Shah Abbas' European Spies – The Secret Embassy

written by Cavid Aga Cavid Ağa

In my first article, I described the geopolitical scene on the eve of Shah Abbas sending an embassy to Europe,[1] and in the previous article, I discussed the adventures of Shah Abbas's great European embassy from Gilan to Prague.[2] In this article, I will talk about the diplomatic mission that Shah Abbas started in Italy at the same time. This mission was not an open embassy, but rather a secret one. Therefore, it passed through more dangerous and less traveled (for Iranian diplomats) roads—through the Ottoman Empire. The purpose of this mission was to provide financial support to the main embassy and to act as a backup plan.

In the previous article, I mentioned that the Safavid embassy was able to leave Prague on 15 February 1601. However, another Catholic member of the embassy, priest Alfonso Cordero of the Franciscan order, left them a little earlier and went to Spain. Arriving in Genoa on 12 February, Cordero, who presented himself as a representative of the Safavid embassy in Prague, met with the Spanish ambassador in Genoa, Pedro González de Mendoza, and informed him that the embassy was going to Rome, though he told de Mendoza that he would not joining them. Four days later, on 16 February 1601, Mendoza's letter to King Philip III reported the arrival of "an infidel Englishman who is particularly an enemy of Spain," which referred to Shirley, and advised the Spanish ambassador in Rome, the Duke of Sessa, to be careful about Shirley.[3] I will talk about how this advice changed Shirley's place in the embassy. This article is about the secret embassy of the Safavid state in Venice.



Antonio Fernández de Córdoba y Cardona, 5th Duke of Sessa by Pieter de Jode the Younger

Asad Bey

Unknown to the members of the Grand European Embassy, Shah Abbas sent another ambassador after them—a merchant named Asad Bey. He was supposed to collect information about the fate of Huseyn Ali Bey's group and provide them with money, if

necessary, when they arrived. Presumably, this person might be Asad Bey Tabrizi, whose name I mentioned in the first article.[4]

Because Asad Bey, unlike other ambassadors, was a merchant, he was able to go to Venice in 1600, accompanied by several servants, through Ottoman lands. He had a considerable wealth, lived in a large and rich house and spent without restraint. The Doge of Venice received him as the shah's official envoy. According to Asad Bey himself, he had served Muhammad Khudabanda and Abbas for 40 years, his influence in the palace was such that the doors of the palace were always open to him, and he especially served Abbas's wife, who was a Christian, and most of her actions were for the benefit of Christians.

Venetian officials recognized that Asad Bey behaved more like a merchant than an ambassador—he was engaged in buying and selling various types of goods. It is specifically noted that he brought with him about 80.000 ducats worth of musk and other goods and that he bought cloths and luxuries.

The Spanish ambassador in Venice, Don Íñigo de Mendoza, wrote on 10 June 1600 that: "There are two people in Venice, a Turkish *chavush* and a Persian agent. The Persian agent is a person who has been in Rome before, and if he talks about religion, his intention will be known. He only comes here to buy various things and to send messages to his master."[5]

On 17 June 1600, Offredo Offredi, the nuncio (ambassador) of Pope Clement VIII in Venice, reported about Asad Bey that: "There is a Persian man here for several days now. He buys some things, but it is assumed that he secretly deals with others. Most likely, he improves relations between his country and the republic more than just trade."[6]

When Asad Bey started working in Venice, he met Diego de Miranda, who had come from Iran a few months before him. Diego de Miranda must have been in Venice from the beginning of 1600; the priest Francesco da Costa Miranda who arrived here

in June 1600[7] noted that he arrived 6 months before him. According to Diego's later statements, he and Asad Bey knew each other from Hormuz when Asad Bey had been traveling to the Mughal Empire.

Miranda presented himself in Venice as a member of one of the principal Portuguese families of India. When the Spanish ambassador in Rome and the Vatican authorities asked the Portuguese residents of Rome for information about Miranda, no one knew anything about him or his family.

Asad Bey had been in Venice for several months and was engaged in dual activities. He was about to return to Iran because he had not heard from Huseyn Ali bey. Everything became clear in a meeting with Diego de Miranda, whom Asad occasionally invited to his house for dinner. Miranda this time came to Venice with a man named Domenico Stropene from Hormuz. Gradually, all three of them began to visit the markets together and meet often. Domenico would later play an important role in Shah Abbas' relations with Europe.

During one of these meetings, Asad Bey invited Diego de Miranda to return to Iran with him, offering to serve the Shah. To show that the proposal was serious, he told him the real purpose of his visit, and particularly that he had come to investigate the ambassadors sent by the king last year. Miranda offered Asad Bey a meeting with a bishop in Venice, considering that these ambassadors would visit the King of Spain and the pope. It was Bishop Octavio Abbioso, former bishop of Pistoia and resident of Venice.[8]

Octavio Abbioso of Ravenna served the Duke of Tuscany, Francesco de Medici, with great loyalty, in Venice, Rome and elsewhere, especially in financial matters, until his death in 1587. Abbioso, Bishop of Pistoia, who fell out of favor with Ferdinando, Francesco's brother and successor, was forced to resign in 1599. After that, he was made to return to Ravenna, where he was born, and from there to Venice, where he began to

live with the help of acquaintances and friends. During his time as a bishop, he worked as a spy for both the Papacy and Spain because he befriended Antonio Fernandez de Córdoba, the Spanish ambassador in Rome, the aforementioned Duke of Sessa.

Asad Bey, who befriended the bishop with Miranda's help, told him that he wanted to become a Christian, and that, if there was enough support from the West, even all the Safavids and the Shah could become Christians. He even said that the king's wife and mother were Christians. The bishop believed him and told him that he would give him a letter of advice to deliver to the pope and that he should go with Miranda to Rome.

On Shah Abbas's love for Christianity

It is an appropriate time to discuss Shah Abbas's supposed love for Christianity, which is a narrative constantly repeated by the ambassadors we have mentioned in previous articles. The belief, especially among Catholics, that Muslim rulers would one day become Christians goes back to the Mongol period. According to this belief, a legendary Christian priest-ruler known as *Prester John* lived in the East, among Muslims and pagans, ruling a lost Christian kingdom. The legend of this legendary Christian ruler, sometimes imagined as Genghis Khan, sometimes as his blood brother (and later enemy) Keraite Togrul Khan, and sometimes as the Ilkhanate ruler Hulagu, laid the foundation for this belief.[9]

Even a strict Sunni ruler like Tamerlane was one of the candidates in this belief. In *the Libellus de Notitia Orbis (Knowledge of the World)* written in Germany by Giovanni III, who was appointed Archbishop of Soltanieh by Pope Boniface IX in 1398, it is noted that Muslims were losing power in Middle Eastern countries and Christians were in the majority. According to Giovanni III, the local Christians thought that the Franks would come and save them. St. Grigoris, who is better known as the Catholicos of Caucasian Albania, supposedly wrote his predictions while living a captive life

on an island. According to Giovanni's writings, Grigoris even saw Tamerlane's future and said that the ruler would convert to Christianity. Giovanni carried with him a portrait of Tamerlane and even wrote his biography. Giovanni asked the leaders of every country he went to as an ambassador for support in the fight against the Byzantine Orthodox Church and financial support for the conversion of Armenians from Gregorianism to Catholicism.[10]

Rudolph Matti notes that the belief that Muslim rulers would soon convert to Christianity affected imaginations about both Shah Ismail and Nadir Shah. According to Matti, Shah Abbas himself knowingly made cross signs in front of Christian missionaries, asked about Jesus and the Bible, and even dressed like the Portuguese:

He was primarily interested in the missionaries as a liaison with the European powers, the enemies of his own main enemy who might join him in his struggle against the Ottomans. Even if he had no intention to convert, there is enough evidence to suggest that he did have a genuine interest in Christianity, its tenets, its emotive symbolism and its artistic expressions—in part, no doubt, because of the resemblance to Shii beliefs and practices some of these evince. But beginning with the letter he wrote to Philip III expressing his affection for Christianity, he clearly also manipulated missionaries and the Christian faith for political purposes, as he did with all groups and individuals in this orbit.[11]

Michelangelo Corai in Venice

In the previous article, we saw that Corai, who brought Shirley to Iran, was not part of the Great European Embassy. In fact, Corai left 6 days before them and arrived in Venice 5 months later. It is interesting that Corai told the Venetian Signoria the exaggerations that Asad Bey would later note: The

Shah wants to erect Roman Catholic churches in Iran, walks around with a cross necklace hidden on his chest… Apparently, these tall tales were spread at the direct order of Shah Abbas as we noted above. Pellegrini, the secretary of the Signoria, reflects this information in his official notes dated 28 November 1599:

This morning at the door of the most Excellent College appeared a man of short stature, black beard, olive skin, dressed in black, about forty years old; this man said that he was a servant of the Shah of Persia, and wished to enter the Excellent College to present certain letters to His Excellency [the doge of Venice]; the Excellent College, having learned of this, ordered me, the secretary Pellegrini, to take him into the antechamber and interrogate him, in order to know exactly who he was, where he came from, and what he wanted. I followed these instructions: he told me that his name was Michel Angelo Coray of Aleppo, that he was sent by the King of Persia, and that he was sent by Antonio Shirley, an Englishman, who had been some months in that city, and was now in Persia.[12]

From Corai's testimony, we know that he came via Tabriz-Erzurum-Trabzon. Corai, who was imprisoned in Trabzon for 21 days, notes that he was released after paying a bribe of 738 piastre to the accountant of Erzurum. Only able to pay 400 piastre, Corai was helped by another Safavid spy in the city, an Armenian merchant named Daniel, by paying the remaining amount. In Trabzon, Corai had to receive 500 ducats from an English merchant named Giacomo,[13] a man who belonged to Shirley's spy network, but he was unable to find Giacomo and left for Constantinople. After meeting with the Safavid ambassador,[14] Corai left for Venice on a ship called Pirona. From the information provided by Corai, we know that there were 35 people in this embassy and the ambassador left for Tabriz a day before Corai. After Corai arrived in Venice, he lodged at the house of his old friend Antonio Padovan. In his

testimony, referring to Asad Bey, he noted that the Shah would send a merchant as an agent.

Corai then left for Florence on December 20, 1599, and established good relations with Ferdinando de’ Medici, Abbioso’s former master. Returning to Venice again, Corai had to wait for Asad Bey according to the order he received from the Shah, and they found each other with Asad Bey.

Meeting with the Doge



Marino Grimani (between 1600-1625, Domenico Tintoretto)

Above, I discussed the letter of the Spanish ambassador in Venice. The Turkish ambassador mentioned in the letter was Davud Chavush. Sultan had sent Chavush to the Signoria to discuss issues related to Croatian rebels called *Uskok*,[15] who were engaged in piracy on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. As we have seen, the Doge of Venice was wary of the Ottomans, although he was aware of Asad Bey's existence, but he did not meet with him openly. Asad Bey managed to meet Marino Grimani

only on 8 June 1600.[16] Asad Bey brought gifts such as carpets and musk with him to the meeting.[17] Among the gifts was “a cloth of gold woven velvet depicting the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Archangel Gabriel.”[18] This gift, which was hung in hall of *the Council of Ten*[19] of the Doge’s palace, has not come down to our time.

It is possible that Asad spoke not Persian but Turkish during the conversation because Giacomo di Nores, the Turkish translator of the palace, was called to the meeting as an interpreter.[20] Giacomo was born in Nicosia before the Ottoman occupation of Cyprus in 1569. Giacomo, who grew up as a captive in Üsküdar after the invasion, had his freedom bought by his mother in 1587 for 260 ducats, and in 1589 he started working as an official Turkish translator in Venice.[21]

Although a reply letter was given to Asad Bey, who presented the letter of Shah Abbas to the doge, the mission was not successfully completed because in the Shah’s letter, even though weapons, ammunition and so on from Venice were requested, the doge in his reply letter merely expressed good wishes to the shah.[22]

After the meeting, when Asad Bey told Corai that they should go to Rome together, Corai realized that Huseyn Ali bey had not yet arrived in Rome and did everything in his power to prevent him from going to Rome. Corai was afraid that Asad would confide diplomatic secrets to the pope because the latter had not been officially sent by the king as an ambassador.

Knowing that Venice did not want to aggravate relations with the Ottomans, Corai also went to the Venetian palace. Corai, who met with doge, persuaded him to send the merchant back to Iran, saying that Asad was an Iranian agent and that if he tried to create an alliance in Venice against the Ottomans, it

could be dangerous for Venice. Asad Bey was forced to return to Shah Abbas as the Venetian ambassador and inform him that Huseyn Ali Bey had not achieved his goal. However, before leaving, Asad Bey, who met with the bishop Abbioso, had the opportunity to relay to the pope through the bishop the information to be given and returned to Iran. But on the way, near Aleppo, he fell ill and died.[23] Abbas then sent someone to retrieve the things that Asad Bey had carried for him.

Francesco da Costa

Francesco da Costa was born in 1561 in the Portuguese colony of Goa in India.[24] After joining the Jesuit order in 1579 and beginning life as a priest, Costa came to Hormuz after being expelled from the order in 1598 and left for Isfahan on 14 May 1599. Here, de Costa, who met Anthony Shirley's brother Robert, stayed in Isfahan for a time. Francesco, who claimed to have received orders from the Shah like Asad Bey, left Isfahan for Venice on 12 July 1599, two months after Huseyn Ali Bey.

Arriving in Venice in June 1600, Costa met his compatriot Diego de Miranda. In response to Costa asking about Huseyn Ali and Shirley, Miranda said that they have not arrived yet. Miranda did not trust Shirley and thought he was deceiving the shah and acting like a Catholic, but he was actually a protestant like most Englishmen. Thinking that the ambassadors were lost, Costa decided to go to Rome himself. This arbitrary action would have bad consequences in the future.



Tomb of Giulio Antonio Santorio in the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano sculpted by Giuliano Finelli in 1634

By the time Francesco reached Rome, Miranda and Abbioso had conveyed the information they had received from Asad Bey to the pope's nephew, Cardinal Cinzio Aldobrandini. Francesco therefore conveniently met both the Spanish ambassador and the pope in July 1600. One of the reports he wrote during the

meeting was related to Huseyn Ali's diplomatic group, and the other was related to Nicola de Melo. In his report on Nicola de Melo, Francesco stated that he and the Armenian priest who accompanied him from Hormuz to Isfahan had seized and read a letter written by Nikola from Moscow to India, and that he had burned that letter. [25]In his testament, he demonstrated the knowledge of the fact that Melo's exile to a monastery in White Sea unlike other ambassadors[26], which means that he saw a rival in the person of Nicola de Melo. In any case, the pope in turn gave this report to Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro, responsible for missionary affairs, for his opinion.

Cardinal Santoro received these reports on 4 August 1600. Having read them and thinking them suspicious, he summoned one of the Portuguese deputies of the Jesuit order to question Francesco da Costa, his identity, and the reason for him being in Rome. After receiving the requested information, the cardinal instructed him to take the reports and give them to Costa with the task of preparing two shorter and clearer reports in Italian, which could then be read by both the pope and Cardinal Santoro and the other cardinals.[27]

On 14 August 1600, around 4 o'clock in the afternoon, Pope Clement VIII, Cardinals Cinzio and Pietro Aldobrandini, Santoro, De Florence, Visconti, Bellarmine, Baronio and Antoniano held a meeting in the Vatican Palace.[28] Speaking at the meeting, Cardinal Santoro informed his colleagues that the pope considered it important to speed up the introduction of diplomatic relations with Shah Abbas and to send the Jesuits and, if necessary, even the Barnabites to the Safavid state. The topic was discussed in depth. At first, they debated whether to believe the reports and their author, Francesco da Costa. All agreed that, considering the seriousness of the matter and the circumstances, they should believe him, even if only *ad nostram cautionem* (with caution), as the drafter of the acts wrote. It was decided that a letter

should be written to Shah Abbas as the cause is good and very suitable. [29] The hard work of Asad Bey, Diego de Miranda, Bishop Abbioso and Francesco da Costa had paid off. But as Corai thought, this did not do much good for the Safavid court.

On 4 September 1600 the Vatican hastily approved the project to be sent to Philip III of Spain; the king was to send missionaries to Iran via Goa and Hormuz.



Pope Clement VIII (Anonymous author)

Diego de Miranda

Meanwhile, Diego de Miranda was not idle. In a letter to

Guillén de San Clemente (1530-1608), the Spanish ambassador in Prague, he asked for support for his mission. San Clemente advised him to contact the ambassador in Venice. [30]Miranda, who was not on good terms with the ambassador in Venice, turned again to his old friend Bishop Abbioso.

Abbioso in turn informed his brother Pedro Antonio Abbioso. Pedro was one of the relatives of the Spanish ambassador in Rome. Diego de Miranda and Pedro Antonio Abbioso agreed to go to Shah Abbas and tell him that Huseyn Ali Bey was lost on the way, and would return to Rome as the next Safavid ambassador. Pedro Antonio did not know that Costa, whom he had just met, was also aiming for this position. It would be helpful to try to eliminate him if possible, but Costa had one thing Miranda lacked: money. Therefore, instead of eliminating him, he began to think about making him a partner in the implementation of his plans.

Thus, on the occasion of da Costa's visit to Venice to collect the money from India, Diego de Miranda and Bishop Abbioso found him, and after a dinner they discussed their plans. Bishop Abbioso would take a letter to the Spanish ambassador. The letter would relay Pedro Antonio, Diego de Miranda and da Costa's plan. The ambassador would most likely reply that he was interested and that they should present themselves in Rome. But in return, Costa had to lend money to these three people.

The plan was partially carried out. Diego de Miranda would go to Isfahan as the pope's ambassador, and Francesco da Costa would go to Isfahan as the Spanish ambassador. Pedro Antonio, on the other hand, was sacrificed and left out of plan, and this greatly displeased him, thinking that the compensation of only 200 escudos, out of the 4.000 escudos which the pope had given for the commencement of the embassy, was too little. His brother, Bishop Abbioso, also stormed off the stage. The Vatican sent the letter written on 4 September to Philipp III on 18 September.

On 25 October, the nuncio to Spain, Cardinal Domenico Ginnasi, confirmed receipt of the letter.[31] Ginnasi, who met the king the next day, wrote his report three days after the meeting. The report noted that Gaspar de Córdoba, the king's confessor, and Juan de Idiáquez, president of the Council of Orders, favored the idea.

A letter of reply arrived in Rome in November, but Philip wrote no further reply to it. The mission was never realized. The main reason for this was the objection from the Archbishop of Braga, Augustin de Jesus (1589-1609) of the Augustinian order. He did not want the self-satisfied superiority of the Augustinian order, which had been active in Iran for a long time, including Hormuz and Bandar Abbas, to pass to the Jesuits.

According to him, other orders already had their own exclusive missions in the East: the Jesuits in Japan; The Dominican Order was on the islands of Solor and Timor and on the coast of Mozambique. The new mission to Iran rightly belonged to the Augustinians, who had sufficient and well-trained personnel for it.[32] Indeed, although de Jesus did not know, there were Augustinian priests in the embassy of Huseyn Ali Bey, but they were imprisoned in Russia.

Although Spain did not send an ambassador, the pope was determined to send his own ambassadors. The sea-land route was chosen as the Mediterranean Sea-Syria-Mesopotamia-Iran. This way was the shortest possible and therefore the most economical. The route was also dangerous as it passed through Ottoman territory, but the expediency of traveling as a merchant and the secrecy of the true nature of his journeys would have prevented this difficulty.



Augustin de Jesus, Archbishop of Braga (1617)

The initial travel and expense plan called for a first leg in

Venice, requiring only two servants brought from Venice by Francesco da Costa and Diego de Miranda. In Venice, they enlisted the services of two interpreters: 300 escudos were asked of Miranda, who had to come back 200 of Costa, who did not have to return because his journey ended in Goa.[33] One of these translators was the aforementioned Domenico Stropene.

According to the plan, they would leave Venice for Alexandria; from there they would pass to Aleppo where they would need to buy horses to join the caravan to Babylon. From there the transition to Iran would be easy. They planned to be in Aleppo at the beginning of April and to come to Iran in the middle of July. Francesco da Costa would later go to Hormuz and from there to Goa. He calculated that he would be in Hormuz at the end of September and in Goa at the beginning of October.

The letter sent by the pope was addressed to Shah Abbas and his "Christian wife." The letter noted that the embassy of Huseyn Ali and Shirley had not yet arrived and that everything would be done for the shah to convert to Christianity. The ambassadors were instructed not to tell the shah that Austria had lost Kanizsa to the Ottomans, and if he knew, to blame it on a traitor and create an alliance against the Ottomans. They should maintain complete confidentiality and only talk to trusted people like Asad Bey.

The result

The white lie that Asad Bey told eventually won over the Holy See. However, the main consort of Shah Abbas was not a Christian, and the Shah did not want to convert to Catholicism. Perhaps these misinterpretations were part of Shah Abbas's plans. Although Asad Bey dreamed of becoming an ambassador by replacing Huseyn Ali Bey, his untimely death prevented this. However, he inadvertently caused Pope Clement VIII to send his embassy to the Safavid state. This embassy will be discussed later.

In the next article, I will continue where I left off by discussing the adventures of Huseyn Ali Bey and Shirley.

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[2]Javid Agha, "Shah Abbas' European Spies – The Great European Embassy," *Baku Research Institute*, February 22, 2024, https://bakuresearchinstitute.org/en/shah-abbas-european-spies-the-great-european-embassy/

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[4]Ahmad Guliyev also joins this version. See Ahmad Guliyev. *Diplomatic historical issues of the Safavid state of Azerbaijan in Venice archive documents*, Baku, 2023, 139.

[5]AGS, leg. K1677, G.6, doc. 46.

[6]Vatican Archives, Fondo Borghese, IV, vol. 253, 73.

[7]In some documents, he is also mentioned as "Francesco d'Acosta".

[8]The main source of information about Asad Bey's activities in Venice is Abbioso. Most of the information in the article is taken from Abbioso's testimony. For the main text, see Vatican Archives, Borghese, Volume II 20, 192-197.

[9]For more on this legend, see Beckingham, CF; Hamilton, Bernard, eds. (1996). Prester John, the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes. Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum. ISBN 0-86078-553-X; Taylor, Christopher (2011). "Prester John, Christian

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[10]Unfortunately, this book has not yet been fully translated into either Azerbaijani or English languages. For a partial translation of the book and details about Amir Teymur, see A. Kern, 'Der "Libellus de notitia orbis" Iohannes III (de Galonifontibus?) OP Erzbishofs von Sulthanyeh', *Archivium Fratrum Praedicatorum* 8 (1938), 81–123.

[11] Rudi Matthee, " The Politics of Protection. Iberian Missionaries in Safavid Iran under Shāh ' Abbās I (1587-1629)", in Camilla Adang and Sabine Schmidtke, eds., *Contacts and Controversies between Muslims, Jews and Christians in Ottoman Empire and Pre-Modern Iran* . Würzburg, Ergon Verlag, 2010, 245-271.

[12]E.D.Ross, *Sir Anthony Sherley and His Persian Adventure*, Psychology Press, 2005, 57-62.

[13]The Italian version of the name James.

[14]Most likely, Muhammadgulu bey Arabgirli (Shamlu), who was sent to announce the victory of Shah Abbas over the Uzbeks in July 1599. During this embassy, the keys to 24 cities and fortresses that Shah Abbas bought from the Uzbeks were presented to the sultan. Most likely, Ottoman ambassador Mehmet Agha was sent in response to this embassy. See: Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, Tarih-i Selânikî, Haz: Mehmet İpşirli, TTK, Ankara,

1999, vol 1, 814.

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[18] Casale, SA (2015). *The Persian Madonna and Child: Commodified Gifts between Diplomacy and Armed Struggle*. Art History, 38(4), 636–651, 641.

[19] Italian: Consiglio dei Dieci – 1310-1797 Supreme Security body of the Venetian Republic.

[20] Guglielmo Berchet, *La Repubblica di Venezia e la Persia,* Turin, 1865, 192.

[21] Rothman, E. Natalie. "Interpreting Dragomans: Boundaries and Crossings in the Early Modern Mediterranean." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2009, 771–800.

[22] When the series of articles is published as a book, these letters will be translated into an appendix.

[23] Antonio de Gouvea, *Relaçam em que se treatam as guerras e grandes vitórios que alcançou o grande Rey de Persia Xá Abbas, do grão Turco Mahometo, e seu filho Amethe as quaes resultarão das Embaxadas que por mandado da Catholica Real Majestade de Rey D. Felippe II de Portugal fizerão alguns Religiosas da Ordem dos Ermitas de Santo Agostinho à Persia,* Lisbon, 1611, p. 55a. However, in the Venetian archives, this place is not listed as Aleppo, but as Baghdad. See: Guliyev Ahmed, History of diplomacy of the Safavid state of Azerbaijan, 139.

[24] J. Wicki-J. Gomes, Documenta Indica, vol. XV (1588-1592) (Mon. Hist. Soc. Iesu, 123), Rome 1981, p. 178 (doc. 69).

[25] Vatican Archives, Fondo Borghese, vol. 20, pp. 160, 167.

[26] Vatican Archives, Fondo Borghese, Avvisi di diverse parti

del mondo 1607-10, Ser. IV, 52, p. 346.

[27] A. Castellucci, Le conférence del Laterano. Marzo Aprile 1923, Rome 1924, 245-247.

[28] Propaganda Fide archives, *Miscellanee com.* , vol. 17, 86.

[29]Vatican Archives, Fondo Borghese, II, vol. 20, 212-218.

[30]Vatican Archives, Fondo Borghese, I, vol. 651-A, fol. 28r-29v.

[31]Vatican Archives, *Spagna,* vol. 53, 244.

[32] Alonso, Carlos. “Una embajada de Clemente VIII to Persia (1600-1609).” *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* , vol. 34, 1996, 7–125.

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