¹⁰⁶ The sole recipient of a large French pension in

¹⁰⁴ Konarski, pp. 134-5; Morsztyn to Rébénacq, Warsaw, 19 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7), p. 296.

Notre parti ici est autant faible et abattu qu'il est négligé en France. On ne sait pas même s'il y a ici un ambassadeur de France, mais ce n'est pas assurément sa faute.

¹⁰⁵ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, Jaworów, Stryj and Lwów, 10 July, 7 August, 15 October and 20 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 235-6, 249-52, 278 and 281-2); Vitry to Beauvais, Stryj, 22 October 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 278-9); Morsztyn to Croissy(?), Warsaw, 29 August 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 260).

¹⁰⁶ Louis XIV to Vitry, Versailles, 26 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 299-301). Louis was expressly responding here to the ambassador's proposed distributions of 15 May 1682.

1681 who seemed to Louis to have remained firm in his attachment to France was Grzymułtowski, who was described in a 24 November document prepared for Vitry at Versailles – and approved subsequently by the French monarch – as a person ‘of very great credit, bold and strongly zealous for His Majesty [i.e. Louis], by whom he has been recompensed as his pensioner, and who merits the continuation of his graces.’¹⁰⁷

This document, which discussed several potential candidates upon which a new French party could be centred, appears to have been based at least in part upon the reports of Morsztyn, whose diligent networking had revealed several prospective candidates who might lend considerable weight to French interests in the *Rzeczpospolita*. Amongst those mentioned were the *Wojewoda* of Malbork, Franciszek Jan Bieliński, whose support the treasurer had recently secured through the marriage of his daughter with Bieliński’s son, Kazimierz.¹⁰⁸ He had also engaged Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, the Crown Grand Marshal and elder brother of Hieronim Augustyn, who was to be recompensed in the form of Louis’ intercession with Thököly, in order to secure the provision of a guarantee that the Hungarian rebels would cause no further damage to the properties of the marshal in Spisz.¹⁰⁹ The Bishop of Kraków, Jan Małachowski, was deemed another potential ally. Notably absent amongst the persons included in this document, however, are the Sapieha family. Although Morsztyn had held preliminary talks upon the provision of a French pension with his friend and counterpart in the Grand Duchy, Benedykt Paweł, these positive beginnings had been rather undone in recent months by Kazimierz Jan, who – in an act which can probably be linked to the fact that the royal declaration upon the destination of Lithuanian Grand

Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 217-9). Vitry and Louis’ letters present amounts in *livres* and *écus* entirely interchangeably, at a consistent rate of exchange of 3:1. For reasons of comparability, I have opted to present all such amounts in *livres*.

¹⁰⁷ Memorial for Vitry, Versailles, 24 November 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 306-9), p. 308.

est [...] d’un très-Grand crédit, hardy et fort zélé pour Sa Majesté, dont il a esté gratifié en qualité de son pensionnaire et qui mérite la continuation de ses grâces.

¹⁰⁸ The celebration of this marriage recorded was recorded in Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 2 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1710, pp. 316-7).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Morsztyn to Callières, Warsaw, 12 December 1682 (*Morstina*, p. 108). It is clear, from the wording of Morsztyn’s letter, that this was by no means the first time that this matter had been discussed. Unfortunately, the fragmentary nature of the surviving corpus of Morsztyn’s letters does not allow a precise dating of when this commitment was made, although the *terminus post quam* is of course provided by Petrůczy’s raid on Spisz in August 1682.

butawa was still pending – had brusquely dismissed any possibility of attaching himself and his family to French interests whilst they ran counter to those of Sobieski.¹¹⁰

The Imperial party was undoubtedly weakened by the recent death of Dymitr Wiśniowiecki and incapacitation of Krzysztof Zygmunt Pac, who had long been stalwart in the defence of Imperial interests. Following the divergence between the emperor and the Elector of Brandenburg in their international alignment in recent years, another long-time leading figure, Michał Kazimierz Pac, had sided with the interests of Friedrich Wilhelm and – by proxy – Louis XIV at the 1681 *Sejm*. He, of course, had also since died. The involvement of Jabłonowski in the recent negotiations between Sobieski and Zierowsky, however, was surely taken by Imperial diplomacy as an indication that the Crown Field *Hetman* – who had seen no contradiction in accepting an Austrian pension of 4,000 thalers alongside his French pension in 1681 – could be relied upon to represent Imperial interests in the coming *sejm*.¹¹¹ Zierowsky had also taken steps to bind Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski to the interests of the emperor, offering him the command of the mercenary force which the emperor still hoped to raise in the *Rzeczpospolita*, if and when Sobieski could be persuaded to relent upon his initial refusal. Lubomirski – a knight of Malta, who had spent time on the island in his youth, earning a reputation for bravery – willingly accepted the offer to join the struggle against the Ottomans.¹¹² If the emperor was to obtain his desired alliance with the *Rzeczpospolita*, however, further support would need to be acquired in the course of the approaching *sejm*.¹¹³

The party of the elector had been shorn of its leading Lithuanian representative following the death of Michał Kazimierz Pac, although it effectively retained its

¹¹⁰ Vitry to Louis XIV, Jaworów, 5 December 1681, 15 May 1682 and 7 August 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 181-2, 217-9, 249-52).

¹¹¹ Konarski, p. 158.

¹¹² Jerzy Baranowski, 'Zakon Maltański w Polsce w XVI i XVII wieku' in *Zakon Maltański w Polsce*, ed. by Jerzy Baranowski and others (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2000), p. 70; Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 20 November and 18 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 281-2 and 297).

¹¹³ Barker, p. 141, suggests that the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski, was also a devoted Austrian partisan. Konarski, pp. 147-9 argues that he remained political neutral at this time, refusing the entreaties of both France and Austria, whilst Wimmer, p. 134, states only that he had detached himself from the French party by this time.

prior strength in Poland. Communicating with the elector through intermediaries – including Władysław Przyjemski, the breaker of the previous *sejm* – Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski and Krzysztof Grzymułtowski, each of whom had promised to exert their influence in support the interests of the elector during the previous *sejm*, gave every indication of doing so again. Morsztyn, working to strengthen cooperation between the parties of Brandenburg and France, likewise maintained close ties with the elector and his representatives in the *Rzeczpospolita*, Wichert and Scultetus.¹¹⁴

Sejmiki przedsejmowe

The *sejmiki przedsejmowe* which assembled throughout the *Rzeczpospolita* on 16 December 1682 were, as usual, the subject of intense competition between the royal court, powerful magnates and foreign interests, as each manoeuvred to secure the election of their own supporters and dependents as *posłowie* to the forthcoming *sejm* as well as to ensure that those men who were elected would be provided with instructions which were in keeping with their own political interests.

Perhaps the most intense competition took place at the major *sejmik* at Środa, the assembly of the *szlachta* from the *województwa* of Poznań and Kalisz. The deliberations there, as in many other parts of the *Rzeczpospolita*, began in a state of heightened tension as a result of the delayed arrival of the royal *uniwersał* and *legacja*, which had left almost no time for preparations to be made.¹¹⁵ Fearing the influence which Brandenburg-Prussia was habitually able to exert in this part of the *Rzeczpospolita*, which bordered upon the domains of the elector, Sobieski dispatched one of his adherents, Gałęcki, to distribute money amongst the *szlachta*. He also gave secret orders for the breaking of the *sejmik* if possible, as well as the detention of Scultetus, the electoral agent who had been present in that region for well over a month, drumming up support for the interests of his patron. The partisans of the elector, led by Grzymułtowski, responded to the

¹¹⁴ Kamieński, pp. 201, 224, 226-7; Morsztyn to Rébénacq, Warsaw, 19 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7).

¹¹⁵ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 54.

activity of Gałęcki by proposing the inclusion of a series of articles in the instructions for the *posłowie* which were provocatively hostile towards the royal court and its perceived interests in the forthcoming *sejm*. Potentially most deleterious amongst these was the seemingly innocuous article requiring the *posłowie* to refuse their consent to any league with the emperor which did not also include a commitment of participation from the Empire. Although disguised as a mere caution, the difficulties involved in securing such a consensus between the manifold states which constituted that polity – including Brandenburg itself – would render the conclusion of any alliance with the emperor near impossible. The advancement of such an article was an act of pure obstructionism. Ultimately, the results of the Środa *sejmik* were a mixed bag for the royal court. On the positive side of the ledger, the offending articles were eventually removed from the instructions and replaced with the command to follow the plurality of opinions regarding any potential Imperial alliance. This came at the cost, however, of the election of several of the elector's partisans – including Władysław Przyjemski, the breaker of the previous *sejm* – amongst the *posłowie*. Moreover, the attempts of the royal supporters to break the *sejmik* had also given rise to the suspicion, probably mistaken, amongst the adherents of Jabłonowski that the king's true purpose had been to clip the wings of the Field *Hetman* by trying to prevent Rafał Leszczyński, whose name was circulating as a leading candidate for the role of marshal of the forthcoming *sejm*, from obtaining a *posełstwo* to that assembly.¹¹⁶

There were further unfortunate results for royal interests in several of the smaller *sejmiki* in Mazowsze *województwo*, where Morsztyn exerted his influence to secure the election of *posłowie* who were strongly inclined towards French interests. Those of Wyszogród and Rożan each sought to prevent a new military *aukcja*, the former making express its belief that the Ottomans held peaceful intentions towards the *Rzeczpospolita*.¹¹⁷ Indeed, despite his concerns regarding

¹¹⁶ Kamieński, pp. 228-30; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 11 November, 23 December and 31 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1666, N. 1739 and N. 1755, pp. 265-6, 344-5 and 358-9), 6 and 13 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1772 and N. 1785, pp. 13-5 and 27-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 6 and 13 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1773 and N. 1786, pp. 15-6 and 28-9); Morsztyn to Rébénacq, 19 December 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7).

¹¹⁷ Konarski, p. 138; Morsztyn to Rébénacq, Warsaw, 19 December 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7).

the recent erosion of the French party amongst the magnates, Morsztyn was confident that there would be a widespread aversion towards the king and (what were understood to be) his intended policies amongst the rank-and-file members of the *szlachta*, which it might be possible to harness in the coming *sejm*. He wrote to Rébénacq in Berlin that: ‘There are a thousand chimeras in the minds of the Poles. It is right to permit these to fully ripen, so long as they are directed against the King of Poland.’¹¹⁸ The treasurer’s confidence on this point likely stemmed from two new rumours which were now beginning to circulate in the Polish capital alongside the aforementioned news of Guilleragues’ declaration at the Porte, all of which he himself was doubtless helping to propagate. The first to emerge held that a Swedish ambassador had been dispatched to the *Rzeczpospolita* to discuss an alliance against Brandenburg-Prussia.¹¹⁹ The second suggested that the king had already concluded an alliance with the emperor, and that as part of the agreement, he had obtained a commitment from Leopold to marry his eldest daughter Maria Antonia to Prince Jakub, as well as to support the election of Jakub upon the death of his father. If true, this second rumour would represent a violation both of the rights of the *sejm* in diplomatic affairs, and of Sobieski’s commitment in his *pacta conventa* to allow the free election of his successor.¹²⁰ These rumours in fact bore only the faintest resemblance to reality. As we have established, the king had every intention of allowing the *sejm* to respond as it saw fit to the alliance proposal which was to come from the emperor. Although Maria Kazimiera had revived the idea of a match between Jakub and Maria Antonia in the wake of the negotiations between Sobieski and Zierowsky in the autumn of 1682, seeking to insinuate to the Imperial court through back channels that this should be considered a prerequisite for any

¹¹⁸ Morsztyn to Rébénacq, Warsaw, 19 December 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7), pp. 296-7.

Il y a mille chimères dans la tête des Polonais. Il est bon de les souffrir *usque ad messem*, pourvu qu’elles soient contre le Roi de Pologne.

¹¹⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1720, pp. 322-3); Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 18 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 297).

¹²⁰ Morsztyn to Callières, Warsaw, 18 December 1682 (*Morstina*, p. 109). Pallavicini first reports that the Imperial alliance had become a subject of public discussion in Warsaw in the final week of December. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1755, pp. 358-9). Vitry had also begun spreading the rumour at the Polish court that Sobieski had requested the honour of the Golden Fleece for Prince Jakub (see n. 80), although he was markedly less confident than Morsztyn that it was making much impact. Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 11 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 293-5).

potential Polish-Imperial alliance, there is every indication that she acted here without the knowledge or consent of her husband. Indeed, when the king finally caught wind of what was afoot around the beginning of November, he made plain his displeasure, fearing that such extravagant demands might mar his own designs for a simple military alliance with the emperor.¹²¹ Moreover, he had promptly taken steps to avoid the damaging perceptions that the arrival of a Swedish ambassador would cause, sending word to the Swedish Resident in Warsaw urging him to ensure that this should not occur prior to or during the coming *sejm*.¹²²

Despite the dissemination of these scurrilous rumours, there were many parts of the *Rzeczpospolita* where royal interests would receive more favourable treatment. In the *sejmik* at Proszowice, where the *szlachta* of Kraków *województwo* gathered, and where Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski filled the post of *Sejmik* Marshal and was subsequently elected as one of the *posłowie*, a strong streak of pro-royal, anti-French sentiment can be detected. In the course of the deliberations, there were loud denunciations of du Vernay-Boucault's activities in Upper Hungary. Meanwhile, the final instructions also included a request that the king should expel the ministers of foreign powers from Warsaw for the duration of the session of the *sejm* in order to prevent outside interference in its workings; if this proposal later found favour in the *sejm* itself, it would only serve to strengthen royal influence in that body.¹²³ Upon his return to the court at Lwów, Lubomirski claimed to Vitry that these outcomes had grieved him greatly and that he had worked to soften some of the complaints against du Vernay-Boucault in the final instructions, but that it was a matter of his honour that he should not allow the *sejmik* to break by refusing the complainants the right to speak. The ambassador could not fail to recognise the weakness of such protestations, and suggested that it would have been better to allow the breaking rather than to permit such malapropos resolutions as these to stand. Nevertheless, despite the accumulating evidence of Lubomirski's attachment to

¹²¹ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 12 October, 19 October and 16 November 1682 (ANP V, N. 1610, N. 1624 and N. 1674, pp. 212-5, 227-9 and 271-3).

¹²² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1720, pp. 322-3).

¹²³ Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 1 January 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 301-2). Pallavicini merely reports that this *sejmik* concluded happily. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1740, pp. 346-7).

the royal court and to a pro-Imperial stance, Vitry continued to hope that he would demonstrate that his true allegiance lay with France through his actions in the *sejm walny*.¹²⁴

Meanwhile, at the *sejmik* held at Sądowa Wisznia (now Sudova Vyshnia, Ukraine) by the *szlachta* of Ruś województwo, the region from which the king originated and where he normally opted to locate his court, Sobieski had orchestrated the presence in person of his close ally, Sieniawski, in his capacity as *starosta* of Lwów. This confluence of factors led to *posłowie* and instructions which were particularly favourable to royal interests. The *szlachta* of the region proposed that *Rzeczpospolita* should seek cooperation with the emperor, and even included an article in the instructions urging that the king should be accorded the right to declare war unilaterally.¹²⁵

The *sejmiki* held at Warsaw, Radziejów (Kujawy), Sochaczew, Zakroczym and Wilno accorded their *posłowie* full power to take whatever decisions they deemed necessary for the defence of the country.¹²⁶ The *szlachta* of Kujawy and Dobrzyń joined those of Kraków in including articles in their instructions demanding limitations on the activities of foreign diplomats.¹²⁷ The Electoral Resident in Warsaw, Wichert, reported in the final week of December that around a dozen *sejmiki* had been broken.¹²⁸ Pallavicini reported that the *sejmik* of Sandomierz and several others in Mazowsze had been amongst their number.¹²⁹ Several were reassembled, however, sending *posłowie* to Warsaw in time to participate in the deliberations of the *sejm walny*.¹³⁰

The royal court remained at Lwów over the festive period. Vitry sought and obtained an audience at court during this time, in which he finally made a public statement upon the actions which Guilleragues had taken at the Porte on behalf

¹²⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 8 January 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 302).

¹²⁵ Kamieński, p. 231; Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 24 December 1682 (*Acta 1680-83*, p. 298).

¹²⁶ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 54; Konarski, p. 138.

¹²⁷ Kamieński, p. 232.

¹²⁸ Kamieński, p. 228. Konarski, p. 137, in his account of the December 1682 *sejmiki przedsejmowe* mistakenly makes reference to the total number which the French embassy reported had been broken in 1680, rather than the count from 1682.

¹²⁹ Konarski, p. 137; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1740, pp. 346-7); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 23 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1742, pp. 348-9).

¹³⁰ Konarski, p. 137.

of the *Rzeczpospolita*, thereby establishing a clear position around which French supporters could coalesce in the approaching *sejm*.¹³¹ The king, meanwhile, continued to give indications of his commitment to an Imperial alliance, at least as far as the need for secrecy allowed. He favoured requests from Zierowsky to send a detachment of troops to Żywiec with orders to prevent any further incursions by the Hungarian rebels into Imperial Silesia, and to provide warehouses of food in Spisz to allow Imperial troops to enter winter quarters there. He also took the initiative of reinforcing the Polish garrison in the exclaves. These actions prompted grousing from Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, the Crown Grand Marshal and *Starosta* of Spisz, who had, as we have noted, already found 'diplomatic' means of providing to the future security of his property in the region. He directed a protest to the king, complaining bitterly that the increased garrison of 500 men was insufficient to provide a meaningful defence in the region, but perfectly capable of ruining his source of income, and recusing himself from any commitment to arrange for the provision of a warehouse until the *sejm*.¹³²

Meanwhile, the king had also written to his resident in Rome, Abbot Jan Kazimierz Denhoff, requesting him to seek clarification from Pope Innocent XI regarding the assistance which the Apostolic Camera might provide the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event of a new Ottoman war. When he heard of the king's request, Pallavicini supplemented it with his own advice, repeating once again his belief that the pope should indicate that his assistance would be forthcoming, but adding the caveat that care should be taken to remain vague upon the precise details in order to induce the *Rzeczpospolita* into taking proper financial measures for its own preservation and prevent it from seeking to rely entirely on the charity of others.¹³³

In the final week of 1682, word arrived at the royal court from Vienna, announcing that Karl Ferdinand, Graf von Waldstein, had been appointed as the Imperial Ambassador to the *Rzeczpospolita*. He was to be assisted in his new

¹³¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1755, pp. 358-9).

¹³² Morsztyn to Rébénacq, Warsaw, 19 December 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 295-7).

¹³³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 30 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1748, pp. 351-3).

posting by Zierowsky, who was accorded the character of Extraordinary Envoy in the course of the following month.¹³⁴

The Polish royals would depart from Lwów shortly after the new year, in order to arrive at Warsaw in time for the opening of the *sejm* at the end of January. Whilst they were en route, the secretary of the Imperial Resident returned from Vienna bearing a declaration from the emperor, as Pallavicini had desired, that he would not hold any negotiations for peace with the Ottomans during the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm*.¹³⁵ The gesture was greatly appreciated by Sobieski, who would reciprocate in the course of the following week by granting the emperor the right – previously refused in November – to raise a mercenary force of 2,000 cavalry within the *Rzeczpospolita* under the command of Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, with the intention that they would reinforce the isolated Imperial garrison at Szatmár. This act finally appears to have restored the nuncio's confidence in the good intentions of Polish monarch.¹³⁶

Remaining attentive to the tenor of political discourse in Warsaw, where senators and *posłowie* were beginning to gather in the city following the conclusion of the *sejmiki*, Pallavicini's concerns regarding the outcome of the *sejm* were by no means fully assuaged, however. His reports to Rome in the month of January are preoccupied above all with detailing the stratagems being devised in ill-faith by opponents of an Imperial alliance in order to place obstacles in the way of negotiations.¹³⁷ This strategising only intensified behind closed doors once Vitry entered Warsaw on 22 January, having left the Polish royals behind on the road. He immediately met with Morsztyn, who appraised him of his efforts thus far to rebuild the French party. The ambassador soon expressed his confidence in Małachowski, Grzymułtowski and Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski. The ire of

¹³⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Lwów, 1 January 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 302-5). Pallavicini first makes reference to Zierowsky's new character in a letter of 20 January. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw (ANP VI, N. 1799, pp. 39-41).

¹³⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 13 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1785, pp. 27-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 13 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1786, pp. 28-9).

¹³⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1794, pp. 35-6). A further contributing factor towards Pallavicini's renewed confidence was the king's eventual acceptance of the mediation between Emperor Leopold and Louis XIV. Cf. n. 74.

¹³⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 December 1682 (ANP V, N. 1755, pp. 358-9), 6, 13, 20 and 27 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1772, N. 1785, N. 1799 and N. 1809, pp. 13-5, 27-8, 39-41 and 51-3).

Lubomirski towards the royal court – prompted at least in part by their recent disagreement over the garrison placed in Spisz – was burning so strongly that the two men considered it necessary to restrain his impulses. Finally, although Vitry still considered Jabłonowski's loyalty to France to be suspect, the fallout from the events of the *sejmik* at Środa gave him hope that the Field *Hetman* could be brought back into the fold.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, Waldstein, the Imperial ambassador, would arrive in Warsaw on 25 January. He would remain incognito for the time being, strategising with Pallavicini and Zierowsky and taking muster of the Austrian party behind closed doors.¹³⁹

Sobieski and Maria Kazimiera had themselves entered the city a day prior to Waldstein, and after the king took some time to receive medical treatments following the long journey, the royals gave several private audiences on 26 January. In particular, they held a lengthy discussion with Pallavicini upon the present emergency facing Christendom, and the perils which the *Rzeczpospolita* and Hungary alike now faced.¹⁴⁰ The nuncio would report to Buonvisi in Vienna that 'the king and queen show that they know the need and the true remedy clearly, and desire it'.¹⁴¹

The 1683 *Sejm*, where the response of the *Rzeczpospolita* to these perils would be decided, opened the following morning.

¹³⁸ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 30 January 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 310-1).

¹³⁹ Konarski, p. 130; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1825, pp. 69-71); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1827, pp. 74-5).

¹⁴⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 27 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1809, pp. 51-3).

¹⁴¹ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 27 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1811, pp. 54-5), p. 55.

il Re e la Regina mostrano di conoscere chiaramente il bisogno et il vero rimedio, e di desiderarlo.

Chapter 3 – The 1683 Sejm

This chapter examines the events of the Warsaw Sejm of 27 January-17 April 1683, tracing the course of the key deliberations which took place in the sejm itself, the alliance negotiations between representatives of the Rzeczpospolita and the emperor which ran simultaneously, and the private and public efforts made by Sobieski to counter the threat posed to the success of both by the representatives of France. It ends with a discussion of the sense of religious obligation which prevailed amongst the participants of the sejm, leading them to commit the Rzeczpospolita to a self-described 'holy war' against the Ottoman Empire.

The opening of the sejm

The 1683 *Sejm* convened for the first time on the morning of 27 January.

The meeting opened with the traditional Mass, in which the sermon was given by Mikołaj Popławski. The content was highly political, with one observer noting that 'there was a sermon, or rather a *sejm*, since it scarcely put forward a theme, but expounded upon our instructions'.¹ Popławski encouraged the *posłowie* towards unity, the king towards action, and everyone towards a new Ottoman war.²

The first order of business, as ever, was the election by the *posłowie* of their *Sejm* Marshal. The nomination, as had been widely expected, fell upon Rafał Leszczyński. This strongly suggests that any lingering resentment between Jabłonowski and the royal court over events at the *Środa sejmik* had been patched up, or at least was deemed unlikely to impede their working relationship going forwards, since the king was able, as ever, to leverage his preponderance of support amongst the *posłowie* to secure the choosing of a candidate for this role

¹ Quoted by Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 160.

kazanie było, albo raczej sejm, bo prawie nie na proponowane Thema kazał, ale na instrukcję naszą exaggerabat.

² Konarski, p. 165

whom he deemed favourable to his interests.³ The election was followed by the laborious process of examining the credentials of the *posłowie*.⁴

On 29 January, the members of both chambers gathered in the senate to hear the *propozycja od tronu*, given by Crown Grand Chancellor Jan Wielopolski and Lithuanian Vice-Chancellor Dominik Mikołaj Radziwiłł on behalf of the monarch, in which Sobieski expanded on the themes contained in the *legacja* to the *sejmiki*:

Poland is under threat from all sides; *Hannibal is at the gates, choose either war or the destruction of the Rzeczpospolita*; there are almost no troops, the border fortresses are abandoned. At the same time, there is distrust of the king, an obsession with matters of little importance, like the delay of the *uniwersał*, and a disregard for things that are very important, like the regular paying of taxes. All these matters lie within the competence of the *sejm*, which must also deal with them vigorously.⁵

He also took the opportunity to lay to rest the rumours which had given rise to this mistrust, assuring the assembled that no alliance had been concluded either with the emperor or with Sweden, and that he left the decisions on such matters entirely in their hands.⁶

Following the *propozycja*, the *posłowie* withdrew to their own chamber to begin the preparation of the list of vacancies which they would request the king to fill.⁷ This quickly devolved into acrimonious debates upon the candidates who might fill them, which swallowed much of the next week. The king became embroiled in a proxy dispute with the Sapieha family, who deployed their adherents to object

³ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 172-3; Kołodziej, 'Sejmy', p. 65. Cf. Wimmer, p. 135, who suggests that Leszczyński was previously a member of the opposition, gained by Sobieski through this action.

⁴ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 199.

⁵ Quoted by Konarski, pp. 165-6.

Polska zagrożona ze wszęch stron; *Hannibal ante portas, vel bellum, vel interitum Reipcae*; wojska prawie niema, fortece nadgraniczne opuszczone. I przy tem wszęstkiem jeszcze brak zaufania do króla, czepianie się spraw drobnej wagi, jak opóźnienie uniwersałóv, a lekceważenie rzeczy tanti momenti, jak regularne płacenie podatkóv. Wszęstkie te sprawy leżą w kompetencyi sejmu, który też energicznie zająć się niemi musi.

⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1825, pp. 69-71); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1827, pp. 74-5); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 311-7).

⁷ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 205.

strongly to the king's intention to appoint Ernest Denhoff, the colonel of the royal guards, to the *kasztelania* of Wilno – apparently as a precursor to making him Lithuanian Field *Hetman* – viewing this as an unwelcome incursion into their newly-established position of dominance in the Grand Duchy.⁸ The rival candidacies of Rafał Leszczyński and Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski for the post of Crown Court Marshal were also feverishly discussed.⁹

On 1 February, Sobieski summoned a private council comprised of six leading senators: Wielopolski; Morsztyn; Gniński; Małachowski; Jan Stanisław Witwicki, Bishop of Łuck; and Stanisław Wojeński, Bishop of Kamieniec. Without revealing anything of the negotiations which he had already conducted with the emperor during the previous autumn, he took steps to prepare the ground for the arrival of the Imperial proposal. He would profess to these men that it was his belief, given the current peril facing the *Rzeczpospolita*, that a purely offensive alliance with the emperor would be in the best interests of the state. Before the arrival of any such proposal however, he posited that it would be beneficial to know how France would respond to such an alliance, and, if French hostility should prompt the *Rzeczpospolita* to reject an agreement with the emperor, to know the specific details of the aid which France would provide in the event of an Ottoman attack, so that the *sejm* might make an informed decision between these two political alignments. In doing so, he likely hoped to demonstrate publicly, as he had already come to believe in private, that Louis XIV had no real intention of providing meaningful assistance. He therefore deputed Morsztyn, Wielopolski and Małachowski to request clarification on these matter from the French ambassador. In doing so, he appears to have sent a warning shot across the bows of the Crown Grand Treasurer, pressing him to use his prodigious talents solely for the benefit of the *patria*. Meanwhile, the king's true intention that the alliance should also have a defensive aspect – demonstrated through the terms of the draft agreement – was dissembled away for now, since France had always opposed such an outcome with particular vigour.

⁸ Kamieński, p. 233; Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 209.

⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1825, pp. 69-71); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1827, pp. 74-5).

When these men met with Vitry the following day, he would inform them, in keeping with his instructions of 26 November not to *publicly* oppose an offensive alliance, that Louis in fact held no objection to an agreement on such terms. He even held out the vague prospect of French assistance in the event of an offensive war against the Ottomans, provided that a firm and stable peace could be secured with the emperor in Germany. On the other hand, if a Polish-Imperial alliance did not come to pass, and the Ottomans launched a new invasion of the *Rzeczpospolita*, he repeated the same statement which he had made since his arrival in 1681, promising that Louis would provide more valid aid than any other Prince in Christendom, without entering, however, into any specific commitment. Vitry overplayed his hand with such a fair-seeming statement. Sobieski, suspecting that the ambassador's hints at active French support for an offensive alliance were specious, saw an opportunity to turn them to his advantage; praising them publicly, he pressed Vitry to put them in writing. The ambassador was left in a difficult position. To consent was unthinkable; such a clear statement of France's support for an Imperial alliance would completely undermine any hope the French party might have of securing a consensus in the *sejm* in favour of refusing the emperor's offer. Even the last resort of inducing the *liberum veto* to block the alliance would become more difficult to sustain if popular opinion was allowed to crystallise in favour of this outcome. An outright refusal, on the other hand, would discredit Louis' promise to support the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event of an Ottoman attack, likewise pushing the *sejm* towards favouring the Imperial alliance. Even stalling was not a particularly appealing option; the longer he did so whilst the king actively pressed him, the more obvious it would be to all concerned that France had no intention of actually backing up these fine words. Nonetheless, stalling was all that Vitry could do for now.¹⁰

That same day (2 February), after facilitation and prompting by Morsztyn, Vitry also met in secret with Jabłonowski. In the course of their audience, the ambassador would assure the *hetman* of Louis' continued affection for him, whilst holding out the prospect of French support for his desired elevation to the Polish

¹⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1825, pp. 69-71); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1827, pp. 74-5); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 311-7).

throne 'in case of a change'.¹¹ Vitry would report to Louis that Jabłonowski had reciprocated his advances, assuring him that his complaisance towards the royal couple the previous fall had been motivated only by the need to assure himself of the grand *buława*, so that he might thereby render greater services to the French monarch. Moreover, the ambassador would relay that Jabłonowski had enquired regarding how Louis desired him to conduct himself on the subject of the Imperial alliance, and that upon hearing of the true nature of Vitry's instructions on this matter, he had expressed the opinion that the court was pursuing an alliance for private interests – the marriage between Prince Jakub and Archduchess Maria Antonia and Imperial support for a Sobieski succession – rather than because it was in the best interests of the *Rzeczpospolita*, noting that he stood to lose out more than anyone from such an outcome. Jabłonowski's words were sufficient to convince Vitry of his good faith.¹²

In the *sejm*, meanwhile, efforts were made to persuade the *posłowie* to come to the senate chamber so that the process of hearing the senatorial *wota* could begin, and final declarations could be made regarding the distribution of vacancies. The adherents of the Sapieha remained intransigent; led by Bogusław Uniechowski, they blocked deliberations in the chamber for several days, even preparing a draft *konstytucja* which would prevent Denhoff from obtaining offices in the Grand Duchy on the basis that he was not a Lithuanian citizen.¹³ Even Sobieski's declaration that he intended to grant the Field *buława* to Jan Jacek Ogiński rather than his own protégé proved insufficient to break the deadlock. Uniechowski was only persuaded to cease his obstruction when the *Sejm* Marshal promised to intervene personally with the king on the matter of the *kasztelania* of Wilno.¹⁴

The senatorial *wota* were finally able to begin on 5 February. All those who spoke early on were agreed upon need to take action to counter the threat facing the *Rzeczpospolita*, although there was little consensus regarding the best method of

¹¹ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 311-7), p. 315.
en cas de changement.

¹² Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 311-7)

¹³ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 209.

¹⁴ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 445; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1840, pp. 85-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1841, p. 88).

doing so. One group, including Władysław Łos, Wojciech Konstanty Breza and Marcin Kątski declared themselves in favour of offensive actions against the Ottomans. A second group, including Franciszek Bieliński and Stanisław Święcicki, were in favour of taking purely defensive measures.¹⁵ A third group wished to defer expressing an opinion until the propositions borne by foreign ambassadors had been heard.

The *wota* were interrupted on 8 February by the royal announcement of the appointments to vacant offices. In the Crown, Jabłonowski obtained the Grand *bulawa* (without any limitation to his term in office, as rumour held that Sobieski had contemplated); Sieniawski was made Field *Hetman* as well as *Wojewoda* of Wołyń; the post of Court Marshal went to Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski; his competitor for that office, the *Sejm* Marshal Rafał Leszczyński, was compensated with Lubomirski's former dignity as Grand *Chorąży* (Standard-bearer); and Jan Chryzostom Pieniążek received the *województwo* of Sieradz. In the Grand Duchy, Kazimierz Jan Sapieha was elevated to Grand *Hetman*, despite the ill omens which the obstruction of the Sapieha adherents in recent days had provided for his and his family's future relationship with the king. Jan Jacek Ogiński obtained the Field *buława* which Sapieha vacated, whilst the promised intervention of Leszczyński had persuaded the king to leave the *kasztelania* of Wilno vacant for the time being.¹⁶

With the vacancies filled, the *wota* were resumed. Jabłonowski indicated his support for a potential alliance with the emperor and a war with the Ottomans, in which he was echoed by Sieniawski.¹⁷ Pallavicini would report to Rome that 'some have expressed one of the best options to be the league with the emperor, and the *wojewoda* of Ruś amongst others has been of this sense'.¹⁸

¹⁵ Konarski, p. 167; Wimmer, p. 136.

¹⁶ Wimmer, pp. 135-6

¹⁷ Wagner, p. 82.

¹⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1840, pp. 85-8), p. 87:

Alcuni si sono espressi uno de' migliori essere la lega con Cesare, et il Palatino di Russia fra gl'altri è stato di questo senso

Cf. Konarski, p. 167 and Wimmer, p. 136 on this point, who follow one of the *sejm* diaries in suggesting that Jabłonowski opined in favour of defensive measures only. Given the public nature of the *wota* sessions (which Pallavicini, who was frequently called upon to play a mediatory role in the *sejm*, is therefore likely to have attended in person), the

Meanwhile, Pieniążek and Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski each proposed basing the new military effort of the *Rzeczpospolita* on the *aukcja* which had been envisaged by the *skrypt do archiwum* from the 1678-9 *Sejm* in the event of the outbreak of a new Ottoman war, which would see its armies increased to a total strength of 36,000 men.¹⁹

Only two senators offered opposition at this stage. Morsztyn limited himself merely to presenting the terrible financial state of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and the risks which it would incur from becoming involved in a new Ottoman war. Grzymułtowski, on the other hand, strongly opposed the idea of an Imperial alliance, citing the lack of clear benefit to the *Rzeczpospolita*, a fear that Leopold's successors would not prove faithful allies if the conflict ran long, and the advantages which might be extracted as a result of waiting to see how an Imperial-Ottoman conflict might develop.²⁰

Beyond the Ottoman question, the greater part of the *wota* contained strong criticism of the Elector of Brandenburg over the Hohenzollern-Radziwiłłówna marriage, accusing him variously of planning to garrison Ludwika Karolina's fortresses in Lithuania with Brandenburg troops, to detach her estates from the *Rzeczpospolita*, and to build new Calvinist churches there.²¹

Once the *wota* concluded on 10 February, the two chambers once again separated, with the stated intention of gathering together again on 25 February – eight days earlier than was customary – for the final reading of all agreed-upon legislation, in the optimistic hope that the *sejm* might conclude within the six-week term. The senators then busied themselves with the hearing of royal judgments on legal cases; the *posłowie*, meanwhile, would quickly lapse into lengthy deliberation. The threat which the marriage of Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna posed to the security and territorial integrity of the *Rzeczpospolita*

timing of Jabłonowski's *wota* in close proximity to his elevation, and his prior commitment to favour an Imperial alliance, I am inclined to follow the nuncio and Wagner, Jabłonowski's biographer, on this point.

¹⁹ Konarski, p. 168; Wimmer, p. 136.

²⁰ Konarski, pp. 167-8; Wimmer, p. 136.

²¹ Kamiński, pp. 237-8.

was a frequent theme, whilst considerable time was absorbed in discussing various matters of little more than local importance.²²

Waldstein also made his formal entrance into Warsaw on 10 February, obtaining a public audience with Sobieski the following day, in which he presented before the king and court the emperor's proposal for an alliance with the *Rzeczpospolita*, based on the terms agreed in secret by the two rulers the previous autumn.²³

One notable discussion which took place in the lower chamber in the days which followed might, perhaps, be interpreted as the product of a unified effort on the part of Sobieski and Waldstein to prompt the *sejm* to allow formal negotiations to begin as soon as possible. The subject of enforcing the old law regarding the expulsion of foreign ministers for the duration of the *sejm* was raised by a known adherent of the Imperial party. This was naturally taken as an attack on the presence of Vitry by those who held an attachment to French interests, prompting Andrzej Gembicki, a son-in-law of Grzymułtowski, to demand that the Imperial ambassador should be the first to depart. Once it was pointed out that Waldstein bore a specific commission – to the king and to the *Rzeczpospolita* jointly – which had not yet been heard by the *posłowie*, and that ordering his departure without doing so would prompt a diplomatic incident, a compromise was reached. A deputation was sent to the king, urging him to inform all the ambassadors of the need to reveal their commissions to the *sejm* as soon as possible, in order that they might be obliged to depart once these were resolved upon. Upon receiving these men, the king was heard to remark wryly that he was delighted to see that the *posłowie* were so eager to hear the propositions of the foreign ministers promptly, and that for his part he would be ready to give his approval to any deputation which the *sejm* might elect to conduct any further negotiations which proved necessary.²⁴

²² Kamieński, p. 238; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 and 17 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1840 and N. 1853, pp. 85-8 and 100-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 and 17 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1841 and N. 1854, pp. 88 and 103-5).

²³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1840, pp. 85-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1841, p. 88).

²⁴ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 248; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1853, pp. 100-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 17 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1854, pp. 103-5).

Vitry, having been informed of the debate which had taken place in the *sejm*, sought clarifications from Sobieski in a private audience of his own. The king sought to minimise its importance in the mind of the French ambassador, explaining that he had tried on several occasions to persuade the *sejm* to enforce the old law without any effect, and reassuring him that in any event, the proposal had not been specifically targeted against France, but would apply to all foreign ministers. For his own part, the king took this opportunity to prompt the ambassador once again to make a public declaration of French support for a Polish-Imperial offensive alliance.

After hearing out Vitry's subsequent urgings not to put his faith in the emperor, the Polish monarch would respond with courtesy, reiterating once again that he had no intention of taking any step contrary to Louis' interests, although the ambassador came away with the impression that his words were continuing to make little impact. He would inform Louis that the efforts of Morsztyn had already uncovered two or three individuals amongst the *posłowie* who would be willing to break the *sejm* if it should prove necessary. Meanwhile, in the wake of the recent obstructiveness of the Sapieha family over the king's proposed elevation of Denhoff, Vitry and Morsztyn had reopened negotiations with those brothers in the hope that they might now be persuaded to bind themselves firmly to French interests. Once again, the first approach was made by Morsztyn to his friend Benedykt Paweł, who proved amenable. In a subsequent meeting, the Lithuanian Grand Treasurer assured Vitry of his unwavering attachment to France, expressed his deep disapproval at the slight which his brother had offered the French ambassador the previous autumn, causing the breakdown of their earlier negotiations, and stated that he and all his brothers were now deeply suspicious that royal interest in an alliance with emperor was motivated by the desire to secure the hand of Archduchess Maria Antonia for Prince Jakub, and to ensure Imperial support for his succession. The French ambassador left convinced of the merits of offering him a pension of 6,000 *livres*.²⁵

²⁵ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 19 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 319-22). In the same letter, Vitry would report having had less success with the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski, whom he found too closely enmeshed with the interests of the queen to be biddable.

Meanwhile, in the lower chamber, Sobieski's hope that the *posłowie* would dramatically hasten their deliberations upon lesser matters, in order to arrive sooner at a formal hearing of the propositions of the foreign representatives, would prove forlorn. Indeed, it was not even until 22 February – more than halfway through the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm*, and only four days before the two chambers had agreed to reunite once again – that the lower chamber would begin to engage in preliminary debates upon matters regarding the defence of the *Rzeczpospolita*.²⁶

With any royal attempt to intervene directly in these proceedings likely to lead to accusations of a violation of the liberty of the *sejm* to take the decisions it saw fit, there was little that the leading supporters of the Imperial alliance could do but seek to prepare the ground, to the best of their ability, for an eventual positive reception of the emperor's alliance proposal when the *sejm* deigned to hear it. In this, they displayed remarkable diligence.

Behind the scenes, Pallavicini worked to remove one stumbling block. Despite her husband's continued disapproval of the project, Maria Kazimiera had persisted in her hopes that the hand of Archduchess Maria Antonia could be extracted as the price of an Imperial alliance. Painfully aware that this was fuelling suspicions amongst the *szlachta* that the king's apparent support for the alliance was motivated by the self-interest of the Sobieski family rather than the best interests of the *Rzeczpospolita* and of Christendom, the nuncio now exerted himself personally to persuade the queen to set aside her marriage plans, or at least to stop speaking of the matter publicly.²⁷

The monarch worked to neutralise another obstacle to the alliance, the objections expressed by Grzymułtowski during his *wota*. Sobieski now indicated his willingness to offer sizeable financial concessions if the *wojewoda* would refrain

²⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1869, pp. 121-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1872, pp. 127-8).

²⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1866, pp. 117-9). The papal nuncio was only convinced that the efforts to dissuade the queen in this matter had succeeded after Waldstein made explicit the fact the Archduchess was promised elsewhere a fortnight later. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1897, pp. 158-9).

from opposing the negotiations with the emperor; Grzymułtowski, however, would remain non-committal for the time being.²⁸

Having learned a lesson from the deleterious impact of electoral diplomacy upon the outcome of the 1681 *Sejm*, Sobieski had given short shrift to the anti-Brandenburg sentiments in evidence during the senatorial *wota* and the early stages of deliberations in the *izba poselska*, instead resuming his attempts to reach a settlement of the outstanding differences between himself and Friedrich Wilhelm.²⁹ The elector was also keen to reach an agreement. Several developments had occurred in the period since the signing of his most recent treaty with Louis in January 1682 which had prompted him to waver, at least a little, on his attachment to French interests. The French seizure in August 1682 of the Principality of Orange, an enclave in Southern France which formed part of the hereditary estates of the Dutch *Stadtholder*, William III, and which had been a frequent place of refuge for French Calvinists (Huguenots) fleeing from persecution in Louis' realm, had left the staunchly Calvinist elector deeply concerned about the fate of his co-religionists. Moreover, the anger of Charles XI of Sweden over Louis XIV's *réunion* of the Palatinate of Zweibrücken had led him to seek new alliances with the emperor and the United Provinces in the course of 1682, the obvious targets of which were France's allies, Denmark and Brandenburg-Prussia.³⁰

Were this alliance network to be expanded to include the *Rzeczpospolita*, as rumours reaching him suggested, Friedrich Wilhelm faced potential encirclement by enemies. In these circumstances, he sought over the winter of 1682-3 to tread a moderate course between the French and Imperial-Swedish-Dutch camps. On the one hand, he would continue to accept French subsidies and advocate for a final settlement of Louis' claims in the Empire; on the other, he would tentatively reach out to the emperor with offers of help against the Ottomans.³¹

With his efforts in the autumn to persuade Louis of the need for more effective French diplomatic representation on the Wista having drawn a blank, he also

²⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1866, pp. 117-9)

²⁹ Kamiński, p. 233.

³⁰ McKay, pp. 244-6; Upton, pp. 94-8.

³¹ Kamiński, pp. 226; McKay, pp. 246-7.

decided upon the necessity of resolving his differences with Sobieski as the next best means of preventing the *Rzeczpospolita* from committing itself to an anti-Brandenburg alliance and securing the rights of the Hohenzollern to the properties of Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna. Following preliminary conversations at the beginning of January between Sobieski's kinsman, Radziejowski, and the Resident of Brandenburg, Wichert, the elector provided Krockow and his assistant Scultetus with instructions which emphasised the importance of reaching a settlement.³²

Negotiations began in earnest immediately following Krockow's arrival in Warsaw incognito on 20 February, with Radziejowski again acting as an intermediary for Sobieski. The elector was willing to offer a financial settlement totalling 40,000 thalers – higher than his initial offer but lower than his final offer in 1681 – with one half tied to the issue of the document which Sobieski had drawn up previously, guaranteeing his protection of the estates of Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna, and the other tied to the securing of a commitment from his sister Katarzyna to resign from the claims of her deceased husband Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł upon these properties. Discussions upon the other aspects of the settlement, including a potential marriage between Prince Jakub and a member of the Hohenzollern dynasty, would continue for the next several weeks.³³

Despite the positive start to these negotiations, Krockow also engaged in contingency planning, seeking to ensure that the interests of his master would be protected in the event of their collapse. He held several conferences with Grzymułtowski upon his arrival, whilst another with Kazimierz Jan Sapieha saw the new Grand *Hetman* commit to provide the elector with the same services which his predecessor Michał Kazimierz Pac had done. Around 8,600 guilders were also spent on securing the services of around a dozen *posłowie*.³⁴ Ultimately, however, the decision of the elector to place his own self-interest above his attachment to France where the affairs of the *Rzeczpospolita* were concerned would see electoral diplomacy would play a markedly less active role during the 1683 *Sejm* than Louis XIV and his ambassador had anticipated. It was only in the early days of

³² Kamieński, pp. 226-7, 236-7; Konarski, p. 193.

³³ Kamieński, pp. 207, 239.

³⁴ Kamieński, p. 233; Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 348; Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 26 February 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 174-6).

March that Krockow met with Vitry for the first time, a delay which in itself might be taken as indicative of electoral intentions. In the course of their meeting, Krockow would dissemble upon the funds which the elector had provided him with, claiming not to have received any money, as well as the contents of his instructions, which Vitry came away believing were favourable to French interests.³⁵ Following this meeting, the electoral envoy was careful to maintain the perception that he was working towards the same goals as France, whilst providing almost nothing in the way of tangible assistance to its representatives. Although Morsztyn and Vitry were not yet aware of this fact, it would fall upon themselves and their adherents alone to prevent the *Rzeczpospolita* from concluding an alliance with the emperor, if the *sejm* resolved upon it.

Sobieski remained alert to the threat which France posed, and continued his efforts to extract a written statement of support for an offensive alliance with the emperor from Vitry, pressing him with such persistence that the French ambassador felt compelled, towards the end of February, to forward the request to Louis XIV to obtain clarification, simply to gain a respite from the questioning.³⁶ The centrepiece of the king's efforts to prepare the ground for a favourable hearing in the *sejm* of the alliance proposal which Waldstein bore, however, was his confrontation of the clandestine activities of Morsztyn. The black chamber of the Polish court, led by the talented codebreaker, royal secretary and abbot, Michał Antoni Hacki, had – with the connivance of the postmaster in Gdańsk, Paweł Gratta – been secretly intercepting and copying the letters which both Morsztyn and Vitry had been passing to their correspondents in France for at least the past six months.³⁷ These letters, as was common for diplomatic correspondence of the period, were partially enciphered to protect any sensitive or potentially compromising details which the writer wished to convey, whilst the remainder of their contents was written in plain text. Hacki was assisted in his efforts to decrypt the hidden contents of the letters of Vitry in particular,

³⁵ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

³⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1869, pp. 121-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1872, pp. 127-8). The request in question, forwarded to France on 26 February, is included in *Acta 1680-83*, p. 323.

³⁷ Deiches, pp. 65-6.

however, by the bribing of one of the French ambassador's secretaries, a Monsieur Deul, who provided him with the key to Vitry's cipher.³⁸

By early February 1683, Sobieski appears to have reached the conclusion – from the plain text of Morsztyn's letters, and the deciphered reports of Vitry – that the two men were engaging in conversations which could be deemed treasonous. The Polish monarch would respond, in the first instance, by moving swiftly to obtain the original copies of several recent letters written by both men, arranging for a series of hijackings of the post at Pokrzywnica, shortly after its departure from Warsaw towards Gdańsk.³⁹

Only the originals would serve the king as evidence; if he sought to use copies alone, written in a hand which could not be verified as that of Morsztyn, Vitry or one of their respective secretaries, the letters could easily be dismissed as forgeries. Meanwhile, obtaining the letters through a public hijacking, rather than instructing Gratta to quietly extract them from the post at Gdańsk, allowed the king to claim ignorance of the circumstances of their interception, and that the letters had come into his possession purely through good fortune. However implausible this might have seemed to the victims, there was little they could do to counter the claim – roads in this period were notoriously unsafe.⁴⁰ Moreover, obtaining originals in this manner served to disguise the fact that the king was also engaging in the routine interception of postal correspondence, knowledge of which would be certain to prompt those who wished to engage in clandestine intrigues to seek a more secure method of communication.

With the originals of Morsztyn's letters in hand, Sobieski made his move against the Crown Grand Treasurer in the second half of February. He would begin by summoning the *starosta* of Kowal, Władysław Morsztyn – a cousin of Jan Andrzej – to attend a private audience, where he would produce one of treasurer's letters, written to his French handler, Callières.⁴¹ From the plain text of this letter, it

³⁸ Kamieński, pp. 234-5.

³⁹ Deiches, pp. 65, 67; Kamieński, p. 234. Per the former, Polish-French post was carried via Gdańsk, Berlin, Stettin, and Hamburg. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1839 and N. 1840, pp. 84-5 and 85-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1841, pp. 1841).

⁴⁰ Deiches, p. 66.

⁴¹ Deiches, p. 67; Konarski, p. 170; Wimmer, p. 138; Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

appears to have been possible to surmise that the enciphered sections contained a discussion of the Polish succession, including details of those whom Morsztyn had deemed appropriate to raise to the throne, as well as those prominent persons with whom he had discussed the matter and who had shown themselves favourable to such a proposal. Sobieski, of course, likely knew considerably more about what the enciphered parts of this letter were likely to contain than he let on at this stage. Whilst Hacki had been unable as yet to break the code to Morsztyn's cipher, the letters of Vitry would have provided the Polish monarch with many of the missing details. The ambassador's report to Louis of 5 February, in particular, had contained an account of the private meetings which first Morsztyn, then he himself had held with Jabłonowski, in which the matter of the succession had been discussed at some length.⁴²

For now, however, it was Morsztyn alone that Sobieski sought to tackle. Perceiving the treasurer to be the driving force of French interests in the *Rzeczpospolita*, and the lynchpin who held the adherents of France together, the king nonetheless hoped that through the right application of leverage, he might yet be cowed into detaching himself from his allegiance to Louis XIV. If this proved successful, the threat which France posed to the happy conclusion of both the *sejm* and the Imperial alliance alike might still be neutralised quietly.⁴³ Without entering into the details gleaned from Vitry's letters, he would therefore inform Władysław in an angry tone that the letter of Jan Andrzej which he held in his hands contained incontrovertible proof that the latter had engaged in treason, but that because of his royal clemency and the affection which he still bore for the treasurer, he did not wish to publish these actions before the entire senate, and would content himself instead with reproaching his actions in the presence of four senators of the king's own choosing. The *starosta* was then dispatched to convey these words to the treasurer himself.

Deiches has argued persuasively that the communications of Morsztyn and Vitry did not in fact constitute a conspiracy, and that they had merely been engaging in

⁴² Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 February 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 311-7).

⁴³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1866, pp. 117-9). Having read the letters of Vitry written over the past several months, the king would have been well aware of how reliant the ambassador was upon the treasurer as his intermediary in the recruitment and management of the supporters of French interests.

routine succession planning – not unreasonable, given the bouts of serious illness which Sobieski had suffered in recent years. This need not, however, be taken to imply that the king’s accusation was purely cynical, or that he did not believe in their guilt. There was one aspect of this affair which – as Pallavicini would report – had given Sobieski particular cause for concern. Morsztyn was eight years older than him and thus in the normal course of events would be expected to predecease him. Having largely recovered his strength, and understandably lacking the same conviction that his mortality was imminent, the king deemed that there was no legitimate reason for Morsztyn to be discussing the succession, unless he was planning on this occurring rather more immediately, as a result of unnatural causes.⁴⁴

Morsztyn, apparently astonished at the nature of the accusations levelled against him, would send his political associate and kinsman-by-marriage, the *Wojewoda* of Malbork, Franciszek Jan Bieliński into the royal presence, in order to seek the king’s permission to justify himself in front of the senators which the monarch had proposed. With the treasurer seemingly intent on defending himself, rather than simply accepting his reproach, the king opted to hold him in suspense for two days awaiting a response, before eventually marking 27 February as the date for the treasurer to come before him.⁴⁵ The king’s purpose in this short delay, Pallavicini believed, was to allow the alliance negotiations with the Imperial ambassador to get off to a positive start whilst the treasurer was regaining his equilibrium.⁴⁶

Alliance negotiations

Following two days of preparatory deliberations in the *izba poselska* on the subject of how best to provide to the defensive needs of the *Rzeczpospolita*, Waldstein had finally received a public audience in that chamber on 24 February, where he would lay out the framework of the emperor’s alliance proposal before the *posłowie*. The following day, the *Sejm* Marshal appointed eighteen *posłowie*

⁴⁴ Deiches, p. 78; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1885, pp. 144-6).

⁴⁵ Deiches, p. 67; Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1879, pp. 132-5); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

⁴⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1866, pp. 117-9).

as commissioners – six each from the provinces of Wielkopolska, Małopolska and Lithuania – who, together with the chancellors and other senators – five bishops and five *województwie* – were to form the delegation of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the detailed negotiations to come. The first conference between the two parties was arranged for 26 February.⁴⁷

In the meantime, those amongst the *posłowie* who favoured the Imperial alliance sought to persuade their fellows to re-enter the senate that same day – eight days before the usual term, as had been proposed – in order to allow the combined chambers to conduct the fullest possible deliberations upon how best to provide for the security of the *Rzeczpospolita*. If this could not be obtained, they at least hoped to secure a focused debate on defence matters in the lower chamber, for the avoidance of unnecessary delays when the two chambers eventually gathered. These efforts would be frustrated on both counts. Władysław Przyjemski, the man who had broken the 1681 *Sejm*, would vigorously oppose himself to the early departure, introducing a litany of private matters and demanding that these should be resolved first. Despite the interjection of Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski – still sat in the lower chamber in his capacity as a *poseł* for Kraków *województwo* – who would speak powerfully of the need to put all other matters aside to give thought to the needs of the *patria*, the adherents of Grzymułtowski and the Sapieha repeatedly interrupted attempts to hold serious debates upon the defensive measures to be taken and the *subsidium charitativum* or ‘voluntary contributions’ which each *województwo* would be required to provide in order to pay for them. The activity in the chamber was halted on several occasions by threats to exercise the *liberum veto*.⁴⁸ The decision of Krockow to begin disseminating the rumour amongst the *szlachta* that the elector was negotiating with the emperor and seeking to reach an agreement with Sobieski is best interpreted as an attempt to quell these disruptions which had arisen from amongst those who had declared their attachment to the interests of both Brandenburg and France, but whose actions now ran counter to the goals of the elector. These rumours caused considerable confusion amongst the

⁴⁷ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, p. 249; Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 24 and 28 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1872 and N. 1879, pp. 127-8 and 132-5).

⁴⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1885, pp. 144-6); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1887, pp. 149-50).

malcontents. Krockow would report to Berlin that the Sapieha brothers, Kazimierz Jan and Benedykt Paweł, had visited him in the final week of February, seeking to clarify whether the elector was still friends with France.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, this action of Krockow would not quell the disturbances in the *izba poselska* instantaneously, and this obstructionism would immediately present an obstacle when the deputation from the *Rzeczpospolita* met with Waldstein and Zierowsky for their first conference on 26 February. The session began with the reading of the plenipotence of the Imperial ministers; the Polish deputation, however, could not correspond, since its composition had not as yet been approved by a *combined* sitting of the upper and lower chambers. With the intervention of the king, a workaround was eventually found; negotiations would begin, but any framework for an alliance which might emerge would be considered non-binding on both parties at this stage.

The Imperial ministers opened the session proper with a carefully constructed statement of purpose. Continuing to avoid any mention of the negotiations between Leopold and Sobieski the previous autumn, whilst at the same time seeking to avoid the possibility that their proposal might be wilfully misinterpreted as an appeal for aid from the emperor rather than a mutually-beneficial arrangement, they declared that they had been sent by the emperor in response to several previous invitations which the *Rzeczpospolita* had made to their master proposing to unite with him in an offensive alliance, in order to see whether an agreement might now be reached.

The remainder of the session was spent responding to the numerous requests for clarification from the Polish-Lithuanian delegation regarding the precise details of the commitments which the emperor was willing to make. In the course of this process, several of the obstacles which had been prepared in ill-faith by opponents of the alliance in recent months were raised by individuals amongst the Polish-Lithuanian delegation: the idea that a final settlement in Germany needed to be reached between the emperor, the states of the Empire and France as a precursor to a Polish-Imperial alliance, and the suggestion that the Empire should enter the alliance as a contracting party alongside the emperor were each

⁴⁹ Kamiński, p. 239.

advanced at points. As the Imperial ministers had suspected would happen, attempts were also made to depict the negotiations as an Imperial plea for aid, leading to proposals that the emperor should recompense the *Rzeczpospolita* in some manner for the assistance it would provide, in addition to providing it with some tangible form of security, as a guarantee that he would observe the terms of the alliance faithfully. On this last point, the example of the Treaty of Vienna (27 May 1657), by which Leopold had entered the Northern War of 1655-60 on the side of the *Rzeczpospolita*, providing it with assistance against the alliance of Sweden and Brandenburg-Prussia, was cited as precedent. As one of the terms of this agreement, Imperial garrisons had been placed in the cities of Kraków and Poznań. Pallavicini had noted as early as 6 January that opponents of the alliance were preparing this precise line of argument as a means of embroiling the negotiations, and the Imperial ministers had been able to prepare their response well. They would note several differences between the situations in 1657 and 1683, not least of which was the fact that the *Rzeczpospolita* had itself requested the placement of these Imperial garrisons, to prevent these cities from falling into the hands of the enemy. Nevertheless, when the two sides parted after concluding this first session, it seems that the notion that the *Rzeczpospolita* would require some form of security was merely parked to one side for now, rather than truly disabused.⁵⁰

With obstacles to the Imperial alliance abounding both in this first negotiating session and in the deliberations in the lower chamber of the *sejm*, confounding Sobieski's hope that Morsztyn's awareness of the accusations against him might be capable of holding these in check, the Polish monarch appears to have decided that a more vigorous approach would be required.

Thus, when the treasurer came as appointed to the house of the Crown Grand Chancellor, Jan Wielopolski, on the morning of the following day – 27 February – he would find himself confronted not merely by the king and the four senators whose presence he had been led to expect, but by the king, the queen, and a group of twelve senators. The scene was constructed to leave Morsztyn with the impression that he was going to receive neither the audience which he had

⁵⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 6 January and 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1772 and N. 1886, pp. 13-5 and 146-9).

requested, nor even the formal reproach which the king had threatened, but that he was to be summarily placed on trial.

The king began, however, by offering the treasurer another chance to come clean. He again brought forth the hijacked letter which had been shown to the *starosta* of Kowal, repeated the same simple accusation that it contained evidence of treachery, and demanded that Morsztyn send for the code to his cipher and decrypt its contents before the assembled persons. The treasurer remained defiant, claiming that the letter contained nothing criminal. He countered with the offer to decipher the letter for the king alone, or in the presence of men whom he himself trusted, but refused absolutely to do so in front of all those who were present. Such conditions were clearly unsatisfactory to the king.

Perceiving that an intimidating atmosphere and an accusation light on specifics would not suffice by themselves to induce Morsztyn either to hand over the key to his cipher in an attempt to prove his innocence or to admit his guilt and throw himself upon his royal mercy, Sobieski now escalated the confrontation in two ways. First, the king would lay out his allegations in more detail, implicating Morsztyn's co-conspirators by name for the first time; he accused the treasurer of plotting to dethrone him and crown Jabłonowski in his place, and imputed Vitry of having joined him in this conspiracy by offering the throne both to Jabłonowski and to the Crown Grand Marshal, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, on behalf of France. Second, he would make explicit the threat, if Morsztyn did not produce the counter-cipher, to produce the hijacked letter before an open session of the senate. In the event that the senate refused to support him in demanding the counter-cipher, he even expressed the willingness to summon the *pospolite ruszenie* and impose his will in this matter by threat of force.

It should be noted that whilst the king no longer veiled his knowledge of the details and the co-conspirators in this conspiracy, he appears once again to have been careful to avoid mention of the fact that his information had been gleaned from Vitry's letters, rather than those of Morsztyn. Had the king revealed at this time that he had been intercepting and reading the ambassador's letters to France, it seems inconceivable that Morsztyn would have failed to mention this to Vitry, or that Vitry would have omitted to mention it to Louis. Vitry's report relating the events of Morsztyn's audience, however, contains nothing which

indicates that such a revelation had taken place.⁵¹ The king's intention here was probably twofold. If Morsztyn could be led to believe that the king was well on the way to breaking his cipher anyway, he might feel incentivised to hand over the full key in the hope of persuading the king to respond mercifully. Moreover, whilst it was likely an unavoidable outcome that once Vitry was implicated of involvement in such a conspiracy, Morsztyn would make him aware of this fact, it was one thing to allow this to occur in an indirect and low-key manner, where it might even serve beneficially as a warning to Vitry against engaging in further clandestine activity, and quite another to risk needlessly triggering a formal protest, and perhaps even a major diplomatic incident, by brazenly acknowledging the interception of his mail. Confronted for the first time with the details of the king's accusations against him, and pressed strongly by the king and those whom he had assembled, Morsztyn finally promised to hand over the counter-cipher the following morning (28 February), at which point he was permitted to depart from the king's presence.⁵²

Morsztyn's true intentions in accepting the king's demand must ultimately remain a matter of speculation. One possible interpretation is that he was genuinely taken aback, at least for a time, by the extent of the king's apparent knowledge of the contents of his letters, and decided in the moment that handing over the counter-cipher was the best option available to him, before reassessing the situation later and deciding that his interests were better served by trying to ride out the storm. Having had time to consider the situation, he may have recalled his earlier suspicions about the trustworthiness of Vitry's secretaries – he had written to one of his correspondents in January that 'the secretaries of Vitry are rotten' – and reached the conclusion that it was Vitry's cipher which had been compromised, not his own.⁵³ Another possibility is that his acquiescence was

⁵¹ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

⁵² Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1879, pp. 132-5); Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1885, pp. 144-6); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

⁵³ Morsztyn to an unknown correspondent, Warsaw, 23 January 1683 (*Morstina*, p. 355)

Les secretaires du marquis de Vitry sont gâtés.

Ochmann-Staniszevska tentatively identifies the recipient as Jean de Courtonne, Abbé de Paulmiers, previously a French agent in the *Rzeczpospolita*. See also p. 315. Helcel, the original editor of this letter, considered the identity of Morsztyn's correspondent to be uncertain. *Listy Jana Sobieskiego do żony Maryi Kazimiry*, ed. by Antoni Zygmunt Helcel (Kraków: Nakładem zapisu Świdzińskiego z Ordynacją Myszkowską, 1860), p. 430.

never anything more than a ploy to extricate himself from the king's presence and the hostile surroundings in which he found himself, in order to allow himself time to regroup.

In any event, the key to the cipher would not arrive at the Royal Castle as promised on the morning of 28 February. In its place, Morsztyn's wife Katarzyna appeared, claiming that she had burned the key without her husband's knowledge when she had heard the news of the mail hijackings in early February, fearing that writing in this method would arouse suspicions, and that some misfortune might befall her husband as a result.⁵⁴ Sobieski found her testimony to be rather less than compelling: her claims, it seems, were not at all helped by the fact that the court had obtained copies of Morsztyn's letters, written in cipher, which post-dated the alleged date of the burning.⁵⁵ He would continue to demand the delivery of the key in the days which followed.⁵⁶

In the aftermath of these events, the king appears to have allowed some word of the accusations against Morsztyn to trickle out into the public consciousness, in order that the circulating rumours as to the nature of his crimes might intensify the pressure on the intransigent treasurer to come clean. On the other hand, the alleged involvement of Vitry, Jabłonowski and Stanisław Lubomirski appears to have been deemed a matter of the utmost secrecy: public accusations of the involvement of the ambassador in a treason plot would, of course, trigger an unwanted diplomatic incident, whilst the two magnates were amongst the most important and influential men in the *Rzeczpospolita*, with the financial means and base of support to disrupt and perhaps even break the *sejm* to ensure their own preservation if they deemed it necessary. Pallavicini, it might be observed, would come to know of the king's audience with Morsztyn and the general thrust of their conversation within a day of it having taken place. Despite his wealth of connections, however, he appears to have remained unaware of the alleged involvement of these three men until after the king finally felt compelled to make

⁵⁴ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1879, pp. 132-5); Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1885, pp. 144-6); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

⁵⁵ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 28 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1879, pp. 132-5).

⁵⁶ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1887, pp. 149-50).

the entire conspiracy a matter of public record more than a fortnight later.⁵⁷ Krockow would report to Berlin on 11 March that Jabłonowski had informed him that Morsztyn's letter had discussed the election of a new king, and the lack of ability of Sobieski's children. The fact that the *hetman* had been willing to engage in such gossip strongly suggests that his own alleged involvement had not yet leaked publicly.⁵⁸ The obvious conclusion, although nowhere stated, is that the twelve senators whom the king had gathered were sworn to the utmost secrecy regarding these most sensitive details. If this assertion is correct, the fact that these details did not leak suggests that the king chose his confidantes remarkably well.⁵⁹

Although the two chambers of the *sejm* were still yet to gather together to approve the composition of the deputation to the imperial negotiations, a second conference with the Imperial ministers was held on 1 March. Progress was made in a few areas in the course of this session, including over the question of security for the faithful observance of the alliance, where the suggestion emanating from the delegation of the *Rzeczpospolita* of placing garrisons in Imperial territory was dropped; the two parties instead reached an agreement to beseech the pope to provide a guarantee to each party of the faithfulness of the other. The demands for some form of recompense to be given to the *Rzeczpospolita* were not forgotten, however; nor was the 1657 treaty. It was now proposed that the emperor should surrender back to the *Rzeczpospolita* a commitment he had received at that time, that the *szlachta* would never elect a candidate whom the emperor found displeasing as king. The Imperial ministers were obliged to reiterate the point that they had come to treat upon a matter of common defence, not to bargain for aid. As the session concluded, the Imperial ambassador expressed his frustration that such distractions had thus far prevented any detailed discussion of the main terms of an alliance, before attempting to focus minds on the task at hand by noting that the emperor had

⁵⁷ The nuncio first mentions the alleged involvement of Jabłonowski and Vitry in Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1917, pp. 185-6).

⁵⁸ Kamieński, p. 235; Konarski, p. 171.

⁵⁹ Cf. Deiches, p. 70, on this point, who suggests without nuance that the senators who were present on 27 February freely discussed the details of the case publicly.

only bound himself not to negotiate with the sultan during the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm*, the conclusion of which was now fast approaching.⁶⁰

These chidings did not have an immediate effect; the third conference, on 5 March, was to prove the most fruitless yet. The entire session was taken up with disputations over the particularly thorny matter of the division of the subsidies to be provided by the pope. The deputation from the *sejm* began by insisting – much as Sobieski had proposed through the terms of the draft agreement the previous September – that these should be given in their entirety to the *Rzeczpospolita*. The Imperial ministers maintained – as the emperor had responded in November – that these should be split equally. The session would end with no resolution in sight.⁶¹

Whilst these conferences were taking place, the Sapieha family continued to negotiate the terms by which they would formalise their attachment to French interests. Morsztyn, despite the king's accusations against him, would act in his usual role as intermediary. Evidently having been appraised by the Crown Grand Treasurer of his present difficulties, the danger money demanded by the brothers was considerable. The Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*, Kazimierz Jan, expected a payment of 12,000 *livres*, equal to that which had previously been given to Jabłonowski, his Polish counterpart; the Lithuanian Grand Treasurer, Benedykt Paweł, was content to accept the 6,000 *livres* previously offered; meanwhile, some provision should also be made for Franciszek Stefan, the Lithuanian Grand *Koniuszy* (Equerry) in the form of a payment or gift. The brothers also requested assurances from Louis of his protection, in the event that some misfortune should befall them as a result of their actions in his service. Vitry was well-inclined to divert the sum previously earmarked for Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, who seemed ever more closely attached to the royal court, into the pockets of the Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*.⁶²

In the *sejm* meanwhile, the adherents of the Sapieha family in the *izba poselska* had continued to frustrate any and all efforts to hold a productive debate on

⁶⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 3 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1886, pp. 146-9).

⁶¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1900, pp. 163-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 12 March (ANP VI, N. 1904, pp. 169-70).

⁶² Sawicki, p. 219; Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30).

defensive measures. In particular, they hit upon the tactic of repeatedly diverting the discussions back to the acrimonious subject of who should fill the post of *Kasztelan* of Wilno, which the king had earlier been obliged to leave vacant. These debates were every bit as pointless as they were contentious, given that the *sejm* ultimately had no right to decide upon the appointment, which remained solely within the royal gift. The king perceived the necessity of ending this game of brinksmanship and ensuring that the lower chamber would at least join with the Senate on the proper date – 6 March – in order that the deputation conducting the negotiations with the Imperial ministers might at last receive formal approval, and resolutions could be taken on matters of defence in joint sessions, under his watchful eye. On 4 March, therefore, he requested the senators to opine upon whether he should hold firm in his intention to appoint Ernest Denhoff to the vacant post. Receiving their unanimous approval, he called Leszczyński into his presence, informing the *Sejm* Marshal of the decision taken and commanding him to make the declaration in the lower chamber.⁶³ The astonished Sapieha partisans at first tried to propose that the *posłowie* should come to the senate immediately to hear – and protest – the king’s declaration, before returning to their own chamber to continue their deliberations. Upon being informed that it would be unconstitutional for the two chambers to separate again once they had united in this manner, the opposition were forced to weigh their competing interests. Ultimately, the Sapieha family appear to have deemed that allowing the appointment of Denhoff to go uncontested would pose so great a threat to their Lithuanian power base, that they were willing to risk the possibility that discussions on the subject of defence would progress more smoothly once the two chambers were joined together. The king’s approach ultimately proved well-judged: the opposition allowed the lower chamber to enter the senate at the proper time.⁶⁴

When the two chambers gathered together again on 6 March, the Sapieha partisans would find out quite how badly they had been outmanoeuvred by the king in this matter. The Crown Vice-Chancellor, Jan Krzysztof Gniński, made the

⁶³ Given that the king’s proposal received unanimous approval, it must be presumed that none of the Sapieha family were in attendance at this meeting. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1899, pp. 160-3)

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*; Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1901, pp. 166-7).

declaration *od tronu* of Denhoff's appointment, pointedly adding that all the oppositions to his elevation had been found to be frivolous. When four adherents of the Lithuanian *posłowie* arose to protest against his nomination, the support of the senators allowed the king to dismiss their complaints. Denhoff was able to take the senatorial oath, after which the king instructed Gniński to move on to other business. The next three days were spent in reading the draft *konstytucje* agreed by the *izba poselska*, each of which received the approval of the Senate.⁶⁵

Outside the *sejm*, meanwhile, the leading promoters of the Imperial alliance continued to work diligently to ensure that when the time came for that assembly to take a decision on that subject, the outcome would prove favourable.

Pallavicini would report that Waldstein had succeeded at last in disabusing the queen of the notion that the marriage between Prince Jakub and Archduchess Maria Antonia was attainable, noting also that 'the King, who is very prudent and foresees the difficulties better than the Queen [...] has not flattered himself with the hope, [and] has not changed anything in his working, as the Imperial ambassador and I have diligently observed'.⁶⁶ A few days later, on 11 March, Waldstein would receive a commitment from Krockow that Brandenburg-Prussia would look favourably upon an alliance between the emperor and the *Rzeczpospolita*.⁶⁷

The nuncio, meanwhile, had also spent his time working on those amongst the magnates who had previously shown themselves opposed to an Imperial alliance. He was assisted in his efforts by reiterating the time-limited nature of the emperor's commitment not to negotiate with the sultan, as well as by a piece of news brought by Sieniawski, the newly-appointed Crown Field *Hetman* and *Wojewoda* of Wółyń, who reported that a copy of the royal *legacja* to the *sejmiki przedsejmowe* held in the winter of 1682/3, bearing the royal seal, had been

⁶⁵ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 209; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1899, pp. 160-3).

⁶⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1897, pp. 158-9), p. 159:

Il Re, che è assai prudente e prevedeva le difficoltà meglio che la Regina [...] né si era lusingato con la speranza, non si è mutato niente nel suo operare, come habbiamo diligentemente osservato l'Ambasciatore dell'Imperatore et io.

Cf. Konarski, p. 176; Wimmer, p. 139; and Wójcik, p. 314, each of whom have erroneously suggested – as a result of a misreading of Pallavicini's letter – that the royal couple were unified in demanding a marriage between Jakub and Maria Antonia.

⁶⁷ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 12 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1904, pp. 169-70).

stolen and taken to the Ottoman garrison at Kamieniec.⁶⁸ This document had discussed the present weakness of the armed forces, the inadequate defences of Kraków and the king's preference for an aggressive response, amongst other matters of state.⁶⁹ The very real prospect that these details might now reach the ears of the sultan and Grand Vizir doubtless helped the nuncio's case that the *Rzeczpospolita* needed to take serious measures to ensure the security of its borders.

Finally, with electoral diplomacy showing itself little inclined to oppose an Imperial alliance, the king had at last succeeded in persuading Grzymułtowski to set aside his own objections, reaching a settlement through which the acquiescence of the *wojewoda* was purchased.⁷⁰

The fruits of all these labours would be seen when the senators and *posłowie* began unified deliberations on the subject of defence on 9 March. Pallavicini would report to Rome that the majority now expressed themselves to be favourable to the Imperial alliance. There were renewed proposals for the activation of the *skrypt do archiwum* from the 1678-9 *Sejm*, as Pieniżek and Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski had suggested in their *wota*, which would see the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* increased to 36,000 men. Grzymułtowski now gave a lengthy speech, in which he softened his stance from his earlier outspoken criticism of an Imperial alliance when giving his own *wota* at the beginning of February. Whilst he expressed concerns about the size of the proposed forces, considering them insufficient for the task at hand, as well as about the challenges of extracting the money which would be necessary to pay for a new Ottoman war, he now indicated his willingness to follow the will of the majority on the matter of the Imperial alliance. As the deliberations had not concluded by the evening of 10 March, when the ordinary six-week term of the *sejm* expired, and as that assembly had not yet heard the proceedings of the fourth conference with the

⁶⁸ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1901, pp. 166-7).

⁶⁹ *ARJ*, pp. 5-10.

⁷⁰ Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 177-8). Cf. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1866, pp. 117-9), in which the nuncio notes the need to satisfy the greed ('cupidigia') of Grzymułtowski.

Imperial ministers which had been taking place simultaneously, the decision was unanimously taken to extend the term by ten days.⁷¹

In the course of that day's negotiations – which once again revolved primarily around the demands of the deputation from the *Rzeczpospolita* – Waldstein and Zierowsky would make several concessions, including agreeing to the return of the aforementioned document restricting the freedom of the *szlachta* in future royal elections, as well as the cancellation of an outstanding debt which the emperor claimed was owed for his assistance during the war of 1655-60. They would also consent to a request from the Polish-Lithuanian delegation to provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with the sum of 200,000 thalers, equivalent to half the subsidies which the emperor had received so far, which would enable Poland-Lithuania to promptly raise the new levies which would be required to meet its military commitment, without first having to await the gathering of the *subsidium charitativum*. Without subsidies, this process would inevitably be a lengthy one; one of the *posłowie*, Wespazjan Sienicki, would prophesy 'sejmiki (relacyjne) in May, taxes in July, levies only in the fall'.⁷² It was agreed that if the pope should consent to impose the *decime* in Italy, the emperor would be reimbursed this sum out of the proceeds, the remainder of which were to be given entirely to the *Rzeczpospolita*. If not, the payment would be treated as a gift. In return, the *Rzeczpospolita* agreed to make no further claim upon any future subsidies given to the emperor, whilst the Imperials appear to have consented not to object to any appeals which the *Rzeczpospolita* made to the pope for further financial assistance.⁷³

When the results of this conference were presented before the *sejm* on 11 March, these concessions further tilted the balance of opinion in favour of pursuing the Imperial alliance. Indeed, the only vocal dissension came, once again, from a known adherent of the Sapieha family, who wilfully misinterpreted several of the agreed terms to cast them in the least favourable light.

⁷¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 and 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1899 and N. 1915, pp. 160-3 and 180-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1901, pp. 166-7).

⁷² Quoted in Kołodziej, "Ostatni", p. 484.

⁷³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1900, pp. 163-5).

Sobieski was under no illusion as to the true peril which these persistent disruptions on the part of Sapieha adherents signified. Although the groundswell of support in the *sejm* for the alliance with the emperor and war with the Ottomans was sufficiently strong to indicate that those who opposed these policies would not be capable of countering them in a fair fight, the threat that the *sejm* might still be broken by underhand means, as it had been in 1681, remained a potent one. From Vitry's intercepted letters, the king was well aware that the ambassador had orders from Louis to check the Imperial alliance through covert means. The latest of these letters, that of 5 March, had made plain that Vitry and the Sapieha family were close to formalising an alliance, that the Lithuanian magnates were to receive large sums of money for their services to France, and that they were also seeking Louis' protection if the Polish court should turn against them for their actions on his behalf. Moreover, despite the king's efforts to cow him into submission, it was clear that Morsztyn was continuing to act as an intermediary in these negotiations. This cabal now seemed to pose a clear and obvious threat, which would have to be dealt with if the *sejm* were to have any hope of concluding successfully.⁷⁴

For now, however, Sobieski played for time, seeking to gather more evidence for this inevitable confrontation, whilst also minimising the risk of further obstructionism in the *sejm* for the time being, at least until it could resolve upon whether to give its consent in principle to the Imperial alliance. In furtherance of both of these goals, the king would respond favourably to the requests of Morsztyn for a new private audience in which to justify himself. Despite the treasurer's continued efforts to further French interests, the rumours which the king had allowed to spread of his involvement in a conspiracy were taking a sufficiently heavy toll on his public standing to prompt him into attempting a reconciliation. When the treasurer came into the royal presence, also on 11 March, he would find the king in an almost inconceivably charitable frame of

⁷⁴ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 5 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 324-30). Sent to Berlin with private couriers for onward dispatch to France, this letter was intercepted despite never entering the postal system. The couriers were despoiled by hijackers, suggesting that the king had set a watch upon Vitry's personal interactions, as well as intercepting his postal consignments. Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 13 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 330-1).

mind, given the tenor of their recent interactions.⁷⁵ After hearing out Morsztyn's protestations of innocence, Sobieski informed him with apparent candour that he had no other evidence against him than the letter in cipher which he had produced previously. Moreover, he would even hint at a willingness to shift the weight of his accusations elsewhere, informing the treasurer that he had come into possession of several letters from Vitry to Louis XIV detailing a plan to dethrone him and raise up Jabłonowski in his place, and that he had only desired to have Morsztyn's letter deciphered to clarify whether or not the treasurer had been involved in Vitry's plotting. The king's new choice of approach brought some success. Morsztyn was sufficiently reassured that he now consented to decipher the intercepted letter for the king, although subsequent royal demands for the provision of the key indicate that the treasurer was not so beguiled as to provide him with his full counter-cipher.⁷⁶ Having been informed by Morsztyn of the escalation of Sobieski's accusations against him, Vitry would petition the king repeatedly over the next few days to grant him an audience. Sobieski would excuse himself on each occasion, pleading that the affairs of the *sejm* kept him too busy at present.⁷⁷

On 12 March, the *posłowie* gathered for provincial sessions, where the population declarations of the *województwa* and *ziemie* which would be used in the calculation of the *subsidiium charitativum* were read and agreed upon, at least on a regional level.⁷⁸ In a session of the full *sejm* that same evening, in the presence of both chambers, the king moved to have the acceptance in principle of the Imperial alliance proclaimed as being the common will. When it was asked whether anyone might have anything to say to the contrary, the redoubtable Przyjemski arose to insist upon further debate, since the breaking of a treaty with the greatest power in the world, the Ottoman Sultan, was no small matter. A final resolution was therefore postponed until the following day. On the morning of 13

⁷⁵ Deiches, p. 69, misdates this audience, suggesting that it took place immediately after Morsztyn's failure to deliver the key to his cipher on 28 February.

⁷⁶ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 13 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 330-1); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 12 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1904, pp. 169-70). Pallavicini suggests that more than one letter was deciphered on this occasion. Given that Morsztyn's close collaborator, Vitry, reports that the king had claimed in this audience to possess only one of Morsztyn's letters, this assertion must at least be considered doubtful.

⁷⁷ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 13 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 330-1).

⁷⁸ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 235.

March the agreement in principle upon the alliance was proclaimed by the *Sejm* Marshal. No further obstructions were raised.⁷⁹

The *sejm* would move on to discuss the number of troops to be raised by the *Rzeczpospolita* through a new *aukcja*. Swift progress was made, with a decision reached to set the size of the *komput* at 48,000 men – 36,000 from the Crown, 12,000 from the Grand Duchy – an effort similar to that adopted in 1673, following the Ottoman occupation of Podole.⁸⁰ The size of this *komput* – larger than that envisaged in the 1679 *skrypt do archiwum* upon which it was based – marked a concession towards the concerns which Grzymułtowski had recently expressed, and would be more than sufficient to cover the commitment of 40,000 men which it was envisaged would be required of the *Rzeczpospolita* by the terms of the alliance.

Turning then to discuss the *subsidiium charitativum*, the *sejm* reached a consensus unexpectedly quickly upon which of the old rates should be used in the calculations of the amounts to be levied. By the end of 15 March, the *sejm* was beginning the lengthy process – so often the cause of wrangling between the representatives of different parts of the *Rzeczpospolita* – of the reading, now before the entire assembly, of the population declarations to which the chosen rate would be applied.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the ongoing negotiations with the Imperial ministers over the minutiae of the alliance were already proving contentious. The fifth conference would be dogged by the question of security for the faithful observance of the league. This issue had, in fact, first arisen again in the previous session, with a proposal from the Polish-Lithuanian delegation that the emperor should swear an oath on this point to the *Rzeczpospolita* directly. The Imperial ministers, however, had strict instructions from Leopold not to concede upon this issue of status, which had not been part of the draft agreement formed the previous autumn. Pallavicini, perceiving that a flat refusal would immediately give rise to suspicions, advised the Imperials to state that the emperor would do so only if a precedent

⁷⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1915, pp. 180-2).

⁸⁰ Wimmer, pp. 142-3.

⁸¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1915, pp. 180-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1917, pp. 185-6); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 178-80).

could be found; otherwise, a papal guarantee made to each contracting party that the other would honour the terms of the agreement faithfully, as had previously been agreed, should suffice. The matter had been left at this point when that session ended.⁸²

In the intervening days, however, the Polish-Lithuanian delegation had been digging in the archives, and had found that Emperor Rudolf II had sworn an oath to uphold the terms of the Treaty of Bytom-Będzin of 1589. Their instructions obliged the Imperial ministers to make the weak protestation that only an oath given by the current emperor, not his predecessors, should be deemed to constitute a precedent. Unsurprisingly, this argument found no traction with the Polish-Lithuanian delegation, and only caused suspicions as to Leopold's motives to run rife amongst them. With the Imperial ministers likewise considering such suspicions to be a great insult to the emperor's honour, the two parties separated in great coldness, and negotiations appeared close to collapse.

Despite Sobieski's request for Nuncio Pallavicini to intercede to help find a route forwards, for several days all attempts to find a solution were rejected by one party or the other. Eventually, it was decided that another conference should be held under Pallavicini's mediation; to avoid unnecessary hostility, the two parties were to remain separated, whilst Pallavicini himself passed between them conveying propositions and responses. Proceeding in this manner, a compromise was eventually reached. The public text of the treaty would make no mention of any oath, but a secret article would be added in which this would be discussed.

At this point, sufficient common ground had been established between the two parties for the Polish-Lithuanian delegation to begin drawing up a draft of the treaty. Pallavicini and the Imperial ministers meanwhile, knowing that persuading the emperor to give an oath directly to the *Rzeczpospolita* was likely to remain impossible, came before the king and his ministers with the proposal that oaths should instead be given into the hands of the pope by representatives of each contracting party. Accompanied by the argument that a guarantee in this manner was all the more appropriate for a Holy League made for the defence of the faith,

⁸² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 and 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1900 and N. 1916, pp. 163-5 and 182-4).

the proposal met with approval, although it would still need to find the same favour with the men who comprised the deputation from the *sejm*.⁸³

The fall of Morsztyn and isolation of Vitry

By the middle of March, the *sejm* had reached agreements upon the desire to conclude an alliance with the emperor and the size of the new *komput* which would be needed, the debates over the *subsidiium charitativum* were progressing well – albeit now reaching what was likely to be the most contentious stage – and the text of the alliance treaty was under preparation. Sobieski now deemed the time right for a decisive confrontation with the two leading representatives of French interests, Morsztyn and Vitry, seeking either to bring them at last to heel or – as perhaps seemed the more likely – to so firmly establish their actions as rooted in bad faith, that any attempt which they might make to arrange for the exercise of the *liberum veto* would prove impossible to sustain against the will, and indeed the outrage, of the majority in the *sejm*.⁸⁴ His line of attack would be to publicly charge both the treasurer and the ambassador with having conducted treasonous correspondence, on the basis of their conversations with Jabłonowski over the succession to the Polish throne.

On 14 March, the day after the *sejm* gave its approval in principle to the alliance with the emperor, the king summoned into his presence the Bishop of Warmia, Michał Stefan Radziejowski, his counterparts from Łuck and Kamieniec, Jan Stanisław Witwicki and Stanisław Wojeński, and an unnamed Capuchin priest. Informing these four men that he had received notice of a conspiracy against the king and the *Rzeczpospolita*, he first extracted an oath from them to publish nothing of what he was proposing to reveal to them, beyond what he himself might explicitly permit. After this oath was given, the king produced several months' worth of the letters of both Vitry and Morsztyn, and requested the four

⁸³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1916, pp. 182-4).

⁸⁴ The latter was Buonvisi's interpretation of Sobieski's motives, when he was subsequently informed by Pallavicini of the king's actions against the French party. Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 29 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1948, pp. 218-20).

men to adjudge which of them constituted the *corpus delicti* (body of the crime). A total of four letters were identified.⁸⁵

The most plausible reading of the accounts of what happened next – each of which contains different details, as well as conflicts in their timeline of events – is that before presenting these charges to Morsztyn and Vitry, Sobieski chose to inform Jabłonowski of what was about to happen, and completely absolved the *hetman* of complicity in their scheming, despite the knowledge that he had engaged with both men in conversations regarding the succession.

There are several factors which, when taken together, might explain the king's promptness in absolving the *hetman*. The first is that, unlike Morsztyn, Jabłonowski was five years younger than Sobieski; his participation in succession planning did not, therefore, bear the same implication that he had envisaged displacing the king from the throne within his natural lifespan. Whilst Sobieski was certainly less than thrilled that his old comrade-in-arms harboured hopes of contending with Prince Jakub for the crown after his death, there was no evidence of a crime here. The second is that, unlike Morsztyn, Jabłonowski had advocated publicly for the merits of the alliance with the emperor in his *wota*, whilst his adherents amongst the *posłowie* – including the *Sejm* Marshal Rafał Leszczyński – appear to have likewise acted in the public interest, refraining from engaging in obstructionism. The third, and likely the most crucial, however, is the fact that although the relationship between the two men had been tested in recent months, Sobieski would have known, from reading the letters of Vitry and Morsztyn, that Jabłonowski had learned the lesson from his previous exposure of politically sensitive information to the Elector of Brandenburg in 1677, never revealing to them his knowledge of the negotiations over the draft alliance agreement which the king had undertaken with Zierowsky in the autumn of 1682.⁸⁶ Had the existence of these negotiations been exposed, not only would the French have been able to stir up widespread opposition to the Imperial alliance, but the violation of the liberty of the *szlachta* which Sobieski's actions represented would have put his tenure on the throne at risk. Despite what he may

⁸⁵ 'De eis, quae diebus 14–17 III a. 1683 Varsaviae facta sunt' (ANP VI, A. 10, pp. 487-90).

⁸⁶ Wagner, pp. 70-1

have claimed to Morsztyn and Vitry, Jabłonowski had been no devoted servant of France, and Sobieski was well aware of this fact.

The three bishops subsequently requested the presence of Vitry at one of the monasteries in Warsaw. The ambassador would report that when he arrived, he found that alongside the bishops, a group of around a dozen senators were gathered there, including both Morsztyn and Jabłonowski. Radziejowski would be the first to speak. As he was laying out the accusations and evidence against Vitry, however, the ambassador would interrupt him, stating that he had not come to be placed on trial, or to give an account of his conduct, which he owed to his king alone. After a short declaration of his innocence of the central charge of conspiring to place Jabłonowski on the throne, he departed from that place. Radziejowski then moved on to detailing the charges against Morsztyn; Jabłonowski may also have spoken against him at this time. The treasurer at first declared his innocence; his protestations were halted, however, by the words of one of the bishops, who finally revealed the fact that the king had been opening and copying the contents of his letters for several months, at which point the crestfallen Morsztyn sued for the clemency of the king.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ The reader will forgive the inclusion of an extended discussion here of the main differences between the two accounts which discuss the events which took place behind closed doors on 14 and 15 March, as well as the attempts made here to reconcile them. The author of an anonymous account of the events of 14-17 March suggests that Vitry and Morsztyn were confronted twice over consecutive days, first on 14 March in an unstated location by the three bishops, then on 15 March at the aforementioned monastery by Jabłonowski and several of his friends. Before this second confrontation, the Crown Grand Hetman was apparently granted an audience with the king, in which he was privately shown the contents of the letters in question and seems to have been exonerated from involvement in any crime by the king. 'De eis, quae diebus 14-17 III a. 1683 Varsaviae facta sunt' (ANP VI, A. 10, pp. 487-90). The account of Vitry, however, only mentions one confrontation, taking place at the monastery, where the bishops, Jabłonowski, and several other senators had been present. Given Vitry's status as a participant, it seems reasonable to accept his account that there was only one confrontation, and to suggest that the anonymous author perhaps mistakenly split the events of that singular confrontation into two. Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 19 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 338-41).

The reason given for Jabłonowski's presence during this confrontation differs significantly between the two accounts. Vitry's initial assumption was that the *hetman*, like himself and Morsztyn, had been summoned to the monastery to be confronted by the bishops and other senators who were present, a picture which is difficult to reconcile with the understanding of the anonymous account that Jabłonowski had himself sought to confront Vitry and Morsztyn at the monastery in the company of his friends. Vitry's assumption here is probably mistaken. It should be noted that whilst Vitry moves on to discuss the interrogation which he and, after his departure, Morsztyn were subjected to, the same

Sobieski had other ideas. On the morning of 16 March, he summoned a wider group of confidantes, conferring with them regarding how to proceed for several hours. The decision ultimately taken was that the treasurer should be called before the session of the *sejm* that day to answer to the charges against him, initiating several days of turmoil. Pallavicini, whose letters make plain his concerns regarding the king's choice of approach, fearing that handling the situation in so public a manner would itself trigger the breaking of the *sejm*, would begin his report to Rome of the events which then took place with the following words: 'Most furious and most perilous was the storm which has shaken the *sejm* from Tuesday [16 March] to Saturday [20 March]'.⁸⁸

The senators and *posłowie* gathered together in the Senate chamber for a closed session on the afternoon on 16 March, anticipating the continuation of the population declarations which would underpin the *subsidium charitativum*. Instead, the Crown Vice-Chancellor, Jan Krzysztof Gniński, arose to speak. Before the misdeeds of the treasurer and the ambassador were addressed directly, Gniński first set out to establish the stakes, reading a letter which the king had recently received from Proski, the resident in Constantinople, reporting upon the massive Ottoman armaments which were under preparation for the coming campaign. After observing that all deliberations upon the stance which the *Rzeczpospolita* might take to this overwhelming threat would be rendered useless unless the disunity which was being sown within it could be extinguished, Gniński

does not occur in the case of Jabłonowski. Indeed, the presence of the *hetman* amongst the assembled is not even mentioned again in the account of the ambassador. The apparent disinterest of that gathering in interrogating Jabłonowski is likely best interpreted as an indication that he and the king had already cleared the air between them prior to the confrontation taking place, as the anonymous account suggests. Jabłonowski's attendance at the monastery is, therefore, best interpreted as his own choice, made for the purpose of hearing how Vitry and Morsztyn would respond to the charges against them in this matter which had already affected him deeply. If he personally spoke against either of the two accused men during that assembly, as the anonymous account suggests, it must be assumed that this only occurred after the abrupt departure of Vitry, since the ambassador's report does not mention it. Likewise, the anonymous account is the source for Morsztyn's appeal for the clemency of the king. Vitry, by his own testimony, had already left the monastery prior to the interrogation of Morsztyn.

⁸⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1928, pp. 193-6), p. 193.

Furiosissima e periculosissima è stata la tempesta che ha agitata la Dieta dal dì di Martedì sino al Sabato.

The nuncio's earlier objections to this choice of approach are noted in Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 10 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1897, pp. 158-9).

sat. The Bishop of Warmia, Michał Stefan Radziejowski then arose, producing the intercepted letters of Vitry and Morsztyn and reading a series of incriminating excerpts, which were abridged and contextualised in such a way as to enhance the perception amongst the audience that treachery had been committed. These were supplemented by the contents of a letter from the Graf von Mansfeld, the Imperial ambassador in Paris, to Waldstein, in which Morsztyn was described as a slave to Louis XIV, who had boasted to the French court that he would dissuade Sobieski from an Imperial alliance through bribery. When the treasurer attempted to defend himself, he was drowned out by clamours demanding that he leave the senatorial seat which he occupied and stand instead in the middle of the chamber as an accused party.⁸⁹

The other magnates who were identified in these letters were granted every opportunity to distance themselves from Morsztyn and Vitry. Jabłonowski declared that he wore his *szabla* (sabre) for the service of the king and the *Rzeczpospolita*, as he had proven many times, as well as to defend his own honour. He stated boldly that he would use it again now against Vitry, if he did not bear the character of ambassador, whilst Morsztyn's treachery was too base to merit even that response. He would conclude by imploring that the justice of the king and the *Rzeczpospolita* should be enacted against both men. The Crown Grand Marshal, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, who was mentioned in the letters as having been newly gained as a French supporter as a result of the French-mediated commitment from Thököly that the marshal's properties in Spisz would be left unmolested by the Hungarian rebels, would admit that he had written to Louis XIV on this subject, but claimed that his loyalty was not so easily gained, and certainly not for so small a price. Even the Sapieha family, who in recent days been making ever greater demands of Vitry for their entry into French service – the latest quoted figure had been 30,000 *livres*, to be divided between the brothers as they saw fit – would declare their public disdain for France. Kazimierz Jan made a great show of asking permission from the king to challenge Vitry to a duel. His brothers would exculpate themselves in a markedly more restrained manner. With the time already late, the examination was halted that

⁸⁹ Deiches, pp. 73-4, 75-6; Konarski, p. 172. Several summaries of the cited passages were produced. Cf. 'Notata ex litteris praefecti magni aerarii Regni et legati Francogallici' (ANP VI, A. 9, pp. 485-7); 'Copia Literarum...' (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 331-3).

evening, with the intention that Morsztyn himself should be heard when they resumed the following day.⁹⁰

Overnight, Morsztyn and his adherents worked desperately to rally support for his position; rumours circulated suggesting he had distributed several thousand thalers amongst the Lithuanian *posłowie*.⁹¹ The entirety of the next three days were consumed with fervent debates upon the treasurer's guilt or innocence, whether he should be tried, and what would constitute due process in this case.⁹² At points, some of those who were present 'exceeded, with words and with deeds, the limits of moderation which are appropriate in that place', as Pallavicini tactfully put it.⁹³

Eventually, a compromise was reached on the morning of 20 March, finally allowing the matter to be set to one side. The trial would be postponed until the next *sejm*. In the meantime, the king and senate were permitted to hand down a provisional judgment intended to prevent Morsztyn from further intriguing. This deprived him of his office, excluded him from attending meetings of the senate council, and obligated him not to break the deliberations of the present *sejm*. He was also required to produce the key to his cipher within eight weeks and raise several hundred soldiers at his own expense as proof of his obedience to the *Rzeczpospolita*, amongst other conditions. The terms were accepted on behalf of Jan Andrzej by his kinsmen Władysław and Stanisław Morsztyn, and his son-in-law Kazimierz Bieliński. Jan Andrzej, meanwhile, remained out of the public eye at his house in Warsaw for several weeks.⁹⁴ The king took a further measure around this same time to try to ensure that the *sejm* could not be broken in French interests.

⁹⁰ Deiches, pp. 86-7; Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1917, pp. 185-6); 'De eis, quae diebus 14-17 III a. 1683 Varsaviae facta sunt' (ANP VI, A. 10, pp. 487-90). The latest sums demanded by the Sapieha family are noted in Sawicki, p. 219; Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 13 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 334-7).

⁹¹ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 347.

⁹² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1928, pp. 193-6); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1929, pp. 196-8); 'De eis, quae diebus 14-17 III a. 1683 Varsaviae facta sunt' (ANP VI, A. 10, pp. 487-90).

⁹³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1928, pp. 193-6), p. 194:

con parole e con fatti, passò i limiti della moderazione che conveniva al luogo.

⁹⁴ Deiches, pp. 83-4; Konarski, pp. 174-5; Wimmer, p. 139; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1936, p. 207); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 24 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1941, pp. 213-4); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 7 and 14 April 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 182-3 and 183-4).

Bankers in Warsaw were forbidden, on pain of death, from lending money to the French embassy.⁹⁵

After unanimous approval was given to a further extension to the term of the *sejm*, the members of that assembly then turned to discuss their response to the involvement of Vitry in this affair. The first resolution taken was the adoption of *konstytucja* which permitted foreign envoys to remain in the *Rzeczpospolita* for a maximum of three weeks, requiring them to present their proposals promptly and depart once negotiations were concluded.⁹⁶ This was accompanied that same day by the production of two letters to Louis XIV requesting the recall of Vitry to France on behalf of the monarch and senate respectively.⁹⁷ The ambassador, meanwhile, would follow the lead of Morsztyn in withdrawing himself from public life, apparently living in fear for his safety given the public outcry over his involvement in this affair.⁹⁸

Krockow, reporting on these events to Berlin, would draw the elector's attention to the fact that Sobieski had made every effort to prevent Brandenburg from becoming embroiled in the scandal. The envoy noted that the parts of Vitry's correspondence which had discussed the recent negotiations between Brandenburg and the Sapieha family had been omitted entirely when the contents of the ambassador's letters were read in the *sejm*. Moreover, Sobieski had taken no steps to publicly address a highly compromising letter written by one of the agents of the elector in Warsaw, Johann Heinrich Berrenhauer, which had been intercepted alongside those of Vitry and Morsztyn in early February. The contents of this letter had contained slander directed at the Polish monarch, as well as the suggestion, likely prompted by the strong anti-Brandenburg sentiments which had been circulating in the early weeks of the *sejm*, that Friedrich Wilhelm should contemplate the necessity of inducing a break. With

⁹⁵ Konarski, p. 180.

⁹⁶ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 393. Although this *konstytucja* passed into law, its requirements were not respected in future *sejmy*. The post of papal nuncio was specifically exempted, as Pallavicini made a point of noting. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1928, pp. 193-6).

⁹⁷ Sobieski to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 20 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 342-3); Konstanty Samuel Lipski, Archbishop of Lwów, in the name of the senate, to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 20 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 343-4).

⁹⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1927, pp. 192-3); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 31 March, 7 and 14 April 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 182, 182-3 and 183-4)

Sobieski giving ever clearer indications of his good intentions towards the elector, Friedrich Wilhelm remained firmly disinclined to fight against the tide of popular opinion in the *sejm* in favour of an Imperial alliance.⁹⁹

The conclusion of the Imperial alliance

It was only on 21 March that the *sejm* resumed its normal order of business, although little immediate progress was made on the outstanding matters regarding the defence of the *Rzeczpospolita*. A similar sense of inertia pervaded the sixth conference between the Polish-Lithuanian delegation and the Imperial ministers, Waldstein and Zierowsky, which took place that same day. The draft text of the alliance being produced by the former was not yet ready for inspection, meaning only matters of lesser importance could be discussed.¹⁰⁰ The following day – after prompting from the Imperial diplomats – the king, queen and nuncio would all exert themselves to try to engender a greater sense of focus. Their efforts met with some success. The *posłowie* would organise a series of provincial sessions in the last ten days of March to deliberate their final decision upon the proposed alliance. These were interspersed with the resumption of the population declarations in the joint sessions of the two chambers.¹⁰¹

The seventh conference with the Imperial ministers, held on 25 March, also saw progress. Although the draft of the treaty was still not ready for inspection, the Imperial proposal that both contracting parties should place oaths into the hands of the pope to maintain the terms of the league faithfully was now set before the Polish-Lithuanian delegation. Once it was demonstrated to them that such a proposal would only enhance the solemnity of the alliance made, without binding the emperor to give oaths in the future when forming alliances of a purely secular nature, the greater part now allowed their concerns to be assuaged.

⁹⁹ Kamieński, pp. 234, 237-40. Berrenhauer's suggestion was likely prompted by the strong anti-Brandenburg sentiments which were circulating in the early weeks of the *sejm*.

¹⁰⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1938, pp. 210-1).

¹⁰¹ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", pp. 229, 237; Wimmer, pp. 143, 177-8; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 24 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1937, pp. 207-10); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 24 March 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 180-1).

On the morning of 26 March, Pallavicini came before the king bearing two letters newly arrived from Rome. Addressed by Innocent XI to the senators and to the *posłowie* respectively, these letters contained the pope's exhortations for the *Rzeczpospolita* to give its consent to a Holy League with the emperor. The enthusiastic approval of the Polish monarch having been secured, the nuncio passed the letters to Jan Małachowski, Bishop of Kraków and to Rafał Leszczyński, the *Sejm* Marshal, in order that those men might read them publicly that day to their addressees.¹⁰² This having been done, a deputation of 4 senators and 6 *posłowie*, led by Małachowski and Grzymułtowski, was dispatched to seek further clarifications from the papal nuncio. In the course of this audience, it became evident that the reading of the papal letters had produced an unfortunate, and apparently unforeseen, side-effect. Innocent's vigorous advocacy of an alliance between Poland-Lithuania and the emperor, together with the reinforcement of the papal message offered by Pallavicini during this meeting, prompted the deputation to ask direct questions – apparently for the first time during the course of the 1683 *Sejm* – about the pope's intentions regarding the provision of financial assistance to the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event of an Ottoman war.

Pallavicini was now placed in a deeply uncomfortable position. Although Innocent XI had offered commitments regarding a subsidy of 500,000 florins plus the proceeds of the *decime* in Italy in both 1679 and 1681, and although the nuncio had been advocating for the past several months in his letters to Rome regarding the need to support the *Rzeczpospolita* in the event that the Imperial alliance was concluded, the most recent guidance which he had received on this matter from Rome had made it quite clear that there was no money available at present for Poland-Lithuania, since the pope was intent upon providing all possible assistance to the emperor directly.¹⁰³ Only adding to the nuncio's difficulties were the orders he had received in recent months regarding the first 100,000 florins of the

¹⁰² Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 282; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1952, pp. 224-31). The two letters in question have been edited and published. See: Innocent XI to the Senatorial Order of the *Rzeczpospolita*, Rome, 27 February 1683 (Berthier, II, p. 75); Innocent XI to the Equestrian Order of the *Rzeczpospolita*, Rome, 27 February 1683 (Berthier, II, pp. 75-6).

¹⁰³ Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 20 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1859, p. 107). The nuncio would confirm his receipt of this letter in: Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1914, p. 179). Sobieski had, in all probability, been made aware of the pope's intentions independently; Cybo informed Pallavicini that Innocent's reasoning had been elucidated to the Polish monarch's representative in Rome, Abbot Jan Kazimierz Denhoff.

proposed subsidy, which had been sent to Warsaw in 1680 for immediate dispersal in the event of an outbreak of war, and had remained there since.¹⁰⁴ This sum was now to be sent to Buonvisi in Vienna to assist the Imperial war effort.¹⁰⁵ Buonvisi and Pallavicini initially agreed between themselves upon the necessity of this money remaining in Warsaw, at least whilst alliance negotiations were ongoing.¹⁰⁶ The emperor, however, had subsequently ordered that it should be placed at the disposal of Waldstein immediately, for use in raising the mercenary force to be commanded by Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski.¹⁰⁷ Although Waldstein and Pallavicini had structured the handover as a loan per the advice of Buonvisi, and had attempted to keep the matter quiet, Pallavicini would report that news of Innocent's initial order had leaked into the public consciousness, creating a perception that the pope was withdrawing his support from the *Rzeczpospolita* at the precise moment when it was needed most. All he was able to do in response to the questions of the deputation was evade, telling them that Innocent had thus far declared subsidies only for the emperor, and that other than this, he did not know the pope's mind.¹⁰⁸ At this, one of the *posłowie*, identified by Pallavicini as the Crown Quartermaster-General – a man who was thus particularly well placed to understand both the needs of the army and the mindset of the soldiery – interjected, protesting that 'the *szlachta* was ready to shed its blood, spending it for the faith, but that it was necessary that they might be certain of being succoured, the Kingdom being unable to bear so much weight by itself'.¹⁰⁹ Conscious of the need not to let such sentiments dissipate, the nuncio attempted to leave the deputation with a message of hope, reminding them of the support which Innocent and his predecessors had always provided in such circumstances,

¹⁰⁴ ANP VI, p. 5, n. 3.

¹⁰⁵ Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 16 January 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1789, pp. 30-1).

¹⁰⁶ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 17 February 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1854, pp. 103-5); Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 1 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1880, pp. 135-7).

¹⁰⁷ Buonvisi to Pallavicini, Vienna, 14, 14 and 15 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1911, N. 1912 and N. 1913, pp. 174-5, 175-6 and 176-9).

¹⁰⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1952, pp. 224-31); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1956, pp. 235-6). Cf. Konarski, p. 184, who presents Pallavicini's reasons for acting in this manner as a mystery.

¹⁰⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1952, pp. 224-31), p. 226.

la nobiltà era pronta a spargere il sangue, spendendolo per la fede, ma che bisognava fosse certa d'esser soccorsa, non potendo portare il Regno tanto peso da se solo.

and urging them to have confidence that the Holy Father would recognise them in their need.

When the deputation returned to the *sejm* with these answers, however, the effect appears to have been deleterious. Gniński would inform Pallavicini that the spirits of even those who had been the most fervent supporters of the alliance had been seen to cool, accompanying this message with a lengthy discourse upon the need for papal subsidies, in which he reminded the nuncio that many in the *Rzeczpospolita* understood the promise made by Innocent XI in 1679, and repeated in 1681, to be a standing commitment.¹¹⁰ Vitry would likewise report on 28 March that there had seemed to be less enthusiasm for the Imperial alliance in the *sejm* for the past few days.¹¹¹ The nuncio, fearing that those who still did not favour the union with the emperor would use this as a pretext to oppose themselves to it when the draft of the treaty was read before the *sejm*, would spend the next several days working desperately to prevent this matter from causing the complete collapse of the alliance negotiations. Reporting his actions in the final days of March to Rome, he would offer no specifics of the actions which he had taken, volunteering only that his exertions had left him in a state of great anxiety and distress.¹¹²

The Imperial ministers, meanwhile, were growing increasingly frustrated at the delay in presenting the draft of the treaty for the approval of the *sejm*. Suspecting that this might be motivated by a desire to ensure that the Crimean Tatars were well on their way towards Hungary before news that an alliance had been concluded could reach them, they now threatened to withdraw from the commitment to provide 200,000 thalers to the *Rzeczpospolita* to assist it in entering the field promptly, noting that further delays would see the dissipation of any advantage that the emperor might hope to derive from this payment, and

¹¹⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1952, pp. 224-31).

¹¹¹ Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 28 March 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 344-8). Cf. Wimmer, p. 140, on this point, who argues that Vitry's conception of the mood in the *sejm* at this time was probably based more on the opposition pamphlets circulating in Warsaw than on a genuine understanding of the mindset of the men who comprised that assembly. Given that Vitry's reading of the situation seems entirely in keeping with that presented by Gniński to Pallavicini, Wimmer may have overestimated the degree of Vitry's isolation at this time.

¹¹² Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1952, pp. 224-31).

suggesting that perhaps the money could be better employed in raising troops elsewhere.¹¹³

It was only on the evening of 31 March that Crown Vice-Chancellor Gniński was deputed to read the draft text of the treaty before the two chambers of the *sejm* for their approval.

The overarching structure of the alliance had changed little from the agreement which had been hammered out by Sobieski and Zierowsky – and subsequently approved by Leopold – in the course of the previous autumn. The emperor remained obliged to put 60,000 soldiers into the field; Poland-Lithuania 40,000. The Imperial forces were still expected to operate in Hungary; those of the *Rzeczpospolita* in Podole and Ukraine, with an exchange of resident military officers agreed to ensure good communication between the two. Meanwhile, the clause around the provision of mutual support in the event the Ottoman forces were thrown exclusively against one party was modified slightly, so as to apply only in the event that Vienna or Kraków were besieged. Each party agreed not to make peace without the consent of the other.

There was, of course, greater innovation around the more peripheral matters which had been the subject of much of the deliberation during the conferences held in recent weeks. On the thorny subject of papal financial support, a clause was included noting that the pope would encourage the *Rzeczpospolita* in this holy war ‘with promised favours of subsidies’, a statement which clearly exceeded the weak commitments which Pallavicini had been able to give to the deputation sent by the *sejm*. On the other hand, explicit mention of the previous papal commitment to provide a subsidy of 500,000 florins was at least avoided.¹¹⁴ As for the *decime*, if Innocent opted to impose it, the proceeds were to be given in their entirety to Poland-Lithuania. Moreover, the emperor was obliged to make representations to his kinsman, Carlos II of Spain, that he might offer no obstruction to its imposition in the Spanish-owned Italian territories of Naples and

¹¹³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 31 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1954, pp. 232-4).

¹¹⁴ ‘Foedus offensivum et defensivum...’ (ARJ, pp. 63-70), p. 67.

favoribus subsidiorum promissis.

Pallavicini would nonetheless take issue with the construction here when he was subsequently able to read the text of the treaty. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1975, pp. 251-5).

Milan. Further clauses were included confirming that the emperor would provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with the agreed subsidy to assist with the prompt raising of its armies, alongside returning the document limiting the freedom of royal elections which he had extracted in return for his aid in 1657 and cancelling the old debt dating from that same time. Moreover, another clause was included, allowing for the incorporation of other parties into the alliance in the future if both parties desired it, with the potential involvement of Russia envisaged in particular.¹¹⁵ Finally, on the question of security, it was agreed that oaths were to be given by the contracting parties into the hands of the pope by means of their respective Cardinal-Protectors, Carlo Barberini for the *Rzeczpospolita* and Carlo Pio de Savoia for the emperor.¹¹⁶

The Imperial ministers had spared no expense to persuade people of influence within the *Rzeczpospolita* to lend their support to the alliance. In total, more than 50,000 guilders were distributed amongst the senators and *posłowie* during the *sejm*. Amongst the notable recipients were Benedykt Paweł Sapieha and Krzysztof Grzymułtowski, who each received 3,600; Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski – 7,200; Mikołaj Hieronim Sieniawski – 3,000; Jan Krzysztof Gniński – 3,000; Andrzej and Feliks Kazimierz Potocki – a total of 12,000; Marcjan Aleksander and Jan Jacek Ogiński – a total of 3,000; and the *Sejm* Marshal, Rafał Leszczyński – 1,200. This total did not include the regular remuneration for Jabłonowski, who received 12,000 guilders in June 1683 – apparently a one-off increase to his normal pension of 4,000 thalers – as well as the payments which Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski would receive as commander of the mercenary force which was to enter Imperial service.¹¹⁷

The outlay was not in vain. With no objection arising from amongst those who were present, the *sejm* gave its consent in full to the Imperial alliance that same evening. Pallavicini would write to Rome of this outcome, which at several points

¹¹⁵ This clause had been inserted at the prompting of Pallavicini, who feared that the arrival of ambassadors from Russia, who were expected before the end of the *sejm*, would otherwise lead to further delay in the negotiation and signing of the alliance. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 17 March 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1915, pp. 180-2).

¹¹⁶ 'Foedus offensivum et defensivum...' (ARJ, pp. 63-70).

¹¹⁷ Kamieński, p. 240; Konarski, p. 158; 'Verzeichniss der geheimen ausserordentlichen Ausgaben der polnischen Gesandtschaft' (ARJ, pp. 99-100).

had seemed to him almost beyond reach, with the words 'Beyond the hope, but not beyond the endeavour put into this, [the alliance] was approved by all'.¹¹⁸

The end of the *sejm*

The alliance would not have force of law, however, until the *sejm* could be concluded peacefully. Before this could happen, a final agreement still needed to be reached on how the burden of the *subsidiium charitativum* would be apportioned across the *Rzeczpospolita*. Moreover, an issue would arise over the precise wording of the treaty when the formal copies were presented to the Imperial ministers for signing at the Royal Castle on the morning of 1 April. Having at first been pressured to provide a quick signature, Waldstein and Zierowsky insisted upon receiving time to review the minutiae, which they had not yet seen. Upon doing so, they discovered that the deputation from the *Rzeczpospolita* had found their own means of ameliorating, at least in part, the shortfall arising from the lack of a firm commitment regarding papal subsidies to Poland-Lithuania. The article discussing the subsidy of 200,000 thalers which the emperor was to provide had been amended, removing the condition that the emperor should be reimbursed this sum from the proceeds of the *decime* in Italy, if the pope decided to grant this to the *Rzeczpospolita*. When they protested this variation to their Polish-Lithuanian counterparts, who had assembled themselves for the signing – including Gniński, who had been responsible for drawing up the formal copies – they were met first with claims not to remember the existence of such a condition, then with the blunt and repeated insistence that if the alliance was truly desired by the emperor, the treaty would need to be signed as it stood. A subsequent attempt at pleading their case before the king proved almost as fruitless: he was willing to offer a verbal commitment that the subsidy would be reimbursed, but nonetheless insisted that the alliance should be signed as written, since this was the form to which the *sejm* had given its approval. After a disputation lasting almost six hours, in which the threat that the alliance would collapse if the matter was returned to the *sejm* for further debate was impressed upon them strongly, the Imperial ministers eventually gave way on this point,

¹¹⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1975, pp. 251-5), p. 251.
sopra la speranza non già sopra lo studio postosi in ciò, fu da tutti approvata.

consenting to affix their signatures to the treaty as it had been presented to them.¹¹⁹

In the wake of the signing of the treaty however, the *sejm* would stand virtually paralysed for nearly a fortnight, requiring several further extensions of the term of the *sejm*, each one more perilous than the last because of the risk, as in 1681, that someone would use the delay as a pretext to exercise their *liberum veto*. The primary problem remained the computation which would govern the 'voluntary contributions' to be made by the *województwa*. On the basis of the initial declarations given towards the end of March, the total expected yield of the *subsidium charitativum* fell far short of the sums which would be necessary to maintain the 40,000 troops they had just committed to raising through the treaty with the emperor, let alone the 48,000 envisaged by the *komput* which had been agreed. Only one *województwo* – Poznań – had declared an increase in its tax liability proportional to the planned growth in the armed forces. Indeed, the total sum declared in March was insufficient to cover even the debts which the *Rzeczpospolita* had accrued towards the existing standing army.¹²⁰

Sobieski now pushed the *województwa* to commit to an increase in the sums which they would volunteer sufficient to support the army until the gathering of the next *sejm*, which should assemble at the beginning of 1685. Whilst the need to remedy the shortfall was inescapable, the usual debates raged, day after day, upon the question of which regions should bear the brunt of the responsibility for raising the missing amount. The spectre of a break was raised at several points, with protests arising from the *posłowie* from Mazowsze against the size of the tax burden and from the entirety of Lithuania against a proposal that foreign subsidies should be delivered in their entirety to the Crown army, before each was persuaded to restore the chamber to a state of *activitas*.¹²¹

The promoters of the Imperial alliance used every recourse available to them to attempt to end the deadlock, and prevent the *sejm* from breaking entirely. The rumour began circulating in Warsaw – disseminated by the royal court – that in

¹¹⁹ Konarski, p. 181; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1975, pp. 251-5).

¹²⁰ Konarski, pp. 178, 184; Wimmer, p. 143.

¹²¹ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 424; Wimmer, p. 143; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1975, pp. 251-5); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 182-3).

the event a break was sustained, the king intended to summon the *pospolite ruszenie* to arms, place himself at its head, and, through a *sejm konny* (horseback *sejm*), judge the perpetrators the breaking. Vitry would report that the king had even gone so far, on the evening of 5 April, as to order Gniński to draw up the universal letters ordering the *szlachta* to assemble, in order that they would be ready for immediate dispatch across the *Rzeczpospolita* if it proved necessary.¹²² Pallavicini, meanwhile, had explored another means of bridging the shortfall, appealing to the leading clergymen of the kingdom to maintain soldiers at their own expense. By mid-April, he had extracted commitments, some of them sizeable, from fourteen of these men.¹²³

It was only on the evening of 14 April when, with an agreement upon the apportionment of the *subsidium charitativum* having at last been reached, the *sejm* was in a position to begin the final readings of all the agreed *konstytucje*, including the *skrypt do archiwum* which would govern the military and foreign policy of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Almost immediately, however, a series of protestations were raised by the Lithuanian *posłowie*, in which the hands of the Sapieha family can be seen. Amongst the litany of demands which they made were the shortening of the period of service for newly-raised regiments, a reduction in the commitment to be provided by the Grand Duchy from 12,000 to 10,000 soldiers, the receipt by the Grand Duchy of a third of all foreign subsidies (despite Lithuania providing only a quarter of the armed forces of *Rzeczpospolita*), limitations upon the king's ability to call the *pospolite ruszenie*, the provision of a separate *skrypt do archiwum* to govern the Lithuanian war effort, and the transference of the right to appoint military officers in the Grand Duchy from the king to the new Lithuanian Grand *Hetman*, Kazimierz Jan Sapieha.¹²⁴

In hindsight, it seems clear that the Sapieha family and their Lithuanian adherents had little desire to actually break the *sejm*. Their objections at this time appear to have been opportunistic, motivated primarily by a desire to extract whatever

¹²² Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 67; Konarski, p. 180; Wimmer, p. 142; Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 6 April 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 355-6).

¹²³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 and 14 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1975 and N. 1991, pp. 251-5 and 269-73).

¹²⁴ Kołodziej, "*Ostatni*", p. 478; Wimmer, p. 143; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2002, pp. 282-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 14 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1992, p. 275).

concessions they were able from king and from Poland as the price for allowing the assembly to conclude, as well, perhaps, as the hope of demonstrating to the representatives of France that their influence in the *sejm* merited the large sums of money which they had demanded to represent French interests. Following mediation by Pallavicini, the Lithuanians were persuaded to drop several demands, whilst they received concessions on others, obtaining one third of the foreign subsidies for the Lithuanian army, as well as their preferred wording around the royal right to call of the *pospolite ruszenie*.¹²⁵ Calm was gradually restored in the course of the sessions held on 15 and 16 April. By the end of the latter, Good Friday, there was increasing optimism amongst the supporters of the Imperial alliance that the *sejm* could be concluded the following day.¹²⁶

It was at this point that Morsztyn and Vitry finally broke from cover, making one last attempt to trigger the breaking of the *sejm* in accordance with Louis' orders. They spent the entire night of 16-17 April travelling incognito around Warsaw in an attempt to find someone willing to exercise the *liberum veto*. Reporting on his actions to France, Vitry would complain that no matter how large a sum of money he offered, he could find no-one amongst the *posłowie* and senators who was willing to induce or support a break.

One of those whom the ambassador called upon was Krockow, who maintained his policy of fair-seeming passivity with regard to France. The envoy of Brandenburg made a pretence of assisting the Frenchman in his search, only to inform him that he had been unable to find any willing candidates.¹²⁷ It is worth emphasising, on the eve of the conclusion of the 1683 *Sejm*, the reasons why Friedrich Wilhelm felt comfortable taking a different approach to that which he had taken in 1681, given that the *Rzeczpospolita* was once again on the verge of arming itself. The conciliatory attitude displayed by Sobieski was an important factor. Unlike in 1681, he had studiously avoided provocations towards the elector, and had taken pains to avoid embroiling him in the Morsztyn affair.

¹²⁵ Konarski, p. 186; Wimmer, pp. 143, 215; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2002, pp. 282-5). The final *skrypt do archiwum* contained what Pallavicini had noted to be the preferred wording of the Sapieha family. *ARJ*, pp. 80-6.

¹²⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2002, pp. 282-5)

¹²⁷ Kamiński, p. 239; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2000, p. 280); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2003, pp. 285-7); Vitry to Louis XIV, Warsaw, 17 April and 21 April 1683 (*Acta 1680-83*, pp. 360-1 and 361).

Moreover, the troops which the *Rzeczpospolita* was raising were bound by the terms of the Imperial alliance to be used against the Ottomans, whereas in 1681, there had been no firm alliance in place which would constrain the use of the planned *aukcja*. The two rulers would eventually formalise their agreement a few weeks after the conclusion of the *sejm*, on 14 May. Sobieski delivered the document guaranteeing his protection of the estates of Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna and promised to secure a commitment from his sister Katarzyna to resign her outstanding claims on those estates – which followed in July – in return for the 40,000 thalers which Krockow had offered upon his arrival. Fearing the response from France, both parties undertook to keep the agreement secret.¹²⁸

Despite the goodwill of the Elector of Brandenburg and the failure of the representatives of France to avail themselves of a willing breaker, the session of 17 April – the last of the 1683 *Sejm* – nonetheless saw considerable turbulence. Disturbances began amongst the Lithuanians almost immediately after the participants gathered at nine that morning, and at several points, the tumult grew so great that a break appeared imminent. The king worked with the utmost patience and dexterity, however, mediating and resolving the innumerable difficulties which arose. Meanwhile, above the heads of all those who might have contemplated exercising the *liberum veto* hung the fear of being deemed complicit in the scheming of Morsztyn and Vitry, reinforced by the Damoclean threat – which Sobieski now expressed publicly for the first time – of the calling of the *pospolite ruszenie* to pursue the breakers and bring them to justice. The final reading of the *skrypt do archiwum* saw no active protest, although the diarist Jan Antoni Chrapowicki noted that ‘some muttered’ at the result.¹²⁹ Eventually, at shortly before three in the morning on 18 April, after a session which had lasted for almost eighteen hours, the last difficulties were resolved and the 1683 *Sejm* was successfully concluded. The *Rzeczpospolita* had now firmly committed itself to an alliance with Emperor Leopold, and to a war with the Ottomans.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Kamieński, pp. 241-2; Pietrzak, p. 110.

¹²⁹ Quoted in Kołodziej, “*Ostatni*”, p. 414.

niektórzy mruzcili

¹³⁰ Konarski, pp. 186, 200; Wimmer, p. 143; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2000 and N. 2002, pp. 280 and 282-5); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 18 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2003, pp. 285-7).

The content of the *skrypt do archiwum* which codified these decisions is wide ranging. It records the conclusion of the alliance with the emperor; details the total augmentation of the armed forces to be made by the *Rzeczpospolita*, their intended composition, and the terms of service of the newly-levied soldiers; confirms that the *subsidium charitativum* would be implemented via a specially-developed repartition, through which each region would be assigned a list of units which they would be responsible for maintaining; records the implementation of several additional financial measures, including an increase in the levy of the *hiberna* and a commitment made by the clergy as a whole to make a further contribution to the state coffers; provides an amnesty for deserters from the current standing army; and confirms the right of the king to summon the *pospolite ruszenie* should the military situation require it, amongst various other matters.¹³¹

There is a second aspect to the *skrypt do archiwum*, however, which also merits comment. As the formal record of the prevailing view amongst those men who comprised the *sejm*, this document does not merely set out the decisions taken there, but also provides an invaluable insight into the attitudes and motivations which underpinned these decisions. One distinct problem which arises when examining the events of the 1683 *Sejm* is that the available epistolary and diaristic evidence, which all historians – including the present author – have leant upon heavily in constructing their understanding of events, tends to focus disproportionately on the issues raised by a disruptive and vocal minority. The reasons for this are certainly understandable; to take two opposing examples, Pallavicini's letters detail at length his efforts to identify malcontents and resolve issues which threatened the conclusion of the Imperial alliance, whilst those of Vitry focus on his efforts to promote and organise a clandestine opposition to this same policy. Nevertheless, the result is that the attitudes of the majority are most frequently understood only indirectly, through the prism of what the minority objected towards, whilst their own mindsets are made explicit only on rare occasions. The *skrypt do archiwum*, when examined not merely for its raw content, but also for the arguments and the language within which this content was couched, can help to bridge this gap.

¹³¹ Konarski, pp. 200-1; Wimmer, pp. 143-4; *ARJ*, pp. 80-6.

The introductory matter of this document begins by detailing the recent Ottoman violations of the agreement made at Żurawno in 1676. The annexation of Czortków during the delimitation of Podole and encroachments upon the borders of the *Rzeczpospolita* are highlighted, and the fear expressed that when the Ottomans eventually sought the delimitation of Ukraine – already being subjected to Tatar raiding in contravention of the terms of the treaty – the pattern of Ottoman acquisitiveness would be repeated. The Porte is accused of initiating open hostilities through the actions of its vassal, Thököly, in the autumn of 1682; the burning of Spiska Sobota and the passage of Hungarian rebel forces through Żywiec are singled out for mention here. The threat which the Ottomans now appeared to pose to Kraków is also emphasised. The introduction concludes, however, with a remarkable elucidation of the sense of religious motivation – and even obligation – which existed amongst the participants of the *sejm*:

Now, as a service before the Lord God, to whose holy cause we owe our life and our blood and gladly offer them in sacrifice; for the honour of his Holy Church and the salvation of Christian souls who lament in bonds under the Mohammedan yoke, and perish in uncertainty of their salvation; and indeed to prevent our final destruction – God forbid! – lest so powerful an enemy, finding us unprepared, might oppress us, the *Rzeczpospolita*, with the consent of all its estates, undertakes the following:¹³²

Engagement with the vocabulary of crusading is by no means isolated to this one example. Several others can be found from throughout the *skrypt do archiwum*. For example, in discussing the reduction of the forces of the *Rzeczpospolita* to peacetime levels which would take place at the conclusion of the war, the following words are used:

In this holy war, declared for His holy glory, we have great hope that the Lord of Hosts will bless us. And therefore, after the happy victories which God will give, and after securing ourselves from the power of the Turk in accordance

¹³² 'Skrypt do archiwum' (*ARJ*, pp. 80-6), pp. 80-1

Tedy dla przysługi przed Panem Bogiem, którego chwale świętey zdrowie i krew naszą *in victimam* winniśmy, y ohotnie *sacramus* dla zaszczytu świętnciego Pańskich y ratunku dusz Chrześcijańskich, które pod iarzmem Mahometańskim w arkanach ięczą, y mizerniez wątpliwością zbawienia giną, zabiegaiąc ostatniey, (uchoway Boże) zgubie naszej, aby nas ten tak potężny Nieprzyjaciel niespodzianie niegotowych *non opprimat*, ten sposób Rzeczpospolita za zgodą wszech Stanów przed się bierze:

with the treaty agreed with His Majesty the Emperor, we decree that this army will be released to the fields.¹³³

There can be little doubt, upon reading this document, that the men of the *sejm* who produced it, and indeed the wider *szlachta* class whose interests they represented, retained a clear understanding that the conflict to which they now committed themselves – although undertaken in considerable part to ensure the preservation of the *patria* – belonged also to the broader Christian tradition of crusading against Islam, and against the Ottomans in particular. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to suggest that the *skrypt do archiwum* represents the codification – founded upon a basis of popular accord – of religiously motivated warfare against the Ottoman Empire as the official foreign policy of the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1683.

In the introduction to his *uniwersał* of 3 May summoning the assembly of the *sejmiki relacyjne*, where the decisions taken by the *sejm walny* would be implemented on a regional basis, the king himself would engage with the same corpus of crusading vocabulary found in the *skrypt do archiwum*, writing that: ‘We have concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Emperor of Christendom¹³⁴ against the enemy of the Cross; at the same time also, we have resolved ourselves to a war against the aforementioned heathens’.¹³⁵

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3

Którą to Świętą wojnę, ku chwale swojej świętey podniesioną, iż Bóg zastępów błogosławi, wielką mamy nadzieję. A za tym, po szczęśliwych da Bóg victoriach, y ubezpieczeniu od potęgi Tureckiey według traktatu z Cesarzem JoMcia postanowionego, aby to Woysko na włości [...] zwinione było, postanawiamy

¹³⁴ This formulation reflects the elevated regard which the Holy Roman Emperor was still held in as the notional secular head of Christian society in the seventeenth century. The concept of Christendom as a single hierarchy of states had survived the period of religious schism, although the position of the emperor at its head was theoretical – a reflection more of historic convention, inherited from the medieval period, than current power. Andreas Osiander, ‘Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth’, *International Organisation*, 55 (2001), 251-287, p. 262.

¹³⁵ Andrzej Chryzostom Załuski, *Epistolarum Historico-Familiarum*, 3 vols (Brunsberg [Braniewo]: Typis Mandata, 1709-12), I (1710), pp. 809-12, (p. 809).

conclusimus cum Imperatore Christianitatis contra hostem Crucis foedus offensivum et defensivum; insimul etiam resoluimus nos [...] ad bellum contra praedictos Ethnicos

Chapter 4 – The Polish relief expedition to Vienna

This chapter begins with a brief summary of events between the conclusion of the Sejm in mid-April 1683, and the arrival of the news that Vienna had been besieged in mid-July. The remainder contains what might be termed a devotional history of the relief expedition, highlighting the prominence accorded to aspects such as pilgrimage, the distribution of indulgences in articulo mortis to the soldiery and mass religious practice both in the army and back in the Rzeczpospolita, as well as explicit connections which participants made to the crusading movement. Through this process, the continuity between the crusading/holy war sentiments expressed by participants in the Sejm and the actual practice of the expedition is emphasised.

Preparations for war

The months which followed the conclusion of the *sejm* saw the *Rzeczpospolita* undertake efforts to rapidly mobilise the new forces which had been agreed there. By early May, the king and the two Grand *Hetmani* had reached an agreement upon the units which would comprise the *komput*, with commanders now appointed for all the units to be raised, and licenses distributed to these men to make the enlistments which were required. Although disagreements arose between Sobieski and Jabłonowski over the right to appoint commanders of units – a source of considerable influence within the army – the two men were able to calm these tensions through mutual concessions.¹

The larger problem facing the *Rzeczpospolita*, however – as had been anticipated during the *sejm* – was the availability of money with which to make the levies of new troops. The *subsidium charitativum* could be not gathered in time. Although all the *sejmiki relacyjne* would eventually approve the resolutions taken in the *sejm*, many met late – those of Mazowsze, for example, only assembled at the end of July.² Even after the *sejmiki* concluded, time would be required for the

¹ Konarski, p. 201; Wimmer, p. 160; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2036, pp. 323-5).

² Konarski, pp. 188-9; Wimmer, p. 159; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 26 May and 9 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2076 and N. 2100, pp. 363-5 and 395-7); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 May and 9 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2078 and N. 2101, pp. 368 and 398-9); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 26 May 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 195-7)

accumulation of these sums. Meanwhile, the Imperial subsidy of 200,000 thalers which had been negotiated as a condition of the alliance, and which the *Rzeczpospolita* had been relying upon to bridge this gap, proved slow in arriving.³ The first half of this money was not received until 27 May.⁴

In the interim, Sobieski and Zierowsky – once again the leading Imperial representative in the *Rzeczpospolita* following the return of Waldstein to Vienna – each took steps to make up the shortfall. The former made two contributions of 100,000 florins each from his personal treasury, which were spent on the levying of the new units and the preparation of the Crown artillery respectively.⁵ The latter borrowed as much as he was able from the merchants of Warsaw, almost 500,000 florins, before his line of credit was cut off in the second half of May.⁶ Despite these efforts, however, the process of raising the new units was unavoidably delayed, and the audacious date of 1 July appointed for the mustering of these forces twice required deferment. Wimmer has noted by way of comparison that in 1673, when the *sejm* had concluded on 8 April, the period of mobilisation had lasted until the end of October that same year. Even so, some parts of the army had not arrived before operations commenced.⁷

Once the news reached Rome in the early weeks of May that the alliance had been concluded, the pope immediately sought – in spite of the strains which the subsidies already given to the emperor had placed on the Apostolic Camera – to pull together money to send to the *Rzeczpospolita*. 200,000 florins were sent by the middle of May.⁸ When this money arrived in the course of June, it was designated for use in the hiring and upkeep of a force of 3,000 Cossack

³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 12, 19 and 26 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2048, N. 2064 and N. 2076, pp. 333-5, 348-50 and 363-5); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 12 May 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 190-2).

⁴ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 2 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2087, pp. 376-80).

⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2064, pp. 348-50); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2065, pp. 351-2); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 12 May 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 190-2 and 192).

⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2064, pp. 348-50); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 19 and 26 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2065 and N. 2077, pp. 351-2 and 365-7)

⁷ Wimmer, pp. 143, 145; *ARJ*, pp. 80-6; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 26 May and 23 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2076 and N. 2128, pp. 363-5 and 427-8); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 26 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2077, pp. 365-7).

⁸ Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 8 and 15 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2042 and N. 2054, pp. 329-30 and 339-40).

mercenaries which would supplement the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Sobieski intended that these men should fight under papal insignia as a recognition of the pope's generosity.⁹ Indeed, accounts produced detailing the expenses involved in their enrolment include a line item 'for 30 banners bearing Jerusalem crosses'.¹⁰

In the councils of war held at the end of April, it had been decided that the newly raised units should muster towards Podole, in the vicinity of Lwów. A final decision on a plan of action for the year was postponed at this time, however, in order to see how the military situation along the Danube developed.¹¹ Over the next several months, Polish forces were gradually drawn westwards. In the course of May, a series of reinforcements were sent towards the passes from Upper Hungary into Silesia and Moravia, to prevent further incursions akin to that made by Petrůczy the previous autumn, which might threaten Imperial or Polish territory alike.¹² The arrival of news at the end of the month that the main Ottoman force was gathering at Belgrade, and that the Tatars beneath Kamieniec had departed for Hungary, provided confirmation that the enemy's blow would fall upon the territories of the emperor.¹³ Shortly thereafter, the standing Crown army was ordered to draw back from its base at Trembowla towards Lwów, in case it should prove necessary to transfer them westwards if Vienna itself came under siege.¹⁴ At the beginning of July, Sobieski received a request from the emperor to provide further assistance for Moravia and Silesia in the wake of the withdrawal of the Imperial forces from the siege of the Ottoman fortress of Uyvar (now Nové Zámky, Slovakia). The king responded on 4 July, ordering the Crown Field *Hetman*, Sieniawski, to gather such forces as were ready to march from

⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 9, 16 and 16 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2099, N. 2111 and N. 2113, pp. 393-5, 411-4 and 415-6).

¹⁰ 'Index dispendiorum, quae necessaria sunt, ut 3 millia Cosacorum unum annum sustineantur' (ANP VII, A. 1, pp. 431-3)

Pro 30 vexillis cum cruce Hierosolimitana

¹¹ Wimmer, pp. 166-7.

¹² Wimmer, p. 167; Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 5 and 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2036 and N. 2064, pp. 323-5 and 348-50); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 5 and 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2037 and N. 2065, pp. 325-7 and 351-2); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 5 May 1683 (*Talenti*, pp. 188-90). These forces included the royal foot guards, under the command of Ernest Denhoff, as well as a part of the newly-raised mercenary force which was to enter Imperial service under the command of Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski.

¹³ Wimmer, p. 200.

¹⁴ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 16 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2113, pp. 415-6); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 16 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2114, pp. 417-9).

amongst the standing army and move with all haste to assist the emperor, with the initial intention of helping to defend the line of the River Váh.¹⁵ Meanwhile, a pretence was to be made of preparing for a major incursion towards eastern Upper Hungary or Transylvania, in the hopes of drawing off the forces of Thököly and Apafi from assisting their Ottoman overlords.¹⁶ These orders were appended shortly afterwards with the command that the Crown Grand *Hetman*, Jabłonowski, should follow his colleague westwards, bringing the remainder of the old standing army as far as Przemyśl, which was also established as the new rendezvous point for the newly-raised units.¹⁷

The king, meanwhile, who had remained in his palace of Wilanów outside Warsaw following the conclusion of the *sejm*, would regulate his own departure southwards to join with his army based on the progress of these levies. By late June, Pallavicini and Zierowsky were pressing him with increasing fervency to at least depart for Kraków, in the hope that this example would serve to hasten his subjects along, although the former would acknowledge to Rome that they were not moving with undue slowness given the distances involved. The king would write a circular letter to the *hetmani* and *województwa*, urging them to hasten the raising of the new units, but he himself made no move southwards as yet.¹⁸

The months immediately following the *sejm* were not just a period of practical preparations to tackle the Ottoman threat. Considerable thought was also put into the making of spiritual preparations for the war to come, demonstrating that the language in the *skrypt do archiwum* was not to remain a dead letter. On 24 April, even before word had reached Rome of the conclusion of the *sejm*, Cybo had written to Pallavicini reminding him of the need to make arrangements with the prelates of his nunciature for the implementation of processions and other pious exercises, in order to placate the wrath of God and secure divine assistance

¹⁵ Wimmer, p. 201.

¹⁶ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 4 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2157, pp. 6-9); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 4 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2158, pp. 10-2); Talenti to Barberini, Warsaw, 7 July 1683 (*Talenti*, p. 204).

¹⁷ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 14 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2176, pp. 34-7).

¹⁸ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 23, 23 and 30 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2127, N. 2128 and N. 2144, pp. 426-7, 427-8 and 442-4); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 23 and 30 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2131 and N. 2146, pp. 431 and 445-6).

against the Ottomans.¹⁹ Responding on 19 May, Pallavicini would write that he had begun the process of making the necessary arrangements. He now requested the dispatch of a plenary indulgence for all those who might participate in the processions, adding moreover that he had already made a concession throughout the nunciature of indulgences lasting only a few days, as his authority permitted him, for the regular Sunday recitation of 'the usual prayers of the Church in time of war against the infidel'.²⁰ The requested plenary indulgence would be dispatched from Rome on 12 June.²¹ The following week, the papacy would go one better, dispatching a second indulgence *in articulo mortis* (in the event of death) for all those who were to fight personally in the Ottoman war.²² Pallavicini received both of these indulgences by the middle of July, immediately handing them to printers to allow for their prompt publication and distribution.²³

A period of pilgrimage

On 15 July, the news reached Sobieski – brought by the newly-arrived envoy of the emperor, Philipp Jacob, Graf von Thurn-Valsassina – that the Grand Vizir, Kara Mustafa Pasha, and the main Ottoman force appeared intent on bypassing the Habsburg-held fortifications along the Danube in Hungary, and heading directly towards Vienna instead. The Polish monarch now shifted into action. The cavalry force which Crown Field *Hetman* Sieniawski was gathering from amongst the ranks of the old standing army – initially intended to assist in the defence of the River Váh – was ordered instead to reinforce the Imperial army outside Vienna under the command of Charles V, Duke of Lorraine. Meanwhile, the rendezvous point for the remainder of the standing army of the Kingdom under the command of Crown Grand *Hetman* Jabłonowski, the standing army of Lithuania, and all

¹⁹ Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 25 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2018, pp. 303-4). This same letter was also sent to Buonvisi, as well as to the nuncios for Spain and Portugal.

²⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2063, pp. 347-8).

le preci solite della Chiesa in tempo di guerra contro gl'infedeli.

See also: Universal letter of Pallavicini, Warsaw, 19 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2066, pp. 352-3) for the indulgence conceded by Pallavicini on his own authority.

²¹ Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 12 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2106, p. 404).

²² Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 19 June 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2118, p. 420).

²³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 and 14 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2160 and N. 2173, pp. 16 and 29-30).

newly assembled units, was shifted again, well over a hundred miles westwards, from Przemyśl to Kraków. For his own part, Sobieski would hold himself in readiness either to follow Sieniawski with such troops as he was able to gather if news should come that Vienna itself had been besieged, or to make some form of diversionary attack, as envisaged by the terms of the Polish-Imperial alliance, if the Ottoman blow should land elsewhere.²⁴

The king would depart from Wilanów with his court on 18 July. Although his eventual destination was Kraków, he would first make a pilgrimage to the sanctuary at Częstochowa, the most holy site for the Catholic faith in Poland-Lithuania, and home to a miraculous image of a Black Madonna known as Our Lady of Częstochowa (*Matka Boska Częstochowska*). One of the oldest images of the Virgin in the *Rzeczpospolita*, the Black Madonna had been housed in the Jasna Góra monastery at Częstochowa since the late fourteenth century and had long been renowned as a place of healing; within living memory however, it had been accorded new heights of veneration as a result of events which had occurred during the 'Swedish Deluge', part of the Northern War of 1655-60. With the fortunes of the *Rzeczpospolita* seemingly at their lowest ebb, large swathes of its territory occupied by Sweden, Brandenburg-Prussia and Russia, and the king, Jan II Kazimierz, having been forced to flee into Imperial Silesia, Jasna Góra had been besieged by Swedish forces over the winter of 1655-56, but had held out against the invaders. Meanwhile, the Polish army, having been galvanised by the potential outrage of the Protestant Swedes occupying the heart of Polish Catholicism – and, more prosaically, having been allowed to focus their efforts upon defeating the Swedes by a temporary truce and alliance with Russia, which feared the possibility of total Swedish occupation of the *Rzeczpospolita* – was gradually able to turn the tide against the Swedes. Upon returning from his brief exile, Jan II Kazimierz arranged for the coronation of the Virgin Mary as the 'Queen and Protector of Poland' in a ceremony in the Cathedral at Lwów in the spring of 1656, in recognition of the aid she had provided during the seemingly miraculous defence

²⁴ Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Warsaw, 16 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2179, pp. 38-40); Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2194, pp. 54-6).

of the monastery, and the turnaround in his own fortunes which this had heralded.²⁵

After reaching the sanctuary on 24 July, Prince Jakub Sobieski, the king's eldest son, would record – in his diary of the expedition to Vienna – that the royal party remained there for the entirety of the following day in the pursuit of their devotions.²⁶ In his memoirs, François-Paulin d'Alerac, a Frenchman who spent time in the service of the Polish court and accompanied the Polish monarch during the relief expedition, would make explicit the king's purpose in making the pilgrimage to Częstochowa, writing that:

The king, whose piety equals his other virtues, believed it necessary to claim in this holy place the protection of Heaven through the intervention of the Virgin, since the undertaking he made was for the glory of the Christian name, the defence of the Church, and the salvation of the Empire.²⁷

The visit would subsequently be recorded by Wezpazjan Kochowski – whom Sobieski had recently appointed to the post of *historiographus privilegiatus* in order to accompany and memorialise his expedition – in the early pages of his *Commentarius Belli Adversum Turcas*, published during the following year.²⁸ Kochowski, writing once the outcome of the expedition was already known, and with his customary rhetorical flourishes, would note that the king had made this pilgrimage:

so that he might bring suppliant prayers for victory to that celebrated place of miracles and to the Virgin Mother of God, his queen and the queen of the

²⁵ Oscar Halecki, "The Place of Czestochowa in Poland's Millennium", *Catholic Historical Review*, 52 (1967), 494-508 (pp. 494-502).

²⁶ Jakub, p. 617.

²⁷ d'Alerac, p. 117.

le Roy, dont la pieté égale ses autres vertus crût devoir reclamer en ce Saint lieu, la protection du Ciel par l'entremise de la Vierge, puisque l'entreprise qu'il faisoit, étoit pour la gloire du nom Chrétien, la deffence de l'Eglise, et le salut de l'Empire.

Pallavicini also notes the purpose of the king's visit to Częstochowa in a letter to Rome: Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2194, pp. 54-6). Meanwhile, the chronicler of Częstochowa records that in the course of his stay, alongside his devotions before the Black Madonna, the king also received the blessing of the Pauline Fathers who administered the monastery of Jasna Góra, as well as their gift of a sabre in an expensive sheath. Rożek, pp. 15-6.

²⁸ Anna Czarniecka, "Nikt nie słucha mnie za życia": *Jana III Sobieski w walce z opozycyjną propagandą (1684-1696)* (Warsaw: Neriton, 2009), p. 93.

Poles. That same place, Częstochowa as it is called [...] now surpassed its greatness of old, for victory over the Turks was obtained by the praying king. For truly the Damascene says: 'The right hand of the Most High (i.e. Christ), whom from you has been made flesh, works many virtues through your intercession, O Virgin Mother of God!'²⁹

Whilst Sobieski was travelling to Częstochowa to attend to his own devotions, Pallavicini had remained behind in Warsaw for the time being, at least in part to make final arrangements for the establishment of a field hospital, funded with papal money, which was to accompany the Polish forces.³⁰ In a report to Rome dated 21 July, he detailed the spiritual preparations in support of the expedition which were already beginning to take place across the *Rzeczpospolita*:

General devotions and penances are performed in the Kingdom, and several days of fasting will be observed in this diocese [of Poznań], as has followed in that of Kraków, and very soon the plenary indulgence will be published, conceded for the entire Kingdom and in the Grand Duchy, and this will be taken up. It is thought also to publish the indulgence *in articulo mortis* – conceded to the soldiery that will fight in this holy war, and to whoever shall give their aid, counsel or favour to the said war – in Kraków, in the presence of Their Majesties, and with the attendance of the heads of the army.³¹

²⁹ Kochowski, p. 16.

ut celebri miraculis loco, VIRGINI DEIPARAE suae Poloniarumque; Reginae, supplices pro Victoria preces adferret. De loco isto, ut vocatur CZESTOCHOWA, [...] nunc transcendit reliquorum magnitudinem, impetrata supplicanti Regi [...] de Turcis Victoria. Vere Damascenus ait. DEXTERA EXCELSI, *quae ex te incarnata est, virtutes multas per tua suffragia operatur, o VIRGO DEIPARA.*

³⁰ This idea had first been proposed by Pallavicini in April, in order that the men of the armies of the *Rzeczpospolita* would not die needlessly, or without receiving the sacraments. He suggested repurposing funds which were previously intended for the beatification of a monk of the Abbey of Jędrzejów. Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 7 April 1683 (ANP VI, N. 1974, pp. 249-50). The proposal had been approved by the pope the following month. Cybo to Pallavicini, Rome, 15 May 1683 (ANP VI, N. 2056, p. 341).

³¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Warsaw, 21 July 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2194, pp. 54-6), p. 56.

Si fanno generali devotioni e penitenze nel Regno e s'osserverà qualche giorno di digiuno in questa diocesi, come è seguito in quella di Cracovia, e ben presto si pubblicherà l'indulgenza plenaria, concessa per tutto il Regno e nel Gran Ducato, e si prenderà questa. Anco si pensa in Cracovia alla presenza delle Loro Maestà e coll'intervento de' Capi di guerra publicar l'indulgenza in articulo mortis, concessa alla soldatesca che guerreggerà in questa guerra sacra et a chi porgerà alla detta guerra aiuto, consiglio o favore.

Departing from Częstochowa on 26 July, the court took the road south-eastwards towards Kraków, arriving at the Palace of Łobzów on the outskirts of that city on 29 July, where the king would reside for over a fortnight until his departure for Vienna. Upon his arrival, neither part of the old standing army of the Kingdom – travelling westwards under the command of the *hetmani*, Jabłonowski and Sieniawski – had yet reached Kraków, whilst the newly-raised units which were to augment them could be gathered only slowly, a reflection both of the great distances which many were obliged to travel, as well as the decision of some to delay their departure from their homes until they felt certain that the king was truly intent on campaigning during the present year. The levies for the Lithuanian army – gathering at Janów Podlaski, not far from the Polish border – were proceeding particularly slowly, in part due to the obstructionism of the *hetmani*, Sapieha and Ogiński. Even a fortnight later, in mid-August, the king had received no clear indication of their intentions to unite as instructed with the forces of the Crown.³² Despite having received firm news whilst at Częstochowa that the Ottoman army had indeed arrived before Vienna and laid siege to the city, with no army to hand yet to lead to its relief, there was little for Sobieski to do but send orders to try to hasten preparations and wait.³³

The advance force led by Sieniawski reached Skawina, a few miles south of Kraków, on 6 August. The king rode out to review these troops, before hastening them on their way south-westwards in the shadow of the Beskid Mountains via Bielitz (now Bielsko-Biała, Poland) and Teschen (now Cieszyn, Poland).³⁴

Around this same time, Sobieski also received news from Lorraine of the victory secured near Pressburg (now Bratislava, Slovakia) on 29 July against a combined force of Hungarian rebels and Ottoman troops under the command of Thököly, as well as the prominent role played in that battle by the Polish troops in Imperial

³² Wimmer, p. 215.

³³ Jakub, p. 617; Kątski, p. 580; d’Alerac, p. 118. The fault for such delays should not be attributed to Sobieski himself. As Pallavicini acknowledged to his counterpart in Vienna, ‘he has more need of praise than of being prompted, doing in truth as much as he is able in order to gather people and place himself on the march’ (ha più bisogno di lode che d’esser acesa, facendo in verità quanto più si può per radunar gente e porsi in marcia). Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Kraków, 1 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2219, pp. 81-2), p. 81.

³⁴ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 6 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2225, pp. 91-3); d’Alerac, pp. 118-9. Prince Jakub, in his diary, records Sieniawski’s passage as having occurred a few days earlier, on 2 August, p. 617.

pay, led by Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski.³⁵ In a letter of 6 August, the Polish king expressed his congratulations to Lorraine as follows:

We rejoice with Your Serenity and we heartily congratulate you concerning this affair having been well conducted, not at all doubting that Divine Providence shows here, in the first instance, what result we might hope for from His goodness with regard to this war.³⁶

Nuncio Pallavicini, who had also arrived in Kraków in the interim, gives a clear indication of his confidence in the king's pious disposition at this time. Writing to Rome on 6 August, he would report that 'His Majesty, from what I can see, and as is confirmed by evident proof, has such a zeal and fervour that it would be superfluous for anyone else to incite him'.³⁷

In Warsaw meanwhile, on 8 August, a procession was instituted to implore the aid of God for Christian arms, ending in the Dominican Church of St. Jacek. Prior to his departure from that city, Pallavicini had authorised the concession of an indulgence lasting three hundred days for all those who attended from beginning to end and offered their prayers to the Lord of Hosts.³⁸

That same day, the king once again departed from Kraków, this time to review the second part of the old standing army under the command of Jabłonowski a few miles north of the city. Afterwards, this force would continue marching, now in a north-westerly direction, towards a newly assigned rendezvous point just beyond the border with Imperial Silesia, at the town of Tarnowitz (now Tarnowskie Góry, Poland). Jabłonowski would leave his force to continue the march without him for a short while, instead returning with Sobieski to Kraków, where a major religious

³⁵ Charles V, Duke of Lorraine, Commander of the Imperial Army to Sobieski, the Imperial camp at Marchegg, 31 July 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 216-7).

³⁶ Sobieski to Lorraine, Kraków, 6 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 232-3), p. 233.

cum Serenitate Vestra gaudemus eidemque animitus congratulamur super re bene gesta; nullatenus dubitantes Divinam providentiam hisce monstrare primordiis, quemnam huiusce belli exitum a sua Bonitate sperare debeamus.

³⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 6 August 1683 (*ANP VII*, N. 2224, p. 234).

Sua Maestà, a quel che osservo e vien confermato da prove evidenti, ha tanto zelo e fervore ch'è superfluo che vi sii chi più l'accenda.

³⁸ Universal letter of Pallavicini, Warsaw, 2 August 1683 (*ANP VII*, N. 2220, pp. 82-3). The presence of popular devotional activities is also attested in the churches of Kraków by this same date. Rožek, p. 18.

ceremony was planned.³⁹ By far the most detailed account of this ceremony, held two days' later on 10 August, comes from a report sent to Rome by one of the leading participants, Nuncio Pallavicini. Pallavicini's account is well worth quoting at length:

On Tuesday, the day of St. Lawrence, which the House of His Majesty has always held in singular veneration, the king wished to receive the benediction for his sacred expedition. The ceremony was performed in the Cathedral, where His Majesty with the queen and their sons [...] all the bishops that were now present, the secular and regular clergy, the generals, the *wojewodowie*, and other grandees of the Kingdom were congregated, with a numerous gathering of the soldiery and the people. The nuncio celebrated in the pontifical manner, and with all solemnity.

After the gospel, the sermon was given by Abbot [Jan Franciszek] Kurdwanowski, who took for his theme the words of St. Sixtus to St. Lawrence [prior to their respective martyrdoms]: *Greater things are due to you for faith in Christ during ordeals*, and he spoke very strongly and effectively to enflame souls to the holy war, which shall be undertaken with the advice and exhortation and under the auspices of His Holiness, of which he spoke in a most proper manner. At the end of the sermon, he published the indulgence and papal benediction *in articulo mortis*, given by Our Lord to those who fight in this holy war, and to whoever offers him aid, advice or favour; and he read the apostolic brief, translated into the vernacular language, of which he had more than a thousand copies printed, and of which he has now dispensed a great quantity.

After the publication and the reading, he spoke of the greatness of Grace, and of how losing one's life actually meant gaining a new one, exchanging the mortal for the eternal. When the Mass had finished, the benediction took place. The nuncio, in the pontifical habit, was assisted by all the bishops. The king, stepping down from his throne, brought himself to his knees upon the steps of the Altar, the clergy sung appropriate psalms, and the nuncio said some prayers over him, and then blessed him. And so the service ended,

³⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 6 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2233, pp. 100-3); d'Alerac, p. 119.

which the king attended with great and exemplary devotion, as did the queen, not in public, but at a handrail, and she was observed shedding a great many tears, as the ceremony brought home the imminent departure and the dangers which the king was about to face, to preserve him from which the church implored Divine aid and assistance. His Majesty then had lunch in the castle, after which, he returned to the same church and viewed the royal tombs, so that he might choose the location of his own; such was the determination and resolution with which he went to war. Moreover, His Majesty had taken communion in the Sanctuary of Częstochowa most exemplarily and publicly, as Our Lord had desired when he issued the plenary indulgence.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 12 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2233, pp. 100-3), pp. 100-1.

Martedì, giorno di San Lorenzo, che la Casa di Sua Maestà ha sempre havuto in singular veneratione, il Re volle ricevere la beneditione per la sua sacra spedizione. Si fece la cerimonia nella Chiesa cattedrale, ove Sua Maestà colla Regina e figli [...] eran congregati [oltre a] tutti i Vescovi che hora son qui, il clero secolare e regolare, i Generali, i Palatini et altri Grandi del Regno, con un numeroso concorso di soldatesca e popolo.

Celebrò il Nuntio pontificalmente e con ogni maggior solennità. Dopo l'Evangelio fu fatto il sermone dall'Abbate Cordovanoschi, che prese per tema il detto di San Sisto a San Lorenzo: *Maiora tibi debentur pro fide Christi certamina*, e perorò assai dottamente et efficacemente per accendere gl'animi alla guerra sacra, s'intraprende per consiglio, essortatione e sotto gl'auspicii di Sua Santità, della quale parlò con le forme più spetiose, onorevoli e però più dovute. In fine del sermone pubblicò l'indulgenza e beneditione papale in articulo mortis, concessa da N.ro Signore a chi milita in questa sacra guerra o porge aiuto, consiglio o favore, e lesse il breve apostolico tradotto in lingua volgare, nella quale si son fatti imprimere più di mille esemplari, de' quali fu in l'ora dispensata una gran quantità.

Doppo la publicatione e lettura parlò della grandezza della gratia e come il perder la vita era un guadagnarla, commutando la temporale coll'eterna. Finita la messa, fu fatta la funtione della beneditione. Assistevano al Nuntio tutti i Vescovi in habito pontificale. Il Re, sceso dal trono, si portò ad inginocchiarsi su gradini dell'altare, e stando la Maestà Sua genuflessa, si cantarono dal clero alcuni salmi adattati, et il Nuntio disse sopra lui alcune orationi e poi lo benedisse. Così finì la funtione, alla quale assisté il Re con grande et esemplare divotione, e non meno la Regina, che non fu in publico ma ad una ringhiera, e fu osservata spargere gran copia di lacrime, mettendo la cerimonia avanti agl'occhi l'imminente partenza et i pericoli che va ad incontrare il Re, per preservarlo da quali la Chiesa implorava l'aiuto et assistenza Divina. Rimase Sua Maestà a pranzare in Castello, e spese il dopo pranzo in visitare la medesima Chiesa et in vedere i sepolcri regii, non senza opinione che ciò fosse fatto per elegere un luogo per il suo, con tanta determinazione e risoluzione d'animo va alla guerra. Per altro la Maestà Sua si era comunicata nel Santuario di Cestocovia con molta esemplarità e pubblicamente, come N.ro Signore haveva desiderato nel concedere l'indulgenza plenaria.

Several other accounts of this ceremony exist, albeit considerably shorter. Cf. Kochowski, p. 16; Sobieski to Lorraine, Kraków, 11 August 1683 (ARJ, pp. 243-5).

Every aspect of this ceremony was structured with unmistakable care. The indulgence *in articulo mortis* was no mere afterthought; its publication and distribution formed one of the centrepieces of the ceremony. Meanwhile, the didactic elements which surrounded it, complemented by the prominent role in proceedings played by the nuncio – expressly on the pope’s behalf – served to reinforce the message that the soldiers were committing themselves to a pan-Catholic struggle against a common enemy, and that those who fought and died in God’s war would gain remission of their sins and entry to heaven. Efforts were made to ensure that awareness of this message could permeate as widely as possible, through the translation of the pope’s words into Polish, and the printing of a large number of copies for distribution.

Even the choice of day held intense meaning. St. Lawrence was a martyr of the early church, executed in 258 on the orders of Emperor Valerian, and thus a symbol of the persecution of Christendom by unbelievers; a clear allegorical match for the forthcoming struggle with the Ottomans, which Abbot Kurdwanowski evidently played upon in his sermon.⁴¹ In the context of the consolation which St. Sixtus offered to St. Lawrence regarding their impending martyrdom, the Latin *certamina* best translates as ordeals, as it has been rendered in the passage above. In other contexts, however, it can convey a meaning such as warfare or battle. Through this prism, the words of St. Sixtus offered a particularly apt starting point for Kurdwanowski, whose purpose was to assure his audience that the impending Ottoman war would indeed be a holy one, and that it would bear a spiritual reward for those who fought and died.

Moreover, as Pallavicini hints, the figure of St. Lawrence held a particular significance for the king and his family, particularly in the context of warfare with the enemies of the faith. At the root of this connection lay Sobieski’s maternal great-grandfather, the Crown Grand *Hetman* Stanisław Żółkiewski, who had founded the Collegiate Church of the Queen of Heaven and Sts. Lawrence the Martyr and Stanisław the Bishop on his properties at Żółkiew (now Zhovkva, Ukraine) prior to his death in battle against the Ottomans at Cecora (now Țuțora,

⁴¹ Johann P. Kirsch, ‘St. Lawrence’, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. by Charles G. Herbermann, 16 vols (New York: Appleton, 1907-14), IX (1910), pp. 89-90.

Moldova) in 1620.⁴² Żółkiewski was himself buried in that church, where his widow established a weekly mass for:

‘the soul of her late spouse and all those who, alongside him, for the holy Christian faith and the aforementioned Church of God, stood up bravely against the enemies of the Holy Cross, the Turks and Tatars, and bravely laid down their lives’.⁴³

By the late-seventeenth century, the collegiate church at Żółkiew had become a mausoleum for members of the extended Żółkiewski family, including Sobieski’s own father, Jakub, who had obtained the Żółkiewski estates through marriage and bequeathed them to his son.⁴⁴ The king’s admiration for the life, and death, of his great-grandfather is clear from the pages of the short manuscript ‘Of the deeds of my house’ which he wrote on the subject of his own ancestry, in which the activities of Żółkiewski – as well as his own elder brother Marek and several other family members who died fighting in ‘the Lord’s wars’ against the Ottomans and Tatars – feature prominently.⁴⁵ He would maintain an intimate connection with his forefather’s church at Żółkiew throughout his life, financing its renovation following a fire in 1690, and supplementing a large painting of Żółkiewski’s great victory at Kłuszyn (1610) which he had hung there with three others, celebrating his own victories at Chocim (1673), Vienna and Párkány (now Štúrovo, Slovakia – October 1683).⁴⁶

Through the choice to hold this ceremony on the Feast of St. Lawrence, Sobieski was not only symbolically connecting the forthcoming expedition to Vienna with

⁴² Jacek Macyszyn, ‘Żółkiewska kolegiata – pomnik chwały żołnierskiej’, *Biblioteka Epoki Nowożytnej*, 2 (2015), 187-202 (p. 191); Jerzy T. Petrus, *Żółkiew i jej Kolegiata* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Polska, 1997), p. 35.

⁴³ Quoted by Macyszyn, p. 192.

duszy ś.p. Małżonka i tych wszystkich, co z nim za wiarę św. Chrześcijańską na powyższenie Kościoła Bożego przeciwko nieprzyjaciołom Krzyża św, Turkom i Tatarom mężnie stanęli i odważnie żywot swój położyli

⁴⁴ Macyszyn, pp. 189, 193, 196; Petrus, pp. 40-2.

⁴⁵ Quoted by Czarniecka, p. 93.

wojnach pańskich

⁴⁶ Macyszyn, pp. 195-6; Petrus, p. 43.

wider Christian traditions of conflict against Islam, but also to the prominent role which his own family had played within that struggle.⁴⁷

Whilst the nuncio himself makes no reference to the king taking the Cross as part of this ceremony, this is one possible reading of the account of d'Alerac, himself a participant in the expedition, who recorded that:

The papal nuncio [...] gave the benediction in the name of the Pontiff to His Polish Majesty; to the Prince, his eldest son; to the generals; and to the other lords, crossed, so to speak, along with this Monarch, for the expedition to Vienna.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Lest any doubt remain that Sobieski had the collegiate church at Żółkiew – and the family history with which it was imbued – clearly in mind when planning the ceremony on the Feast of St. Lawrence, it should be noted that Abbot Kurdwanowski, who was chosen to give the sermon, also possessed strong ties to that church. The first benefice he had received, in the late 1670s, was the rectorship there. 'Jan Franciszek Kurdwanowski', in *PSB*, XVI, pp. 233-4

⁴⁸ d'Alerac, p. 121.

le Nonce du Pape, [...] donna la benediction au nom du Pontife, à Sa Majesté Polonoise, au Prince aîné son fils, aux Generaux, et autres Seigneurs, croisez, pour ainsi dire, avec ce Monarque, pour l'expedition de *Vienne*.

It should be noted at this point that an English translation of d'Alerac's memoirs was produced in 1700, the year after he himself had published them in French, which has naturally been widely used in modern anglophone scholarship. Whilst this translation is generally faithful, it deviates from the original text in one key area. The anonymous translator removed a series of passages, including the one above, which make reference to aspects of the expedition which his predominantly Protestant audience was likely to find uncomfortable, including several references to the involvement of the papacy, the granting of indulgences and certain miraculous events, as well as statements which might be seen as advocations of papal primacy or conceptions of spirituality which were uniquely Catholic. The impetus for these abridgements – whether imposed censorship or simple editorial decision – cannot now be stated with certainty, although the latter seems the more likely, given that occasional passages which mention the pope's involvement do nonetheless survive in the English translation.

The use of this translation has no doubt contributed to the failure in anglophone scholarship to appreciate the depth of religious engagement demonstrated during the course of the Polish relief expedition. This present study instead examines d'Alerac's text in the original French. Here, however, cf. François-Paulin d'Alerac, *Polish Manuscripts: or the Secret History of the Reign of John Sobieski, the III of that name, K. of Poland* (London: H. Rhodes, 1700), p. 79 for the absence of this passage in the English translation.

The reader will forgive a second, shorter interjection here, given that one's interpretation of the above passage might turn significantly upon the translation of a single word. Whilst in modern French, the -ez ending to "croisez" would normally indicate the second-person plural (in both the present indicative and imperative tenses), d'Alerac habitually uses the -ez ending to denote the perfect passive participle, as I have translated it here. His use of "so to speak" (pour ainsi dire) following "crossed" suggests that some more euphemistic meaning should be read into his use of this verb.

It was likely also during this visit to Wawel that the king was given a ‘prophetic’ shield by the clerics of the cathedral chapter. Rediscovered in 1679 in the attic of the cathedral, above the altar of the Crucified Christ (often referred to as St. Jadwiga’s Cross), it was decorated with an image of the victory of Constantine over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge in 312. Given the remembrance of that battle as a victory of Christianity against its ‘pagan’ oppressors, the gifting of the shield at this moment in time, as the king was about to depart to fight the Ottomans – merely the latest in a long line of persecutors of Christians – would have seemed, much like the references to St Lawrence, to have been particularly apropos.⁴⁹

On 13 August, the king and queen made a pilgrimage to a number of holy places within Kraków, including the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, the churches of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and the university collegiate church of St. Anna, praying before the relics of several prominent Polish saints. The pilgrimage of the royal couple concluded in St. Mary’s Church, in the main square of the city, where a litany was recited.⁵⁰

Sobieski would remain in the city for two more days following this pilgrimage, apparently out of a desire to time his departure so that it might coincide with Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, one of the four major Marian feasts in the liturgical calendar (15 August).⁵¹ Christoph Maier has noted that the importance of observing the major feast days of the Virgin Mary, as well as those of the Cross, had been emphasised to participants in the crusading movement

⁴⁹ A precedent for such a parallel had already been set as early as 1680, the year following the rediscovery of the shield, when the poet Jan Gawiński who wrote a short poem about its finding entitled *Clipoeus Christianitatis: that is, the Shield of Christendom with miracles on it of Christian lords in the war against the enemies of the Holy Cross. (Clipoeus Christianitatis to jest tarcz Chrześcijaństwa z cudownem na niej panów chrześcijańskich na wojnę przeciwko nieprzyjaciołom Krzyża św.)*. Gawiński’s use of the Latin phrase “*Clipoeus Christianitatis*” also tapped into the long-standing conception amongst the inhabitants of the *Rzeczpospolita* that they existed as an *Antemurale Christianitatis* (Bulwark of Christendom). Czarniecka, p. 84; Rożek, pp. 19-20. The king himself would engage with this same corpus of ideas in a letter to the pope sent during the course of the expedition. See n. 71.

⁵⁰ Rożek, p. 19

⁵¹ The king’s decision regarding the date of his departure was taken some way in advance. See: Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 1 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2218, pp. 79-80). Although there was briefly some suggestion that the departure might shift a few days later, ultimately, the king remained firm on his chosen date. See Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 1 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2232 and N. 2233, pp. 99 and 100-3).

since at least the early-thirteenth century, and that these feasts had been commonly observed by crusaders even prior to this point. Housley has likewise observed the prominence of Marian devotion as a feature both of the crusading movement and of Counter-Reformation Catholicism.⁵²

It is notable, then, that Wespazjan Kochowski records that in the course of his departure from Kraków, the king visited the Carmelite Church dedicated to the Visitation of the Virgin Mary, standing just beyond the walls of the city, where he performed his devotions in front of the miraculous image of the Virgin known as of Our Lady 'on the Sands' (*Matka Boska na Piasku*)⁵³ 'in order that more frequently and more zealously, he might commend the expedition he had undertaken to the Virgin Worker of Miracles'.⁵⁴

Moreover, as the king departed the city, accompanied by the queen and much of the royal court, his route would take him past the Camaldolese hermitage at Bielany, another prominent centre of Marian devotion for the city of Kraków. The king ascended the high hill upon which the hermitage stood, where, in its church, which was dedicated in honour of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, he would participate in a service held to commemorate the feast bearing that same name.⁵⁵

In a letter to Pope Innocent XI that same day announcing his departure, Sobieski would make an explicit statement of his conception of the conflict in which he was about to engage. This letter makes plain his belief that the Ottoman war had been divinely sanctioned, and echoes the text of the alliance with the emperor by once again acknowledging the role of the pope in overseeing the conflict. Moreover, it demonstrates amply the Polish monarch's proficiency and willingness to engage with the corpus of crusading language:

⁵² Christoph T. Maier, 'Crisis, Liturgy and the Crusade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 48 (1997), 628-657, (pp. 651-2). Housley, *The Later Crusades*, p. 142.

⁵³ James J. Boyce, *Carmelite Liturgy and Spiritual Identity: the Choir Books of Kraków* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), p. 3; *Z Dawna Polski Tyś Królową: przewodnik po sanktuariach Maryjnych koronowane wizerunki Matki Bożej 1717-1999*, ed. by Grażyna od Wszechpośrednictwa Matki Bożej and others, 5th edn (Szymanów: Siostry Niepokalanki, 1999), pp. 128-30.

⁵⁴ Kochowski, p. 17.

quo crebrius et enixius, susceptam expeditionem Taumaturgae Virgini commendaret.

⁵⁵ Rożek, p. 21.

Today, the Feast of the Assumption, sacred to the Blessed Virgin, I mount my warhorse, to depart towards the holy wars and towards besieged Vienna, to restore the former liberty of this city under the auspices of God, [...] greatly certain of the apostolic benedictions and paternal affection which Your Holiness – to whom both in hand and in mind I profess that I am his most obedient son – will not omit to lay upon me, proceeding as an obedient son in the struggle for the glory of the Cross, and for the preservation of the Christian world.⁵⁶

There may be a temptation, if one reads this letter in isolation, to dismiss the words contained within as merely pandering to the expectations of the pope, and to suggest that the sentiments which the king expressed were not, in fact, genuine. Whilst one must certainly recognise that this letter contains an element of the performative, when Sobieski's words are viewed in the full context of the thoughtfulness and devotion with which he had applied himself to his spiritual preparations on numerous occasions over the course of recent weeks, such a position becomes difficult to sustain. The sentiments expressed here of fighting 'for the glory of the Cross and for the preservation of the Christian world' were, in all probability, reflective of the king's own deeply held convictions, which he further reinforced through his devotional practices.

The Polish relief expedition to Vienna

The remainder of this chapter examines events which took place during the course of the Polish relief expedition, both amongst the army as they moved towards Vienna, and in the country which they left behind. The intent here is not, it should be noted, to provide a further contribution to the already extensive corpus of studies which have explored the expedition primarily or exclusively as a

⁵⁶ Sobieski to Innocent XI, Kraków, 15 August 1683 (Theiner, III, p. 689).

hodie divae Virgini Assumptae sacra festivitate bellatorem conscendo equum ad sacra iturus bella, et obsessae Viennae auspice Deo pristinam redditurus libertatem [...] certus tam de benedictionibus Apostolicis, quam de paterno affectu, quo me ceu obedientem filium in certamina pro gloria Crucis, pro conservatione Orbis Christiani descendentem cumulare non intermittet S. V. cui et manu et animo profiteor, quod sim obedientissimus filius.

military exercise.⁵⁷ Instead, the focus will lie upon the often overlooked devotional aspects of the expedition, in order to demonstrate how the expressions of religious motivation made during the *sejm*, and the spiritual preparations examined earlier in this chapter, continued to be reflected in the conduct of the monarch, the soldiery, and the populace of the *Rzeczpospolita* during the march of the Polish forces to the assistance of the emperor. What follows will therefore provide only the bare minimum of military detail necessary to orientate the reader.

As the first part of this chapter has demonstrated, Sobieski's preparations for the relief expedition to Vienna were marked by a focus upon pilgrimage, often with the express purpose of securing the intercession of the Virgin Mary on behalf of himself and the *Rzeczpospolita*. The early stages of the expedition provide further evidence of this same focus. The chosen route through Imperial Silesia towards Vienna took the main Polish force past two other prominent centres of Marian pilgrimage, Piekary (now Piekary Śląskie, Poland) and Rauden (now Rudy, Poland). It is unfortunately unknown whether the king had specifically pushed for a route which incorporated these sites in the course of his negotiations with the Duke of Lorraine and the Silesian commissars tasked with preparing his passage towards Vienna, or whether he had simply made a point of visiting prominent religious sites which happened to fall upon his route.⁵⁸ The fact that the king visited these two sites, as well as others of spiritual significance, is well attested, however.

Leaving the Camaldolese hermitage at Bielany behind them, the king and his cortège moved towards the new rendezvous point at Tarnowitz, travelling as yet with little haste, in order to allow as much time as possible for his newly raised units to converge.⁵⁹ Back in Kraków, meanwhile, devotional activities in support of the expedition were continuing even in the absence of the court. On 18 August, the city councillors ordered a solemn votive Mass for the purpose of securing God's favour for the Christian forces, where a specially-prepared sermon was

⁵⁷ Amongst studies in English, those of Barker and Stoye stand out as particularly high quality. Barker, pp. 306-19; Stoye, pp. 138-41, 159-66.

⁵⁸ Konarski, p. 218, notes only that the correspondence discussing the provision of food and choice of route had been extensive.

⁵⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 19 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2250, pp. 120-2).

given by a Benedictine preacher.⁶⁰ Pallavicini, who had been observing over the course of recent weeks the sense of enthusiasm for the war which seemed to be permeating amongst the Polish populace – particularly following the arrival of the news of the stalwart performance of Lubomirski's troops during the victory near Pressburg – would record that large numbers of *szlachcice* were now opting to follow the king towards Silesia, in order to fight with him as non-enlisted volunteers during the expedition.⁶¹ Konarski has noted the example, unearthed in the town archive at Oświęcim, of a *rewers* (a document confirming the existence of a debt) set down by a certain Miciowski, who borrowed 5,000 *złoty* to purchase horses and equipment 'for my urgent need, against the enemy of the Holy Cross'.⁶²

The king and his following would eventually unite with Jabłonowski and his forces at Będzin on 19 August. Later that same day, he would cross the border of the *Rzeczpospolita* into Imperial Silesia near Beuthen (now Bytom, Poland) at the head of his troops. The diary of Kątski records that on 20 August: 'Their Majesties assisted [...] at Mass in the Jesuit Church in Piekary, where there is a miraculous painting'.⁶³

The painting noted by Kątski was a depiction of the Virgin Mary known today as 'Our Lady of Piekary' (*Matka Boska Piekarskiej*), which had been housed in Piekary since at least as early as the fifteenth century. In the decade prior to the Polish relief expedition, however, the fame and reputation of the image had been considerably enhanced, as it had been attributed responsibility for the curing of two outbreaks of plague, first in nearby Tarnowitz in 1676, then in Prague in 1680, where Emperor Leopold had arranged for it to be transported and processed through the streets of the city. As a result of these recent miracles, the sanctuary

⁶⁰ Rożek, pp. 23-4.

⁶¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 6, 12 and 19 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2225, N. 2233 and N. 2250, pp. 91-3, 100-3 and 120-2); Pallavicini to Buonvisi, Kraków, 6 and 19 August 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2226 and N. 2251, pp. 94-5 and 122-3).

⁶² Quoted by Konarski, p. 219.

na pilną moją potrzebę, przeciwko Nieprzyjacielowi Krzyża Świętego, pożyczanym sposobem wziętych

⁶³ Kątski, p. 580.

Leurs Majestés assistèrent [...] à la messe dans l'église des Jésuites à Piekary, où se trouve un tableau miraculeux.

at Piekar had become one of the most prominent sites of Marian pilgrimage in Silesia at the time.⁶⁴

The king and his court reached Tarnowitz that same evening, where they remained for two nights in order to allow as many of the straggling troops as possible to enter the camp. On 22 August, feeling himself unable to wait any longer, although the full strength of Poland was not yet gathered, and the army of Lithuania was still nowhere to be seen, Sobieski began the march south-westwards towards Vienna. After the celebration of Mass, the queen reviewed the parade of troops leaving the camp, before returning towards Kraków with the court. It was probably at this parting that she gave her husband a miniature portrait of the Virgin Mary, which he carried with him throughout the expedition in a small purse.⁶⁵

The Polish forces passed that night in the town of Gleiwitz (now Gliwice, Poland), where local tradition records that the king also participated in the dedication of the new Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, built to house a miraculous crucifix which had been found intact in the ruins of the previous iteration when it had burnt down a few years prior. He spent the night in the Franciscan monastery there.⁶⁶

On 23 August, Sobieski marched with his entire force into the heavily wooded area south-west of Gleiwitz, ending that day's march at the Cistercian abbey in the village of Rauden. Like the church at Piekar, this abbey was a well-established centre of Marian devotion and pilgrimage, having housed a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary known as either 'Our Lady of Humility' (*Matka Boska Pokornej*) or 'Our Lady of Rauden' (*Matka Boska Rudzkiej*) – a copy of the *Salus Populi Romani*, located in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome – since its foundation in the mid-thirteenth century by monks from the Polish abbey of Jędrzejów.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ *Z Dawna Polski*, pp. 178-81.

⁶⁵ Jakub, p. 618, Kątski, p. 581; d'Alerac, p. 83; Sobieski makes reference to this portrait in a later letter to Maria Kazimiera, Isle of Schütt (now Žitný Ostrov, Slovakia), 28 September 1683 (*ARJ*, p. 428).

⁶⁶ Joanna Puchalik 'Kościół pw. Podwyższenia Krzyża Świętego' in *Gliwice znane i nieznanne*, ed. by Leszek Jodliński and others, 5 vols (Gliwice: Muzeum w Gliwicach, 2007-2015), I (2007), pp. 114-9, (pp. 115-7).

⁶⁷ Kątski, p. 581; d'Alerac, p. 171; *Z Dawna Polski*, pp. 645-7.

The following morning, upon his departure from Rauden, the king once again separated from the main Polish forces, taking a few thousand *pancerny* and dragoons with him to make the junction with the forces of Charles of Lorraine, whilst the main body, under the command of Jabłonowski, was to follow as swiftly as it was able.⁶⁸ The king's decision was motivated by a complex set of factors, including the reports reaching him that the defenders of Vienna were facing increasingly dire straits, as well as the concern that his advance guard under Sieniawski might join Lorraine in undertaking some enterprise against the Ottomans and their allies before he could join them, exposing the entire expedition to failure if they were defeated, and robbing him of his share of the glory if they succeeded.⁶⁹ He may also have hoped that his physical presence would dissuade Leopold from making his own way to join the Imperial troops, a potential outcome which was being promoted by several of Leopold's leading advisors, and which – by the precedence-conscious norms of the day – would see Sobieski obliged to cede the position which he hoped to secure as overall commander of the combined Christian army.⁷⁰

In a combative letter addressed to the pope and cardinals around this same time, he sought to set out for posterity the efforts which he had made and was continuing to make to assist Vienna, in case the besieged city should fall before his relief force could arrive. In doing so, he marshalled the well-established *topos* of Poland-Lithuania as a bulwark of Christendom (*Antemurale Christianitatis*), writing that:

Your Holiness might consider whether one can do more of advantage for a friend and an ally, and indeed for all this which regards the good of the Church, the advantage of Christendom and the glory of Your Holiness. I and all

⁶⁸ Kątski, p. 581; d'Alerac, p. 126.

⁶⁹ Sobieski would reveal these concerns in a letter to Maria Kazimiera, Opava, 25 August 1683 (*ARJ*, p. 300-2).

⁷⁰ See Stoye, pp. 151-3; Barker, pp. 310-1 for Leopold's long period of prevarication over this particular decision. The emperor would not fully reconcile himself to the idea of staying away from his forces until the final stages of the Christian army's approach to Vienna, upon being informed in no uncertain terms that his presence would likely cause more harm than good.

this Kingdom are bound to shed up to the last drops of our blood as Bulwarks.⁷¹

The use of bulwark metaphors to refer to those states along the frontiers with the Ottoman Empire had been systematised and disseminated via humanist networks throughout Christendom in the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans by Eneo Silvio Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, triggering the gradual adoption of these ideas as an increasingly prominent part of the self-identity of Poland during the course of the late-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Piccolomini was not the first to engage with this concept however. Prototypical examples of the *topos* can be found relating to Poland dating from the fourteenth century, and perhaps even as early as the thirteenth, entwined with the idea of crusading against the Tatars. Meanwhile the Italian humanist, Francesco Filelfo, had already applied the concept to the emerging Ottoman threat as early as 1444, addressing Władysław III Jagiellon, King of Poland and Hungary, as a bulwark of Christendom prior to his death in battle against the Ottomans during the Crusade of Varna (1443-4) later that same year.⁷²

Over the days which followed, the king's route took him through the towns of Ratibor (now Racibórz, Poland), Troppau (now Opava, Czech Republic) and Olmütz (now Olomouc, Czech Republic). Despite his haste, he made time in the latter to

⁷¹ Sobieski to Innocent XI, Ratibor, 24 August 1683 (Theiner, III, pp. 689-90), p. 690.

E poi si compiaccia Vostra Santità considerare se si puol far di vantaggio per un'amico collegato; anzi tutto ciò che riguarda il bene della Chiesa, il vantaggio della Christianità e la gloria della Santità Vostra. Io e tutto questo Regno come Antemurale sono tenuto à spargere sino all'ultima goccia del sangue.

There is some uncertainty about the precise moment of dispatch of this letter. Theiner records this letter as having been sent from Ratibor. This agrees with the account of d'Alerac (pp. 392-3), who included a copy of this letter in his memoirs. Kluczycki, who also provides an edition of this letter in French in *ARJ* (pp. 294-5), follows the manuscript of Dupont and alternatively suggests that the dispatch took place at Gleiwitz. However, the former location, which fits better with the chronology of the march given in diaries of Kątski (p. 581) and Prince Jakub (p. 619), should likely be preferred.

⁷² For the role of Piccolomini in the systematisation and propagation of bulwark metaphors see: Kerstin Weiland, 'The Origins of *Antemurale Christianitatis* Myths: Remarks on the Promotion of a Political Concept' in *Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, ed. by Liliya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher (New York: Berghahn, 2019), pp. 31-57. For more on prototypical engagements with the *antemurale topos*, see: Paul W. Knoll, 'Poland as "Antemurale Christianitatis" in the Late Middle Ages', *Catholic Historical Review*, 60 (1974), pp. 381-401; as well as Mikolaj Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders: Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 390-1.

visit the church and college of the Jesuit order.⁷³ He subsequently noted with pleasure that: ‘The Jesuit Fathers [...] did me a great honour by calling me ‘Saviour’ in their perorations and upon decorations or veils placed upon the altars’.⁷⁴

In his *Commentarius*, Kochowski provides further details regarding the king’s visit to the Jesuit Church at Olmütz, again singling out the altar cloths for mention, recording that they bore the biblical verse: ‘They cried out to the Lord, who raised them up a saviour’.⁷⁵ The context of this passage is God’s deliverance of the Israelites through the agency of Othniel, after eight years of oppression by a tyrant from the East, Chushan-Rishathaim.⁷⁶ As in Wawel Cathedral, prior to Sobieski’s departure from Kraków, when the clerics of the chapter had gifted him the shield bearing the image of the Milvian Bridge, the ready parallels to the present struggle with the Ottomans were not lost upon either the Jesuits who assembled to welcome him – who appear to have taken this as the theme for their orations – or upon the king himself, who seems to have enjoyed the comparison.⁷⁷

Departing from Olmütz on 27 August, the king and his small force continued to move south-westwards through Moravia via Wischau (now Vyškov, Czech Republic) towards Brünn (now Brno, Czech Republic), the capital of that province.

⁷³ Kański, p. 581.

⁷⁴ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Prossnitz (now Prostějov, Czech Republic), 27 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 307-9), p. 308.

Les Pères Jésuites [...] m'ont fait un grand honneur en m'appelant Salvator dans leurs péroraisons et sur des dessins ou transparents placés sur les autels. Aujourd'hui j'ai été les voir [...] Les bonnes gens d'ici nous bénissent et lèvent les mains au ciel derrière nous.

⁷⁵ Judges 3.9.

Clamaverunt ad Dominum, qui suscitavit eis Salvatorem.

⁷⁶ In different translations of the Bible, Chushan-Rishathaim is described either as King of Mesopotamia or of Aram-Naharaim.

⁷⁷ Kochowski, p. 18. The *historiographus privilegiatus* concludes his account of this visit with a short anecdote, doubtless intended to demonstrate Sobieski’s modesty and piety for the benefit of his audience, in case there were any doubt about precisely which allegorical role the king was fulfilling here. When one of the assembled went a little too far in his praise, evidently casting Sobieski in the role of God himself rather than the more appropriate role of God’s implement, Othniel, he reports that: “the inappropriate metaphor of the encomiast was less than pleasing to the king, the titles for the Divine having been usurped and bestowed upon a mortal man” (“minus placeret Regi incompetens Encomiastae Metaphora, usurpatos Numini titulos, mortali homini tribuentis”).

That same evening, he received news – first through Sieniawski, then from Charles of Lorraine directly – that on 24 August, the Duke had engaged and defeated a new Ottoman and Tatar raiding force along the north bank of the Danube opposite Vienna, near the village of Stammersdorf on the southern slopes of the Bisamberg.⁷⁸ The battle having occurred without any stolen glory, since Sieniawski's forces had not been in close enough proximity to participate, the king felt able to dispatch his most fulsome congratulations to Lorraine the following morning. He wrote in terms similar to those which he had used in describing the Duke's earlier victory at Pressburg, deeming this latest success to be a manifestation of divine favour and an augur of greater victories to come, writing that:

Our solaces are made complete by this extraordinary reward, since we are informed by Your Serenity of such a propitious success against the enemy. We ascribe this blinding of the enemy to Divine favour, because they plunder with so much temerity against reason and against all the rules and fundamentals of war. May the Lord of Hosts arrange it that the present victory might be an omen of subsequent fortunate events.⁷⁹

Sobieski reached Brünn on 28 August, where he attended Mass at the Franciscan Church of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, which was celebrating both the anniversary of its foundation and the feast of the beheading of its namesake that same day.⁸⁰ From that city, the king and his small advance force turned due southwards towards Dürnholz (now Drnholec, Czech Republic), with the main body under Jabłonowski continuing to follow behind. As the Polish forces passed the Benedictine abbey at Raigern (now Rajhrad, Czech Republic) a few miles south of Brünn, one of the monks of that abbey, Father Bernard Brulig,

⁷⁸ Lorraine to Sieniawski, Imperial camp at Korneuberg, 25 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 297-8); Lorraine to Sobieski, Imperial camp at Korneuberg, 26 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 305-6). The arrival of Sieniawski's letter to the Polish monarch is recorded in Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Prossnitz (now Prostějov, Czech Republic), 27 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 307-9).

⁷⁹ Sobieski to Lorraine, Wischau, 28 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 313-4), p. 313.

Cumulantur insigni auctoramento solatia Nostra, cum de tam prospero contra hostem successu a Serenitate Vestra edocemur. Divino adscribimus beneficio istam hostium accaecationem [*sic*], quod contra rationes et omnes belli regulas et fundamenta adeo temere agant. Faxit Dominus exercituum, ut praesens victoria subsequentium sit omen fortunatorum eventuum.

⁸⁰ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Mödritz (now Modřice, Czech Republic), 27 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 307-9).

provides a rare insight into the mentality amongst the rank-and-file of the *szlachta* who comprised the bulk of the Polish forces as they moved towards Vienna:

[The Poles said] that we idle Germans were unworthy to have such a good land, for which we would never be able to honour or thank Almighty God enough, but above all we were to be rightly admonished, because even for so noble a fatherland, or rather an earthly paradise, we were not prepared to fight against that hereditary enemy who seeks to destroy it along with us, much less to give our lives (as they, as strangers, are doing for us voluntarily), and that we are thus afraid to fight and die for the Christian faith.⁸¹

On 30 August, the king and his small force reached Dürnholz, turning south-westwards again the following day towards Hollabrunn, a town a day's march north of the bridge which was under construction at Tulln, upstream of Vienna, for the purpose of conveying the relieving forces across the Danube. Shortly after sunrise on 31 August, the king's forces were joined by those of Sieniawski. A few hours after the arrival of the Crown Field *Hetman*, as the Poles were preparing to break camp, the Duke of Lorraine unexpectedly appeared with a small escort to meet with Sobieski.

With different characters involved, this meeting could easily have gone awry, not least because the two men had previously been rival candidates for the Polish throne in 1674, and because Lorraine had again been touted as a possible replacement for Sobieski by the pro-Habsburg opposition in the *Rzeczpospolita* during the late-1670s. However, any initial suspicions which may have lingered were swiftly allayed by Lorraine's willingness to cede overall command to the Polish monarch, who was, after all, as experienced as any commander in

⁸¹ Bernard Brulig, 'Bericht über die Belagerung der Stadt Wien im Jahre 1683', ed. by Beda Dudík, *Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichts-Quellen*, 4 (1850), 255-296 and 397-496, (p. 434).

sagendt dass wir fauhle Deütsche, ein so guttess landt zuhaben, unwüridig wehren, von welchess wir gott den allmächtigen niemahlenss gnugsamb weder ehren noch dancken kennen, vornemblichen aber darumb billig zuthadeln wehren, dass wir wegen einess so edlen vatterlandss oder vielmehr irdischen paradeyss wieder den erbfeündt, der solchess sambt uns zu vernichten trachtet, weder streitten, viel weniger (wie sie alss frembdlinge vor unss freywillig thun) unser leben darbitten wollen, unndt unss also vor den christlichen glauben zufechten unndt zusterben fürchten.

Christendom in warfare against the Ottomans, as well as by the immediate rapport which formed between the two old soldiers.⁸² Pallavicini, when he received a report of this encounter, was quick to recognise its significance against the backdrop of efforts at unified Christian action in previous centuries, writing to Rome that:

The Imperial envoy, in giving to me an account of the meeting, used these terms: 'between the king and the Duke of Lorraine there passed great confidence and true, true friendship', a thing for which we must particularly thank God, given that the ill-fortunes of holy wars are always derived from the lack of correspondence of the leaders.⁸³

Perhaps prompted by the removal of this potential obstacle to his overall command, the king chose this moment to remind Innocent XI, by way of Maria Kazimiera and Nuncio Pallavicini, that he was yet to receive the consecrated sword and hat – traditionally awarded by the Papacy in recognition of services performed in the defence of Christendom – which had initially been promised to him by Innocent's predecessor Pope Clement X (1670-76) in 1674, following the victory at Chocim the previous year.⁸⁴

The marches of 30 and 31 August are also remarkable for the observance of two celestial events, which appear to have been taken – at least tentatively – amongst the Poles as positive omens for what was to come. On the first of these days, as

⁸² The king would leave an account of the events of this meeting in a letter to the queen. Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Hollabrunn, 31 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 325-31). Further accounts are provided by Dupont, p. 129; d'Alerac, pp. 127-8.

⁸³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 8 September 1683 (*ANP VII*, N. 2282, pp. 162-4), p. 163.

Il Sig. Inviato cesareo nel dar mi parte dell'istesso, usa questi termini: Magna inter Regem et Ducem Lotaringiae intercessit confidentia, et vera, vera amicitia, cosa della quale deve ringratiarsi Dio particolarmente, atteso che li mali successi delle guerre sacre sono sempre derivati dalla poca corrispondenza de' capi.

Pallavicini also wrote in similar terms to Buonvisi two days prior: Kraków, 6 September 1683 (*ANP VII*, N. 2280, pp. 160-1).

⁸⁴ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Hollabrunn, 31 August 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 325-31). In the aftermath of the relief of Vienna, Innocent XI would finally consent to the awarding of the consecrated sword and hat to Sobieski. The ceremony of bestowal took place on 25 July 1684, in the aforementioned Collegiate Church of St. Lawrence in Żólkiew, in the presence of a large number of bishops and senators, as well as the envoys of both the emperor and Venice. Maria Kazimiera would receive the accompanying honour, the Golden Rose, at the same time. Macyszyn, p. 195; Petrus, p. 43; Jerzy Lileyko, *Regalia Polskie* (Warsaw: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1987), pp. 126-9.

Kątski recorded it in his diary: 'Scarcely had the king set himself marching, when a large and beautiful eagle was noticed which flew throughout that entire day and did not leave His Majesty, to whom it seemed to show the path'.⁸⁵

Several others who were present also deemed the presence of this eagle to be worthy of remark, including Prince Jakub, who wrote of it in his diary, as well as the Frenchman, d'Alerac.⁸⁶ On the morning of the second day, around the time of the conjunction with the forces of the Crown Field *Hetman* and the arrival of Lorraine in the Polish camp, Kątski records that:

A rainbow of extraordinary form appeared in the heavens. [...] It had the form of a crescent such as one sees immediately after the new moon. Its two points were turned to the side opposite the sun. Its colours, like those of an ordinary rainbow were very vivid and clear. Growing from the base of this rainbow, on the side of the sun, there was a second rainbow with less splendid colours. [...] All those who were with the king, without exception, saw this phenomenon.⁸⁷

Jakub again wrote of this event in his diary.⁸⁸ The king, meanwhile, also provided an account of both events to the queen back in Poland. She in turn informed Pallavicini, who clearly accorded them a prophetic character in writing of these events to Rome:

His Majesty writes to the queen, two portentous things having occurred on the journey. One is that an eagle has flown above him for some time, as is said

⁸⁵ Kątski, pp. 582-3.

à peine le Roi se fut-il mis en marche, qu'on remarqua un grand et bel aigle qui pendant toute la journée vola et ne quitta pas Sa Majesté à laquelle il semblait montrer le chemin.

⁸⁶ Jakub, p. 619; d'Alerac, p. 144. As with the details of the ceremony on the Feast of St. Lawrence in Kraków, the near-contemporary English translator of d'Alerac's memoirs omitted this passage from his translation.

⁸⁷ Kątski, p. 583.

un arc-en-ciel d'une forme extraordinaire se montra dans le firmament. [...] Il avait la forme d'un croissant tel qu'on en voit aussitôt après la nouvelle lune. Ses deux pointes étaient tournées du côté opposé au soleil. Ses couleurs comme celles de l'arc-en-ciel ordinaire étaient très-vives et très-claires. A partir du bas de ce croissant qui était du côté du soleil, un second arc-en-ciel aux couleurs moins splendides s'étendit de deux côtés. [...] Tous ceux qui étaient avec le Roi, sans exception, virent ce phénomène.

⁸⁸ Jakub, p. 619.

to have happened to Charles V, when he gave the famous battle to the Elector of Saxony [Johann Friedrich I, one of the leaders of the Lutheran Schmalkaldic League] upon the Elbe [at Mühlberg in 1547], and made the elector his prisoner. [...] The second is that at midday, with the sky being very clear, a rainbow was seen in which the blue, which is the colour pleasing to the king, was more vivid and stood out above the others.⁸⁹

Wespazjan Kochowski, who continued to accompany Sobieski in his official capacity as *historiographus privilegiatus*, was also an eyewitness to these celestial events. In his *Commentarius*, would write that:

On the day that the body of Field *Hetman* Sieniawski was joined to the royal forces, a many-coloured rainbow appeared. It did not now embrace the land with its spread horns, but rather the middle of the heavens in the form of a circle, with the bright, clear Sun in the middle of the spectacle [...] just as the Divine might proffer a crown or wreath. It was permitted to augur therefore not the onset of rainfall or a storm, but rather, from a rare occurrence, an infallible token of victory. All the more so because this rainbow might also be a sign of an alliance initiated between God and men. [...]

Furthermore, an Eagle of remarkable whiteness, the ancient emblem of the Sarmatian Kingdom [i.e Poland], with wings on-high led forth above the army, borne in unwearied flight for two days; now higher, now lower, passing through the regions of the sky, as if it might have sought a place of halting. Many people observed, and remembered from the histories, the similar omen

⁸⁹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 11 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2291, pp. 175-7), p. 176.

Scrive la Maestà Sua alla Regina esserle occorse nel viaggio due cose portentose. Una è che un'aquila ha volato sopra di lui qualche tempo, come narrasi esser successo a Carlo Quinto quando diede la famosa battaglia all'Elettore di Sassonia sull'Elba e lo fece suo prigioniero [...] Il secondo, che nel mezzo dì et essendo l'aria assai chiara, si s'è visto un arcobaleno, nel quale fra gl'altri colori era più vivo e spiccava sopra gl'altri l'azzurro, che è il colore aggradito dal Re.

It should be noted that the extant version of Sobieski's letter to Maria Kazimiera, dated 31 August from Hollabrunn (*ARJ*, pp. 325-31), only mentions the rainbow, without mentioning the eagle. Pallavicini's words make clear his belief that the king had written of both celestial events. Whether the letter was subsequently redrafted by a secretary, at which stage a mention of the eagle was made, or whether the individual who brought the king's message to the queen had in fact conveyed knowledge of this detail verbally, can only now be speculated at. It is clear, however, that the queen had been informed of it in some manner.

of the auspicious bird which portended victory over the Persians to Macedonian Alexander.⁹⁰

The *Commentarius*, it should be remembered, was published a few months after the return from Vienna, once the efficacy of these omens had already been proven. It is certainly reasonable to suggest that in the moment, these celestial events were interpreted with a greater degree of caution – and less rhetorical flourish – than Kochowski was to employ retrospectively.⁹¹ Nevertheless, given his own presence on the scene, as well as the presence of some considerable part of the audience for his work – the Latin-educated *szlachta* – his account of the response to these apparent omens is also unlikely to be an outright work of fiction. It does not seem implausible to suggest that Kochowski's account had at least some basis in how they were interpreted contemporaneously amongst the Poles who witnessed them.

In a letter from the encampment at Hollabrunn the following day (1 September), Stanisław Potocki – the son of the *Kasztelan* of Kraków, Andrzej – who was participating in the expedition as *rotmistrz* (captain) of a banner of *pancerny*, provides a further short insight into the prevailing spirit amongst those members of the *szlachta* who comprised the bulk of the Polish forces as they marched to

⁹⁰ Kochowski, p. 19.

Quâ die Campiducis SIENIAVII agmen, copiis iungebatur Regiis, multicolor Iris apparuit, non iam protensis terram cornibus, sed medium Caeli, forma circulari complexa; illustre claro ante medium Sole spectaculum [...] velut coronam aut sertum protenderet Numen; hinc non imbrium aut tempestatis praenunciam, sed ex raro accidente, infallibilem victoriae tesseram licuit ominari. Tum quod signum id, initi inter Deum ac homines faederis esset; [...]

Adhaec, eximio candore Aquila, vetus Regni Sarmatici insigne, pennis in sublime euecta, super Exercitum, indefesso volatu biduo ferebatur; nunc superas, nunc inferas, aeris regiones percurrens, tanquam locum subsistendi quaereret. Multi conspexere, memorabantque; ex historiis, simile bonae alitis omen, Alexandro Macedoni ex Persis portendisse victoriam.

⁹¹ It might be observed that the classical reference which Kochowski employed here, to Plutarch's account in the *Life of Alexander*, 33, of an eagle flying above the head of Alexander prior to his defeat of Darius III at Gaugamela in 331BC, is a further allusion to a proto-Christian figure combatting and defeating oppression from the East, in a similar vein to that made to Othniel and Chushan-Rishathaim in Kochowski's account of Sobieski's visit to the Jesuit church in Olmütz. See: Plutarch, *The Age of Alexander: Ten Greek Lives*, trans. by Ian Scott-Kilvert, 2nd edn, rev. by Timothy E. Duff (London and New York: Penguin, 2011), pp. 317-8.

relieve Vienna: 'This war excites among us a general enthusiasm. We have unwavering hope in God that he will bless the Christian armies'.⁹²

A report of Nuncio Pallavicini to Rome, also dated 1 September, reveals that the continued engagement amongst the Polish forces with the faith-based aspect of their forthcoming conflict with the Ottomans – observed in recent days by Brulig and demonstrated by Potocki – was likewise being mirrored back in Kraków during the last days of August. He records that:

Here, great and continuous prayers are made to implore Divine aid for Christian arms. A good part of the afternoon is spent on this, the queen going to the Church around four in the afternoon, where the Forty Hours' has been ordained for this purpose; the nuncio, the bishops and the senators also attending with a large number of people. They go to the Church, where the exposition takes place, and where all the orders make processions, singing litanies and prayers, and the preachers rightly preach penitence and exhort [the people] to pray with fervour.⁹³

The Forty Hours' Devotion originated in the early sixteenth-century, most likely in Milan, but quickly spread throughout Catholic Christendom. The purpose of the devotion, as recognised and codified by Pope Paul III in 1539, was 'to appease the anger of God provoked by the offences of Christians, and [...] to bring to nought the efforts and machinations of the Turks who are pressing forward to the destruction of Christendom'. Its practice normally involved continuous prayer in front of the exposed Eucharist, either in a single church or a number of churches in succession, with one ceremony beginning as the previous one ended, all initiated with a 'Mass of Exposition', and concluded two days later with a 'Mass of

⁹² Stanisław Potocki, *Starosta* of Halicz, to his mother, Anna Potocka, 1 September 1683 (*ARJ*, p. 332).

Cette guerre excite chez tous un entrain général. Nous avons en Dieu l'espoir inébranlable qu'il bénira les armées chrétiennes.

⁹³ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 1 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2274, pp. 152-3), p. 152-3

Qui si fanno grandi e continue preghiere per implorare l'aiuto Divino all'armi cristiane. Buona parte del doppio pranso [*sic*] s'impiega in esse, andando la Regina verso le 4 hore alla Chiesa, ove sono le quarant'hore ordinate a questo fine, intervenendovi il Nuntio, i Vescovi e Senatori con un numeroso popolo. Vanno alla Chiesa, ove è fatta l'espositione, le Religioni processionalmente, cantando le litanie e preci, et i predicatori predicano opportunamente la penitenza et essortano al fervor dell'oratione.

Deposition', whilst a votive Mass *pro pace* was offered on the intervening day.⁹⁴ Pallavicini's report of 1 September includes a further detail of great interest, regarding a particular oration given by one of these aforementioned preachers:

One of these days a preacher, desiring to move the people more strongly, and to encourage them to ask for the aid of God, made a list of the defeats suffered by the Christian Princes, and of the death of some of them; [he] now coming to the deplorable case of Varna, it is almost beyond belief how much the queen was saddened. She gave manifest signs of it at the time, and at the end of the Mass she went to the Church of the Carmelites, where she remained until two hours before midnight, praying in front of a pious icon of the Blessed Virgin. Now the nuncio, to remove the sadness and apprehension caused by the aforementioned speech from the mind of Her Majesty, studiously procured that the following day, another preacher might advance reasons and examples to increase her hope, and according to that preacher, it appeared that the desired effect was achieved.⁹⁵

The Crusade of Varna was hardly a tactful example to recall before the present Queen of Poland, of course. The aforementioned Władysław III, King of Poland at that time, as well as of Hungary, had been one of its leading figures, but was cut down during the climactic battle, and his body never found.⁹⁶ The preacher's decision to mine the crusading past for examples of Christian defeat merits further comment, however. It is clear from Pallavicini's description that he took

⁹⁴ Herbert Thurston, 'Forty Hours' Devotion', in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VI (1909), pp. 151-3. Christoph Maier has noted the development of new forms of crusading liturgy in response to the threat of Ottoman invasions at least as late as the sixteenth century. pp. 656-7.

⁹⁵ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 1 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2274, pp. 152-3), p. 153.

Un di questi giorni un predicatore, volendo più fortemente muovere il popolo et eccitarlo a ricorrere all'aiuto di Dio, fece un epilogo delle rotte, patite da Principi christiani e della morte d'alcuni di essi. Hor, venendo al caso deplorabile di Varna, non è credibile quanto si contristò la Regina. Ne diede in l'hora segni manifesti, e finita la funtione se ne andò alla Chiesa del Carmine, ove si trattenne sino a due hore avanti a mezza notte, pregando inanzi ad una divota imagine della Beata Vergine. Hor il Nuntio, per togliere dall'animo della Maestà Sua la mestitia et apprensione, cagionatale dal discorso sudetto, procurò studiosamente che il giorno seguente un altro predicatore adducesse ragioni et esempi d'accrescerle la speranza, e secondo che apparve, si conseguì l'effetto.

⁹⁶ Colin Imber, *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-45*, Crusade Texts in Translation 14 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 12-36 (pp. 30-1); Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, rev. edn, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), I, pp. 356-61.

examples not merely from the history of Poland-Lithuania but from across Christendom; moreover, the phrasing implies that Varna was by no means the earliest example given. Given that the Polish-Ottoman wars of the seventeenth century alone could have provided plentiful examples of Christian defeat, several of which were comfortably within the living memory of his audience – Żółkiewski's death at Tułora in 1620; the loss of Kamieniec in 1672 and the humiliating treaty of Buczacz later that same year – one must ask why the preacher chose to invoke these more distant examples at all. The answer must surely be that the long crusading tradition which his chosen examples represented was felt to resonate particularly closely with how the present undertaking was conceived of and being conducted within the *Rzeczpospolita*. It should be noted here that, by his own testimony, Pallavicini took no steps to attempt to disqualify the points made by the first preacher in his efforts to comfort Maria Kazimiera; he evidently held such comparisons to the present expedition to be entirely valid. Instead, he merely sought out another preacher to adduce other examples which had resulted in a more positive outcome, in the hope of countering the traumatising effect of the first oration.

There may also be some significance to the fact that, in her distress, the queen took herself to the same church – that of the Carmelites '*na Piasku*' – which she and the king had visited prior to his departure on 15 August. Although the idea can be advanced only speculatively, it is possible that the royal affinity for the Carmelite church during the course of the expedition to Vienna – and particularly in this moment when Maria Kazimiera had been confronted with the expedition's connections to crusading – stemmed not only from the strong focus on the Virgin Mary retained by that Order, but also from its continued connection to its origins on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. Whilst the vast majority of secular congregations and monastic orders had adopted the use of the Roman rite during the Counter-Reformation, the Carmelites were one of the few exceptions who had chosen to retain their own distinctive rite, which was based on that of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and still referred to by that name.⁹⁷ The choice of the royal couple to practice their devotions at this church in

⁹⁷ Boyce, pp. 3-4, 296-7. Revisions were made to the Rite of the Holy Sepulchre during the Counter-Reformation to bring it closer into line with the Roman Rite, but it nevertheless retained its distinct identity.

particular might perhaps be a subtle reflection of an understanding that the conflict in which they were currently engaged – through arms and through prayer – ultimately retained a spiritual connection to the Holy Land and the Holy Sepulchre.

The king, meanwhile, remained in the vicinity of Hollabrunn until 3 September, moving his force that day to Stetteldorf in order to be closer to the bridge at Tulln which was to carry his forces to the south bank of the Danube, and which was now nearing completion. In a letter of the following day, evidently having been informed by the queen of the devotions which were being performed in support of the expedition back in the *Rzeczpospolita*, the king expressed his pleasure at the news: 'That the Forty Hours has commenced, this is very good, it is necessary to continue; for that Lord who is himself called the commander of the heavenly hosts of the chosen, and consequently of the victories'.⁹⁸

The king's forces were finally rejoined on 5 September by the main body which he had left behind in Silesia under the command of Crown Grand *Hetman* Jabłonowski, and the now-unified Polish army began crossing the Danube that same day. The crossing of the Polish forces, followed by that of Lorraine's Imperial troops, continued until 8 September.

Meanwhile, the forces of the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria, along with those of a number of other German princes who had crossed the Danube further upstream near Krems, were advancing eastwards along the south bank of the river towards where the combined Christian army was gathering, in the fields to the south-east of Tulln.

Final preparations

Alongside the complex military preparations which would be necessary to manage the final advance of the combined Christian forces across the Wienerwald, the

⁹⁸ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Stetteldorf, 4 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 342-7), p. 345.

Que les Quarante heures ont commencé, c'est fort bien, il faut continuer; pour ce Seigneur qui s'est appelé lui-même le chef des armées célestes des élus et par conséquent des victoires.

hilly and heavily forested area which lay between them and the besieged city, time was also reserved for spiritual preparations.

8 September was the feast day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the second major Marian feast to occur during the course of the Polish relief expedition. As with the Assumption on 15 August, which had coincided with the king's carefully timed departure from Kraków, the Nativity was marked by devotional exercise. Sobieski and Prince Jakub gathered in a church with the leaders of several other contingents of the combined Christian army who had already arrived. They were ministered by the famous Capuchin priest, Marco d'Aviano, who had recently arrived at the camp outside Tulln via the Imperial court at Linz, having been commissioned by the pope to provide spiritual assistance to the emperor and to those who were fighting in defence of Christendom.⁹⁹ The assembled took communion from the Capuchin, who gave a special Mass and sermon, imparting upon the Christian army the blessing of the pope which he had conveyed.

The ceremony appears to have been relatively small; it is discussed in a letter of Sobieski and the diary of Prince Jakub, as well as by Kochowski in the *Commentarius*, but does not feature in the accounts of d'Alerac; the military engineer and royal courtier, Phillippe Dupont; the royal attendant Mikołaj Dyakowski or even the General of Artillery Marcin Kątski, all of whom were with the army at the time.¹⁰⁰ Evidently, however, it had a powerful effect on those who were present. Sobieski recorded his impressions of the ceremony in a letter to Maria Kazimiera the following day:

We spent the day yesterday at the church, where Father Marco d'Aviano gave us the benediction that the pope sent to us expressly in his name. He gave us Communion himself, said the Mass, and gave an extraordinary sermon, for after we have asked: 'Do you have confidence in God?', and him having

⁹⁹ Cybo to Father Marco d'Aviano, 7 August 1683 in *P. Marco d'Aviano: Corrispondenza Epistolare*, ed. by Arturo Maria da Carmignano di Brenta, 5 vols (Abano Terme: Piovan, 1986-1991), I, pp. 79-80; d'Aviano to Cybo, 14 August 1683, p. 80.

¹⁰⁰ It should be noted that Kątski nonetheless considered the date to be of some importance. In his diary, he acknowledges only two feast days in the course of the expedition, the two major Marian feasts of the Assumption (15 August) and Nativity (8 September).

responded wholly to the affirmative, he ordered us to repeat aloud after him: 'Jesus and Mary! Jesus and Mary!'. He said his Mass with an extraordinary grace.¹⁰¹

Kochowski records the emotional response amongst those present:

The pope, at that time deeply concerned with the crisis, as was fitting, and all the more so lest the men of such a great army should become faint from the delay, stirred them up to that which was to be done and dared through Marco d'Aviano, Priest of the Capuchin Order. Having truly understood there to be no need for an incitement to the king, with his disposition already resolving upon battle, this Apostolic Man with his famous zeal publicly beseeched the victory down from heaven, and imparted the pope's benediction, which he conveyed, upon the Christian Army. To the words proffered by that most mild old man many poured forth tears, not even the king so much restraining his emotion that he might not testify to the welcome care of the Universal Pastor.¹⁰²

On 9 August, the combined Christian forces moved again towards Vienna, halting that day in the vicinity of Königstetten. In the course of the following day's march through the Wienerwald, the king left his countrymen on the right wing of the army under the command of the two *hetmani*, Jabłonowski and Sieniawski, whilst he took Prince Jakub and a small group of companions to lead the other relieving princes in a council of war. He would remain apart from his own men overnight, attaching himself in his capacity of commander-in-chief to Lorraine and his

¹⁰¹ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, Tulln, 9 September 1683 (*ARJ*, p. 357-63), p. 358.

Nous avons passé la journée d'hier à l'église, où le Padre Marco d'Aviano nous a donné la bénédiction que le Pape nous a envoyée exprès en son nom. Il nous a fait communier lui-même, a dit la messe et a fait un sermon extraordinaire, car après nous avoir demandé: Avez vous confiance en Dieu? et lui ayant répondu tous affirmativement, il nous a ordonné de répéter à haute voix après lui: Jésus-Marie! Jésus-Marie! Il a dit sa messe avec une onction extraordinaire.

¹⁰² Kochowski, p. 26

Pontifex, praesenti ut par erat discrimine sollicitus, tum ne tantorum Exercituum Vires mora languerent, per MARCUM de AVIANO Capuccini Ordinis Praesbyterum, in agendum audendumque; extimulabat. Verum is intellecto nil opus stimulo Regi, suoapte ingenio praelium destinanti, praeclaro Vir Apostolicus zelo [...] publice Victoriam de caelo praecatus, transmissam Pontificis benedictionem Christianis Exercitibus impertiit. Ad prolata mitissimi senis verba multi profudere lachrymas, ne Rege quidem satis affectum cohibente, quominus gratam sibi Universalis Pastoris curam testaretur.

Imperial troops, who were to form the left wing. Travelling along the better roads, the Imperial contingent would be the first part of the army to gain a vantage point over Vienna and the dispositions of the besieging Ottoman forces. He continued to accompany the Imperials as they established themselves atop the Kahlenberg overlooking the besieged city during the morning of 11 September, before reuniting with his own men – still slogging through the near-impassable terrain to reach their own designated hilltops along the final ridgeline of the Wienerwald further to the south-west – during the course of that afternoon. Finally reaching their objective after nightfall, the king passed that night amongst his infantry on the right flank, from where he could see the entire Ottoman camp.¹⁰³ In his *Commentarius*, Kochowski provides a fascinating passage, in which he paints a picture of the king's innermost thoughts during that night:

The king [...] drew back the flap of his tent and surveyed – not without foreboding in his eager mind – that desolation and the [Ottoman] camp shining brightly with many fires until late at night with its brilliant stars, thinking to himself how to turn many things in a better direction:

The harvest was within easy reach for a forceful hand, but before victory ripened, the field would be irrigated with the shedding of Christian blood; there appeared to be ample opportunity for glory to be furnished, but also for disaster, with so many dead and so many dangers. The deadly power of the Turk would in no way be broken with a single battle; the uncertain gamble of war; the disadvantage of the location; the recently acquired [Ottoman] power over so many peoples; and other things were all to be considered. On the other hand, the role of God as avenger of the invader of another; the justness of his own cause; the incredible [Ottoman] tyranny; the innocent blood demanding to be avenged; the wretched condition of those dragged off into slavery; all of these led a mind now unburdened from anxiety to the point of good hope.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, from the mountains named Kahlenberg, 12 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 371-6).

¹⁰⁴ Kochowski, pp. 28-9.

The image of Sobieski which Kochowski crafts through this passage is that of a perfect Christian soldier; brave, righteous and zealous for the protection of the Christian faith and for all its adherents who were subjected to the Ottoman yoke. It would be a mistake not to recognise the element of idealisation at play here; it is not necessary, however, to discard this passage as valueless as a result. Kochowski's choice to depict Sobieski in such terms is surely instructive as to the characteristics and considerations which his primary audience, the *szlachta*, would have expected their monarch to embody and to possess in such a moment. Moreover, given the position Kochowski held as Sobieski's appointed *historiographus privilegiatus*, it seems likely that the monarch would have approved of the portrayal at the very least, if indeed he did not play an active role in shaping it through his own interactions with Kochowski.

Although Sobieski's own letter to Maria Kazimiera, written during the largely sleepless night of 11/12 September, is primarily occupied with recounting the more prosaic matter of the army's crossing of the Wienerwald, there are nevertheless numerous points where he breaks from his narrative to express that the good fortune which the Christian forces had met with so far – and which he hoped they would continue to meet with in the battle to come – had depended and would continue to depend entirely upon the grace and mercy of God.¹⁰⁵ One further detail of interest from that night's encampment, mentioned by both Dyakowski and Kochowski, was the implementation of camp passwords of a distinctly religious character. The former records the use of the words 'In the

Rex [...] quae sideribus illustris noctem, subducta conopaei lacinia, vasta illa, ac crebris ignibus collucentia Castra, non sine gestientis animi omine aspexit, multa in meliorem partem apud se volutans.

In promptu adesse strenuae manui segetem, sed antequam maturescit victoria, multo Christiani sanguinis profluvio rigandam; amplam apparere gloriae materiam, sed funestae, tot caedibus, tot discriminibus parandae. Fatalem Turcae potentiam, uno nequaquam praelio frangendam; incertam belli aleam, loci iniquitatem, recens in tot Gentes imperium, aliaque non improvide consideranda. Rursus ultor in invasorem alieni DEUS; Causae aequitas, Tyrannis incredibilis, innocens, ac vindicias poscens sanguis, templorum desolatio, abstractorum in servitutum miserabilis status, animum sollicitudine exoneratum, ad CAPUT bonae spei ducebant.

¹⁰⁵ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, from the mountains named Kahlenberg, 12 September 1683 (ARJ, pp. 371-6).

name of the Virgin Mary, help me Oh Lord',¹⁰⁶ whilst the latter notes that the name of St. Leopold, the patron saint of Austria, was invoked.¹⁰⁷

Sobieski began his preparations for the day of 12 September in the early hours. Dyakowski, who was encamped near the king in his capacity as a royal attendant, records that at three in the morning, the king ordered the preparation of a rudimentary altar, which was constructed under a nearby oak tree by the stacking of infantry drums. Here, Mass was given for the Polish troops by Ambroży Skopowski, a Dominican friar who accompanied Sobieski as his confessor.¹⁰⁸ The Polish monarch then gathered with his fellow commanders for a second, considerably more famous Mass held in a ruined Camaldolese monastery, now known as the Church of St. Joseph on the Kahlenberg, which had been burned by the Ottomans in the early stages of the siege.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Mikołaj Dyakowski, *Dyaryusz wiedeńskiej okazji Jmci Pana Mikołaja na Dyakowcach Dyakowskiego podstolego latyczewskiego*, ed. by Józef Adam Kosiński and Józef Długosz (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1983), p. 56.

W imię Panny Maryji Panie Boże dopomóż.

¹⁰⁷ Kochowski, p. 28.

¹⁰⁸ Dyakowski, p. 57.

¹⁰⁹ As Bogusław Dybaś has recently set out, the question of whether the Mass with the other Christian leaders took place in what is now the Church of St. Josef on the Kahlenberg, or in the Church of St. Leopold on the neighbouring Leopoldsberg, has been the subject of fervent debate, rooted in separate Polish and Austrian traditions mythologising the battle on 12 September 1683 which began diverging almost immediately following the event itself. Further confusion has been sown by the fact that the name Kahlenberg appears to have applied, at the time of the battle, not merely to the modern-day hill of that name, but also to the entire range of neighbouring hills, from the Leopoldsberg at the north-eastern end, at least as far as the Hermannskogel to the south-west. Although both Prince Jakub and Dupont each positively identify the Mass as having taken place in a Camaldolese monastery, a description which fits only the Church of St. Josef, those who favour the church on Leopoldsberg have deemed these identifications contestable, on the basis that the youthful prince and French engineer were unfamiliar with the local terrain, as well as the fact that the Frenchman wrote his account almost 20 years after the battle. Dybaś has observed, however, that there are several other factors which, when taken together, indicate that the Church of St. Josef should be preferred as the site of the Mass. The first is its central position along the Christian line, making it a logical meeting point, whilst the Church of St. Leopold was on the extreme left end. The second is the uncertain state of completion of the Church of St. Leopold in 1683, since it had only been founded by Leopold I four years prior. The third, which has previously been somewhat overlooked but which Dybaś deems decisive, is that Sobieski himself, in his letter written shortly after the Mass to Maria Kazimiera, gives his location as "the mountains named Kahlenberg, upon which there is a Camaldolese monastery now burned". Dybaś argues that Sobieski was too well-versed in the local topography, too deeply religious, and Camaldolese architecture too distinctive, for this identification to be mistaken, and that his mention of the monastery is a clear indication of his presence

Dupont records the scene as follows:

The part of the mountain which the Christian army occupied, is called Kahlenberg. There was upon its summit, towards the Danube, an ancient, ruined castle, very close to a monastery of the Camaldolese Order, which had been burned by the Turks. At four in the morning, the king ordered that an altar should be prepared in the ruins of the church, where Father Marco d'Aviano, a Capuchin who was very famous at that time in both Italy and Germany due to his extreme piety, who was close to the Duke of Lorraine and who had been sent by the emperor, celebrated the Mass; he was served by the king himself, who held his arms outstretched almost the whole time, and who took communion there, as did the Duke of Lorraine. This saintly monk, in presenting them the Host, made a most touching speech regarding the merit which they were about to acquire, exposing their blood and their lives for the glory of the Sovereign Master, whom they received from his hand. They then took a little of the bread and wine.¹¹⁰

Prince Jakub, who had accompanied his father, wrote in his diary that:

On the Lord's Day, early in the morning, we went to the monastery of the Camaldolese situated on the Kahlenberg, in which all the Princes had assembled. [...] [The king] took himself to the chapel to beseech God for the

there. Per Dybaś, the tradition connecting the Mass – the symbolic starting point of the battle – with the church on the Leopoldsberg likely stems from the role of that hill in the history of Austria and its connection with its patron saint, Margrave Leopold III of Babenberg (1095-1136), which prompted a minor – and perhaps not even conscious – shifting of how the Mass was remembered to incorporate the new church which the emperor had recently founded in honour of his namesake. Bogusław Dybaś, 'Gdzie modlił się Jan Sobieski przed bitwą pod Wiedniem?', *Biblioteka Epoki Nowożytnej*, 5 (2016), 449-465, (pp. 453, 458, 460-3).

¹¹⁰ Dupont, p. 136.

La partie de la montagne, que l'armée chrétienne occupait, s'appelle Calemburg. Il y avait sur son sommet, vers le Danube, un ancien château ruiné et fort proche d'un monastère de religieux camaldules, qui avait été brûlé par les Turcs. A quatre heures le matin, le roi ordonna, qu'on préparât un autel dans les ruines de l'église, où le père Marc Daviano, capucin, si célèbre dans ce temps-là en Italie et en Allemagne par son extrême piété, qui se trouvait au-près du duc de Lorraine et qui avait été envoyé par l'empereur, célébra la messe; elle fut servie par le roi même, qui tint presque toujours ses bras étendus et qui y communia, aussi bien que monsieur le duc de Lorraine. Ce saint religieux, en leur présentant l'hostie, leur fit un discours fort touchant sur le mérite, qu'ils allaient acquérir, en exposant leur sang et leur vie pour la gloire du Souverain Maître, qu'ils recevaient de sa main. Ils prirent ensuite un peu de pain et de vin.

propitious success of the next steps to be taken. After the service had been heard, we were full of hope that with such a very good beginning, a good end was soon to follow.¹¹¹

The words spoken by d'Aviano during this public act of giving communion make clear once again the very conscious understanding amongst the participants that they were participating in a holy war. After taking this opportunity to commit himself and his forces to the protection of God prior to the battle to come, the king returned to take command of his waiting troops on the right wing, whilst the battle was already commencing between the Imperial and Ottoman troops on the left end of the Christian line.

Over the intervening centuries, at least three separate traditions which purport to record Sobieski's words of encouragement to his Polish soldiers prior to the battle have emerged. Only one of these traditions, which opens with the words 'Brave Gentlemen of Poland, it does not suffice here solely to sustain the glory that your Ancestors and your Generosity have acquired for you...', is demonstrably contemporary to the events in question. It was first published in London in 1683, apparently translated into English from a French original, as *A Speech delivered by the King of Poland... (Harangue du Roy de Pologne...)*, although no information is

¹¹¹ Jakub, p. 621.

Die Dominica mane ivimus ad monasterium Cameldulensium in monte Calenberg situm, quo omnes Principes convenere [...] ad sacellum se contulit Deum exoraturus pro fausto rerum novandarum successu. Audito sacro plenus spei tam bono principio finem bonum subsequaturum.

A further account of this ceremony is provided by d'Alerac, pp. 133-4. Dyakowski, pp. 57-9, records that after the Mass given by Skopowski, a second was given by an Italian Capuchin, whom his editors have identified as d'Aviano, although Dyakowski himself does not provide a name. His choice of wording implies, but does not make explicit, that this second mass took place in the same location as the first. Such a reading, however, would leave Dyakowski's account at odds with those of Prince Jakub, Dupont and d'Alerac, all of whom agree that the Mass given by d'Aviano took place not before a makeshift altar under an oak tree, but in the ruins of a church. One acceptable means of reconciling these accounts, without discarding that of Dyakowski entirely, is to suggest that two separate Masses took place: The first being led by Skopowski and held specifically amongst the Polish contingent on the right flank of the Christian line; the second, also attended by Sobieski and several other prominent Poles, being led by d'Aviano and taking place in the ruins of the Camaldolese monastery in the middle of the Christian line. The fact that the Mass given by d'Aviano received mention in several sources, whilst that of Skopowski was included only in one, might well be explained by d'Aviano's pre-existing fame as a preacher, a reputation that was only enhanced further in subsequent years as he continued to minister to the spiritual needs of Imperial armies during the course of the gradual reconquest of Hungary. See *d'Aviano: Corrispondenza*, I, pp. 26-30.

provided which indicates who transcribed this supposedly verbatim account, or the route of transmission by which it had crossed the continent to reach the publisher within a span of only a few months.¹¹²

The earliest located example of the second tradition, which depicts Sobieski as beginning with the words ‘The numerous enemy, which you see here before you is the very same whom you have already known in the victories in which you have grown gray’, is found in Gottfried Uhlich’s *Geschichte der zwenten türkischen Belagerung Wiens*, published in Vienna on the centenary of the siege in 1783. As with the first tradition however, Uhlich provides no indication of how he came by this account.¹¹³

Meanwhile, the first recorded example of the third tradition, which portrays Sobieski as opening his speech by saying ‘Warriors and Friends! The enemies down there are truly a great number, greater still than at Chocim...’, comes from Karl August Schimmer’s 1845 work, *Wien’s Belagerungen durch die Türken und ihre Einfälle in Ungarn und Oesterreich*. Schimmer reports that the king’s address was immediately noted down and translated from the original Polish by interpreters, but provides the reader with no details of any original document from which he had obtained this evidence.¹¹⁴

¹¹² *A Speech Delivered by the King of Poland to his Army Before the Battle, September 12th 1683 or: Harangue du Roy de Pologne a son Armée Avant le Combat, le 12 du mois de September, 1683* (London: N. Thompson, 1683), p. 2.

Braves Chevaliers Polonnois, Il ne s’agit pas icy seulement de soûtenir la Gloire que vos Ancestres et vostre Generosité vous ont aquire...

¹¹³ Gottfried Uhlich, *Geschichte der zwenten türkischen Belagerung Wiens* (Vienna: Sonnleithnerischen Buchhandlung, 1783), pp. 178-9.

Der zahlreiche Feind, den ihr hier vor euch erblicket, ist eben der nehmliche, den ihr in den Siegen, unter welchen ihr grau gewerde, bereits kennen gelernt habt...

Further examples of this second tradition can be found in: Georg Rieder, *Johann III, König von Polen, Sobieski, in Wien* (Vienna: Braumüsser, 1882), pp. 167-8; Guido Panek, *Der Kahlenberg, Kurze Geschichte und Führung* (Vienna: Verlag der PP. Resurrektionisten, 1952), p. 24; Walter Sturminger, *Die Türken vor Wien in Augenzeugenberichten* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1983), p. 359.

¹¹⁴ Karl August Schimmer, *Wien’s Belagerungen durch die Türken und ihre Einfälle in Ungarn und Oesterreich* (Vienna: Heubner, 1845), pp. 288-9.

Krieger und Freunde! Der Feinde da unten sind fürwahr eine grosse Zahl, fast noch grösser als bei Choczim...

Further examples of this third tradition can be found in: Karl Toifel, *Die Türken vor Wien im Jahr 1683* (Prague; Leipzig: Tempsky; Freytag, 1883), pp. 476-7; John B. Morton, *Sobieski, King of Poland* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1932), p. 194; Janusz J. Tomiak,

There is a heavily overlap in the themes which the king is claimed to have touched upon between these separate traditions: each version makes plain that the participants are fighting in God's war, and displays an engagement with the concept of *antemurale christianitatis*, either in relation to the Poles themselves, or in reference to the need to preserve Vienna as a bulwark. Moreover, the final two traditions depict the king explicitly making use of the term 'holy war' in reference to the conflict with the Ottomans, and contain statements of the idea that those who die in this conflict would obtain a spiritual reward.¹¹⁵ Ultimately however, whilst such themes do not appear to be out of keeping with the religious mindset and practices of the Polish monarch and his forces, as demonstrated elsewhere in this chapter, the lack, in each case, of a clear and demonstrable line of provenance to an eyewitness account of this event must leave the veracity of such traditions in question.

In the early part of September, as the Polish forces crossed first the Danube then the Wienerwald and made their spiritual preparations for the battle to come, devotional exercises were also continuing in the *Rzeczpospolita*.

On 1 September, a special service was held in Wawel Cathedral. The continued presence of the queen at many services both in the Cathedral and in other churches since her return to Kraków was noted. Two days later, the papal nuncio also instituted the practice of ringing all the church bells in the city of Kraków and its suburbs in the course of each night, so that the faithful might wake to offer private prayers for the success and safety of the king and his forces beneath Vienna.¹¹⁶ Pallavicini would send word to Rome of the nightly bell-ringing, as well as the institution of further public services in a report dated 8 September, writing that:

'A British Poet's Account of the Raising of the Siege of Vienna in 1683', *The Polish Review*, 11 (4), 66-74, pp. 66-7.

¹¹⁵ It should be considered as eminently plausible that any mention of such distinctly Catholic conceptions of faith was omitted by the contemporary English printer from both the English and French versions of the speech for much the same reasons that overtly Catholic elements were removed from the English translation of d'Alerac's *Memoires*. See n. 18.

¹¹⁶ Rożek, pp. 24-5; Dupont records that the queen was a frequent visitor to the altars of Kraków throughout the relief expedition. p. 125.

In the belief that within the present week, the armies might come to blows, new public devotions have been added to those which were already being performed (by the populace in private) by praying during the night in their own homes at the general sound of all the bells, which is a new innovation to excite the people to implore the mercy of God, and which has been received with universal satisfaction and pleasure.¹¹⁷

Kochowski, probably writing following his return to Kraków, chose to focus upon the devotional exercises of Maria Kazimiera in particular, explicitly drawing the connection between her role and that of her husband during this conflict:

Just as no-one acted with more strength than the Most Noble King, so also no-one acted with more piety than the Most Serene Queen. The daily prayers of the humbly imploring wife aided the hands of her husband; for whilst he acted in the field, likewise she went to Sands of the Carmelites, to that Altar, before which [...] she worked together with him towards the victory.¹¹⁸

It should be noted that the queen is once again placed as a frequent worshipper at the Carmelite Church *na Piasku* in particular, the possible significance of which has been noted earlier.

On 10 September, a second Forty Hours' Devotion was ordained by the Bishop of Kraków, Jan Małachowski, throughout the entirety of his diocese. In the city of Kraków itself, the devotion was to conclude with a procession on 12 September – the anticipated date of the battle – from Wawel Cathedral to the Church of St. Mary in the main market square of the city.¹¹⁹ Kochowski would include an account of this procession in the *Commentarius*, which hews sufficiently closely to the picture of these events emerging from Rožek's work on archival material from

¹¹⁷ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 8 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2284, pp. 165-7), p. 167.

Credendosi che nella settimana presente gl'esserciti possin venire alle mani, si sono aggiunte nuove divotioni publiche a quelle che già si facevano, orandosi di notte tempo nelle proprie case al suono generale di tutte le campane, che è una nuova industria per eccitare il popolo ad implorare la misericordia di Dio, e che vien ricevuta con universale sodisfattione e gusto.

¹¹⁸ Kochowski, p. 97.

ut nemo fortius REGE Optimo egit, sic et Serenissima REGINA nemo religiosius. Iuvabant quotidie Numini supplicantis Coniugis praeces manus Mariti; nam dum is campo agit, etiam illa in Arenensis Carmeli adiit, ad Aram illam, ante quam [...] ad victoriam cooperabatur.

¹¹⁹ Rožek, pp. 25-8.

Kraków to provide confidence that the *historiographus privilegiatus* had been given an accurate account of proceedings, despite his absence from the city at the time:

The Most Serene Queen, in the presence of the apostolic nuncio, on her own impulse devoted herself, in order that on the day of 12 September public supplications might be instituted throughout the city, such as is customary to be permitted before the festivals of the Corpus Christi. The Most Illustrious Bishop of Kraków, Jan Małachowski, submitted to this pious intent, and himself in pontifical attire, bore around in ceremonial procession the mystical body of Christ [i.e. the consecrated Host]. [...] The City was very loud and crowded indeed, with everyone devoting themselves to the duty of the propitiation of the Divine. From the Church of the Citadel, the Bearer of God [i.e. Małachowski], with the queen following behind as an attendant [as well as the nuncio and monks from various religious institutions in the city bearing relics], descended into the largest market, which was thronging with crowds. Before the altars which had been raised during the circuit of the marketplace, when the Holy Receptacle was halted, it was supplicated, and then advanced with that wherein the Lord of Hosts is borne, under the guise of bread.¹²⁰

Kochowski concludes his account with a further demonstration of the continued understanding in the *Rzeczpospolita* of the connection between the activities of fighting and prayer during war with the Ottomans:

On the same day, indeed even in the same instance that battle was fought at Vienna, with standards gathered and hands having been joined, and blood abundantly shed: here, for blood, tears were substituted; for machines of war, the sighing or prayers of the spirit. On both counts, they fought against the one enemy a twofold fight, of spirits and of arms; in Kraków with orations to

¹²⁰ Kochowski, pp. 97-8.

Serenissimam REGINAM apud Nuncium Apostolicum motu proprio instituisse, quatenus pro die duodecima Septembris, publicae Supplicationes per Urbem, quales sub ferias Corporis Christi servari mos, instituerentur. Paret pio intento Illustrissimus loci Episcopus IOANNES MAŁACHOWSKI, ipseque Ornatu Pontificio, circumfert Mysticum Christi Corpus processionaliter; [...] Urbs quinimo bene magna et frequens, universa se in Officium propitiandi Numinis impendit. Ab Arcis Templo descendentem Baiulum Dei, comitatur pone REGINA, [...] vastissimo foro late circumfusus. Apud excitata per Circuitum fori altaria, cum Sacra Theca subsistitur, supplicatur, dein proceditur cum eo: Qui DEUS Exercituum, etsi sub involucro Panis, habetur.

God, at Vienna with armed legions for God. If it has been possible at any time, then it might truly be said that *Moses lifted his hands, and Amalek fell*.¹²¹ The Divine was honoured, the Turk succumbed; in Kraków they turned their hands to supplication, in Austria to battle.¹²²

The battle outside Vienna

As noted earlier in this chapter, no attempt will be made here to present a detailed and systematic discussion of the course of the battle on the plain outside Vienna on 12 September 1683; this has already been the subject of centuries of investigation and numerous excellent analyses.¹²³ There are, however, a number of details to be drawn from the various contemporary accounts of the battle which provide further indication as to the religious characteristics with which the expedition was imbued, as well as the depth of religious fervour amongst the Polish forces, and which therefore merit discussion in this study.

Perhaps the most striking, particularly for scholars of the crusading movement, is an excerpt from Kochowski's account of the descent of the Polish forces from the last ridgeline of the Wienerwald to engage the Ottoman forces on the open plain below, which obliged them first to pick their way across a long stretch of broken

¹²¹ Here, Kochowski paraphrases Exodus 17.11, the context of which is the battle at Rephidim between the Israelites and Amalekites. The people of Amalek were – like Chushan-Rishathaim – a biblical persecutor of God's chosen people, and thus are unmistakably intended to stand as a proxy for the Ottomans here.

¹²² Kochowski, p. 98.

Eodem die imo eodem instanti, ad Viennam pugnatur, collatis signis manus conferuntur, cruor abunde funditur. Hic pro sanguine lachrimae, pro machinis animorum suspiria aut praeces, utrinque; in unum hostem duplex pugna, animorum aut armorum: Cracoviae orationibus ad DEUM; ad Viennam pro DEO armatis legionibus. Si quando tunc vere dici potuit. *Levabat manus Moyses et cadebat Amalech.* Adorabatur Numen, succumbebat Turca; Cracoviae in supplicationem vertebantur manus, in Austria in pugnam.

One further detail noted by Rožek, which Kochowski tactfully neglected to mention, was a dispute which occurred over precedence in the procession of relics between the representatives of the Dominican and the Jesuit Orders, which led the former to withdraw their relics from the procession. Rožek, p. 26.

¹²³ For analyses in English of the course of the battle outside Vienna on 12 September, see: Barker, pp. 321-38; Stoye, pp. 166-73; Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Enemy at the Gate: Habsburgs, Ottomans and the Battle for Europe* (London: Bodley Head, 2008), pp. 173-87.

ground on the downslope. The reader will note the remarkable imagery and language which the *historiographus privilegiatus* employs:

Without delay the ranks of the Poles, with banners raised, strived uncomfortably through the rough terrain: especially the Hussars, whose spears often snagged upon or shattered the saplings and denser branches of the trees. When from the peak of the highest mountain a red banner with a white Cross was unfurled, joyous to be beheld between the trees, and where it could be beheld also by both the besieged and by the Turk, the arrival of the *militia Crucis* (army of the Cross) could no longer be disputed.¹²⁴

As ever, one must be cautious when using the *Commentarius* as an eyewitness account. Produced under the auspices of the king, and *post factum*, it at times straddles the line between reporting and rhetorical exercise. The unfurling amongst the Polish contingent of the Christian army of a specific banner bearing the mark of the Cross is not, to the best of my knowledge, mentioned in other contemporary sources for the battle; the possibility that the events depicted here are apocryphal cannot be ruled out. Even if this event did not occur entirely as depicted however, the presence of the unmistakable parallels which Kochowski draws in this passage between the present undertaking and the crusading past through the central focus upon the image of the Cross, as well as his employment of the phrase *militia Crucis* in reference to the Christian army, are surely further indications that such parallels would have been considered particularly resonant by both the monarch who employed him, and the *szlachta* who were to form the bulk of the audience for his work.

Moreover, whilst not depicted upon a banner, crosses do feature in an episode observed by Dyakowski later in the battle. With the Polish forces having successfully descended onto the plain outside Vienna and reformed their ranks, the king ordered the hussar *chorqgiow* (banner – a unit of approximately 100 men) nominally under the command of his younger son Aleksander (1677-1714),

¹²⁴ Kochowski, p. 30.

Nec mora, Poloni sublati vexillis, aegre per confragosa concisos moliebantur Ordines: Hussari praecipue, quorum hastas, olim sylvarum prolem, densiores arborum frondes impedirent, aut frangerent. Laetum inter haec visu, cum ex eminentissimi montis fastigio, rubrum alba Cruce vexillum panderetur, unde ab obsessis conspici, nec diutius a Turca, quin militia Crucis adesset, dubitari potuerit.

who was not present on the expedition, to charge alone against the Ottoman forces in front of them, with the purpose of testing whether the ground was suitable for the massed cavalry charge which he envisioned. When the isolated unit began to be enveloped by the Ottoman troops, and sight of them began to be obscured by clouds of smoke from Ottoman firearms, Dyakowski records that:

When the king saw that the Turks pressed upon them, and nothing could be seen of them, only a cloud over them, he drew forth the trees of the Holy Cross and Caravaca Crosses with great indulgences on them, and drew the sign of the Cross in the air above them, saying these words: ‘God of Abraham, God of the Isaacs, God of the James’, have mercy upon your people’. After this extraordinary protection of the Most Holy Mother, and almost by a Divine miracle, they saved themselves from the midst of so great a mob.¹²⁵

Later in his account of the battle, Kochowski also records the death of the *rotmistrz* Stanisław Potocki, a letter of whose was referenced earlier. As a scion of one of the most prominent families of the *Rzeczpospolita*, Kochowski eulogises his death with the following words, wherein the connection between the Polish relief expedition and the image of the Cross is once again emphasised:

It is neither rare nor new for a Potocki to shed his blood for the *Patria*: and why not also for the glory of the Cross, as they bear that half-triple mark of the trophy of the Saviour upon their ancestral coat of arms.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Dyakowski, pp. 60-3 (p. 62).

gdy widział Król, że już Turcy na nich wsiedli i nic ich widać nie było, tylko tuman nad niemi, dobył drzewa Krzyża św. i karawaki z odpustami wielkimi, żegnał ich, mówiąc te słowa: “Boże Abrahama, Boże Izaaków, Boże Jakubów, zmiłuj się na ludem twoim”. Po tym osobliwszą protekcją Matki Najświętszej, a cudem prawie Bożym, z pośrzedka tak wielkiej tłuszczy ludzi salwowali się.

Dyakowski, it should be noted, shows little grasp of why a single *chorągiew* might have been ordered to charge in this manner, speculating that it may have been to ensure the death of an individual cavalryman who had opposed the king over a private matter during the *sejm*. Brzeziński has advanced the rather more pragmatic and plausible reason for this charge stated above. Richard Brzeziński, *Polish Winged Hussar, 1576-1775* (Oxford: Osprey, 2006), p. 63.

¹²⁶ Kochowski, p. 35.

nec rarum, nec recens sit, POTOCIIS pro Patria sanguinem fundere: quidni pro gloria Crucis, ut qui Semitrium Salutaris trophaei Signum, in auito stemmate deferant.

The somewhat circumlocutionary phrasing which Kochowski employs here is a reference to the Piława *herb* (coat of arms) borne by the Potocki family, at the centrepiece of which is a Cross with two-and-a-half bars.¹²⁷

The aftermath of the victory

In the early hours of 13 September, once it was clear that the Ottoman forces had been driven from the field and that Vienna had been saved, the Polish monarch dispatched the French engineer Dupont to Kraków to bring news of the victory, first and foremost to Maria Kazimiera. Dupont carried no letter, as the king had not yet been afforded the time to write. Instead, he bore with him an ornate stirrup, apparently belonging to Grand Vizir Kara Mustafa Pasha himself, which had been handed to Sobieski in the Ottoman camp by an apostate Pole who had formed part of the Vizir's household, and which was now intended to serve as proof of the victory.¹²⁸ Dupont records the scene three days later, on 16 September, when he came into Maria Kazimiera's presence in front of St. Jadwiga's Cross in Wawel Cathedral:

Though it was not yet seven in the morning, the queen was already at the feet of the altars; As soon as she caught sight of me, uncertain of what I had to say to her, she let out a great cry, which resounded throughout the whole church. As soon as I had explained, she prostrated herself upon the ground and remained there for some time. [Later] I presented her with the stirrup of the Vizir, which she attached in that moment to the foot of a miraculous crucifix, where it still remains.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Tadeusz Gajl, *Polskie Rody Szlacheckie i ich Herby: Ponad 20 000 nazwisk 1275 barwnych herbów 200 herbów czarno-białych* (Białystok: Wydawnictwo Benkowski, 1999), pp. 164, 291.

¹²⁸ Dupont, pp. 140-1.

¹²⁹ Dupont, p. 144.

Quoiqu'il ne fut encore que sept heures du matin, la reine était déjà aux pieds des autels; aussitôt qu'elle m'aperçut, incertaine de ce que j'avais à lui dire, elle fit un grand cri, qui retentit dans toute l'église. Aussitôt que je me fus expliqué, elle se prosterna sur la terre et y resta quelque temps. [...] Je lui présentai l'étrier du visir, qui fut attaché dans le moment au pied d'un crucifix miraculeux, où il est encore.

In a report to Rome, Nuncio Pallavicini leaves an account of the impromptu acts of thanksgiving which were hurriedly arranged following the arrival of the happy news:

At the arrival of this news the queen was in the Cathedral at the foot of a miraculous crucifix, which God perhaps arranged to make her recognise the author of the victory. Her Majesty immediately sent to inform the nuncio, and he bore himself without delay to that church, where he found Her Majesty with an extreme joy, and no less piety; she having immediately received his congratulations, the same nuncio was requested to think upon what means of rendering thanks he might deem most appropriate in such a circumstance, she desiring to perform at once some singular act of piety towards God, and so it was done, the clergy and the bishop being hurried along at the sound of the bells, so that it was possible, after a short time, to chant the *Te Deum*¹³⁰ as well as some psalms used by the Church on an occasion of such graces, the nuncio officiating pontifically, and the choir and part of the people present responding, almost all crying for joy and blessing God. Soon afterwards followed the firing of cannon, which was also repeated three times in the evening.¹³¹

Further devotional activities were to take place in Kraków in the days which followed, allowing the populace to render thanks to God for the victory and for

¹³⁰ The hymn *Te Deum laudamus* was traditionally sung in thanksgiving for the receipt of some special blessing from God. Hugh T. Henry, 'The Te Deum' in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIV (1912), pp. 468-71.

¹³¹ Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 17 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2299, pp. 186-9), pp. 187-8.

All'arrivo di questa nuova la Regina era nel Duomo a piedi d'un crucifisso miracoloso, il che Iddio forse dispose per darle a conoscere l'autore della vittoria. Fece la Maestà Sua dar subito parte al Nuntio, et egli si portò senza dimora alla Chiesa, ove trovò la Maestà Sua con un'estrema gioia e non minor pietà, havendo subito ricevuta la sua congratulatione, richiesto il medesimo Nuntio di pensare qual rendimento di gratie stimasse più conveniente in tal congiuntura, desiderando di fare incontinente qualche atto di pietà singolare verso Iddio, e così fu fatto, essendo accorso al suon delle campane il clero, e nell'istesso tempo ancor Mons. Vescovo, onde si puoté poco doppo cantare il Te Deum e qualche salmi usati dalla Chiesa in un'occasione di tali gratie, offciando pontificalmente il Nuntio, e rispondendo il choro e parte del popolo presente, piangendo quasi tutti per l'allegrezza e benedicendo Iddio. Poco doppo seguì lo sparo del cannone, il che pure si rinuovò la sera per 3 volte.

Rožek, pp. 29-30, provides a further account of the arrival of this news, written by the chapter notary of the Cathedral, which echoes the details contained here.

the deliverance of the *Rzeczpospolita* from the peril which it had faced. On 18 September, the city councillors arranged a votive Mass in St. Mary's Church in the main square, combined with the chanting of the *Te Deum*. The following day, Bishop Małachowski celebrated a pontifical Mass in Wawel Cathedral, where the queen, the cathedral clergy, and representatives of the guilds and religious brotherhoods of the city are all recorded as having participated. On 21 September, Nuncio Pallavicini celebrated a further votive Mass in St. Mary's Church, whilst funeral solemnities were initiated for those who had fallen. The popular demand in the *Rzeczpospolita* for such activities, if Kraków is at all representative, was evidently high.¹³²

During the day of 13 September, whilst the Christian forces outside Vienna busied themselves with looting the Ottoman camp, reuniting themselves with their support trains – a sizeable part of which had been abandoned during the treacherous crossing of the Wienerwald – and preparing either to return home or to press forwards into Hungary in the wake of the retreating Ottoman forces, Sobieski was to receive a tour of the ruined Viennese fortifications from the commander of the city's garrison, Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg, before entering the city itself at Starhemberg's invitation.

The religious devotions which the Polish monarch undertook during this visit would mirror the devotions which he had engaged in prior to and during the early stages of the relief expedition to seek the intercession of the Virgin Mary on behalf of his expedition – in Częstochowa, in Kraków, in Piekary and elsewhere. Now, upon entering within the walls of Vienna, he immediately took himself to the Augustinian Church near the Hofburg Palace, where there was a Loretan chapel, entirely coated in a thick layer of black moss, within which was housed a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary. The king prostrated himself on the ground before the image, and recited the *Te Deum laudamus*, offering thanks to the mother of God for the protection which she had accorded him.¹³³

Following this intimate and personal ceremony of thanksgiving to God and to the Virgin, Sobieski also attended the Cathedral of St. Stephen, the city's main church,

¹³² Rożek, pp. 31-2; Pallavicini to Cybo, Kraków, 17 September 1683 (ANP VII, N. 2299, pp. 186-9).

¹³³ Jakub, p. 623; d'Alerac, pp. 157-8.

where a Mass was held before a considerably larger audience. On his departure, the king was detained for a considerable length of time by the throngs of well-wishers, all eager for a sight of the man who had brought his army to their salvation.

Returning to join his troops in the former Ottoman encampment that evening, the king was afforded an opportunity at last to write to his spouse during the small hours. Although he devoted much of his letter to providing the queen with a fuller account of the battle of the previous day, as well as a few details of his visit to the city, it is nonetheless clear that the emotions prompted by the victory – thankfulness, relief, even a touch of euphoria – had not left him. Indeed, this letter contains some of Sobieski's most overt statements of his belief that the will of God had been the ultimate arbiter of the fate of the relief expedition, as well as the strong sense of connection which he himself felt with previous crusading enterprises. He would open the letter with an attribution of the victory first and foremost to God's hand, writing that: 'Our God and Lord, whose name ought to be praised forever, has accorded to our nation a victory and a glory unknown to centuries past'.¹³⁴

He would also reference a conversation shared with Marco d'Aviano in the aftermath of the battle, in which the Capuchin friar had informed him of a further celestial omen which he had witnessed personally during the battle, noting that: 'Father d'Aviano [...] told me that he saw a white dove flying above our heads throughout the action'.¹³⁵ The symbolic associations within the Christian tradition of doves with the presence of the Holy Spirit and with the concept of martyrdom would have been motifs familiar both to d'Aviano and to the pious royal couple.¹³⁶ The Capuchin's mention of the appearance of this dove might thus be understood as signifying either the presence of God during the battle in a general sense, or

¹³⁴ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, from the Tents of the Grand Vizir nr. Vienna, 13 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 376-82), p. 376.

Notre Dieu et Seigneur, dont le nom soit loué à jamais, a accordé à notre nation une victoire et une gloire inconnus aux siècles passés.

Later in the letter, of course, he was certainly not shy of claiming that the whole army had acknowledged that the second part in the victory belonged very much to the Polish forces.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

Le Padre d'Aviano [...] m'a raconté qu'il a vu une colombe blanche volant au-dessus de nos têtes pendant l'action.

¹³⁶ Arthur S. Barnes, 'Dove' in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, V (1909), pp. 144-5.

perhaps more specifically the fulfilment of the promise, made via the indulgences *in articulo mortis*, that those who fell there would receive a spiritual reward.

At the conclusion of the main body of his letter, Sobieski would make a remarkably direct comparison between the unified Christian army which had relieved Vienna and the men of the First Crusade who had recovered Jerusalem, whilst implicitly placing himself in the role of the man who had come to be remembered as its greatest hero, writing that: 'This is an army truly resembling that which the great Godfrey [de Bouillon] led to the Holy Land'.¹³⁷ Even in the midst of signing off this letter, between requests for Maria Kazimiera to pass his greetings and embraces to various family members, Sobieski was unable to refrain from returning once more to the theme of God's support for his expedition, exclaiming: 'May all the world rejoice and thank God that he has not permitted the pagans to ask "Where is your God then?"'¹³⁸

The following day, he would also write to Pope Innocent XI, informing him of the victory which had been achieved, and of the dispatch towards Rome of what was believed to be the Banner of Mohammed. Captured in the midst of the Ottoman camp, this banner was being carried by the king's private secretary, Tommaso Talenti, as a gift for the pontiff, who had given his protection to the Imperial alliance, as well as his benedictions and financial support to the relief expedition. Before turning to address such matters, however, the king would paraphrase Julius Caesar in his salutation, modifying the Roman leader's famous claim in order to demonstrate once again whom he believed the true author of the victory had been.

In Sobieski's own words: '*Venimus, Vidimus et Deus Vicit*', ('We came, we saw, and God has conquered').¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Sobieski to Maria Kazimiera, from the Tents of the Grand Vizir nr. Vienna, 13 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 376-82), p. 382.

C'est une armée véritablement ressemblante que le grand Godred menait à la terre Sainte.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

Que tout le monde se réjouisse et remercie Dieu qu'il n'a pas permis aux païens de demander "Où est donc votre Dieu?"

¹³⁹ Sobieski to Innocent XI, from the Tents of the Grand Vizir nr. Vienna, 14 September 1683 (*ARJ*, pp. 386-7), p. 386.

Before concluding, a few brief comments upon how the crusading aspect of this expedition was used subsequently in royal propaganda merit inclusion here.

Excerpts from Sobieski's letter to Maria Kazimiera, including the passage comparing himself and his army to Godfrey de Bouillon and the participants of the First Crusade, were utilised by his spouse in the shaping of the earliest piece of royal propaganda connected with the relief of Vienna, which was swiftly published in the *Rzeczpospolita* with the title *Relacya potrzeby, która trwała godzin 14 pod Wiedniem* (An account of the struggle, which lasted for 14 hours beneath Vienna), and was translated into French for wider distribution throughout Christendom as *Rélation de la levée du siege de Vienne* (An account of the lifting of the siege of Vienna).¹⁴⁰

As Czarniecka's detailed study of propaganda in the period following the relief of Vienna has demonstrated, royal propagandists would repeatedly return to crusading themes in the future. Wespazjan Kochowski would employ the comparison to Godfrey de Bouillon in his 1684 poetic rendering of the events of the Viennese expedition, *Dzieło boskie albo pieśni Wiednia wybawionego* (The Divine Work, or songs of Vienna saved).¹⁴¹ During the 1685 *Sejm*, a play entitled *Imago victoriae a sermo... Joanne III de Turcis rei atae in Godifredo Bollonio primo rege Hierosolymarum adumbrata atque eidem... regi in publico theatro comitorum tempore... repraesentata* (An image of the victory by the Most Serene... Jan III over the Turks, a deed alike in outline to that of Godfrey de Bouillon, the first king of Jerusalem, and exhibited to the same King [i.e. Sobieski] in public theatre at the time of the *sejm*) was staged at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The performers, drawn from amongst the students of the Jesuit college, included the children of several leading oppositionist figures.¹⁴²

The intercessory role played by the Virgin Mary in Sobieski's successes, particularly through the image of Our Lady of Częstochowa, was also taken as a

¹⁴⁰ Czarniecka, p. 90; Komarzyński, pp. 157-8; *Relacya potrzeby która trwała godzin 14 y Wiktoryey otrzymanej Die 12. Septembris nad Nieprzyjacielem pod Wiedniem* (Unknown, 1683), p. 7; *Rélation de la levée du siege de Vienne. Composee par ordere de la Reine de Pologne et traduite en français par Monsieur Dalerac*, included in d'Alerac on pp. 395-411 (p. 407)

¹⁴¹ Czarniecka, p. 81.

¹⁴² Czarniecka, pp. 73-4; Wanda Roszkowska, 'Diariusz życia teatralnego na dworze Jana III: Próba rekonstrukcji', *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, 18 (1969), 562-584 (p. 578).

theme by writers such as Janicki in his *Vota Poloniae sub tempus Turcici in Austria belli* (A Polish request at the time of the Turkish war in Austria) and Pucilowski, the author of a 1684 stage play entitled *Victoriae Mariae seu Vienna... liberate* (The Victory of Mary, or Vienna liberated).¹⁴³ The use of direct crusading parallels and Marian imagery was further complemented by a suite of appropriate classical allegories. Allusions were made, across a range of artistic and literary media, to figures such as Alexander the Great (conqueror of the Middle East) and Constantine the Great (victor over the pagan Maxentius).¹⁴⁴ Most prominent of all was the depiction of Sobieski as a *Hercules Polonus*, a uniquely Polish archetype based upon the Greek hero, which, as Czarniecka has noted, was defined by Jerzy Banach as being characterised by bravery proven in defence of the Christian faith in the struggle against the Ottomans and Tatars.¹⁴⁵ Tackled through this multifaceted approach, the propagation of the image of Sobieski as a defender of Christendom against the Ottoman and Tatar threat would come – as Czarniecka has noted – to form the dominant strand in courtly propaganda in the period post-Vienna.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Czarniecka, pp. 82-3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 81.

Conclusions

This thesis set out to examine the motivations and internal processes which led Poland-Lithuania to ally with Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I and initiate a new war with the Ottoman Empire in 1683, with a particular focus upon exploring whether the new conflict was envisaged and conducted as a crusade.

When the *sejm* gathered in January 1683, the decision upon the twin questions of whether the *Rzeczpospolita* should unite with Leopold and seek war with the sultan lay firmly within the hands of the senators and *posłowie* who comprised that assembly.

The monarch, Jan III Sobieski, was in favour of an affirmative answer to both questions. The events of the Upper Hungarian campaigning season of the previous summer – which had seen the rebel leader Imre Thököly bind himself to the sultan and seize large swathes of Imperial territory along the poorly fortified southern border of Poland with Ottoman military assistance – had laid bare to him the renewed threat which the Ottomans themselves now posed to the *Rzeczpospolita*. These events had, moreover, essentially served to sever his already-strained sense of attachment to his old benefactor, Louis XIV of France, whose agents were continuing to use the *Rzeczpospolita* as a base to provide material support to the Hungarian rebels. What Louis viewed as a useful counterweight and distraction for his bitter enemy, Leopold, whilst he pursued his policy of *réunions* along the western borders of the Empire, Sobieski had now come to perceive – as a result of Thököly's tightening bonds with the sultan – as posing an existential threat to the *Rzeczpospolita* which could no longer be ignored.

The Polish monarch had responded to these developments by reopening negotiations with the emperor on the possibility of his forming an alliance with the *Rzeczpospolita* against the growing Ottoman threat. With the minds of the two rulers finally aligned on the form which such an alliance might take, draft terms had been hammered out between the two in the course of the autumn of 1682.

The experiences of the late 1670s, however, which had seen Sobieski attempt to take foreign policy decisions independent of the legislative structure of the

Rzeczpospolita – prompting accusations that he had violated the liberty of the *szlachta* to take such decisions freely, and placing him in serious danger of losing his throne as a result – had taught the king the need for both secrecy and patience. It would be necessary for the emperor to propose the agreed terms to the *Rzeczpospolita*, with no mention of Sobieski's role in their generation, and for the *sejm* to reach its own response to them. Sobieski himself could guide and encourage that assembly to reach the right decision, but could not command.

A positive outcome to such a proposal was by no means certain, in spite of the support which Sobieski would give to it. The unhappy conclusion of the 1681 *Sejm* had demonstrated the fragility of the legislative process of the *Rzeczpospolita* in the face of both foreign interference and internal political opposition. With the *sejm* at the point of agreeing measures to augment the *Rzeczpospolita's* armed forces and form an offensive alliance against the Ottomans with Russia, that assembly had been broken at the behest of Brandenburg-Prussia and France by means of inducing the exercise of the *liberum veto*, resulting in the dissipation of all legislation which had been concluded.

Nevertheless, by the opening of the 1683 *Sejm*, the king had taken such steps as he was able to lay the groundwork for the emperor's proposal to at least receive a favourable hearing. On the one hand, he had engineered a pretext for the public exposure of French activities in support of Thököly's Hungarian rebels carried out from within the *Rzeczpospolita* and their subsequent halting, whilst taking pains to position himself as the voice of moderation in the matter in the hope of forestalling active French opposition to his policies in the forthcoming *sejm*. On the other, he had worked assiduously to assure himself of the strongest possible political backing in the *sejm* – notably targeting several leading figures who had previously worked closely with him during his own period of attachment to French interests – since the risk remained that the French monarch would deem any alliance between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the emperor to be detrimental to his strategic interests and give orders to his adherents to take measures to prevent its conclusion.

Meanwhile, despite a period of fear and doubt in the last months of 1682 over the emperor's willingness to commit himself to the proposed alliance, Sobieski had provided the *sejmiki przedsejmowe* with a *legacja* requesting a vigorous response

to the threat which the Ottomans now posed. Moreover, he had deployed his close supporters wherever he was able, seeking to ensure that the *sejm walny* would be comprised of *posłowie* who were favourable to royal policy, and who had been provided with advantageous instructions by their electorate. Finally, he had secretly set a watch upon the correspondence of Vitry and Morsztyn, the two leading French agents in the *Rzeczpospolita*, intercepting and making copies of the contents of their letters, in the hope of using this to outmanoeuvre any opposition which they might seek to present during the coming *sejm*.

The eventual decision of that assembly to give its approval to the proposed alliance with the emperor and to the initiation of new hostilities with the Ottomans was the product of several factors:

Despite the limitations upon his ability to interfere in the deliberations of the *sejm* and the negotiations between the Polish-Lithuanian delegation and the Imperial ministers, Waldstein and Zierowsky – a product of the expectation amongst the *szlachta* that such decisions should be taken freely – the king nevertheless inserted himself into these matters with adeptness at several crucial moments, using such means as were available to him to produce compromises, dispose minds favourably and break deadlocks. His efforts were mirrored in the diligence and flexibility shown in trying circumstances by the Imperial ministers and the papal nuncio, Pallavicini.

The intercepted letters of Morsztyn and Vitry were handled with particular deftness. Sobieski at first took great pains to engineer a result in private which would see the representatives of France cowed into quiet inactivity. It was only once their continued intransigence and intention to secure the breaking of the *sejm* became clear that he opted to make the matter public, exposing their correspondence before that assembly and demonstrating beyond doubt the ill-faith of any attempt which the supporters of French interests might make to exercise the *liberum veto*, whilst also pushing the two men into isolation by allowing the co-collaborators mentioned in their letters to exculpate themselves.

The Polish monarch also demonstrated that he had learned from the events of the 1681 *Sejm* where the Elector of Brandenburg was concerned. This time, he took great pains to avoid confrontation with the elector, setting aside his previous

rancour over the marriage of Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna into the Hohenzollern family and reaching a settlement which guaranteed Sobieski's protection of her estates in Lithuania, thereby ensuring that the elector's diplomats offered no support to their French counterparts in their efforts to break the *sejm*.

Underpinning all these efforts, however, was the prevailing belief amongst the members of the *sejm* that a war with the Ottomans was both a necessity and a religious obligation, and that an alliance with the emperor would provide the *Rzeczpospolita* with the best possible means of achieving a favourable outcome to this conflict. In a political system where unanimity – at least in the form of an absence of objection – was the required threshold for action, without an underlying preponderance of support for these policies, all the skilful negotiation of the obstacles which the king and his fellow advocates demonstrated would have proved incapable of generating the desired result.

Although the views of the majority are underrepresented in sources for the events of the 1683 *Sejm*, which focus disproportionately on the efforts to promote and to counter the opposition of a vocal minority to the alliance and the war with the Ottomans, their mindset does occasionally find expression. The *skrypt do archiwum* produced in the final days of the *sejm*, which codified the foreign policy of the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1683, contains several striking assertions of the feelings of religious motivation which had compelled the participants of that assembly to commit the *Rzeczpospolita* to this new, self-described 'holy war' against the Ottomans. The king himself would echo these sentiments in his universal letter to the *sejmiki relacyjne*, which again draws heavily upon the corpus of crusading language.

Further inferences about the depth of feeling amongst the majority of participants in the *sejm* can be made from the agreement which was reached to pay the *subsidium charitativum*. Through this measure, they not only committed themselves and their fellow *szlachcice* to fight in this new war, but also to find the money which would be required to pay the majority of the war expenses from their own pockets, albeit after a great deal of arguing over which of them should bear greater and lesser shares in this expense. These decisions taken centrally

were backed, it should be noted, in all the *sejmiki relacyjne* following the conclusion of the *sejm*.

The expedition to relieve the siege of Vienna – the first fruit, so to speak, of all these decisions – would see the sentiments of religious motivation and obligation which had been expressed by the members of the *sejm* echoed and reinforced in the manner in which the expedition was conducted.

In the introduction to this thesis, I proposed – on the basis of earlier work by Housley and Poumarède in particular – that when examining Christian conflicts against the Ottomans in the seventeenth century, a three-part threshold should be applied, each aspect of which needed to be met before one could talk of them as a true form of crusading. It would be necessary to demonstrate the presence of meaningful structural and emotional/ideological connections to the crusading movement in earlier centuries, as well as evidence of broad-based engagement.

There is plentiful evidence, in the case of the Polish relief expedition, of clear structural connections to crusading conflicts in previous centuries. The pope was envisaged, from the earliest stages of the alliance negotiations with the emperor, as playing a role in overseeing and guaranteeing the faithful prosecution of the conflict. The two contracting parties sought and received papal funding, both through direct subsidies and through the imposition of the *decime*. Indulgences were dispatched to the *Rzeczpospolita* from Rome in support of the conflict, including indulgences *in articulo mortis* for those who actually fought. A major religious ceremony prior to the departure of the expedition was constructed around the publication and distribution of the latter, and their widespread take-up amongst the Polish soldiery is attested.

There are, moreover, a wide range of examples which one can point to which together suggest that strong ideological and emotional parallels were drawn by participants in the relief expedition. The aforementioned ceremony, held on the Feast of St. Lawrence, was symbolically tied into both the wider Christian traditions of struggle against unbelievers, and, more intimately, into the role played by Sobieski's own family in previous conflicts against the Ottomans. One commentator even implies that the king and others took the Cross on this occasion.

Sermons were given, both on that day and others, which expressly tied the present expedition into traditions of crusading and holy war, with comparisons drawn to the role of Poland during the Crusade of Varna, amongst other examples. Elsewhere, proto-Christian tradition provided a fruitful source of parallel and analogy, with the Ottomans frequently depicted in the role of biblical oppressors. Meanwhile Sobieski, after the victory outside Vienna, would cast himself in the role of Godfrey de Bouillon, the man who had come to be remembered as the greatest hero of the First Crusade. Moreover, two broadly contemporary Polish narrative accounts of the battle outside Vienna, those of Kochowski and Dyakowski, contain prominent imagery of the Cross in their description of the events that day.

The king devoted considerable effort to the fulfilment of pilgrimages to a number of significant religious sites, in particular those associated with the Virgin Mary, with the express aim of securing her intercession on behalf of himself and the expedition which he led. This would include visiting miraculous images at Jasna Góra Monastery at Częstochowa, the Carmelite Church *na Piasku* in Kraków, the sanctuary at Piekary and the Loretan chapel in Vienna, to name but a few. Marian devotion has been noted as a prominent feature both of the crusading movement and of post-Tridentine Catholicism, and its practice during the course of the relief expedition is further demonstrated both in Sobieski's choice of departure date – the Feast of the Assumption – and in the diligence shown in celebrating the Feast of the Nativity a few days before the battle outside Vienna.

Finally, we come to the question of whether there was broad-based engagement with crusading ideas. It merits repeating here that the language of the *skrypt do archiwum* should be considered reflective of the prevailing attitudes of the members of the *szlachta* who comprised the 1683 *Sejm*, and thus of that sizeable social class in general. Direct insights into the prevailing mindset amongst those members of the *szlachta* who filled the ranks of the army occur only rarely. Where they exist, however, the sentiments which find expression therein closely parallel those found in the *skrypt*. The Moravian monk Bernard Brulig, for example, records the harangues which the Polish soldiery directed at the populace of that region for their lack of willingness to fight and potentially die in the defence of the Christian faith, as the Poles themselves had committed to do. There are,

moreover, some indications that the sense of religious motivation amongst the Polish forces led them to interpret certain celestial events which occurred during their march to Vienna as divine omens for the forthcoming confrontation with the Ottomans.

Back in the *Rzeczpospolita*, meanwhile, concerted efforts were made to promote engagement with the religious aspect of the conflict with the Ottomans throughout all corners of society. Some months before the departure of the expedition, short indulgences were given throughout the *Rzeczpospolita* for the regular recitation of the customary prayers in times of war with the infidel. These efforts were ramped up in the period prior to and during the expedition.

Processions to beseech divine aid for Christian arms are firmly attested in both Kraków and Warsaw; given Pallavicini's instructions on this matter from Rome, it is reasonable to suggest that similar activities also took place in other major cities within the *Rzeczpospolita*. Those in Kraków, which are described in most detail, appear to have attracted considerable public interest across the social spectrum, from the queen to the common folk of the city. Moreover, these processions did not take place in isolation; they were accompanied by a range of other devotional practices, such as the Forty Hours' and the nightly ringing of bells as a call for private prayer. A similar level of enthusiasm would subsequently be applied to ceremonies of thanksgiving, once news of the victory at Vienna reached the *Rzeczpospolita*.

In the case of the Polish relief expedition to Vienna then, there is compelling evidence that each of these thresholds was met, and that crusading rhetoric could still translate into crusading action on a societal level in at least one corner of Christendom as late as the final decades of the seventeenth century, approximately 100 years beyond the currently accepted date for the denouement of the last true form of the crusading movement. It is my hope that the research presented here will therefore prompt reconsideration and further debate upon the timeframe within which we consider true crusading to have remained possible, as well as further research into the crusading movement in early modernity more generally.

A further contribution made by this study is in deepening our comprehension of the Polish-Lithuanian background to the expedition to Vienna, which has

previously been discussed in anglophone scholarship only in passing, and only in works with other geographic foci. The singular focus of this thesis upon events in the *Rzeczpospolita* has allowed for a wide range of refinements upon these previous studies; for example, a sharpened understanding of the respective roles which were played by monarch and *sejm* in the conclusion of the Imperial alliance, and an improved comprehension of the uniqueness of the legislative process of the *Rzeczpospolita*.

Before ending, I want to offer a few short comments about possible directions which future research might take. Due to limitations of both time and space, it has not been possible in this study to include an examination of the subsequent campaign which Sobieski conducted along the Danube in the final months of 1683, following the relief of Vienna. Preliminary research conducted upon this topic, however, suggests that this period saw some particularly striking examples of engagement with crusading ideas amongst the Polish army, particularly in relation to the Battle of Párkány in October.

More broadly, whilst the evidence of meaningful crusading engagement in the *Rzeczpospolita* from 1683 is compelling, it ultimately offers only a single data point, which stands at present in isolation. The arguments advanced here that the relief expedition to Vienna merits consideration as part of the crusading movement would be greatly strengthened by the ability to demonstrate that it formed merely one part of a continuum of active engagement with the concept of crusading in Poland-Lithuania during the seventeenth century. The examination of other conflicts in this period between the *Rzeczpospolita* and the Ottoman – both actual and planned – such as the war of 1620-1 (which had resulted in the death of Sobieski's ancestor, Stanisław Żółkiewski), the war of 1672-6, and Władysław IV's frustrated preparations for war in the mid-1640s, would enable an assessment of whether such a continuum existed, or whether the burst of crusading enthusiasm in the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1683 was truly as isolated as it presently appears.

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