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COMMENTARII HISTORICI

ANTONIO POSSEVINO, S.J.

AS PAPAL MEDIATOR BETWEEN EMPEROR RUDOLF II AND KING STEPHAN BÁTHORY

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THE ORIGINS OF THE DISPUTE

Conflicting claims to territory can sometimes spark wars even though the territories themselves are small and hardly touch the national life or economic interests of the nations involved. The war between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands is an example. When such disputes have arisen between Catholic kingdoms and nations, the Holy See has sometimes been able to serve as a mediator in reaching a fair and amicable settlement. The successful papal mediation (1979-1985) of a border dispute between Argentina and Chile is a case in point. Understandably, disputes which resulted in fighting have attracted far more attention from historians than have disputes settled by negotiations. A territorial conflict poisoned relations between Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor (1576-1612) and Stephan Báthory, Prince of Transylvania (1571-1576) and King of Poland (1576-1586).

Contemporary documents usually refer to the territory in question as Szatmár (now Satu-Mare) and Nemethy, but several neighboring villages were also included in the dispute. Szatmár, the main city involved, is now in Romania, close to the point where Transylvania borders Hungary and the Ukraine. The city, which was strongly fortified, was located in the sixteenth century on a small island in the Somesul (Somes) River, a tributary of the Tisza River, which in turn flows into the Danube. Nemethy lay just across the Somesul to the northeast of Szatmár².

¹ I wish to thank Michael Zeps, S.J., Ryan Kelsey, and A. Lynn Martin for suggestions which have improved this essay. A short version was delivered to the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in St. Louis, 1993.

² There is an engraving of Szatmár (from 1689) in J. DĄBROWSKI, editor, *Étienne Báthory: Roi de Pologne, Prince de Transylvanie* (Kraków 1935) 24. A comparison of modern maps with that of Transylvania in G. DE JODE's, *Speculum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp 1578; reprinted Amsterdam 1965) Part II, map X, suggests that the course of the Somesul has shifted since the sixteenth century. The Vatican Archives contain a large (four folio pages) hand-drawn map of the disputed territories (reproduced at the end of this article); it is addressed to the Cardinal Secretary, Tolomeo Gallio (327v), in the autograph of Antonio Possevino, the papal legate and mediator of the Szatmár dispute, probably early in 1582: *Nunz. Germ.* 93 327.

Disputed territorial claims usually have complex roots. The controversy over Szatmár and adjacent territories goes back to the Ottoman victory at the Battle of Mohács on 28 August 1526. Following their victory the Turks occupied most of Hungary. Meanwhile the majority of the Hungarian nobility elected John Zápolya, the Prince of Transylvania to be their king, while a minority recognized the claims of the Habsburg Archduke Ferdinand, brother of Charles V and King of Bohemia. When Charles V abdicated in 1556, Ferdinand became Emperor Ferdinand I, but his Hungarian possessions were in fact confined to the northern fringe of medieval Hungary, while the Ottomans controlled the vast majority of the Kingdom. Ferdinand's army had defeated Zápolya's troops in 1527 and forced him to flee to Poland in 1528. Zápolya's only hope was Ottoman support. In 1528 he received Turkish military support and recognition as King of Hungary. He died in 1540 and was succeeded by his infant son, John Sigismund. In 1540 and 1541 Turkish troops occupied most of the Hungarian territory which Zápolya had ruled, but they did recognize John Sigismund as Prince of Transylvania, which he continued to rule under Ottoman overlordship until his death in 1571. His elected successor was Stephan Báthory, who was Prince of Transylvania from 1571 to 1576 and King of Poland from 1576 until his death in 1586³.

Szatmár and its adjacent villages were minuscule compared to the vast Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but the Szatmár territories were family lands for Stephan Báthory, and he was deeply and personally involved in the events that led to the Habsburg repossession of these lands. There is little doubt that their loss to the Habsburgs represented for Báthory an affront to his honor both as a Báthory and as Prince of Transylvania and King of Poland. In this dispute the question of honor and traditional claims weighed far more than the economic or military worth of the lands in dispute. Such claims generally loomed large in sixteenth century diplomacy. Although in these years Transylvania had a mixed population of Hungarians, Romanians and Germans, considerations of nationality and ethnicity hardly surfaced during the protracted negotiations between Rudolf II and Báthory. In the Convention of Leles of 1543 Ferdinand had acknowledged Andrea, Christopher and Stephan Báthory as having dominion «*opidi Zathmar et Nemethy ac possessionum et villarum ad id pertinentium*». Additional documents issued in 1544 and 1548 confirmed these family possessions⁴.

After the abdication of Charles V in 1556, the Transylvanian Diet recalled John Sigismund from exile in Poland. It was Stephan Báthory who served as the spokesman for the delegation that greeted the Prince as he crossed the border on his return. But Ferdinand I was not inclined to accept a Transylvania independent of his Kingdom of Hungary and sent a delegation to Constantinople in 1556

³ Ferenc SZAKÁLY, *The Early Ottoman Period, including Royal Hungary*, in *A History of Hungary*, edited by Peter SUGÁR et al. (Bloomington 1990) 83-85.

⁴ The documents are cited and quoted by Antoine ÁLDÁSY, *La généalogie de la famille Báthory* in *Étienne Báthory*, 15.

to assert his claims to Transylvania. Suleiman did not accept his claims, and war broke out between John Sigismund and Ferdinand I in the spring of 1557. The conflict, which nicely suited Ottoman purposes, was a series of sieges along the forty fortresses that guarded the frontier. Truces broke the actual fighting in this war, which dragged on from 1557 to 1567.

No fortress was more important than Szatmár, which John Sigismund put under the command of Stephan Báthory. Báthory was defending not only his country but his own personal estates. In the autumn of 1557 Habsburg troops besieged the fortress, but stout resistance and the approach of a Transylvanian army forced them to retreat in December of 1557. Báthory then defended the Tisza River line farther to the north until peace negotiations began in 1559-1560. These reached a provisional agreement, but war broke out again in 1561 when the leading Transylvanian general, Melchior Balassa, accepted bribes from Ferdinand I and deserted to the Imperial side.

Balassa's defection resulted in the Habsburg occupation of Szatmár in December of 1561. Meanwhile Báthory was engaged in defending the territory along the Tisza and was able to recapture the fortress of Hadad, but Balassa led a Habsburg counterattack which defeated Báthory and another Transylvanian general. Báthory himself was wounded in the fighting, and most of the Transylvanian army deserted. After the debacle many leading Transylvanians went over to the Habsburgs and forced John Sigismund to enter peace negotiations. He was willing to make concessions, but the Habsburgs deemed these insufficient. Two Polish ambassadors served as intermediaries so that a truce was reached while final negotiations dragged on. The sticking point was the districts drained by the Tisza River, which were mostly under Habsburg occupation⁵. The truce was supposed to last until December of 1564, but fighting broke out during the summer, with the Habsburg forces under Balassa and the Transylvanian army under Báthory. Báthory had entered into secret negotiations with inhabitants of Szatmár, who were restive under Balassa's heavy yoke. Báthory tricked Balassa's forces into marching north while he cut south toward the Tisza Rivers and established contact with his partisans in Szatmár, who told him that the town was lightly defended. After a long night's march his troops entered the town on 3 September and stormed the fortress, putting the German mercenaries who resisted to the sword. An added prize was the capture of Balassa's wife and children. Balassa was forced to ransom them from Báthory by surrendering three more fortresses⁶.

These developments greatly angered the court at Vienna, now under Maximilian II (1564-1576), which regarded Szatmár as the key to controlling the territory along the Transylvanian border. The war continued as Báthory led the Transylvanians to conquests reaching along the Tisza all the way to Cassovia (Kassa, Kaschau, Košice, today in Slovakia). Vienna reacted by recruiting a new

⁵ Emeric LUKINICH, *La jeunesse d'Étienne Báthory (Étienne Báthory, prince de Transylvanie)* in *Étienne Báthory*, 22-28.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 28-30.

army and launching an unexpected winter campaign which caught the Transylvanians unprepared.

In January 1565 the Habsburg army recovered all that it had lost. Discouraged, John Sigismund sued for peace. Báthory was one of the two representatives that he sent to negotiate a preliminary treaty at Szatmár on March 13, which ceded most of the territory along the frontier to Maximilian. All the territories outside of Transylvania proper were recognized as constitutive parts of the (Habsburg) Kingdom of Hungary and owing obedience to the Hungarian crown. This Convention of Szatmár was only provisional, for the final treaty was to be negotiated in Vienna. Again John Sigismund put Báthory in charge of the negotiations with orders to seek concessions from the extreme measures of the Szatmár Convention. Báthory presented his Prince's request for mitigations, but Maximilian refused to give up any of the gains awarded him by the Convention⁷.

John Sigismund had one obvious recourse to gain concessions. He sent an embassy to Constantinople to enlist the support of his Turkish overlord. Suleiman agreed and requested that Maximilian restore the conquests of the previous winter, threatening war if the Emperor refused. John Sigismund now felt strong enough to disregard completely the Szatmár agreement and to demand a totally fresh start to negotiations. In Vienna Báthory had just begun his efforts to gain mitigations of the Szatmár Convention when the new, uncompromising instructions arrived from his Prince. He presented these to the Imperial advisors on 14 May 1565. Maximilian was to restore all his recent conquests; in return John Sigismund would make minor concessions. The Imperial counselors were outraged and considered Báthory, not his Prince, the main sources of the fresh demands. Ignoring the traditional rights of an ambassador, they arrested Báthory on 5 June 1565⁸. They demanded to see his instructions and he complied; they then demanded to see his further, secret instructions, but he had none and could not comply. Báthory remained a prisoner for two years, first at Vienna, later at Prague. He devoted the two years to encyclopedic reading, an enjoyable pursuit given his scholarly bent, but he could scarcely forget these two years of unjust imprisonment when he became King of Poland. Both John Sigismund of Transylvania and Sigismund Augustus of Poland pleaded in vain for his release. His release came only in 1567 when the new Sultan, Selim II, made it a condition for giving a safe conduct to Imperial ambassadors who had to undertake negotiations with the Porte⁹.

Báthory returned to Transylvania to find John Sigismund under the domination of his chief minister, Caspar Békés. Báthory was given command of Várad but was excluded from influence. Békés was the main force behind new

⁷ Ibid., 30-31.

⁸ On the immunities granted ambassadors in this period, see Garrett MATTINGLY, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Baltimore 1964) 39-44 233-244.

⁹ LUKINICH 32-34; Antonio POSSEVINO, *Transylvania*, edited by Endre VERESS (Budapest 1913) 99 100.

negotiations with the Imperial government during 1570, first at Prague, then at Speyer. The Convention of Speyer, which regularized relations between the Habsburg Kingdom of Hungary and Transylvania, not only dealt with control of territory in the Tisza frontier region but also recognized the suzerainty of the King of Hungary over all of Transylvania. Indeed, the Convention seemed to reduce Transylvania to a province of Hungary with its Prince acting as a governor named by the King. Transylvanian patriots such as Báthory regarded the Treaty as a sellout to the Habsburgs. On 14 March 1571 John Sigismund died without an heir and without having submitted the Convention of Speyer to the Diet for approval so that technically it did not have the force of law—at least in the eyes of many Transylvanians. In 1566 Sultan Suleiman had recognized the right of the Transylvanian Diet to elect the Prince. The Diet proceeded with the election on 25 May 1571. There were two candidates: Báthory supported by the Sultan and Békés supported by the Habsburgs. Báthory was elected unanimously¹⁰.

In 1576 Rudolf II was elected Emperor after the death of his father, Maximilian II. There was also a new king in Poland that year. Henry III's return to France resulted in his *de facto* abdication of Polish throne. The election of a new king of Poland attracted half a dozen candidates, of whom the two most popular were the Habsburg Archduke Maximilian and Stephan Báthory, Prince of Transylvania. The election was irregular and disputed, but Báthory emerged as King of Poland-Lithuania. Four factors favored him: he enjoyed wide support among the anti-Habsburg nobility led by Jan Zamoyski; he promised to marry Anna Jagiellonka and thereby indirectly carry on an illustrious Polish dynasty; he had the support of the Sultan, who mobilized an army against the Emperor; and he marched into Kraków before the Habsburgs could react. He was both married and anointed King on 1 May 1576. As Prince of Transylvania Báthory was in no position to challenge effectively the Habsburg occupation of Szatmár or even demand compensation. As King of Poland he was in a much stronger position, but immediately after his elections there were more pressing problems than settling old accounts with the Habsburgs. Danzig (Gdańsk) rose in a revolt that required a major military operation to put down. The Khan of the Crimea and 100,000 Tartars were raiding Ruthenia. Most important was the Livonian War. Since 1557 the Poles and the Swedes had been fighting parallel wars against the Muscovy of Ivan the Terrible for control of the Baltic region. Until the Livonian War was concluded, Báthory could not apply enough pressure to force the Imperial court to reopen the Szatmár question¹¹. That war ended early in 1582, thanks in part to the efforts of a papal mediator, Antonio Possevino, who soon assumed a similar role in the Szatmár dispute.

¹⁰ LUKINICH 33-35; POSSEVINO, *Transylvania* 105-112.

¹¹ NORMAN DAVIES, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (New York 1982) I 421-423; LOUIS SZÁDECZKY, *L'élection d'Étienne Báthory au trône de Pologne*, in *Étienne Báthory*, 82-104. Some Poles saw Habsburg intrigue behind both the Tatar attack and the Danzig revolt: see EDWARD KUNTZE, *Les rapports de la Pologne avec le Saint-Siège à l'époque d'Étienne Báthory*, in *Étienne Báthory*, 165.

ANTONIO POSSEVINO AS PAPAL MEDIATOR

The complex and protracted negotiations that resulted in the Peace of Jam Zapolski between Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania (the Swedes did not participate) owed much to the papal mediator, Antonio Possevino, S.J., although the peace mainly resulted from mutual exhaustion¹². For years the forces of Ivan IV the Terrible had been on the defensive. Ivan sought to cut his losses by taking advantage of Pope Gregory XIII's desire to forge an alliance of Christian rulers against the Turks and to open Russia to Catholic influence. Ivan sent a representative to Rome in early 1581 to request papal good offices in attaining peace between Muscovy and Poland, dangling before the Pope the possibility of an anti-Turkish alliance. Gregory assigned the Jesuit Antonio Possevino to the task of mediator and conferred on him exceptional powers as papal nuncio and legate for northern and eastern Europe. Possevino held preliminary discussions with Báthory at Vilnius and with Ivan at Moscow before serving as honest broker in the peace negotiations at Jam Zapolski in December and January. The Treaty was concluded 15 January 1582¹³. Stephan Báthory had reason to be satisfied with the considerable territorial gains made by Poland-Lithuania. The Poles had had the best of the fighting, but the stout Russian resistance in the epic siege of Pskov (1581) had dampened Polish ardor to continue the war to total victory.

Possevino's dealings with the Polish King ripened into an unusually close relationship. Both were born in 1533; both had studied at the University of Padua; both were steeped in humanist culture and had encyclopedic intellectual interests; both conversed easily in Latin. Báthory's exceptional confidence in Possevino is shown by a letter he wrote to Gregory XIII:

«So then we have noted singular trustworthiness in Father Possevino ... I have often thoroughly discussed these matters with him that I feel pertinent to the public good of the Christian name, so I reiterate my request that Your Holiness have complete trust in him about these matters»¹⁴.

¹² Possevino was born in Mantua on 12 July 1533, entered the Society at Rome 29 September 1559, and died at Ferrara 26 February 1611.

¹³ The literature on the negotiations is extensive. See Stanislas POLČIN, *Une tentative d'Union au xvr siècle: La Mission religieuse du Père Antoine Possevin S.J. en Moscovie (1581-1582)* (Rome 1957); Paul PIERLING, *Un arbitrage pontifical au xvr siècle entre Pologne et la Russie: la mission diplomatique de Père Possevino, 1581-1582* (Brussels 1890); Id. *La Saint-Siège, la Pologne et Moscou, 1582-1587* (Paris 1885); Liisi KARTTUNEN, *Antonio Possevino: un diplomate pontifical au xvr siècle* (Lausanne 1908). For Possevino's own account of his mission, written for Gregory XIII, see Antonio POSSEVINO, *The Moscovia*, edited and translated by Hugh F. GRAHAM, (Pittsburgh 1977). A general study of peacemaking in the sixteenth century is Joycelyn G. RUSSELL's *Peacemaking in the Renaissance* (Philadelphia 1986); for the section on the papacy's role, see pp. 21-47.

¹⁴ Letter of Báthory to Gregory XIII, 27 August 1584, printed in Edward KUNTZE and Czesław NANKE, editors, *Alberto Bolognetti nuntii apostolici in Polonia epistolae et acta, 1581-1585 in Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana* (Kraków 1923-1950) VII 419, henceforward referred to as MPV.

Possevino's esteem for the King is most evident in a memorial he wrote to guide Martin Laterna, the King's Jesuit confessor¹⁵. It was to Possevino that Báthory entrusted the main task of negotiating a settlement of the Szatmár dispute. The negotiations went on from 1582 to 1585. Several factors contributed to making Possevino the main facilitator of these negotiations. Crucial was the confidence that he enjoyed not only with Báthory but also with Gregory XIII and the Cardinal Secretary, Tolemeo Gallo, the Cardinal of Como. During this period the Polish and Imperial courts did not have regular ambassadors with each other. This allowed Possevino as nuncio extraordinary, who was frequently traveling between the two courts, to play a key role as mediator even though the Imperialists felt that Possevino was partial to Báthory.¹⁶ In this they were probably right, but his partiality could have had little affect on the negotiations. Possevino's task was to facilitate negotiations, suggest alternatives, and ease rancor. He was not a mediator in the sense of one who has the power to make a decision after hearing both sides. He had certainly been sympathetic to the Polish King in his fight against Ivan the Terrible, but he had succeeded in mediating a treaty both sides could accept. Any anti-Habsburg inclinations he had in these negotiations were more than offset by the papacy's desire for an amicable settlement, its need to please the Habsburgs, and the fact that, unlike Ivan's diplomats, the Imperialists were dealing from a position of strength throughout the negotiations: they were in possession of Szatmár and its adjacent territories. Báthory could only plead for their restoration or for compensation.

The negotiations studied here have been largely ignored by previous historians, perhaps because they did not lead to war and because Báthory died shortly after their conclusion. The *World of Rudolf II: A Study in Intellectual History, 1576-1612* by R. J. W. Evans never refers to these negotiations¹⁷. They fall outside the parameters of Stanislas Polcin's study of Possevino's mission to Moscow. More surprisingly, Liisi Karttunen's study of his diplomatic career merely alludes to the negotiations in passing¹⁸. So does Edouard Kuntze, while

¹⁵ M. Laterna born 1552 at Drohobycz; entered Society 10 May at Braniewo; died 30 September 1598 in the Baltic Sea. László SZILAS, *Der Hofprediger Laterna, Possevino und der polnische Königshof. Eine Instruktion Possevinos aus dem Jahre 1583*, AHSI 40 (1971) 391-422.

¹⁶ *Mon. ant. Hung.* II (1580-1586) 6*, 767-768 (= LUKÁCS II).

¹⁷ (Oxford 1973). Rudolf had an inflated sense of his own grandeur and suffered had severe mental problems that grew worse with time and complicated negotiations: see H.C. MIDELFORT, *Mad Princes of Renaissance Germany* (Charlottesville, VA 1994) 125-134. On his stance toward a league against the Turks, see Friedrich von BEZOLD, *Kaiser Rudolf II und die heilige Liga*. Königlich Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Abhandlungen XVII (1886) 341-384.

¹⁸ KARTTUNEN, 217-218. There is no modern full-length biography of Possevino. The only full biography is that of Jean DORIGNY (Paris 1712); I have used the Italian translation by Nicholas GHEZZI, which contains a second volume of documents not in the French edition: *Vita del P. Antonio Possevino della Compagnia di Gesù* (Venice 1759). Georg Fell included a ninety page biography of Possevino at the beginning of his edition/translation of Possevino's *De Cultura ingeniorum* (277-367) in *Die Jesuiten Perpiñá, Bonifacius und Possevin: Ausgewählte pädagogische Schriften*, edited and translated by J. STIER, H. SCHEID, and G. FELL (Freiburg im Breisgau 1901). Neither of these works deals with the Szatmár negotiations.

Ladislau Lukács devotes a paragraph to the Szatmár negotiations¹⁹. Ludwig von Pastor gives them only two sentences²⁰. The most detailed discussion, by Roderich Gooss, runs only six pages²¹. All the same, the negotiations have left an abundance of archival material²². The greatest part of this documentation is the correspondence of Possevino. Possevino also incorporated a summary of the first two years of the negotiations into his *Transilvania*, which he wrote for Gregory XIII²³. Hundreds of documents relating to the negotiations have been printed, but in a variety of different works²⁴.

¹⁹ Kuntze, *Les rapports*, 158, 166; LUKÁCS, 15*-16*. The Szatmár negotiations are not treated either in Andrea PONTECORVO MÁRTONFFY's dissertation, *The Early Counter-Reformation in Hungary, Jesuits, Papal Nuncios, and the Hungarian Lands, 1550-1606*, University of Chicago, 1980, or in Tamás SZABÓ's thesis, *Antonio Possevinos Bemühungen um die Erneuerung des Katholizismus in Siebenbürgen*, Rome, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1990.

²⁰ *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. R.F. KERR (St. Louis 1930) XX 444.

²¹ Roderich Gooss, editor, *Österreichische Staatsverträge: Fürstentum Siebenbürgen (1526-1690)*, (Vienna 1911) 204-210.

²² Archivum secretum vaticanum (ASV), *Nunz. Germ.* 93 94 and 95; *Nunz. Pol.* 15C, 17A; *Nunz. Pol. Ad II.* 2. Also very rich for the negotiations are Antonio Possevino's papers in ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 329 I and II, 330. Possevino had his secretary, Thomas Saily, S.J., compile annual letters of his diplomatic activity which often contain details of his negotiations. That dated 28 May 1582 covers 1581 and is found in two copies in ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 17A 64-72 and 85-94. The annual letters for 1582 and 1583 are in ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 17A 133-170 and are partially printed in LUKÁCS II, 519-540. The annual letter for 1584 is ARSI *Germ.* 165 168-172. Possevino wrote a detailed account of his prolonged negotiations, 13 June to 10 September 1583, at the Diet of Imperial Hungary held at Cassovia; this can be found in ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 17A 106-132 but I have used the copy in ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 112-134; this whole folder contains copies of documents 8-176, dealing with the Szatmár negotiations. It has been largely overlooked, except by Lukács. It seems that not many records of the Emperor's role in the negotiations have survived: «Rudolf is scantily represented» in the Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv in Vienna, and the only printed collection of Rudolf's correspondence covers the years 1589 to 1592: EVANS, 43.

²³ Antonio POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, edited by Endre VERESS, (Budapest 1913) 149-172. This edition is of the *Transilvania* is used throughout this essay. There is a later edition printed in Giacomo BASCAPÈ's *La Relazione fra l'Italia e la Transilvania* (Rome 1931). Possevino's *Transilvania* provides the most comprehensive account of the first three years of the negotiations. Gregory XIII found the *Transilvania* so interesting that he read through it in a few days. It is worth noting that when the Cardinal Secretary returned the manuscript of Possevino's *Transilvania* to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva, it came with instructions to delete most of the account of the Szatmár negotiations before publication. *Ibid.*, XII XXI-XXII. In fact Acquaviva decided not to permit publication of the *Transilvania* so that the manuscript did not see print until 1913. On the criticisms of the Jesuit censors against the *Transilvania*, see LUKÁCS II, 953-958. The Jesuit censors also requested the revision or deletion of the material on the negotiations: *ibid.*, 954 958. In contrast, Ludwig von Pastor speaks thus of the *Transilvania*: «The far-reaching and generous spirit in which the zealous Jesuit drew out his arguments was in complete accordance with the character and ideas of the aged Pope». XX 642.

²⁴ The most copious printed source for documents and correspondence on the Szatmár negotiations is the *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana*, Tomus V-VII, covering 1581-1585. Less valuable is Józef SIEMIENSKI, editor, *Archiwum Jana Zamoyskiego, kanclerza i hetmana wielkiego koronnego* (Warsaw 1913) III (1582-1584). The reports of the Venetian ambassadors to the Imperial court are printed in Mór KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, *Rudolf uralkodásának első tíz éve (1576-1586). A Velencei Kir. Állami Levéltár császári udvarból való követjelentései alapján [The First Ten Years of the Reign of Rudolf (1576-1586) on the Basis of Reports by Ambassadors from the Imperial Court Taken from the Royal State Archives of Venice]* (Budapest 1933). More than half of these reports deal with the Szatmár negotiations and suggest that the Venetian government fol-

The interest of the Holy See in promoting an understanding between Rudolf and Báthory had multiple and somewhat contradictory motives. One was the purely religious goal of promoting peace, especially peace between Christian monarchs. Again and again wars between Catholic kings, most notably the Habsburg-Valois Wars, had weakened Catholic efforts to stem the Protestant tide during the sixteenth century. Protestant congregations were widespread in the lands of both Rudolf II and Stephan Báthory, but they did not constitute a military threat. For Báthory and the Poles the main threat was Ivan the Terrible. For Rudolf the Hungarian frontier with the Turks was always in jeopardy, and we have already noted how Báthory was able to use his status as a client of the Sultan for his Transylvanian lands to put pressure on the Habsburgs.

Habsburg-Ottoman rivalry for control of the Danube basin and the Balkans was to endure for three hundred years, but during the early years of Rudolf's reign there was little active fighting. Rudolf was less personally interested in the art of war than in the mannerist paintings of Bartholomew Spranger and Giuseppe Arcimboldo. He was so fascinated by astrology that in the crucial year 1588 he refused to see the Spanish ambassador for weeks on end²⁵. In 1576, the first year of Rudolf's reign, Turkish expansion began to gravitate toward Iran and the Caspian and away from Hungary and the Mediterranean and resulted in twelve years war of between the Turks and the Iranians and a treaty (21 March 1590) which gave the Sultan control of most of the Caucasus region. After a brief interlude while the Turks put down internal revolts full scale war broke out between the Ottomans and Rudolf along the Hungarian border from 1593 to 1606²⁶.

The policy of Gregory XIII in trying to unite Catholic monarchs against Islam is part of long-standing papal policy going back to the First Crusade. The call to crusade and to jihad could still stir many hearts in the sixteenth century. Gregory XIII, more than any pontiff of the century, had a personal interest in the Levant and in the Christian communities within the Ottoman Empire. Close to his heart was the goal of renewing the alliance against the Turks forged by his predecessor Pius V and crowned with victory at Lepanto. But Venice, ever fearful for her trade and her possessions on Crete and on the Ionian islands, had de-

lowed them with considerable interest. These reports have an added value because they tend to reflect the Imperial viewpoint and thereby compensate for the preponderance of Possevino's correspondence in the source material used here, which better represents Polish and papal concerns. *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae*, edited by L. LUKÁCS and cited earlier, prints a number of documents which touch on the negotiations. A few documents on the negotiations are found in two works by Paul PIERLING: *Bathory et Possevino: Documents inédits sur les rapports du Saint-Siège avec les Slaves* (Paris 1887) and *Le Saint-Siège, la Pologne et Moscou, 1582-1587* (Paris 1885). Of marginal value for this topic is Augustinus Theiner's *Annales ecclesiastici quos post... Baronium...* (Rome 1856), but see III 342 351 352 448 for relevant documents.

²⁵ Garrett MATTINGLY, *The Armada* (Boston 1950) 179.

²⁶ Fernand BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, translated by Sian Reynolds (New York 1973) II 1166-1174 1196-1204. Useful for background is Winfried SCHULZE, *Reich und Türkengefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert: Studien zu den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen einer äußeren Bedrohung* (Munich 1978).

serted the Holy League of Pius V shortly after Lepanto. Philip II had shifted Spanish priorities from fighting the Turks in the Mediterranean to putting down the revolt in the Netherlands.

The popes of the late sixteenth century sought to build a new Christian alliance in eastern Europe. Ideally such an alliance would embrace Rudolf, Stephan Báthory and the Venetians. The Venetians remained rightly skeptical of such schemes, but a secure alliance between Rudolf and Báthory might still persuade the Venetians to reconsider²⁷. The ultimate goal of Possevino's 1581 mission to Moscow had been to win Ivan the Terrible for the Grand Alliance, but once Ivan had ended his war with the Poles, he gradually lost interest in a crusade against the Turks despite papal efforts to encourage him²⁸. That made an understanding between Rudolf and Stephan Báthory even more crucial to papal plans. Rudolf was the most unmartial of monarchs, but Báthory was a proven soldier who cut a figure of heroic proportions in both Poland and Transylvania. One hero king would be enough for a crusade²⁹. As the focal point of Báthory's many grievances against the Habsburgs, Szatmár became the hinge of papal projects for a Grand Alliance against the Turks³⁰.

1582: BÁTHORY DEMANDS HIS LANDS BACK

In January 1581 the long Livonian War ended for Poland. In April and May Antonio Possevino had two private conversations in Riga and Vilnius with the King; the second lasted for four hours. On May 27 Possevino reported from

²⁷ On 12 August 1582 Possevino gave a long, wide-ranging discourse presenting papal plans for the alliance *alla signoria di Venezia in collegio* and urging the Venetians to join the alliance. It is printed in Paul PIERLING, *Bathory et Possevino*, 168-192. I have not been able to use Ludwik BORATYŃSKI's *Stefan Batory i plan Ligi przeciw Turkom 1576-1584* (Kraków 1903). Von Pastor (XIX 329) notes, «The thought of the league [against the Turks] runs like a scarlet thread throughout the pontificate of Gregory XIII, and to a great extent determined his attitude toward the Christian powers».

²⁸ Possevino continued through 1582 to urge Ivan IV to join a crusade against the Turks, for instance by writing a long memorandum to the Czar entitled, *De Foedere cum Serenissimo magno Duce inter Christianos Principes adversus Turcam sarciendo: Ac quodammodo id maxima cum laude, et merito, atque Regnorum suorum propagatione Magnus Dux consequi poterit*. ASV Nunz. Germ. 93 298-302. As late as 29 September 1582 the Venetian ambassador at Rome, Leonardo Donado, was reporting specific plans for an anti-Turkish alliance between Ivan and Báthory. The Pope, Philip II, and Venice were to subvent the effort with 60,000 ducats for Báthory and 20,000 ducats for Ivan. The immediate target would be the Tartars, who were allied with the Turks and provided cavalry for the Turks' on-going war with Persia. Moreover the Tartars had recently ravaged both Polish and Muscovite territories. Donado saw Possevino as the main promoter of the alliance: see PIERLING, *Bathory et Possevino*, 227-231.

²⁹ Norman Davies entitles his chapter on this period of Polish history «Báthory: The Transylvanian Victor (1576-1586)», I, 421-432.

³⁰ An overview of papal policy in eastern Europe with emphasis on Possevino's role is presented in the two articles by Domenico CACCAMO, *Conversione dell'Islam e conquista della Moscovia nell'attività diplomatica et letteraria di Antonio Possevino in Venezia e Ungheria nel Rinascimento*, Vittorio BRANCA editor, (Florence 1973) 167-191, and *La diplomazia della Controriforma e la crociata: dei piani del Possevino alla 'lunga guerra' di Clemente VIII*, Archivio storico italiano, 128 (1971) 255-281. Papal policy toward the Turks in the middle years of the sixteenth century (1551-1571) leading up to Lepanto has been exhaustively studied by Kenneth SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, IV, *The Sixteenth Century from Julius to Pius V* (Philadelphia 1984).

Warsaw to Gallio, the Cardinal Secretary, on these conversations³¹. The letter touched many points: thus the King thanked the Pope for help in ending the Livonian War. But the main focus was his intention to demand that Rudolf II return his Szatmár possessions. «The King began to speak to me with great earnestness that he wanted to communicate to me a matter of great importance ... so I could represent his wishes to His Holiness, the Emperor and to Christian princes». Should events result in war, this should not come as a surprise «to Christian princes, especially to His Holiness». There must be appropriate preliminary negotiations³². At this point Possevino broke in and said that he thought the King had the Emperor in mind, judging from their previous conversation in Riga. Báthory admitted this, recounting the offenses that Maximilian II had committed against him. He also noted the scant respect paid his ambassadors by Rudolf, so much that he regretted having sent them, even though he had sought genuine friendship with the Emperor. He was resolved to send an even more splendid embassy to demand back his property, but he did not want to do so without recourse to His Holiness, the princes of the Empire and other Christian princes. Possevino asked him to hold back until he had consulted with the Pope, whom God would use to enlighten him on what he should do. «He would find that things that appear impossible to human thinking turn out easy when men do their shopping with God». Reaching peace with Muscovy had been far harder and more profitable than would be reaching an understanding with the Emperor. Possevino counselled the King to postpone sending an impressive embassy to Rudolf and to wait and see what the Pope could do by using his paternal diligence with the Emperor. Better to prepare the ground quietly, for grand embassies touch off rumors, and if they fail, they could make the King «more obligated to resentment and to taking action». If he got bogged down in such an enterprise, somebody might attack him in Livonia, and he would not have the power to check the Sultan, who could take advantage of a quarrel between Báthory and Rudolf to increase his domain, as had happened in the past. Possevino went on to encourage the King to tell him how the situation could be repaired either with money or with some other sort of recompense or any other unforeseen way so that God could quietly direct the mind of the Emperor³³.

³¹ MPV V, 352-360. Possevino also describes these conversations in his *Transilvania*, 150; he says «he sensed the odor of a war of great importance for Christendom» in Báthory's words. It is appropriate to note here the languages used in the discussions and correspondence. The papal diplomats used Italian among themselves, except for formal documents, which were in Latin. Possevino used Latin in dealing with Jan Zamoyski, the Polish Grand Chancellor, and with King Stephan Báthory, whose native language was Hungarian. He usually used Latin with the Emperor's advisors, but Spanish when dealing with Rudolf II himself who had spent much of his youth in Spain and preferred to speak that language (see EVANS, 48-50; MPV VI, 264). Most of Possevino's correspondence with the Imperial court was in Latin, but he wrote at least one letter to Rudolf in Spanish: see ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 15C 180-181, undated.

³² MPV V, 353-355.

³³ *Ibid.*, 355-356; POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 150-153. Báthory had tried to bring up the Szatmár question with the Emperor earlier, in 1578 and 1579, but his bargaining position then, before the successful conclusion of the Livonian War, was far less strong. POSSEVINO's *Transilvania*,

Báthory acknowledged that the price of the land, which would constitute a medium-sized duchy in Italy, would be easy to calculate but that he was completely opposed to selling his patrimonial inheritance for money because that involved dishonor, but to Possevino Báthory seemed less opposed to an exchange of territory. The real reason he wanted back his own lands was the way Maximilian had seized and held them, «per notam infidelitatis» in the King's own words. This weighed on him, and when his subjects urged him to recover the lands, they pointed out that if he did not do so now that he was a king, he could never do so. He was being forced to attempt their recovery. The King closed the conversation by agreeing to confer first with the Pope and by giving Possevino the task, «also leaving me free to deal privately with the Emperor, and so he wrote in my papers of credence» to the Pope³⁴.

On May 14 Báthory had a third discussion with Possevino about relations with the Emperor. He raised a new issue: the Emperor had notified two Polish cities, Danzig and Elbląg (Elbing), about the forthcoming Imperial Diet, addressing them as if they were his subjects. Báthory was indignant—what if he did the same as regards Prague or Vienna! Possevino tried to calm him, pointing to the pacific nature of Rudolf, and how Christendom would suffer if the two monarchs were to give an opening to the Turks. The King then told Possevino that the reason why he had discussed the whole problem with him was because rumors were floating throughout Germany that he wanted to invade Hungary—rumors started by the Imperial court. He asked Possevino to tell the Pope not only about their discussions but that «he did not want to be the first to stir up tumults among Christians»³⁵.

Was the Szatmár dispute really likely to lead to war? The conversations with Possevino clearly suggested that Báthory did not rule out military action against the Emperor, and Báthory claimed that he could raise 30,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry in Transylvania to back his complaints against the Emperor³⁶. But there is strong evidence that Báthory was more likely to threaten war than actually start one. He later told Possevino that he never intended to go to war over the Szatmár question³⁷. In the years treated here Báthory was no longer technically the ruler of Transylvania, having surrendered the title of Prince of

149-158, and *Opp. NN.* 317 11-13, review these early negotiations, which dealt not only with the Szatmár question but eleven other sources of friction between the two monarchs. On the linkage between the end of the Livonian War and the reopening of the Szatmár question, see *ibid.*, 158 159.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 153; MPV V, 356.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 357.

³⁶ KUNTZE, *Les rapports*, 164.

³⁷ MPV VII, 437, Possevino to Cardinal Gallio, 29 April 1584. On 20 January 1583 Alberto Bolognetti, the regular nuncio to the Polish court, wrote to Cardinal Guastavillani, the nephew of Gregory XIII, an enormous and bitter letter (MPV VI, 32-57) denouncing Possevino for his role in the Szatmár negotiations and for much else. Bolognetti was an able diplomat and officially maintained cordial relations with Possevino but harbored an intense hatred for him which he revealed only in confidential letters to his brother and to his friend Guastavillani. Bolognetti accused Possevino of greatly exaggerating the danger of war between the two monarchs in his accounts to Gregory XIII and of working for the recall of the special Polish ambassador Hiero-

Transylvania to his brother Christopher after his own election to the Polish throne. When Christopher died in 1581, the title went to Christopher's son Sigismund. But Báthory effectively ruled Transylvania in his young nephew's name³⁸. The weakness of the Polish Kingship also made war less likely since the powerful Polish nobility were unlikely to support a major war either to defend their King's honor or to gain minor territories for the child-prince of Transylvania. Without widespread support among the nobility, war with the Emperor would have been folly, and Báthory was no fool. Moreover, Báthory had potential enemies in Moscow and Constantinople who took priority over his personal grievances with the Habsburg. The threat of war raised by Báthory seems largely a bargaining chip, but many wars have been fought over royal honor and a shorter list of injuries than Báthory's.

After discussing the conversations with Jan Zamoyski, the Polish Grand Chancellor, and with Alberto Bolognetti, the regular nuncio to the Polish court, Possevino decided to go to Prague to discuss issues with the Emperor, probably after preliminary talks with the Imperial Counselors³⁹.

By April 10 Alberto Badoer, the Venetian ambassador at Vienna, was reporting the forthcoming arrival of a Polish envoy who would ask for the return Szatmár, Tochay, and Nemethy. The new Venetian Ambassador, Girolamo Lippomano, stopped at Trent on his way to the Imperial court and there conferred with Cardinal Ludovico Madruzzo, who was about to depart as legate to the forthcoming Diet at Augsburg. He reported the same news as Badoer, but added that the Emperor felt that his father had rightfully taken these lands in war and that subsequently heavy investments had been devoted to fortifying them. These were arguments that would surface again and again⁴⁰.

nymus Rozdrażewski so that he could monopolize the negotiations himself (Ibid., 39). According to Bolognetti, Possevino was also trying to squeeze both the regular nuncios, himself and Bonomi at the Imperial court, out of the Szatmár negotiations. Thoughts of war were far from Báthory's mind, and Possevino's meddling was dangerous. Ibid., 34-39. Specifically, Bolognetti felt that the account of Possevino's conversations with the King which Possevino sent to Cardinal Gallio on 27 May 1582 had exaggerated the danger of war: «...il Re, che pochi giorni dappoi si mettesse in camino per Cracovia, mi parlò in questa materia molto allongo, non mi parve di comprendere dalle sue parole tanto pericolo di rottura contro l'Imperatore, quando haveva impresso il Padre nell'animo di N.S. [Gallio] ...» Ibid., 36. For similar letters revealing Bolognetti's hatred for Possevino, see MPV VI, 140-151 396-399; VII, 749-769.

³⁸ Jacob Wujek [Born 1540 at Wągrowiec, Poland; entered Society 25 July 1567 at Rome; died 27 July 1597 at Kraków], the Jesuit rector at Cluj, reported to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva, on 18 August 1581, shortly after Christopher's death: «Transylvania fere ex praescripto Regis Poloniae gubernatur nunc et deinceps etiam gubernabitur. Tutor ipse est pueri Principis». LUKÁCS II, 161.

³⁹ Ibid., 357. For Bolognetti, see *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome 1969) XI, 313-316. Pope Gregory XIII named Bolognetti cardinal on 11 December 1583 during his involvement in the negotiations.

⁴⁰ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 159. Badoer's dispatch is dated April 10, Lippomano's is April 22.

On June 18 Possevino sent two reports back to Poland, a short one to Jan Zamoyski⁴¹ and a longer one to the King⁴². He reported on his discussions with the Emperor's counselors⁴³. Rudolf himself had already departed for the forthcoming Diet at Augsburg, so Possevino had taken the opportunity to discuss the King's demands with the Emperor's advisors at Prague, who claimed that Maximilian had rightfully captured the territories in war and therefore had done no injury to the Báthory family. Báthory's unjust imprisonment was Maximilian's doing, but he was dead, and Rudolf had never done Báthory any harm. There was no basis for Polish suspicions that Rudolf had been intriguing with Ivan the Terrible⁴⁴. His counselors claimed that as far as possible Rudolf had been striving to renew a treaty of friendship with Poland. If things were handled properly, he would not fail to do everything desired of him so that the public need of the two realms would be put before mere private interests. If necessary, private questions too could be dealt with at the proper time as long as they did not interfere with the greater good. They also made excuses for the Emperor's letter to Danzig and Elbląg⁴⁵.

Just before departing from Prague on June 19 Possevino wrote Báthory and asked how he should respond if the same arguments were brought up at Augsburg by the Emperor. He reached Augsburg on June 25. The next day he conferred with Gian Francesco Bonomi, the nuncio to Rudolf, and with Cardinal Ludovico Madruzzo, the special legate to the Diet⁴⁶. Reporting to Cardinal Galio on July 20, Possevino described a preliminary conference with three of Rudolf's closest advisors, Johannes Trautson, Adam Dietrichstein, and Wolfgang Rumpf, before having «a very long and congenial audience» with Rudolf himself in which Possevino recounted his dealings with Muscovy and discussed the Szatmár question. The Emperor promised to deal with the question, calling it «a most important matter for the good of Christendom»⁴⁷. Rudolf also welcomed the role of the Pope in seeking a resolution⁴⁸.

⁴¹ MPV V, 384-385.

⁴² Ibid., 382-384.

⁴³ He does not name them, but they were probably Wolfgang Rumpf, the Imperial Counselor, and Vratislav Pernstein, the Chancellor of Bohemia: *ibid.*, 357, 384.

⁴⁴ It is worth noting a report of Lippomano to the Doge (1 September 1582) that the Imperial counselors had little praise for Possevino's role in mediating the peace between Muscovy and Poland. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 503.

⁴⁵ MPV V, 383, 384.

⁴⁶ MPV V, 392, n. 2. The considerable success of Madruzzo's mission is discussed by von Pastor XX, 269-283. For Bonomi (also Bonhomini), see *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome 1970) XII, 309-314.

⁴⁷ MPV V, 398.

⁴⁸ Ibid., Rudolf (regarding the Pope) «... non solo sa gli uffici paterni fatti in questo negotio, ma ne porta grata memoria, non senza speranza che S. Bne sia per promuoverlo a fine ...» Ibid., Later (21 September 1582) Possevino wrote to the Polish Ambassador in Rome, Peter Dunin Wolski, «... mihi Caes. Mtas mandasset suoque signo Caesareo Consilii Caesarei responsum munisset et litteras quoque manu propria scriptas ad eius S[ancitatem] dedisset, ad eius Stem quidem veni, ut totam rem afferem». Possevino went on to say how he had written Báthory about how hopeful he was after his interview with Rudolf: «ut possit Regia Mtas intelligere me maio-

The Emperor responded to Báthory in a decree issued at Augsburg on July 13 in which he asserted his desire to renew the treaty of friendship with Poland and invited Báthory to send a delegation to work out details. He rejected, however, Báthory's claims to the Szatmár territories («the King could have no proper cause for requesting those same territories»), but if the Pope could make some proposals so that the affair could be settled, the Pope and all others would realize how eager the Emperor was to secure peace. If Báthory were to pledge to put the on-going negotiations for the friendship treaty ahead of this private matter, then Rudolf promised to do his part⁴⁹.

On July 13 the Emperor gave Possevino a rescript developing the familiar arguments for rejecting Báthory's claims. When Maximilian II had conquered the territories, he was making war against a prince who was allied with the Turkish enemies of the faith. Since then Szatmár had been radically transformed and fortified at very great expense. Moreover Prince Sigismund had explicitly surrendered the territories to Maximilian at Speyer in 1570⁵⁰. The Emperor, in short, was rejecting Báthory's claims to Szatmár while leaving open the possibility of concessions and linking the affair to the treaty of peace and friendship that both desired.

On July 7, even before Possevino met the Emperor, Báthory had written to Peter Dunin Wolski, his ambassador in Rome, giving him background on the controversy and instructing him to line up support among the cardinals and to assure the Pope that he did not so much want the Pope to intercede for him with the Emperor as to recognize the merits of his cause⁵¹. On July 28 Lippomano reported from Augsburg news that at Warsaw Báthory was speaking rather openly about his desire for the fortresses or at least for compensation, otherwise there might be war («si farà poi egli ragione con l'arme»). There was talk of summoning a Polish Diet in September, which would discuss not only the Szatmár question but also Polish claims in Silesia and Moravia. Lippomano asked his masters to keep this information secret. But he held out the hope that if Báthory was inclined to accept a reasonable solution, the Pope would be doing a service by proposing a compromise, for Rudolf was making public how much he wanted peace⁵².

In response to Rudolf's invitation that he send a more formal embassy, Báthory decided in August not to wait for a response from Rome, whither Pos-

rem aliquam spem de hoc negotio concepisse, quam revera antea conceperam ...» MPV V, 504.

⁴⁹ MPV V, 406-407. This document is not to be confused with the one mentioned in the next note, also issued by Rudolf II on 13 July 1582 and dealing with the Szatmár question.

⁵⁰ Siemiński prints most of the rescript, 424-425. For the complete document, see ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 17A 60-61. Lippomano reported the same details to the Venetian government on July 20 and again in still more detail on July 28: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 160-161. Lippomano's source for this information was probably Possevino, who was providing him with a steady stream of information about the negotiations: *ibid.*, 160-168-180; MPV V, 547-590; VI, 267n-275n.

⁵¹ MPV V, 399-400.

⁵² MPV V, 162. «Havendo Sua M-tà voluto, che tutto questo sia risposto gratiosamente al predetto Don Antonio Possevino, rendendosi certa, che essendo referita questa sua sincera volontà al Summo Pont-ce, S. S-tà non sia per mancare con ogni studio, industria et destrezza di re-

sevino had gone after finishing his negotiations at Augsburg. He appointed a special ambassador to the Imperial Diet. His choice was Bishop Hieronymus Rozdrażewski, who did not reach Augsburg until September 18, after the Diet had closed and many of the princes had returned home⁵³. Both Bonomi and Lippomano reported that he quickly made a bad impression on the Emperor and his advisors. According to the nuncio Bonomi, one reason for the hostility toward Rozdrażewski was that his role seemed to conflict with the impression given by Báthory to Possevino that Báthory wanted the Pope to serve as a mediator⁵⁴. Rozdrażewski's harshness seemed a counterpoise to the more supple, less confrontational style of Possevino. Báthory may have intended the contrasting styles of the two negotiators. What is today called the good cop/bad cop technique has a long history. Possevino's proposals may have seemed more acceptable to the Imperialists precisely because they contrasted with the style and statements of Rozdrażewski.

On September 22 Gregory XIII wrote Stephan Báthory, telling how Possevino had described for him the differences between the two monarchs. He was «incredibly troubled» and desirous that his sons be united in supreme charity. The best solution was for the papacy to take the matter in hand. He exhorted the King to allow friendly negotiations and put aside other ways of handling the conflict and promised to send Possevino or a substitute to carry on negotiations⁵⁵.

Also on September 22 Cardinal Gallio sent a copy of the Pope's letter to Alberto Bolognetti, the Polish nuncio, and explained to him the course of the negotiations. Gallio stressed the Pope's concern that the negotiations go forward without igniting a new fire in Christendom. The nuncio was to urge that Báthory put aside any thought of settling the controversy by arms and be content to turn negotiations over to the Holy See acting through Possevino or some other papal representative.⁵⁶ Two days later Possevino wrote to Báthory and expressed optimism about the negotiations as a result of his audience with Rudolf at Augsburg. He gently reproved the King for seeming too pessimistic, especially now that the

durre il negotio á quel fine, che sia più giovevole all Rep-ca Christiana. Nel resto S.M. offerisce sempre al detto Possevino la sua gratia et favor Cesareo». Ibid.

⁵³ MPV V, 409 502 503. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 163. The documents frequently refer to Rozdrażewski by his diocese, Cuiaviensis (Vladislavensis).

⁵⁴ MPV V, 502 503. Lippomano reported of Rozdrażewski, «Onde Cesare vede mal volentieri venir questo huomo, non tanto per le trattatione che porta, che si potrebbe pure accomodare con persone ragionevoli et di buona mente, quanto per la natura sua molto rigida et per l'animo male affetto verso di lui, et suoi predecessori». KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 163. POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 159, says of Rozdrażewski's efforts, «i principi dell'imperio non ricevevano per bene quella legatione, come annunciatrice piuttosto di guerra, che di pace».

⁵⁵ MPV V, 502: «voler rimetter tal controversia all arbitrio di N. Sre». In fact Possevino and Rozdrażewski were old friends, who had known each other not only in Poland and Lithuania, but also during Possevino's decade in France, 1562-1572: ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 17A 142v.

⁵⁶ MPV V, 505 506. On September 8 Lippomano reported the arrival of a letter from the Pope to the Emperor promising «d'interporsi molto volentieri, et esser per fare ogni ufficio, accioche restino accomodate le differenze della Maestà Sua col Polacco; il che eseguirà subito che habbia inteso ogni particolare dal Padre Possevino». KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 164.

Pope's paternal care for all parties had come into play. Possevino insisted on Rudolf's basic good will toward Báthory but expressed fears that Rozdrażewski's mission, undertaken before Báthory had been informed of the Emperor's attitude, might hurt chances for an equitable settlement⁵⁷. The negotiations were now on a different and more difficult basis than in the beginning because the Emperor could be playing Possevino off against Rozdrażewski («gleefully taking advantage of the two working at odds with each other»). Possevino went on to suggest a reason for ending Rozdrażewski's mission—it resulted from the recent meeting of the Polish Senate, but the Szatmár question pertained to Transylvania, not to Poland⁵⁸. His plea was largely successful, for the King wrote Rozdrażewski on December 6 that since the the Pope had taken up the matter, Rozdrażewski's only remaining task regarding the Szatmár negotiations would be to urge the Emperor to a quick response⁵⁹.

On October 1 the Pope had written Báthory with high praise for Possevino and told the King that «you may have the same trust in him as you have in us personally»⁶⁰. The mood in Vienna, however, was anything but optimistic. The various ambassadors there watched the unfolding negotiations with apprehension. The ambassador from Ferrara, Valentino Florio, reported back to Alfonso II on October 30 that a rupture was likely since Báthory's demand for the fortresses meant that the Emperor would have to give up extensive lands and put in danger not only his Hungarian mines but the whole country⁶¹. Meanwhile Lippomano reported to Venice information that he had picked up from an Italian nobleman returning from Poland, who had told him that the nobility at the Polish court were calling for war against the Emperor, and that Adam Dietrichstein, an advisor to Rudolf, had described to him how Báthory had gathered a fund of 600,000 ducats plus jewels to recover the Szatmár lands «sooner than people think»⁶². Rozdrażewski meanwhile was chafing over the chronic procrastination for which Rudolf was notorious⁶³. He was tired, wanted to break off negotiations and go home, convinced that the Emperor was unlikely to restore Szatmár or to give equivalent compensation⁶⁴.

Possevino reached Vienna on November 15 and had brief meetings with Rudolf and his advisors and with Rozdrażewski before hastening on to Poland.

⁵⁷ MPV V, 507 509. Possevino's initiative in getting the papacy to serve as mediator is made clear in a letter (15 September 1582) of Gallio to Cardinal Madruzzo: *ibid.*, 508. On the same day as Gallio's letter to Bolognetti, rumors were floating in Vienna that Rozdrażewski's demands for the return of Szatmár were being backed up by the Turks: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 165.

⁵⁸ MPV V, 509 510.

⁵⁹ MPV V, 591.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 511. The Pope also stated, «Nihil autem opus esse intelligimus, eius fidem commendari, cuius sinceritatem, prudentiam, doctrinam, Dei Gloriam tuaeque dignitatis et laudis studium inexhaustum cognitum tibi esse certo scimus». *Ibid.*

⁶¹ MPV V, 545.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 546. Reports dated 2 and 9 November 1582.

⁶³ EVANS, 64. Rudolf's tendency to procrastinate contrasts with the decisive style of Báthory, «a cui ogni dilazione era lunga». POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 159.

⁶⁴ MPV V, 545. Also KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 167 168.

The Emperor indicated a willingness to give Báthory some recompense in Hungary consistent with his own dignity and consonant with his desire for Báthory's friendship⁶⁵. The next day Lippomano reported to Venice that he had dined with Possevino at the Jesuit college and that a peaceful solution was likely because Rudolf would offer Báthory territorial compensation⁶⁶. On November 22 the Emperor issued a decree which promised to make compensation. Rozdrażewski quickly insisted that the compensation be of equal value with the Szatmár lands and that the negotiations for a renewal of the friendship treaty between Poland and the Emperor be linked with the determination of compensation. The Emperor agreed to this, but noted the need for more information. The documents on these points were forwarded to Possevino in Poland⁶⁷.

In Warsaw things looked less bright. On or about November 18 the King sent almost identical memoranda to the nuncio Alberto Bolognetti in Warsaw and to Rozdrażewski in Vienna in response to Possevino's letter from Rome which had indicated Rudolf's willingness to provide compensation for the occupation of the Szatmár territories. The King curtly rejected Rudolf's claim that the fortresses were legitimate military conquests—rather they were taken over by the Habsburgs as a direct result of Melchior Balassa's treason at a time when there was not even a threat of war. Báthory accordingly refused to accept either the loss of the land itself or of its income. He claimed that the cost of fortifying Szatmár had been modest and that its return to his possession would not denude Habsburg Hungary of its defenses. He likewise rejected arguments based on the Convention of Speyer but did accept papal mediation looking toward a peaceful solution⁶⁸.

Perhaps more alarming was a long discussion the King had with the nuncio Alberto Bolognetti at this time⁶⁹. The King indicated his acceptance of papal mediation. When the subject of the decree on Szatmár that Rudolf had given Possevino came up, Bolognetti tried to stress the Emperor's good will, but Báthory went into a detailed recital of the whole history of the affair from his perspective, stressing that the lands had not been taken from the King of Transylvania but «from himself and from his family» even though he had committed no crime against the House of Austria. He therefore had been despoiled of his personal possessions even though he had remained neutral in the quarrel between Emperor Ferdinand and John Zapolya. Báthory stressed that the lands had belonged to his family for three generations. He also advanced a specific claim beyond Szatmár and Nemethy to the dismantled fortress of Zynyr Var (Szinyérváralja [Seini], which lies between Szatmár and Nagybánya [Baia-Mare]). The

⁶⁵ MPV V, 544 545: two reports of Possevino to Cardinal Gallio, both dated 16 November 1582. Also KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 168 and POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 160. The Emperor provided Possevino with a carriage to speed his journey to Warsaw: *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 168; MPV V, 546.

⁶⁷ MPV VI, 14.

⁶⁸ MPV V, 547 548; SIEMIENSKI, III, 425 426.

⁶⁹ The editors of MPV suggest that Bolognetti's report to Cardinal Gallio about his discussion with Báthory was written between November 18 and 25, 1582. MPV V, 550-552.

fact that the Habsburgs had taken over this fortress on criminal charges and then given it to others especially angered the King. The King went on to rebut other arguments put forth by Rudolf and his advisors. The King stressed that he had the Szatmár negotiations very much at heart because his surviving nephews would reproach him if he did not obtain just restitution⁷⁰.

On November 30 Lippomano, the Venetian ambassador at Vienna, reported that Rozdrażewski had requested an audience with the Emperor, at which he claimed that his King was being treated disrespectfully because two months had passed with no response to his proposals. He stated that if he did not get a response within a day, he would interpret the Imperial irresolution as a denial. The Emperor replied gently and urged him to wait a few more days, for an official response would be coming as soon as possible. The Emperor then held a meeting of the Council of State at which a majority felt it best to wait for Possevino's return within some fifty days. Others thought it best to put off Rozdrażewski with the hope of an accommodation and with talk about consulting all the Christian princes. The delaying tactics had a definite purpose since the Emperor had meanwhile sent an embassy to Constantinople to seek an eight year truce. A truce with the Turks would obviously strengthen Rudolf's hand in dealing with Báthory but would largely dash papal hopes of enlisting Rudolf in a crusade against the Turks⁷¹.

Possevino had a meeting with Báthory at the beginning of December in which the two discussed the Emperor's decree of 13 July 1582 regarding the Szatmár dispute. The King showed evident displeasure with it but then returned to a more even tone and when the conversation turned to the establishment of an alliance against the Turks the King burst out in elation, «O opus bonum, O opus bonum! Utinam antea in rem perductum fuisset»⁷². The King then encouraged Possevino to go to Transylvania and study the country for himself, noting what a disaster it would be if this bulwark for the defense of Christendom were lost and what a good sally port its retention would provide. Possevino took this as a cue to tell Báthory how much God would give him light and heart for defending Christendom and urged him not to rely on his Turkish allies⁷³. In fact, at this time Báthory was building up the defenses of Varadino (Nagyvárad, Oradea-Mare) in Transylvania to the distinct displeasure of the Turks⁷⁴.

At the end of December, much to the relief of both Rozdrażewski and Rudolf II, a special courier from Possevino arrived in Vienna with letters for both of them, which certified that Báthory would be satisfied with compensa-

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 169; POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 159. As will be seen, the truce between the Emperor and the Sultan was renewed early in 1583, *ibid.*, 160.

⁷² MPV V, 589: Possevino to Gallio, 7 December 1582.

⁷³ Ibid., It may have been at this meeting with Báthory that Possevino gave the King copies of his correspondence with Rudolf. Báthory sent copies to Zamoyski, who in turn wrote Possevino about how pleased the King was with them: «Literas ... quas vehementer se probare Reg. M-tas mihi significavit». Zamoyski to Possevino, 6 December 1582: SIEMIŃSKI, III, 126.

⁷⁴ Ibid., KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 170.

tion. Possevino's letter contained some specifications about suitable compensation⁷⁵. Báthory preferred that Szatmár itself and its adjacent territories be returned, and if the Emperor so wished, he could dismantle the new fortifications before their return. Báthory indicated his view that there was no equivalent territory which could be given him which would not result in even greater danger to Hungary, and he insisted that the compensation should not be in Dalmatia or some other area distant from his homeland. He urged the Emperor to make a decision «as quickly as possible» about the the compensation to be offered⁷⁶.

The year 1582, then, ended on a positive note. Just compensation and an amicable settlement, not war, seemed ahead, but the negotiations soon devolved into protracted haggling and two years of delays.

1583: THE MONARCHS HAGGLE AND THE TURKS THREATEN

The negotiations over the Szatmár dispute moved to a lower key in 1583. The Emperor was willing to offer compensation. But what would he offer? Would the offer be acceptable to King Stephan Báthory? Would Rudolf attach conditions to the territory being offered? These questions dominated the slow progress of the negotiations throughout 1583.

At the beginning of the new year Possevino went over the whole question with Stephan Báthory in Kraków and sent Rudolf an account of the discussion on January 7, 1583. The King had rejected out of hand the rumors that had been circulating at the Imperial court that he was plotting with the Turks against the Habsburg possessions in Hungary. He felt that the best solution for the dispute would be for the Emperor to dismantle the fortifications at Szatmár and turn the city over to him on the understanding that it would not be refortified. The King himself took up a pen and redrew the border between Transylvania and Habsburg Hungary. Possevino enclosed this map in his letter to the Emperor⁷⁷.

On January 15 Gallio, the Cardinal Secretary, wrote Possevino to tell him how much he and Gregory XIII were pleased with his report of December 7 about his discussions with Báthory and with the King's enthusiasm for a crusade. Gallio reported that the Pope took satisfaction in Báthory's prompt acceptance of papal mediation but expressed hope that it might not be needed in view of new information received in Rome from Bonomi, the nuncio in Vienna. Twice Gallio noted his hope that a speedy accommodation was at hand so that the Pope could delight «in seeing as soon as possible these great and good

⁷⁵ On 28 December Lippomano sent to Venice a report about the letter and a shortened Italian translation, saying that he had obtained the letter «sicurissima strada» and insisted that its contents be kept «molto secreta». Both are printed by KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 171-172. Perhaps he was puffing up his ability to get secret information. In fact Possevino sent him a copy of his letter at the request of Bonomi, the nuncio in Vienna: see Possevino's letter to Bonomi, 7 December 1582, MPV V, 591.

⁷⁶ Most of Possevino's Latin letter to Rudolf II, dated 6 December 1582, is printed in MPV V, 590.

⁷⁷ MPV VI, 14n. On the same day, 3 January, Possevino sent a bundle of documents dealing with the Szatmár dispute to Cardinal Gallio. Ibid.

princes in peace and union»⁷⁸. In fact, Bonomi's letter (7 December 1582) was more guarded than Gallio suggested. Bonomi felt that the negotiations were going excellently since the King was willing to accept equal compensation, but he pointed out Rozdrażewski's insistence that the compensation must be specified and be «in bonis fructiferis et aequivalentibus». Despite remaining difficulties, the parties seemed close to an agreement which would conclude the whole problem. But Bonomi was still more guarded in a letter of December 21 to Gallio after he had received news from Bolognetti about the mood at the Polish court, and he noted that Possevino's proposals seemed to be too partial to Báthory to please the Emperor⁷⁹. Even less optimistic but more prescient were the reports sent home by the ambassadors of Ferrara and of Venice at Vienna; both rightly felt that the negotiations were likely to be prolonged⁸⁰. Bonomi also reported to Gallio that the Imperial counsellors might want to conclude the negotiations with Rozdrażewski, the special Polish ambassador, rather than wait for the return of Possevino, whose visits to Vienna were often little more than hasty stops. Bonomi stressed how the counsellors habitually took their time to reflect on decisions, and noted how he had suggested to the Emperor that he might want to offer Báthory a choice of any of the territories and villages in the Szatmár prefecture which the King deemed fair compensation. The King might then send commissioners to study the options and gage their worth⁸¹. Late in January the Emperor did send Báthory a letter promising that he would forward a list of several places as possible compensation; they would be in Hungary but near Transylvania, as the King wished, but the matter would have to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Hungarian Diet at Pozsony [Bratislava, Pressburg], which the Emperor was planning to attend. Possevino reported on February 10 to Bonomi that the King wanted Rozdrażewski to stay at the Imperial court, despite his desire to return home, for the King was eager to be finished with the whole affair and was optimistic about the Emperor's good will. He noted that he had passed on to Báthory Bonomi's suggestions for the negotiations⁸².

In early April the Emperor's agents in Constantinople after long negotiations concluded an eight year truce with the Sultan, although the truce did not put an end to chronic border raiding by both sides. Ever since Báthory had come to power in Transylvania in 1576, he had been able to use his own alliance with the Turks to counter Habsburg pressure. Now Rudolf had carried out a minor diplomatic revolution, which became even more evident in August when the Sultan sent representatives to dissuade Báthory from any thought of military action against the Emperor. They also warned the Polish King not to attack the

⁷⁸ Ibid., 26n.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 26.

⁸⁰ To Ferrara, 18 December: MPV VI, 27n; to Venice, 18 January, KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 173.

⁸¹ MPV VI, 27n., Bonomi to Gallio, 25 January 1583. Bonomi made the same points to Possevino in a letter of 26 January: LUKÁCS II, 367.

⁸² MPV VI, 113. Also KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 172-173, for reports of the Venetian ambassador touching these developments.

Tartars, for the Sultan wanted to use them as allies and mercenaries in his on-going war against Persia⁸³. Moreover, when word reached Vienna in late February that Báthory was seriously ill, the court began to devise strategies to elect Archduke Ernest to the Polish throne, but these were quickly scotched when new reports came in that Báthory had recovered⁸⁴.

When Possevino arrived at the Hungarian Diet in Pozsony, he tried a new but feeble argument on Johann Trautson, the Emperor's Privy Counsellor: it was now even more imperative to solve the Szatmár dispute so as to refute the imputation that the Emperor had sought the help of the hated Turks against a fellow Christian prince⁸⁵.

Báthory remained confident of a settlement. On 28 February he told the nuncio Bolognetti that it would be wrong to doubt the good faith of the Emperor⁸⁶. Two weeks later Bishop Rozdrażewski, tired of Imperial procrastination, insisted on a personal meeting with Rudolf. He was given the Emperor's pledge to provide compensation, but the Emperor, it seems, refrained from suggesting specific places, pleading the need to consult with the forthcoming Hungarian Diet. Rozdrażewski left the audience still dissatisfied and returned to Poland⁸⁷.

On 30 March Báthory wrote in his own hand to Possevino, who had been on an inspection tour in Transylvania and was about to journey to Pozsony to meet with the Emperor at the Hungarian Diet. Báthory indicated that Rozdrażewski had returned to Kraków and had reported that Rudolf had named several commissioners who would be going in mid May to Cassovia to discuss the specifics of compensation with delegates to be named by the Polish King. Possevino would be there to serve as mediator. Báthory feared more stalling tactics but had agreed to the time and place suggested by Rudolf, even though he felt that Rudolf should have first made an offer of specific territory. Báthory speculated that the Emperor's commissaries (*commissarii*) would offer several villages around the dilapidated fortress of Erdöd to the south of Szatmár. The King reminded Possevino that he had earlier told him that such an offer was not acceptable because it was not equivalent. «If his Imperial Majesty really desires and esteems our friendship, what prevents him from returning our property to us?» Báthory brushed off the argument that the fortifications and villages around Szatmár had been improved and claimed he would repay the Emperor's

⁸³ POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 159-162; KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 179.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 174 175: Lippomano's dispatches of 22 February and 1 March.

⁸⁵ POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 161.

⁸⁶ [Báthory] «Disse anco di più che quanto a questo negocio, le pareva d'essere in sicuro perchè havendo l'Imperatore già confessato il debito et promesso, non solamente di sodisfarlo, ma di nominar esso i luoghi che voleva dar in recompensa di Zacmar et Nemet, non li pareva d'haver a dubitare della fede d'un prencipe che tenga luogo tale fra gl'altri principi di christianità ...» Bolognetti to Gallio, 1 March 1583: MPV VI, 169.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 163n. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 176.

costs and promised not to be outdone in generosity. If Rudolf should insist, he should keep the villages and dismantle the fortress⁸⁸.

After finishing his inspection of Transylvania⁸⁹, Possevino arrived in Vienna in early April, where he had discussions with Archduke Ernest before moving on to Pozsony, where he went over the whole Szatmár question first with Johann Trautson and then with Rudolf himself. On April 25 he sent Rudolf a letter urging him to restore Szatmár itself, but on condition that the officer put in charge of the fortress by Báthory must also swear an oath to Rudolf that the fortress would never be used against the Emperor were the Turks to invade Hungary⁹⁰. The next day Possevino wrote Báthory and reported on these negotiations; he noted that he had shown Rudolf the hand-written note of March 30 which Báthory had sent him. The Emperor was pleased since he had not yet been informed that the King was going to send a commissary to Cassovia. He promised that he would not offer just a few small villages but something equivalent to Szatmár's value at the time when Maximilian II had occupied it⁹¹. Also on April 26 Possevino wrote a report of his meeting with the Emperor to Cardinal Gallio and added that from conversations with the Venetian Ambassador Lippomano, he expected the Emperor's commissaries to employ more stalling tactics⁹². Events were to vindicate this pessimism.

Lippomano's own dispatch to the Doge put Possevino's negotiations in a larger context. On April 26 he reported on the Emperor's troubles with the Hungarians. At the Diet Rudolf had had to make concessions to Hungarian national feeling, promising to appoint Hungarians as bishops, to replace German fortress commanders with Hungarians, and to abide by ancient Hungarian law rather than trying to rule autocratically. Lippomano followed this with a dispatch of May 3 which announced the Imperial-Turkish truce and contained an account of Possevino's meeting with the Emperor and his counsellors, an account which he must have had from Possevino himself. Lippomano added something that Possevino had not confided to either Báthory or Gallio: that he had told the Emperor that Báthory would be glad to renew the old Polish-Imperial treaty of friendship, but since Báthory tended to be a man of action, unless he were given prompt sat-

⁸⁸ MPV VI, 211. Báthory gave Possevino a copy of Book 7 of Giovanni Michele BRUTO's, *Rem Hungaricarum Libri XX (1490-1552)* to fill in his background in preparation for the Szatmár negotiations. Since Bruto wrote the work at the King's request, it was hardly impartial. Reading the account of the Protestant Bruto seems to have encouraged Possevino to write his own *Transilvania* for Gregory XIII and to have furnished him with material: LUKÁCS II, 558-652. Possevino wrote most of the *Transilvania* during breaks in the negotiations at Cassovia, September to December, 1583: *ibid.*, 558-628-652.

⁸⁹ On Possevino's forty-seven day inspection tour of Transylvania, see LUKÁCS II, 525-540. He visited Szatmár and described its condition to Báthory in a letter of 6 March 1583. He rated its fortifications as stronger than those at Riga: *ibid.*, 407-409. After his return to Poland Possevino also had several long conversations with the King about his tour: *ibid.*, 463.

⁹⁰ MPV VI, 264n.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 264-266.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 267. On April 28 Possevino reported to Bolognetti at the Polish court about a meeting that same day with Rudolf; he had given the Emperor a memorial on reasons for solving the dispute: *ibid.*, 275. For the memorial: *ibid.*, 264n and ASV, *Nunz. Pol.* 15C 171 ff.

isfaction he might take advantage of his excellent knowledge of Hungarian dissatisfaction with the Habsburg. Were that to happen, the Turks might move in and take over all of both Transylvania and Hungary. That possibility had to be a factor in encouraging Rudolf to reach a settlement over Szatmár. Lippomano did not need to point out that Báthory was himself Hungarian⁹³.

Báthory designated Martin Berzeviczy, his Chancellor for Transylvania, as his commissary to meet with the Imperial commissaries⁹⁴. The Imperial commissaries were led by Gregory Bornemissza (the Bishop of Nagyvárad [Varadino]) and included Johann Rueber (the commanding general for Hapsburg forces in Hungary), Rudolfo Ferdinando Nogarola (the military commander at Szatmár), and the cameral officials Felix Herberstein, Christopher Teuffenbach and Francis Nagyváthy⁹⁵. Berzeviczy was set to leave for Cassovia on May 19 when Johann Trautson sent word that the Imperial commissaries would be delayed. Báthory was mildly upset, and Berzeviczy's departure was postponed two weeks⁹⁶.

On June 14, shortly after their arrival, the Imperial commissaries offered as compensation the small towns of Belek and Dobra, which they claimed were more than equivalent to Szatmár and Nemethy because of the beauty of their site, the fertility of their fields and their vineyards, forests and pastures. Berzeviczy scoffed at the offer as totally unequal and threatened to break off the negotiations rather than go on with such an indignity to his King. On June 17 the Imperial commissaries slightly raised their offer by adding the town of Erdewdzada near the Zamos River; these three towns would be for Szatraár and Nemethy, and the commissaries said they had written the Emperor about adding ten smaller villages (*pagi*) inhabited by Walachians. Berzeviczy made it clear that Báthory would prefer areas inhabited by Hungarians rather than by Walachians⁹⁷.

The commissaries claimed that they would have to seek more information and instructions from Rudolf⁹⁸. The commissaries returned with a more generous offer: three more villages in addition to the previous offer, but Berzeviczy rejected this as still not equivalent to Szatmár and to the pledges made earlier by

⁹³ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 177-181. It is obvious from Lippomano's dispatches that Possevino was providing him with confidential information, which he forwarded to Venice. Why? Most likely because Lippomano was giving him information in turn about affairs and personalities at the Imperial court. Perhaps Possevino was also trying to foster good will toward the Holy See and the Jesuits among the Venetian leadership.

⁹⁴ Berzeviczy's activity as commissary is discussed by Endre VERESS, *Berzeviczy Márton, 1538-1596* (Budapest 1911) 158-172.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 158; SIEMIENSKI, 214. Berzeviczy and Rueber were Protestants, much to Possevino annoyance: POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 170. Rueber had proscribed Catholicism in Cassovia. Possevino tried to have him replaced as commanding general by the Catholic Nogarola: LUKÁCS II, 588-594. In April 1584 Nogarola did take over the post, after Rueber's death: *ibid.*, 695.

⁹⁶ Bolognetti to Gallio, 28 May 1583; MPV VI, 322. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 183.

⁹⁷ ARSI, *Opp. NN.* 317 113-116. Possevino's account of the negotiations, which ran from June 13 to October 20, 1583, includes both oral and written exchanges, see *ibid.* 112-134.

⁹⁸ See Possevino's letters to Cardinal Gallio of 26 June 1583 (MPV VI, 370) and 16 July 1583 (*Ibid.*, 420).

the Emperor. In a letter of July 17 to Possevino Berzeviczy complained that during the five weeks he was stuck there («hic haereo») the only communication received from the Emperor was a statement that he had sent letters to his commissaries. Berzeviczy considered this shabby treatment insulting to King Stephan⁹⁹. Possevino replied five days later and urged him not to leave Cassovia without giving the Emperor an advanced warning, which should be done respectfully. He might want to let the Imperial commissaries know that their delaying was contrary to the promise of a swift settlement that Rudolf had given orally to Possevino in April¹⁰⁰.

Possevino showed Báthory his letter to Berzeviczy. The King wrote Possevino a note indicating his approval and said that he himself had ordered Berzeviczy home unless there was a response from Rudolf in fifteen days, but that in leaving he should not make a protest but simply point to the delays and to the Emperor's repeated promises of a swift and fair settlement¹⁰¹. In July the Emperor revised again his package of compensation for Szatmár. The most important item was the fortified town of Nagybánya (Baia-Mare, Rivulus Dominarum) some forty miles southeast of Szatmár. Included was the town of Felsoe Bánya together with several villages: Laczfalva, Orocfalva, Alsó, Felső, and Süngefalva. The offer had several conditions: the friendship treaty between the two monarchs must be signed and the places being handed over could not later be fortified¹⁰².

Báthory told Possevino that the recompense being offered was not «equivalent as regards income, much less than as regards jurisdiction, site, lands or towns, and so forth»¹⁰³. On August 9 Possevino wrote two letters which describes another recent conversation with Báthory and the King's frustration. The longer letter, to Cardinal Gallio, noted the King's emotion because his family's claims to the Szatmár lands were being questioned. His main concern was not the loss of income from the lands, for it was only 11,000 thalers; rather his reason for pursuing the case was «that my fairness may be manifest to all». The King then launched into a long catalogue of his past mistreatment at the hands of Maximilian II, adding details, for instance that he had once sent Maximilian a warning about what the Turks were doing. The Emperor betrayed this kindness by sending his letter to the Sultan to compromise Báthory's standing with the Turks. The whole tenor and content of the conversation made it clear that Báthory's

⁹⁹ Ibid., 437n.

¹⁰⁰ *ASV Nunz. Germ.* 94 155-156. For Rudolf's promise of a speedy settlement, MPV VI, 264.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 437n. Bolognetti wrote Cardinal Gallio (23 July 1583) that Báthory doubted that the Szatmár negotiations would lead to good results: MPV VI, 437.

¹⁰² Ibid., 504n. Early in September Count Nogarola, one of the Imperial commissaries, provided Possevino with a statement of the annual income of Nagybánya and the other towns being offered as compensation. Possevino transmitted this information to the King and his Grand Chancellor Zamoyski: LUKÁCS II, 548-550.

¹⁰³ Possevino in Kraków to Bolognetti, 7 August 1583: MPV VI, 474.

pride and honor were the real issue in the Szatmár negotiations¹⁰⁴. The second letter was to Johann Trautson, the Emperor's Privy Counsellor, and quoted the King as saying, «God knows that I value fairness so much that I put it above Szatmár and everything else»¹⁰⁵.

The King's determination greatly displeased the Council of State at Vienna, which was indisposed to increase its offer any further¹⁰⁶. On August 7 Berzeviczy wrote Possevino and vented his frustrations over the negotiations. As the Imperial commissaries could testify, he had employed supreme moderation and mustered all possible arguments, yet the negotiations made no progress. «They give us nothing but words». «I candidly confess that I have completely despaired of this business». Berzeviczy complained that the Imperial commissaries could do nothing without checking with Vienna, and he saw the sinister hand of the Turks behind the delays¹⁰⁷. Berzeviczy threatened to leave Cassovia, and did so briefly, but then Báthory ordered him back to resume discussions. To underline his determination, the King also ordered the reinforcement of one of his border fortresses «as a sign of his little good will toward his Imperial Majesty». Rudolf replied by having Johann Rueber, his military commander in Hungary, send additional troops to reinforce Szatmár¹⁰⁸.

In late August Stephan Báthory wrote two letters which showed his displeasure. The first was to Possevino and dated August 23; it was so strong that Possevino wrote on the back of it: «Perhaps this will have to be burned». The King scorned and derided the compensation being offered by the Emperor. Were he to accept «such an honor», as the King termed the compensation sarcastically, «ordinary people would undoubtedly judge me to be mad»¹⁰⁹.

Báthory's second letter (August 28) was addressed directly to the Emperor and was more restrained. The King suggested that it was best to bury the memory of what Maximilian II had done to him and «to show the world his desire for the good of all Christians to put down the infidel, whom nobody could ever trust». He claimed that he never had any desire to fortify Nagybánya. There was no purpose in doing so since it was far from Habsburg territory. Had he planned to build a fortress directed against the Emperor, he would have selected Hust, which was his own possession and close to the Emperor's territory. He also denied the rumors that he had designs to seize Szatmár—had he wanted to seize territory, he could easily have taken unfortified places such as Nagybánya and others and then held on to them until he received recompense. Instead he had sought to recover Szatmár through his ambassadors. He could easily have recruited

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 478-481.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 478n.

¹⁰⁶ Lippomano's dispatch of 17 August 1583: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 184.

¹⁰⁷ ARSI *Opp* NN. 317 40r; *Opp*. NN. 329 187.

¹⁰⁸ Lippomano's dispatch of 6 September: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 185.

¹⁰⁹ MPV VI, 495. The Imperial commissaries at Cassovia were equally belligerent. They told Berzeviczy that unless the King accepted their offer of increased compensation, it would be obvious to everybody that he desired war rather than peace, personal gain rather than the public good: Berzeviczy to Possevino, 25 August 1583, ARSI *Opp*. NN. 317 53r.

troops in Transylvania, which had remained at peace while Habsburg Hungary was being ravaged by the Turks. Báthory then argued that Szatmár was of little military value for defending Habsburg Hungary since it did not lie across the main line of a Turkish offensive. The money that the Habsburgs had spent in fortifying it—Báthory estimated the cost at 50,000 to 60,000 Florins—was wasted. Worse, its German garrison tended to alienate the Emperor's Hungarian subjects. Were Rudolf to return Szatmár, Báthory promised to give 30,000 thalers for its defortification and pledged that he would not allow its refortification. Once Szatmár was returned, there would be no more reason for fortifying adjacent towns. He closed by calling the Emperor's attention to the disparity between Szatmár and the Nagybánya mines and Walachian villages which the Emperor was offering in compensation. He also promised to foster Catholicism in the region, as he had done elsewhere in Transylvania¹¹⁰.

The difference of tone and content in the two letters undoubtedly stems partly from the fact that Báthory's second letter was addressed to a fellow monarch, but it may owe something to a memorial that Possevino presented to the King, most likely at this time. In it Possevino drew on the King's religious convictions to persuade him to agree to the Emperor's offer. «Listen to Christ the Son of God saying, 'If somebody wants your coat, give him your cloak also'». Possevino pointed out that even if the towns and villages being offered did not match the value of Szatmár and Nemethy, they were concrete offers, whereas for years the Emperor had rejected all demands. Now he was admitting, not just in words but in deeds, the justice of Báthory's case, and that was something worth more than many Szatmárs. Even if Possevino's intervention may have softened the King's tone, the King continued to reject the Emperor's offer¹¹¹.

In August the Sultan sent an envoy to Báthory with the threat of war unless he put an end to troop movements on the border with Moldavia and returned to Turkish rule four places recently occupied by Polish Cossacks¹¹². The Sultan

¹¹⁰ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 186-187.

¹¹¹ *Proposita ab Antonio Possevino Stephano Regi Poloniae Cracoviae de mense Augusti 1583*: ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 39-40. Since the memorial refers to the increased compensation (f. 39v), it must be toward the end of the month. It comes right after the King's letter of August 23 in Possevino's letters.

¹¹² Lippomano's dispatch of 13 September: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 185. In October 1583 three thousand Turks launched a devastating raid into Transylvania, sacked many villages, seized goods, and carried off prisoners. Troops from Hapsburg Hungary came to the aid of Báthory's Transylvanians. The Turkish attack was a reprisal for raids on their territory by Polish Cossacks. Báthory wrote the Sultan, suggesting that the Turks should attack the Cossacks, not the Transylvanians, but the Cossacks intercepted his letter and made it public, to his considerable embarrassment in Poland. *Ibid.*, 189: Lippomano's dispatch of November 30, which contains a report by the Captain at Toccai dated 28 October 1583. Also see POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 164-165. On December 26 Possevino reported to Cardinal Gallio about more Turkish raids against Habsburg Hungary and the poor condition of the fortifications there. This time 400 Transylvanian infantry and 400 cavalry had come to the aid of the Hungarians. Clearly the forces of Báthory and the Emperor were cooperating against the Turks even without a formal alliance: MPV VI, 724. These raids took place despite the Emperor's eight year truce with the Turks and despite the fact that the

again warned Báthory against molesting the Tartars, whose help he wanted for his war against the Persians, and against stirring up affairs in Hungary now that the Emperor had concluded the eight year truce with the Turks¹¹³. The Turks also increased the tribute that Transylvania had to pay them to 40,000 ducats per year¹¹⁴.

ABORTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AT CASSOVIA

It is against this background that Possevino left Kraków on September 14 to play an active role as mediator at Cassovia, where he took up residence at an inn four days later. Others in the papal diplomatic corps were not optimistic about his prospects. Bolognetti warned Cardinal Gallio that the meeting was «not the sort from which one can hope a very speedy conclusion, especially considering what I have written about how his Majesty discussed with me taking up arms against the Turks»¹¹⁵. Gallio wrote Possevino before he left Poland to encourage him not to despair of success and passed on Gregory XIII's promise that «His Holiness will not fail to make use of every effort and of his authority» to terminate the controversy. Gallio promised to have Bonomi, the nuncio to the Emperor, work for the same end¹¹⁶.

Possevino's stay in Cassovia lasted from late September 1583 until mid January 1584, but the King's commissary broke off negotiations and left the city on October 20. Possevino's papers contain a running account (June 14 to October 20) of the meetings and exchanges of the two parties that the nuncio was trying in vain to bring together¹¹⁷. Before leaving for Cassovia Possevino prepared a bundle of instructions which he then checked out with Báthory. They included two sets of instructions, one to be shown generally, the other for Berzeviczy's eyes only. If asked why he was attending the meetings of the commissaries of the two princes, he was to reply that Báthory felt he could speed up negotiations and foster the projected pact of friendship. Possevino understood the mind of both princes, Báthory claimed. He was to try to have more authority given the Imperial commissaries so as to expedite negotiations¹¹⁸. Possevino was given a document to show Berzeviczy which was entitled «The Ultimate Resolution of His Sacred Royal Majesty in the Szatmár and Nemethy Negotiations Entrusted to the Reverend Master Antonio Possevino, Kraków, 19 September 1583». It authorized Berzeviczy to accept Nagybánya as the center piece of the compensation, and Báthory was willing to promise never to fortify it. If the other places Báthory had requested could not be given, the Imperial commissaries would have to promise other territories as substitutes. As to the friendship pact: the

Emperor was paying 130,000 Florins annually and his Hungarian subjects another 500,000 to the Sultan as tribute: Possevino to Báthory, 29 December 1583; *ibid.*

¹¹³ POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 162.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

¹¹⁵ 14 August 1583: MPV VI, 485.

¹¹⁶ 20 August 1583; *ibid.*, 488; also 3 September 1583; *ibid.*, 517.

¹¹⁷ ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 113-134.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 61-63.

King indicated that nothing would be more gratifying to him, but that he would send envoys to settle the details of the pact when the Emperor designated the place and sent his own commissaries, who were to be invested with full authority¹¹⁹.

King Stephan put a low value on the compensation being offered by Rudolf's commissaries. On September 26 he wrote a stinging answer to Possevino's suggestion of September 21 that the Emperor's offer should be accepted. The King attacked the Imperial commissaries: their arguments, drawn «from the rules of arithmetic» to inflate the value of Nagybánya and deflate that of Szatmár, were inane. Báthory trusted rather the evidence of his own eyes—he knew the places in question from personal experience. What he wanted back was his Szatmár:

«I would consider the smoke of my own property sweeter than the hidden treasures buried in the bowels of the earth at Nagybánya... What keeps his Imperial Majesty from returning to me my property?»

Doing so would do more to solidify friendship

«than a thousand quibbling and verbose treatises which induce more annoyance than conviction... Why does not the Emperor return the villages? The only reason is avarice. Henceforward I can hope for nothing great and solid from the friendship of his majesty. I have thought often within me that it would have been better for me never to have started this negotiation, than having started it, for it to be carried on in such a childish way and to proceed with little or no hope of future good»¹²⁰.

The negotiations at Cassovia collapsed on October 18 and 19. Bishop Bornemissza, the leader of the Imperial commissaries, explained to Berzeviczy and Possevino that the delays in responding to Berzeviczy's complaints about the offered compensation being inadequate grew out of differences among the Emperor's advisors. He repeated the claim that the Emperor's offer was more than equal and satisfactory, so that the friendship pact between Poland and the Empire should go forward. Later that day the Emperor's commissaries sang the praises of the lands he was offering, especially the inexhaustible veins of metal in the mines¹²¹.

The next day Berzeviczy gave the Imperial commissaries a long letter which attacked the earlier delays and argued that they were a ploy to embarrass the Polish King. That is why Báthory had earlier decided to order him home. Only Possevino's intercession with the King and the nuncio's coming to Cassovia had induced Báthory to hold back his decision to break off the negotiations¹²².

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 63r. On September 12 Báthory wrote to Possevino that if there were an agreement to hand over Nagybánya and the other towns and villages offered by the Emperor, Possevino was authorized to have Berzeviczy accept the conditions of the Imperial commissaries on an interim basis provided that they promised to give other villages in place of those requested by the King if these could not be given. SIEMIENSKI, III, 435.

¹²⁰ MPV VI, 576.

¹²¹ ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 126-128.

¹²² Ibid., 128.

Years ago the Emperor Maximilian had led Báthory to believe that he would get back his hereditary possessions, but nothing happened in all the intervening years while income from the lands had gone to the Habsburgs. Repeatedly Berzeviczy's letter indicated his exasperation over the delays during the previous four months of negotiations. He went on to denigrate specific aspects of the compensation being offered: for instance, he noted that much of the income from the vineyards was earmarked for the Church and that the mines involved dangerous work and uncertain income but required large capital investments as compared to agriculture¹²³.

At the end of his letter Berzeviczy returned to what he considered the key issue: the honor of the Polish King. In refutation of the claims that the compensation was more than equivalent he repeated Báthory's offer: if the Emperor returned Szatmár and Nemethy, Báthory would demolish the fortifications and give the Emperor 30,000 thalers, the cost of the fortifications, and a promise to sign the pact of perpetual friendship. He concluded with a bombshell: if the commissaries had nothing more to offer, his remaining in Cassovia was pointless. He was preparing to leave the next morning¹²⁴.

That evening the Imperial commissaries sent him a memo complaining that his long letter contained nothing that had not already been discussed, but they admitted to having nothing new to offer and to being without instructions from the Emperor. Berzeviczy responded by saying that he was committed to leaving and wished them a good trip home. In the morning of October 20 he sent them a note commending them for their zeal and Possevino for his efforts for the common good, even through the negotiations had failed, but he claimed that it would be unworthy of the King's dignity for him to continue the negotiations¹²⁵. One of the Imperial commissaries, Count Nogarola, was in turn so incensed by Berzeviczy's behavior that he later told Possevino that it was unworthy of the Emperor to have further dealings with Báthory¹²⁶.

That day Possevino met briefly with the Imperial commissaries and said that it

«pained him that in this whole affair, in which he had been involved for the whole year with complete sincerity, he had been unable to bring either of the princes to the point of outdoing the other in generosity».

¹²³ Ibid., 129r-131r. Possevino reported to Gregory XIII that Felix Habenstein, one of the Imperial commissaries, held a contract controlling the mines and had furnished Berzeviczy with arguments about their profitability, thereby complicating the negotiations. Habenstein seems to have been motivated by the desire to retain his control of the mines whether they remained under the Emperor or whether they were awarded Báthory (by ingratiating himself with Berzeviczy and Báthory): POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 170. Following the *Acta* of the Cassovia meeting there are seven folios which list the income from Szatmár, Nemethy, Nagybánya and of the other villages being offered in compensation, including information on the mines: ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 135-142.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 131r. POSSEVINO's *Transilvania*, 170, written for Gregory XIII, speaks harshly of Berzeviczy's high-handed manner in dealing with the Imperial commissaries.

¹²⁵ ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 131-133.

¹²⁶ LUKÁCS, II, 593.

He urged them not to leave Cassovia until they had written both monarchs about the breakup of negotiations. The Imperial commissaries agreed to this. Possevino promised them that he would stay at Cassovia until a messenger returned from Báthory; he also promised to send Báthory their proposals¹²⁷.

Meanwhile Possevino wrote to both Báthory and the Emperor to prevent a total breakdown of the negotiations. Possevino sent letters to the King on October 19 and 20. The first, before Berzyviczy's bombshell, noted that the King was already aware of the impasse; Possevino pleaded that he had tried to make clear Báthory's sincerity and goodwill to the Emperor despite hostile elements at the Imperial court. He urged the King to be patient and promised that he would write and encourage the Emperor to act promptly. As a favor to the Pope he asked Báthory for authority to break off negotiations if the Emperor made no new offer or to agree on minor points if the Emperor made concessions since the lands in questions were of minor importance. Such powers would speed up negotiations. Possevino suggested that it would be good if he were to visit Kraków, Prague and Saxony to promote an alliance because he could accomplish much more face to face than through correspondence¹²⁸.

His letter of the evening of October 20 was accompanied by various other letters and documents which demonstrated his efforts to prevent a breakdown of the negotiations. Possevino claimed that the Imperial commissaries, having pledged three more villages, said that they had no authorization to concede anything further and begged Possevino to persuade the King not to ask for more. Possevino promised to try. When questioned further on whether they had power to hand over the possession of Nagybánya and the other villages, they said they could promise ratification but would have to seek the Emperor's permission as regards the actual take-over of the lands. A response on that point would take from twenty to twenty-five days. Possevino promised them that he would wait for an answer from the Emperor. He asked Báthory to have either Berzyviczy or another noble man on hand at Cassovia to await the Emperor's reply¹²⁹.

The next day Possevino wrote the Emperor and told him that Berzeviczy was leaving on the King's orders despite all his own efforts to persuade him in the name of the Holy See to stay at Cassovia and wait for the Emperor's response. Possevino recapitulated that status of the negotiations: Báthory had promised in an autograph letter not to fortify Nagybánya and to renew the friendship pact with Rudolf. Possevino had also persuaded him to surrender his claim to a few small villages and their peasants near Szatmár in return for their equivalent elsewhere. Since the Emperor had offered the three villages of Lazar, Bozonta and Tottalu, the dispute could have ended, but Berzyviczy's declaration had prevented that. Possevino begged the Emperor to make new and prompt of-

¹²⁷ ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 134r.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 77v-78v. For parts of this letter not dealing with the Szatmár negotiations, see LUKÁCS, II, 555.

¹²⁹ ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 78v-79r.

fer: «he who gives quickly gives twice». He suggested obliquely that the delay in the Emperor's previous offer, quite as much as its substance, had alienated Báthory and his commissary. Possevino went on to suggest that the Pope would be agreeable to his immediately coming to see Rudolf personally. Possevino suggested to the Emperor that Báthory's actions may have derived from his fear of the Turks, but were Imperial kindness to take the initiative, Báthory would likely agree to ending the dispute¹³⁰. Rudolf's response to the evolving situation was anything but prompt, for on 10 December Possevino was complaining to Bonomi, the nuncio to the Emperor, that he still had not received a reply. On the same day he sent Rudolf a second letter seeking a decision¹³¹.

Báthory's reply was as prompt as Rudolf's was slow. The King wrote Possevino on October 27 and made it clear that Berzeviczy had not been acting on his own. Báthory castigated the Emperor for «showing himself so difficult in these minor matters». Having once made clear his proposal, Báthory felt that for him to change it like some merchant haggling over prices would be inconsistent with his dignity. The King claimed he was now going to reveal to Possevino for the first time the reason for his stubbornness. In doing so he was implicitly pushing aside Possevino's arguments for his accepting the Emperor's offer. Báthory argued that acceptance would expose his relatives (who were his co-claimants to the villages to be given as compensation) to inconvenience, injury and the possible confiscation of their goods by the Emperor. «The result would be that they would raise everywhere a public outcry and complaint against us. To avoid that, we are prepared rather to endure ourselves any kind of inconvenience in our own fortunes». This is the reason why the King stood by the instructions he had given Berzeviczy either to obtain the villages or return home with the business unfinished. The King continued, «This is now the final statement of our mind; he can expect no other from us». If the Imperial commissaries granted him the villages, then the negotiations could be concluded in God's name, and they could hand over possession to Berzeviczy as soon as possible. Should they lack that power, they should seek it immediately from the Emperor. Berzeviczy had been authorized to leave Cassovia. Somebody would be sent to take possession if the Emperor agreed. The King authorized Possevino to deal with the Emperor about the King's sending commissaries or an ambassador to renew the friendship pact¹³².

THE AFTERMATH OF THE CASSOVIA NEGOTIATIONS

Possevino stayed in Cassovia another three months, partly writing his Transylvania for Gregory XIII, partly trying to restart the negotiations. The timing of the friendship pact gradually emerged as a roadblock to a settlement. Both sides claimed they wanted it. The Emperor wanted to finalize the pact before handing over territorial compensation for Szatmár. Báthory was opposed to linking the pact directly to the Szatmár negotiations and held out for signing the pact only

¹³⁰ Ibid., 79-80.

¹³¹ LUKÁCS, II, 588.

¹³² MPV VI, 626.

after the compensation agreed upon had been handed over to him, otherwise it might seem to his Polish subjects that he had obligated Poland to something as a price for regaining his family lands in Transylvania. An unnamed Imperial commissary came to Possevino at Cassovia and told him frankly that the Polish King would never be given possession of the places designated as compensation unless he first renewed that pact¹³³.

Since Báthory had earlier quietly authorized Possevino to negotiate the friendship pact, provided certain conditions were met, five days after Berzeviczy's departure Possevino took the problem into his own hands and wrote Archduke Ernest, the Emperor's brother and governor of Imperial Hungary. He promised Ernest that the pact would certainly be ratified as soon as possession of the towns and territories agreed upon for compensation were handed over. Possevino told him that the reason for this was that Báthory needed to keep separate the affairs of Poland, where he was elected king of Poland and worked under many constitutional restraints, from the affairs of Transylvania, where he was an hereditary nobleman and the *de facto* regent for his young nephew Sigismund¹³⁴.

Possevino also told the Archduke that if there were no compensation, there would be no friendship pact. Linkage between the two must remain *de facto*, not *de jure*. He assured Ernest that if the details of the compensation were worked out, he was certain that the pact would follow, for the King had promised him as much both orally and in a letter written in the King's own hand. «If full power were given the Imperial commissaries, then the business can be concluded with ease». Such a step would quiet Báthory's fears that once the friendship pact was signed, the compensation might not be forthcoming. The Turks, who feared the pact, would have no opportunity to stir things up. The settlement of the dispute would be welcome by the Pope, who was involved in the question, and by the Polish senators, who would see it as a sign of the Emperor's good will toward their kingdom. Possevino told Ernest that his viewpoint was shared by Jan Zamoyski, the powerful Polish Grand Chancellor¹³⁵. Possevino's letter also in-

¹³³ «... io credo ch'il più importante sarà che l'Imperatore non vorrà dare possesso della ricompensa di Satmar senza vedere prima rinovati i patti co'l Regno di Polonia; al che fin'hora il Re non ha voluto acconsentire». Possevino to Cardinal Gallio, 21 November 1583: *ibid.*, 663.

¹³⁴ POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 167; Possevino to Ernest, 25 October 1583, *ARSI Opp. NN.* 317 81-83. Possevino also wrote to Ernest as viceroy for Habsburg Hungary on 21 October and exhorted him to work toward a settlement since that would curb unrest. He used the letter to attack Protestant officials who made Catholic worship so difficult in Habsburg Hungary that, Possevino claimed, Catholics had more freedom in Turkish Hungary. *Ibid.*, 80-81.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 82. In his letter to Ernest of October 21 Possevino noted that he had secured the support of August, Duke of Saxony and the most powerful of the German Protestant princes, for a settlement of the dispute between Rudolf and Báthory. He also urged that a settlement would serve to lessen the antipathy of Hungarians toward the Emperor and their sympathy toward Báthory, who was of Hungarian ancestry. *ARSI Opp. NN.* 317 81r. Also see MPV VI, 551n. In a letter to Johann Rueber, a Protestant, (17 November 1583) Possevino recalled that the Duke of Saxony had twice written to King Stephan urging that a settlement of the Szatmár dispute was in the interests of the Empire and of Christendom. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 190. The Duke wrote Báthory again on 30 April 1584 to urge a settlement: MPV VII, 279n.

voked his role as nuncio and told the Archduke that the settlement of the dispute could be of greatest importance for uplifting the Kingdom of Hungary, for it was close to the Pope's heart that from the settlement something much greater could come. He did not have to spell out an anti-Turkish alliance¹³⁶.

Possevino's appeal to Archduke Ernest was largely successful, for the Emperor agreed that his offer of Nagybánya and the other territories would be made to Stephan not as King of Poland but to the house of Báthory as recompense for their patrimony; the ten *portiones* or villages near Szatmár would remain feudatory property within the Kingdom of Hungary and subject to the same obligations borne by the other nobles of the Kingdom¹³⁷. The Emperor's response on this point was slow in coming—on December 7 Possevino was complaining to Cardinal Gallio that he was still waiting for it¹³⁸. By mid November Berzeviczy had returned to Cassovia, but his return brought little joy to the Imperial commissaries, for he spent his time traveling the surrounding countryside. He claimed that he was going hunting, or looking after his health, or seeking fodder for his horses, but Bornemessza and the other Imperial representative feared that his conversations with the local inhabitants might involve subversive activity¹³⁹.

On December 10, while still awaiting the Imperial reaction to the stalled negotiations and his initiatives to Archduke Ernest, Possevino wrote to Báthory and suggested three possible reasons for the delays. First, the Emperor was unprepared to defend Habsburg Hungary from Turkish attack, and the Turks may have warned Rudolf against reaching an agreement with Báthory, even though Possevino felt that the Emperor personally desired such an agreement. Secondly, his advisors considered his offer of compensation was more than fair, so that Báthory's request for increased compensation was demeaning to the Emperor. Likewise Báthory's postponement of the friendship pact was offensive to many at court, especially the Spanish faction. Thirdly, some of the Emperor's advisors might be fearful that Báthory's steadfast adherence to his demands might result in more «indignities» to the Emperor when the friendship pact came to be finalized. Possevino argued that were Báthory in the Emperor's place, he too would be fearful of the Sultan's power and his desire to take over all of Hungary¹⁴⁰. Possevino suggested that should the Emperor's agents spin out more delays, he should go and talk with Rudolf personally. Were the Imperial advisors (perhaps out of fear of the Turks) to insist that possession could not be handed over before the friendship pact was concluded, he would like to see the business concluded

¹³⁶ «Etenim cum propensissima Summi Pontificis mens sit, ut hac re composita, aliquid aliud ad Divinam gloriam ad res Christianas statuendas sine strepitu et sine periculo disponatur». ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 80v. In his *Transilvania* (p. 168) Possevino gave Gregory XIII several additional reasons why he was anxious to avoid linking the friendship pact de jure with the Szatmár compensation. One was that linkage might give Polish Protestant grounds to claim papal interference in their national affairs.

¹³⁷ *Transilvania*, 168.

¹³⁸ MPV VI, 700.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 701n; *Transilvania*, 170.

¹⁴⁰ MPV VI, 707 708.

on the basis of the agreements made so far, so as not to give an opportunity for those at the Imperial court who opposed an agreement to raising new difficulties¹⁴¹. Toward the end of December the Imperial Council of State met and decided against increasing the compensation to be offered Báthory. Some argued that increased compensation was a small price to pay for an alliance with Báthory, but the prevailing view was that the current offer was fully equivalent to Szatmár¹⁴².

On the last day of 1583 Possevino reported to Cardinal Gallio that he and Berzeviczy were still waiting at Cassovia and that on the previous day letters had gone to Archduke Ernest urging him to hurry a response from the Emperor. He felt that the Imperial advisors were caught between fears for the Emperor's dignity and fear that Báthory might break off relations. As for Báthory, Possevino wondered why he was so stubborn, since he had many good reasons to accept the Emperor's offer¹⁴³. Possevino's growing distaste for the endless negotiations was exacerbated by his living conditions at Cassovia, where he and his Jesuit companion had to spend four months «in two small rooms like a prison» at a local hostel¹⁴⁴. He also disliked the two leading commissaries he had to deal with. Rueber, the Imperial general, resided at Cassovia; he was very polite to Possevino, but he was a Calvinist and had suppressed Catholic worship in the surrounding region so that Possevino had to celebrate Mass in his small rooms¹⁴⁵. Berzyviczy, Possevino declared, was «a Calvinist and has done various diabolical things»¹⁴⁶.

TOWARD A FINAL SETTLEMENT

The year 1584 and the first months of 1585 brought the long negotiations of the Szatmár dispute toward an amicable conclusion. January 1584 found Possevino still awaiting the Emperor's response. Berzyviczy returned to the Polish court in mid December despite the plea of Archduke Ernest that he remain at Cassovia awaiting the Emperor's response to the latest proposals, specifically

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 709. Rueber suggested to Possevino that Turkish military operations in Transylvania and Hungary were designed to pressure the timid at the Imperial court into postponing a settlement and an alliance with the Polish King: Possevino to Zamoyski, 5 October 1583. SIEMIENSKI III, 220. Possevino argued just the opposite in a letter to Rueber (17 November 1583): If a Polish-Imperial pact was not signed, in the coming summer there might be a Turkish invasion of Habsburg Hungary. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 190. Báthory called a meeting of the Polish Diet to treat with the Turkish menace to Transylvania: Lippomano's report of 13 December 1583, *ibid.*, 191.

¹⁴² Lippomano's report to Venice, 27 December 1583: *ibid.*, 192.

¹⁴³ MPV VI, 730.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁴⁵ LUKÁCS II, 588-594. After Rueber died 23 March 1584, Lippomano rated his military skills very highly and regarded his death as a major loss to the Habsburgs. His post went to the Catholic Count Ferdinando di Nogarola partly because the Hungarians were strongly opposed to another German getting the office of commanding general in Hungary. Dispatch of 3 April 1584: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 194-195.

¹⁴⁶ MPV VII, 48.

that three more villages with their peasants would be given Báthory¹⁴⁷. On January 6 Báthory wrote Possevino and again bitterly complained about the Emperor's delaying tactics and said that recently he had told the nuncio Bolognetti that he doubted a favorable outcome from the negotiations. Bolognetti was more hopeful and urged patience. The King told Possevino to refrain from further negotiations in Berzyviczy's absence¹⁴⁸. Four days later Bolognetti wrote the King and again begged him not to break off negotiations; the delays were to be more attributed to the excessive care of Rudolf's minsters and the press of other business than to any desire of the Emperor to slight the Polish King¹⁴⁹.

The Emperor sent a letter to Possevino on December 23 promising to satisfy the Polish King and put an end to the dispute¹⁵⁰, but the «Final Response» of his commissaries, addressed to Berzyviczy on 7 January 1584, made several concessions but was also hedged with conditions. The Szatmár compensation package was not to be linked directly to the friendship pact. The Emperor agreed to add the three villages (Lázár, Bozonta and Tótfalu) to the compensation package, as suggested by his commissaries, but refused other villages near Szatmár. Báthory was not to fortify Nagybánya and the villages given him and was to receive them not as the King of Poland but as a member of the Báthory family. Hence they were to remain part of Hungary and as such under Rudolf's jurisdiction as King of Hungary¹⁵¹.

Possevino sent Berzeviczy a long memo which urged the acceptance of the Emperor's offer of compensation with minor conditions¹⁵². The memo in fact seems as much aimed at the King as at his chancellor, and develops the case for accepting the Emperor's offer which Possevino had suggested in letters to the King and to Bolognetti back on September 21¹⁵³. Possevino argued in his memo that a major difficulty was that while Nagybánya and the other compensation were to be given to the Báthory family, ten villages (*portiones*) were to be retained by the Emperor because they were said to be needed for the Szatmár fortress¹⁵⁴. Their possession would be given only under feudal obligations (*bona feudaria*), for the Hungarian kings could not alienate Hungarian territory. Moreover the towns and the ten villages would pay the normal taxes to Rudolf as Hungarian king. Possevino recounted the many advantages these seeming re-

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴⁸ Bathory to Possevino, 6 January 1584: *ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 19-20.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 29n.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 29n.

¹⁵² ASV *Nunz. Germ.* 94 247-250. A different copy of the same document is partly reprinted in MPV VII, 29n, where the editor dates it circa 15 January 1584.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 575 for his letter to Bolognetti; SIEMIENSKI III, 214, for his letter to Báthory.

¹⁵⁴ What is meant by *portiones*? The term comes up repeatedly in the negotiations. Other documents speak of «decem portiones seu villas», hence villages or estates (ARSI *Opp. NN.* 317 167v) and of «de portionibus illis rusticorum» (MPV VI, 706) and «portione di rustici» (POSSEVINO, *Transilvania*, 169), hence they include the peasants living and working in the villages. Elsewhere Báthory decided the idea that Szatmár «without these *portiones* would not have enough wine, as if indeed an abundance of wine were to come from these small portions (*portiunculis*)». MPV VII, 699. Here *portiones* is usually translated as *villages*.

strictions would have and recalled how two years earlier he had suggested to the King low key negotiations when Báthory had first brought up the issue of reopening the Szatmár question. Then delays and failures would have reflected less on the authority of the monarch. Having the lands as a Hungarian feudatory would entail certain advantages for the Báthory family and serve as a sort of insurance after Stephan's death, given the uncertainty of Transylvanian politics and the possibility that the Turks might invade their land or increase their tribute or back a different family for the office of Prince of Transylvania. Reaching a settlement with the Emperor would enhance Báthory's reputation among Christian princes because of his zeal for public tranquillity.

Anticipating the potential objection that the King's acceptance of Nagybánya under feudal conditions might seem to be subjecting the King of Poland to another prince, Possevino pointed out, among other examples, that Philip II was a feudatory of the Emperor for the Duchy of Milan without losing his dignity and that God used such bonds among princes to keep them from being enslaved by the Turks. Finally Szatmár itself, when it had belonged to the Báthory family, owed feudal obligations to the Hungarian kings¹⁵⁵. About January 20 Possevino left Cassovia for Kraków; he wrote Báthory while on the way and urged him to agree to the Emperor's offer since its conditions were acceptable¹⁵⁶. He repeated his plea from Kraków on January 28¹⁵⁷.

Báthory was anything but pleased by the Emperor's offer. He wrote a bitter letter to Possevino on January 28, accusing the Emperor of insincerity. Some people, Báthory charged, thought that he had exceeded the requirements of his dignity, but he preferred to be seen as putting concord ahead of his dignity. «We therefore now think we should have nothing further to do with his Imperial Majesty about these matters». Báthory's ironic postscript said that the Emperor had a wonderful way of achieving peace and ended by putting Satan's words to Christ into Rudolf's mouth (Mt. 4:9): «I will give you all these things if you fall down and adore me». The King's response must have shaken Possevino. He rewrote the King's letter and made it a bit milder; on it he wrote a note that Berzeviczy had not yet reported to the King nor given him Possevino's own letter of January 28. These, Possevino hoped, might mellow the King¹⁵⁸.

Despite the King's claim that he was going to break off the Szatmár negotiations, he continued to receive and study the reports and papers of the Cassovia

¹⁵⁵ ASV *Nunz. Germ.* 94 247-250.

¹⁵⁶ ASV *Nunz. Pol.* 15B 371.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 386.

¹⁵⁸ Both versions of the King's letter are printed in MPV VII, 45-46; for Possevino annotations, *ibid.*, 46n. On January 22 Cardinal Bolognetti had written Cardinal Gallio about the King's depressed mood: *ibid.*, 32. On January 31 Possevino wrote to Gallio about the King's desire for continuous military activity may have been a sort of escapism («il desiderio di volere sempre esser in armi gli facesse far qualche scappata in quello che più d'una volta ho visto i cenni»); *ibid.*, 48. From May 1585 to December 1586 Báthory lapsed into deep depression: DAVIES I, 432. His stubbornness, bitterness and preoccupation with his dignity during the Szatmár negotiations seem early symptoms of approaching mental instability.

negotiations¹⁵⁹. Having done so, he wrote Possevino on February 11 to say that «We are not at all pleased with the response of the Emperor nor can We be». The Emperor's representatives had spun things out for months only to come up with an unsatisfactory solution. «We shall therefore now abstain from further dealings with them, for that is what they want, and commit our cause to both God and to time»¹⁶⁰. Ironically the same day, ignorant of the King's letter, the nuncio Bolognetti wrote to encourage Possevino and praise him since «no ill will is enough to obscure the light of those things which with true zeal and an open heart are undertaken or the service of God and his holy church»¹⁶¹. Meanwhile King Stephan had more important things to worry about: a rebellion in Livonia and rumors of a truce between the Sultan and the Shah¹⁶².

Possevino received notice of the King's displeasure with the outcome of the Cassovia negotiations on February 17. This must have been doubly depressing, for it meant that not only were four months of his own work apparently wasted, but more important, good relations between the two monarchs and their alliance against the Turks was as far away as ever. Nonetheless the next day Possevino wrote the King and tried to persuade him to continue efforts toward an understanding. Possevino used as his point of departure information he had recently received from Simon Forgách, an Imperial official in Hungary. Forgách felt that unless Báthory showed some openness to a settlement, perhaps on somewhat better conditions, people would apply to him the proverb, «He who wants to get rid of a friend looks for an excuse». Possevino argued that the Emperor's proposal would not have imposed the conditions he had «unless all the Hungarian counsellors had proven on oath that it was necessary for the Kingdom of Hungary». He asked Báthory, who knew Hungarian conditions perfectly, to provide him with arguments he could use to undermine this contention; Possevino would advance the arguments without using the King's name. Possevino partly defended the Emperor, who had not tried to take advantage of the Turkish incursions into Transylvania nor made an issue «of the harsh responses of a cer-

¹⁵⁹ Possevino wrote (4 February 1584) to Bolognetti that he had sent Zamoyski a full account of the meetings which the King had urgently requested. Berzeviczy made his own report to the King. MPV VII, 49-50. Six days later Bolognetti reported to Cardinal Gallio that the King was much occupied with «a huge bundle of letters from Transylvania», which Bolognetti thought dealt with the Szatmár negotiations. MPV VII, 68. He added a postscript that he had just received a letter [that of 28 January noted above] from Possevino defending his role in the Szatmár negotiations. Possevino wrote it in Latin so that Bolognetti could show it to the King. Bolognetti sent it to Báthory together with his own cover letter and told Gallio that he would talk to the King in a few days when the King came to Vilnius, but since his information was second hand, he doubted if his words would carry much weight in preventing «the efforts of Berzeviczy from prevailing in the heart of the King over the accounts of the Father [Possevino]». *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁶⁰ MPV VII, 72. As Bonomi pointed out to Bolognetti (27 July 1584) in Poland decisions could be made quickly by Báthory, but in Prague he and Possevino had to deal with Rudolf himself, then his advisors, and then decisions affecting Hungary had to be referred to Archduke Ernest, the governor of Hungary, and his council: *ibid.*, 376. The next month Possevino warned Bolognetti that at Prague «il difetto di ogni minima cosa genera dilationi in quel consiglio». *Ibid.*, 409.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 78.

tain person» [obviously Berzeviczy]. Possevino had ascertained and Forgách had confirmed that Báthory's relatives in Hungary regarded as acceptable the feudal obligations tied to the return of the properties, especially if they could be modified. Indeed, a link to the Emperor was desirable for them, otherwise they might be open to Turkish threats. Perhaps a bit forgetful of his role as nuncio, Possevino describes himself as the King's most faithful servant when he begged the King to provide him with a document that would show everybody that the King was rejecting conditions governing the settlement not because of his own wish but for reasons of justice. He asked the King to write him letters authorizing him to keep the negotiations going¹⁶³.

The same day Possevino wrote Bolognetti and said that while he had expected the King's letter to bring him the greatest pain he had ever experienced, he had not lost hope despite the breakdown of the negotiations. One reason for his hope (something that he deliberately had not mentioned in his letter to the King but did mention to Bolognetti) was the fact that those favoring a settlement could count on the support of Jan Zamoyski, the powerful Grand Chancellor. Possevino asked Bolognetti to support his efforts and to discuss the matter with Zamoyski after first pledging his wholehearted efforts for a settlement¹⁶⁴. A gentle conspiracy was forming to bring the King around.

Zamoyski wrote Possevino on February 13 and describes how dejected he was over the breakdown of negotiations but how he had taken heart because the differences involved only a few minor villages. Keeping in mind how Possevino had always insisted that what was really important in the negotiations was the «public advantage of the Christian name» Zamoyski had left his estates and sought out the King, with whom he had discussed the conditions for taking possession of the lands being offered for compensation. In Hungary these feudal obligations include an oath of allegiance, paying taxes, and military service, among other things, and these obligations bound the nobility not only to the monarch but also to his lieutenants. To accept such conditions would involve an indignity to somebody of Báthory stature. Undertaking them would open the King to criticism in Poland. Zamoyski had therefore sought out in his discussion with the King what had been the earlier obligations tied to Szatmár. The King had informed him that the Szatmár lands were held not as a part of Transylvania, but as a part of the Kingdom of Hungary. Reflecting later on his discussion with the King, Zamoyski thought he could find a legal loophole so that Báthory could rightly escape unacceptable conditions for the new lands. Since there was question of taking possession of new lands, a mere letter of investiture could be used, without an oath or homage or other burdens. «I calculated that on this basis ... the dignity of his Imperial Majesty could be taken into account and all the difficulties avoided which his Royal Majesty has seen». But Zamoyski felt it would be best for Possevino to broach the question with Báthory on a less formal basis.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 81-83.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 85-86.

If Possevino were to do so, Zamoyski promised his full backing to bring the whole business to the end «from which your Paternity was wont to promise so much good not only for both realms but for all Christendom»¹⁶⁵.

Possevino's efforts to get an accord had not enjoyed much success, and March 3 Cardinal Gallio wrote him that his expense account had been cut in half, from 100 to 50 scudi per month¹⁶⁶. This action suggests that Rome was becoming impatient with negotiations that seemed to be endlessly protracted. Even before he got this bad news Possevino was writing Gallio (13 March 1584) from Prague to apologize for the delays; he argued that the negotiations between Rudolf and Báthory had not cost «the Apostolic See anything either before God or before these and other princes»; the Emperor would have less willing to offer recompense, for prior to papal involvement the Imperial court had simply ignored Polish efforts to raise the question. The negotiations had provided an occasion «to treat of many other good causes here, and in Hungary, and in Poland and in Saxony». The negotiations had led, for instance, to proposed papal subsidies for Báthory's building fortifications against the Turks at Illye and Mount Aranyi¹⁶⁷. Possevino also invoked his efforts to line up the Duke of Bavaria's support for two of his pet projects, a colony of German Catholics for Transylvania and the establishment of a military academy to train Catholic officers. The ongoing negotiations may have given the Turks pause, the Polish king had not broken with the Emperor, and relations had improved¹⁶⁸.

Better still was Bolognetti's letter of March 12 letter in Vilnius to Cardinal Gallio that Báthory was eager for a war against the Turks, but was determined to have the backing of the Emperor and the German princes before starting a conflict. He had also discussed the Szatmár question with the King, who «used rather harsh words at the beginning», but the conversation confirmed Bolognetti in the conviction that the King could be brought around¹⁶⁹.

Also on March 12 Bolognetti described for Possevino a recent audience with Báthory which discussed the case for accepting the Emperor's conditions. The King said he «was amazed how [Possevino] supposed that the conditions proposed by the Emperor merited being accepted». Báthory claimed that God had made him free, and he had no intention of surrendering his freedom for anything, much less something so unimportant; he said he was ashamed to have wasted so much effort over the affair and having involved the Holy See in it. The peace of Christendom did not depend on Szatmár or Nagybánya. As for seeking concord with the Emperor, he had done his part. Bolognetti still found some hope in the King's words, for he became more calm as their discussion progressed and claimed that he had never asked for the dismemberment of Hungary nor the incorporation of the territories into Transylvania. Bolognetti suggested

¹⁶⁵ SIEMIENSKI III, 264-266.

¹⁶⁶ MPV VII, 114.

¹⁶⁷ Possevino described the fortress project for Gregory XIII in his *Transylvania*, p. 182.

¹⁶⁸ MPV VII, 133-135.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 125-127.

that Possevino should hasten to the Imperial Court and build on the last statement of Báthory; he should try to keep the negotiations going and make sure that Rudolf did not withdraw his offer. Bolognetti wrote that he wanted to believe that the Emperor's response would be «very good and conformed to all our desires»¹⁷⁰.

Possevino had already been in Prague several days when he wrote Báthory on March 12 to say that since he had received nothing to communicate to the Emperor on the compensation issue, he had evaded the issue when questioned whether the Emperor's offer was acceptable. He told Báthory that he had deliberately not shown Imperial officials Báthory's letter to him of February 11 rejecting the Imperial offer¹⁷¹ since he hoped that new information might have changed the King's mind¹⁷².

Possevino had a long audience with the Emperor on March 22 which built on preliminary discussions with Imperial officials and led to several breakthroughs¹⁷³. Possevino showed Rudolf the letter Zamoyski had sent him on February 13 which suggested a loophole that would allow Báthory not to take any unacceptable oaths or feudal obligations which would subordinate him to the Emperor. Rudolf indicated that he was pleased by Possevino's work and that he had not given up hope of an agreement¹⁷⁴. Zamoyski's letter arrived only two days before Possevino's audience with Rudolf; on receiving it Possevino was jubilant for he had a powerful new argument to circumvent Báthory's unwillingness to take an oath and accept feudal obligations that would seem to subordinate him to the Emperor. Aside from indignity to Polish Kingship, an oath to Rudolf would poison Báthory's relations with the Sultan as overlord of Transylvania. Possevino wrote to Zamoyski the day before his meeting with the Emperor: «May God bless your Illustrious Lordship again and again, for whom God (as in other things) has perhaps preserved the greatest palm and role in the agreement». Unless a loophole or technicality was found, the friendship between the princes might dissolve, «without which I see that all of Hungary and Transylvania will fall into ruin»¹⁷⁵.

Possevino's correspondence does not spell out the details of his conversation with Rudolf, but they are given in a dispatch of Lippomano to Venice of 27 March 1584. Báthory would not have to take an oath, so as not to anger the Sultan. Rudolf had turned the decision, as usual, over to his Council of State. The actual lands being offered were Nagybánya and the rest of the previous offer,

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 127-129. Báthory wrote Possevino the same day and again claimed that he had never desired the dismemberment of Hungary or the incorporation of the compensation into Transylvania. Ibid., 129n.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 73.

¹⁷² Ibid., 130. This meeting with Imperial officials is probably the long meeting with Johann Trautson, the Imperial privy counsellor, that Possevino described in his letter of March 13 to Cardinal Gallio: *ibid.*, 138.

¹⁷³ For the date of the audience, see Possevino's letter to Bolognetti, 23 March 1584: MPV VII, 149.

¹⁷⁴ Possevino to Gallio, 28 March 1584: *ibid.*, 160-161.

¹⁷⁵ Possevino to Zamoyski, 21 March 1584: SIEMIENSKI, 278.

which was deemed acceptable to Báthory and had the advantage of being in Transylvania, unlike the Szatmár lands which were in Hungary¹⁷⁶.

The discussion then turned to the friendship treaty, which was far more than a mere statement of friendship. The two crowns promised indissoluble friendship so that should need arise they were to give support and help for the common defense. Both foreswore designs on the other's territory. Rebelling vassals from one prince were not to be received by the other but driven away. Should subjects of different princes have a quarrel that they could not resolve themselves, the two princes would delegated a decision to joint representatives. All roads and rivers were open to traffic by the merchants of the two countries. Mechanisms were adopted to settle problems from subjects of one country committing outrages in the other¹⁷⁷. At this juncture a final settlement of the dispute seemed at hand.

The month of April threatened to undo the progress of March, at least if the Venetian ambassador is to be believed. Officially the loophole suggested by Zamoyski and presented to Rudolf by Possevino so that Báthory would not have to take an oath to Rudolf as King of Hungary was turned over to Council of Hungary (sitting in Vienna) for consideration¹⁷⁸. Rome remained optimistic, for Gallio wrote Possevino that His Holiness would be greatly consoled by the common benefit a settlement would bring to both princes and all Christendom¹⁷⁹. In contrast, on April 3 Lippomano was reporting a minor diplomatic revolution arising from improving relations between Báthory and the Turks and from deteriorating relations between the Habsburgs and the Turks. The Sultan had sent an envoy to Báthory, who freed Turkish prisoners taken by the cossacks and had the heads cut off some sixty cossacks in the presence of the envoy. One important court official at Prague (unnamed) recited for Lippomano a list of Báthory's old grievances against the Habsburgs and accused him of quietly fostering the growing discontent among the Hungarians, for instance by his refusal to take the oath to Rudolf¹⁸⁰. On April 17 Lippomano reported that at Báthory's behest Zamoyski had written to Possevino in Prague that the King had decided to go back to his original demands: the return of Szatmár and his original family possessions, on the promise that he would dismantle the Szatmár fortifications and pay the Emperor 30,000 scudi. «The negotiation has reached a worse stage than ever before. ... Father Possevino in short lives between hope and fear». The reason Lippomano gave for the reversal was that Báthory did not want to give the Turks the impression that he enjoyed cordial relations with Rudolf¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁶ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 193.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁷⁸ Possevino to Gallio, 3 and 11 April 1584: MPV VII, 164 175.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁸⁰ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 194-196.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 197-198. Lippomano was being kept abreast of the negotiations by Possevino, who sent him letters dated March 27, April 17 and May 9 (MPV VII, 215n) so he had good sources of information. Possevino wrote Zamoyski from Prague on April 30 that he had heard about an accord between Báthory and the Turks and that he was still awaiting the Emperor's response, which

Faced with the stubbornness of both parties, Possevino tried a new ploy at the end of April: Báthory should take over from his nephew Sigismund, for whom he was de facto regent of Transylvania, the investiture of the places offered by the Emperor as recompense, but the Emperor was to free them from taxes and other obligations. Initially neither side responded to this suggestion; on May 1 the Emperor urged Possevino to go to Poland and see if Báthory would accept Possevino's newest suggestion before he himself had to make a decision, but Possevino developed a serious sore on one arm which prevented his departure¹⁸². The Emperor took the unusual step of allowing Possevino to negotiate for him, under certain conditions, with Báthory. Nagybánya would be given to Báthory and his family without any oath or onerous conditions but only by a letter of investiture. The letter would be renewed in case the lord of the territory changed, but if the Báthory family were to die out entirely, the dominion would revert to the Emperor¹⁸³. Clearly Rudolf was accepting the legal maneuver suggested by Zamoyski to avoid any oath or conditions that Báthory might regard as indignities.

Since Possevino's arm prevented his going in person to see Báthory, he sent the Emperor's response by courier. He was fearful that Turkish pressure might deter the King from reaching a final settlement with Rudolf. Possevino also suggested to Rudolf that the whole business be concluded either without restitution of the ten villages (*portiones*) or that Báthory surrender his claims to three of them and the other seven be given as restitution to his relatives, on condition that they could be exchanged for other territory¹⁸⁴. Rudolf agreed to his suggestions¹⁸⁵. Possevino requested from Rudolf an additional document clarifying the details¹⁸⁶, to which Rudolf again responded favorably¹⁸⁷.

On May 14 Possevino wrote and asked Báthory to accept this arrangement for the seven manors as the best that could be done¹⁸⁸. The day previously he had

he was not pressing for, but «I do not wonder over the delay, for I see how slowly everything else is done here». SIEMIENSKI, III, 290.

¹⁸² Lippomano's dispatchs of May 1, 8 and 15: *ibid.*, 198-199.

¹⁸³ Rudolf II's response to Possevino, 1 May 1584: MPV VII, 223n. Possevino sent copies of the Imperial document and his own response to it to Cardinal Gallio on May 8: *ibid.*, 232. Bonomi, the nuncio to the Imperial court, was apparently present when Rudolf's response was given to Possevino and related to Cardinal Gallio (1 May 1584) a conversation on that occasion with Johann Trautson, the Emperor's Privy Counsellor. He asked Gallio to keep his account secret. Trautson indicated that the Emperor's action was partly designed to prevent Báthory from adding new conditions. Bonomi replied that given Báthory's bellicose nature and the fact that he had patched up his relations with the Turks, the Emperor would be well advised to move quickly toward a settlement of their dispute. Trautson agreed and came close to admitting that because of these reasons the Imperial court stood in fear of Báthory. *Ibid.*, 224. For all that Poland and the Empire were putting the final touches on the long deferred friendship pact, their real relation was one of mutual distrust.

¹⁸⁴ 3 May 1584: MPV VII, 232n.

¹⁸⁵ Possevino to Gallio, 15 May 1584; *ibid.*, 246.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ Possevino to Zamoyski, 13 May 1584: SIEMIENSKI, II, 295. Possevino again thanked Zamoyski for his crucial suggestion on how to get around the problem of an oath. *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ MPV VII, 245n.

written Zamoyski and said that he preferred to stay in Prague where he could finish the negotiations quietly in the name of the Pope and to the honor of the King. He felt that Báthory would be pleased with his work since he had done nothing without Zamoyski's instructions and begged for freedom to clear up the problem of the seven *portiones*¹⁸⁹.

Báthory felt otherwise. He wrote Zamoyski on May 23 that Possevino should shortly come to him at Grodno since he wanted to deal with Possevino face to face and not by letters, «for our affairs with the Emperor are not going forward sincerely but violently. We recoil from this agreement and are of two minds and doubtful about what We should do». In the next five lines of his letter the King referred to his royal dignity three times and concluded:

«Let the Emperor grant us whatever he wants for our [relatives]; if he does not take proper account of our dignity or injures it in the slightest way, we shall utterly repudiate his offers, even if magnificent»¹⁹⁰.

Báthory's hypersensitivity about his dignity did not augur well for the prompt settlement which all the other parties involved were hoping for.

Báthory went on to tell Zamoyski about his hope that the Turks might become embroiled in war against the Tartars («diabolus cum diabolis»), for then «our affairs would never be safer». He mentioned that two days earlier the nuncio Bolognetti had brought good news about a league of Christian princes against the Turks. Báthory claimed that his heart was in the project¹⁹¹.

Bolognetti wrote Cardinal Gallio a long account of his discussion with the King, which lasted nearly four hours. The King reviewed several possible configurations of a league against the Turks and their chances of success and different strategies that might be employed, depending on which Christian powers joined the league¹⁹².

On May 29 Bolognetti reported to Gallio on another audience with Báthory. The King's wish that the Turks and Tartars become embroiled in war was being fulfilled. Less welcome was Báthory's caustic remarks about the Szatmár negotiations, for instance that he was not going to be satisfied with going around begging for an answer from the Imperial court, that the Imperial counsellors were searching for new pretexts to drag out negotiations and had no intention of ever coming to closure. Báthory claimed that at the beginning he had turned the whole business over to the wise judgement of the Pope. Bolognetti replied that despite the fact that the Pope had embraced the project and assigned the task to Possevino, who had spared no effort, the King had gone ahead and appointed Bishop Rozdrażewski as his representative and had thereby complicated procedures from the outset. Bolognetti wrote Gallio that

¹⁸⁹ SIEMIENSKI, II, 295.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 311-312.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 312-313.

¹⁹² 23 May 1584: MPV VII, 261-265.

Possevino's presence at the Polish court was needed to disentangle the negotiations¹⁹³.

Meanwhile Possevino was still at Prague and ailing. On June 14 he reported to Gallio that he had heard nothing from Báthory on the Szatmár question but had received a letter from Zamoyski¹⁹⁴. That letter (dated 29 May 1584) added details for a final settlement which Báthory had sent Zamoyski. The settlement should make clear the dignity of Báthory's family and be written in *honorificis verbis* and deal with the automatic inheritance of one family member on the death of another, the line of descent being laid down by Báthory. Their inheritance was not to be encumbered by any fees. Zamoyski urged Possevino to send him the text of the investiture documents as soon as possible so that he could show them to the King, for that

«would bring no small hope of bending the heart of his Royal Majesty, especially if to them is added the fact that his [Imperial] Majesty makes no more difficulties about those other *portiones*, although they are small in themselves».

Zamoyski went on to hope that an end to the Szatmár dispute was at last at hand. He added briefly two items of news with larger implications for the direction of Polish policy: a Polish-Turkish peace treaty and the death of Ivan the Terrible¹⁹⁵.

Since Possevino could not come to Poland, the task of dealing with Báthory fell to Cardinal Bolognetti, as he reported to the Cardinal Secretary Gallio on June 17. Possevino forwarded to Bolognetti several documents he had obtained from the Emperor. Bolognetti took two forms to Báthory, one drawn up on the usual form of mutual agreements (*computationes*), the other in the form of a concession made by the Emperor to the house of Báthory¹⁹⁶. In the first document Báthory made a few changes regarding the places named. Báthory repeated that he was so tired of the whole affair and of the delaying tactics by the Emperor's representatives that he had decided not to send them any more correspondence or ambassadors on the issue, but he did not want to stop what the nuncios were doing in obedience to the Pope. Bolognetti promised that Possevino would keep working at Prague on the minor details still needed to finish the negotiations. The one outstanding issue was the sharing of the income from the ten villages being turned over to the Báthory, two thirds of which was to go to the Báthory family, one third being retained by the Emperor in the Imperial offer. The discussion on this point was long, and Bolognetti urged the King to allow some compromise for the sake of the Emperor's friendship. Báthory yielded and agreed to forgo not only the three villages which he had been willing to give up during the negotiations at Cassovia but two more. Bolognetti even tried to get

¹⁹³ 29 May 1584: *ibid.*, 281-282.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 296.

¹⁹⁵ SIEMIENSKI, III, 322. On June 19 Lippomano reported the details of Zamoyski's letter to the Venetian government, information which Possevino doubtless gave him: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁN-SZKY, 200.

¹⁹⁶ These documents seem to have disappeared: MPV VII, 304n.

Báthory to promise to forego the other five or at least allow Possevino discretion on the matter, but here the King refused to budge, nor would he allow his remaining five villages to pay the usual fees to the Emperor. Here Bolognetti foresaw the danger of new difficulties arising. At this juncture the King «replied to me so expansively and with such determination and brought forward so many arguments that I do not know if I can remember them». Most of the arguments touched his dignity: fear that the impression he would leave his posterity was that of a weak man who cared little about them or his own dignity, who was looking out for his own interests rather than his family. The King recounted how one village (Buli) went back in his family hundreds of years thanks to the valor shown by one of his ancestors back in the crusades. He concluded by saying that he was willing to give up five villages but would break off negotiations if the Emperor would not give him the other five, but he asserted he had no intention of going to war over the issue. So determined was the King that Bolognetti abandoned hope of gaining more concessions, «at least for now». Bolognetti concluded that he was sending on information about the King's concessions to Possevino in Prague with the hope that he could use them to wrap up the whole dispute there. He felt it unlikely that more concessions could be wrung from Báthory and was fearful that the delicate issue of homage or subjection might arise again¹⁹⁷.

On June 23 Possevino wrote to Zamoyski about the progress of the Szatmár negotiations. Since he was unsure of the King's reaction to the Emperor's most recent statement on the issue, it seemed unwise for the Hungarian Chancery to draw up as yet a formula of investiture, but he had a document from the Emperor which rather explicitly dropped the oath and other burdens. He promised that he would not allow the inclusion of anything that did not speak honorably of the King and his family. Now that the negotiations were almost completed he doubted if the Emperor would quibble over words. Possevino would avoid raising the question of the ten villages until he heard from Báthory, whom he hoped to see in Lublin in August. The Emperor was being careful to take account of Báthory's dignity in the negotiations, and Possevino foresaw no problems over the projected friendship treaty. Once that was taken care of, the King could turn his attention to the unfolding situation in Russia. Possevino went on to relate recent details of the fighting between Turks and Tartars¹⁹⁸. Later Possevino related to Gallio a conversation in which the Emperor suggested as soon as Possevino

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 303-307. Possevino and Bolognetti went over this discussion on August 1, when Possevino reached Warsaw. Possevino forwarded to Rudolf a detailed summary of the discussion on August 3 together with a formula drawn up by Báthory's officials and approved by the King. It included a plea that there be no further delays in settling the dispute. Báthory insisted that he be given five villages, which were destined for his blood relatives («quae ad consanguinos suos pertinent»). These five he would not surrender, but he was willing to leave to the Emperor's decision the question of the other five («quae minus propinquos suos attingerent»). ARSI *Opp. NN.* 330 133r-134v. The fact that Báthory was childless and only the elected king of Poland may have conditioned his need to provide security for his relatives.

¹⁹⁸ SIEMIENSKI, III, 335-337. Lippomano reported that Báthory's attention was increasingly turned toward developments in Russia after the death of Ivan IV, so that both he and Rudolf had an

spoke with Báthory in Lublin and obtained information about what the King wanted, Rudolf would see to it that no more delays or difficulties would arise from his side¹⁹⁹.

While on his way to Lublin Possevino stopped on August 1 at Warsaw to confer with Bolognetti on how to conclude the Szatmár affair²⁰⁰. The discussion turned on the details of the villages to be turned over to Báthory, but Bolognetti could no longer remember the precise villages in question. Bolognetti argued against having a statement on this or the investiture being formulated in Prague since that would involve more delays²⁰¹.

By late August Possevino was in Lublin; after conferring with King Stephan he reported to the King that he had written Prague on certain details of their discussion: that the King had never read the details of the protocols governing his possession of Szatmár but was content that the same stipulations apply to Nagybánya and its adjacent territory which was being given to him and to the lands being given to his relatives as compensation. Possevino asserted his confidence that now «the whole business will be carried forward very nicely into effect ... and that as your Royal Majesty has come to know the whole mind of his Imperial Majesty ...» a solid friendship between the monarchs could be established. Possevino rejoiced that Báthory had promised to provide him with a draft of the friendship treaty before the Polish senators who had gathered for the Diet at Lublin departed²⁰².

The King wrote Gregory XIII on August 27 to praise Possevino and urged the Pontiff to «trust him in all these affairs». The King stated that he had given Possevino an oral message of great importance to bring the Pope personally but did not specify its details²⁰³. Possevino confided to Cardinal Bolognetti that the King was planning to attack Russia, which was in disorder after the death of Ivan IV, and wanted papal subsidies for the project²⁰⁴. An attack on Russia could be seen either as a distraction from the papal project of an anti-Turk league or a preliminary step toward forcing the Russians into a broader coalition.

On August 27 Báthory gave Possevino a written statement of his position that paralleled their discussion a few days earlier. He gave Possevino broad powers in dealing with the Emperor about five of the villages, the claim to which

additional reason to wrap up the Szatmár dispute. Dispatches of June 26 and July 24: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 201.

¹⁹⁹ 17 July 1584: MPV VII, 366. If earlier the Emperor's side was the cause of most delays, during the later stages of the negotiations that dubious honor belonged to Báthory. Bonomi, the nuncio at Prague, wrote Gallio on July 17 about Possevino going to Lublin to end «this blessed agreement, about which we are astonished that no response has ever come from his Majesty». Rumors were circulating in Prague that now the Báthory had achieved a favorable treaty with the Turks, he was harboring sinister designs. MPV VII, 383n.

²⁰⁰ Bolognetti to Gallio, 2 August 1584: *ibid.*, 383.

²⁰¹ Possevino to Gallio, 2 August 1584: *ibid.*, 385.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 417. Possevino's letter to the King is undated; the editor of MPV dates it circa August 25.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 419.

²⁰⁴ Bolognetti to Gallio, 28 August 1584; *ibid.*, 420.

he was willing to forego. But Nagybánya and its adjacent territories were first to be handed over to his free possession together with Buli and a village lying near the fortress of Ziniriwarallia. The Emperor would be then given time to deliberate over the details of the remaining villages or equivalent compensation that the King insisted upon. The compensation should be made to Báthory himself and to the legitimate heirs of his three brothers and three sisters²⁰⁵. With these instructions in hand Possevino set out for Prague and Rome after some intermediate stops. Meanwhile Gregory XIII had decided that while the Holy See was not opposed to Báthory's contemplated designs on Russia, neither was it about to back the project without a great deal of reflection and making certain about the attitudes of the other powers and of the forthcoming Polish Diet. The papacy, moreover, was in no position financially to provide massive subsidies for Báthory's designs. Therefore Gallio told Possevino not to come to Rome and to leave this whole matter in the hands of Bolognetti and other papal representatives²⁰⁶. Possevino arrived in Prague by mid October. Prospects for a final settlement seemed good. His friend Lippomano reported to Venice that what was needed was «only a few more honorable words in the instrument of compensation, which one thing will be easily obtained»²⁰⁷.

Negotiations did not go so easily. The Emperor noted two discrepancies in Báthory's newest proposals compared to previous negotiations, one was the number of villages in question, the other was the request that the investiture could also pass through the female line²⁰⁸. Possevino referred these objections back to Báthory for a decision²⁰⁹. Bolognetti wrote the King that he had heard from Bonomi, the nuncio in Prague, that Rudolf would allow him to change the «formulation handed down by the Emperor as long as the substance itself of the things agreed upon was not changed»²¹⁰. The King would have to decide whether to act immediately or await Possevino's expected return from Prague²¹¹.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 430n. About this time Bolognetti achieved some success in efforts to get Báthory to moderate his demands. The King was willing to forego five *portiones* or villages but insisted on being given the three he had obtained at Cassovia through Berzeviczy plus two more. At Bolognetti's urging, he agreed that they should pay the customary taxes to Rudolf as King of Hungary but Nagybánya should be held under «the same law, form, privileges and conditions» that Szatmár and Nemethy had possessed: *ibid.*, 699.

²⁰⁶ Gallio to Possevino, 29 September and 20 October 1584: *ibid.*, 451 452 462.

²⁰⁷ Dispatch of 16 October 1584. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 201. This was Lippomano's last dispatch; Matteo Zane took over as Venetian ambassador at Prague in early November: MPV VII, 492. On November 5 Possevino wrote Bolognetti that he had been struck by fever fifty days previously: *ibid.*

²⁰⁸ Decree of the Emperor: 27 October 1584: ARSI *Opp. NN* 330 180r-181r.

²⁰⁹ 1 November 1584: MPV VII, 491n.

²¹⁰ 11 November 1584: *ibid.*, 501.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, On 16 December 1584 Possevino had a conversation with Rudolf and tried to persuade him to allow investiture to the female line and grant the Báthory five *portiones*. *Ibid.*, 559n.

The King decided that much might depend on a turn of phrase and thought it best to wait till he could talk to Possevino²¹².

The year 1584 ended without resolving anything. The Polish Diet showed little interest in an attack on the Grand Duchy of Muscovy. Their disinterest suited papal policy nicely, as Bolognetti observed to Cardinal Gallio. The Pope was of that hook²¹³. The Emperor could also take quiet pleasure from the Diet. The new Venetian ambassador at Prague, Matteo Zane, reported that the Emperor had less fear of the Polish King than in the past, not because of Rudolf's own military strength, but because any move on the part of the King would not enjoy the support of the Polish estates and would depend upon Báthory's own forces and not the Polish army, for the dispute was a private affair of the House of Báthory. Zane predicted more delays in the negotiations²¹⁴. Possevino wrote Gallio on December 31 that newly arrived clarifications from Bolognetti and Zamoyski, which the Emperor had requested, might lead to minor adjustments²¹⁵. The next day Possevino presented to Rudolf a new phrasing that neither included nor excluded explicitly inheritance through the female line so that «the compensation was to be handed on in same way that Szatmár was»²¹⁶. On January 9 Rudolf informed him that he had forwarded his latest statement to Archduke Ernest, and that Possevino was welcome to remain in Prague awaiting the Archduke's reply or to go to Poland, but the Emperor indicated that he preferred his going to Poland to facilitate Báthory's acceptance of the formula of investiture²¹⁷.

Possevino finally left Prague on January 15. As he was leaving he wrote Cardinal Gallio and speculated that the Turks might take advantage of the prolonged negotiations to reach a peace with the Persians and turn their attention to Hungary and that likewise Báthory might find Turkish support more valuable

²¹² Bolognetti to Possevino, 28 November 1584: *ibid.*, 532n. On November 1 Báthory had written Bolognetti complaining about how equivocal the new Imperial proposals were and said he wanted to discuss them with Possevino: «Scripturas istas de negotio Zalmari et Nemeti perlegimus, in quibus illas quas D.V. notavit aequivocationes animavertimus et has totas esse summo ingenio constructas et ordinatas, ipsaque adeo verba ea quadam arte composita, ut totum negotium reddatur infestum. Retinendas vero apud nos ad P. Possevini adventum iudicavimus, ut cum eo presente de iis conferamus ipsique mentem et sententiam nostram aperiamus». *Ibid.*, 484.

²¹³ 11 December 1584; *ibid.*, 547.

²¹⁴ Dispatch of 11 December 1584: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 201 202. In his dispatch of December 25 Zane noted that Possevino was preparing to leave Prague to return to Poland; he had been engaged partly with details of the Szatmár dispute, partly with those of the friendship pact. *Ibid.*, 202. On December 29 Possevino wrote Bolognetti from Prague that he was still awaiting a response from the Emperor and hoped to leave within eight days: MPV VII 565.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 566 567.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 567n. On the same day Zane reported that Possevino was staying in Prague and trying to acquire more latitude and authority from the Imperial ministers, but these were standing firm because an attempt of a Polish king to use force would be checked by constitutional limits. Possevino meanwhile was stressing Báthory's strength and valor as a bargaining tool, so much so that his impartiality was under suspicion. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 203. Zane repeated the accusation of partiality on January 15: *ibid.*, 204.

²¹⁷ ARSI *Opp.* NN. 330 223.

for his interests in Poland and Transylvania and for his designs on Muscovy than would be an agreement with the Emperor²¹⁸.

On January 31 the Emperor, however, finally made a decision on the ongoing differences in a decree he gave to the new nuncio at Prague, Germanico Malaspina, to pass on to Cardinal Bolognetti in Poland. The Emperor agreed to increase his offer to the Polish King beyond the three districts (*pagi*) already agreed on to include five additional villages (*portiones*). These were handed over, as had been suggested by Possevino, «in the way that Szatmár was, that is, govern by the same conditions». The Emperor was doing this so that «his whole-hearted zeal in establishing and strengthening mutual benevolence, friendship and good neighborly relations with his Serene Majesty may be more evident». The Emperor hoped that this decision would put a final end to the long negotiations²¹⁹.

The decree was indeed the breakthrough which led to the final settlement. Malaspina sent a copy through his assistant Pelegrino to Bolognetti, who passed it on to Báthory, who was very pleased by it and said that he would be prompt in putting it into effect and having the negotiations concluded²²⁰. Still he passed it to his Berzeviczy, Chancellor of Transylvania, to examine and make minor changes. Later Bolognetti sent Malaspina a long dispatch which contained a copy of Berzeviczy's careful revisions²²¹.

On February 19 Possevino wrote Gallio from Warsaw and noted that he was still waiting for the decree which the Emperor had given the nuncio Malaspina. He felt that, while more complications might arise, given the good will of Báthory, he expected no real difficulties in reaching a final settlement²²².

The reason that Possevino had not received the Emperor's decree was not the customary delays; rather he was being cut out of the negotiations, largely because of rising resentment at the Imperial Court where he was seen as partial to the Polish King. The Venetian Ambassador at Prague reported on January 15 the dissatisfaction there over Possevino's partiality²²³. The Jesuit Marcus Pitačić at Prague reported to his Provincial similar accusations being made by court offi-

²¹⁸ 15 January 1585: MPV VII, 580.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 604-605. There is a copy of the decree among Possevino's papers, ARSI *Opp. NN.* 330 233. Zane noted (5 February 1585) that the decree got around explicitly allowing hereditary claims in the female line but in fact yielded to the substance of Polish King's demand. Zane, who only a month earlier had been making pessimistic reports, thought the decree should establish solid peace and good relations between the monarchs. KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 204.

²²⁰ MPV VII, 420.

²²¹ The dispatch was drawn up in several stages (February 24 to March 7). The final document settling the disputed and signed by Báthory and Berzeviczy (6 July 1585) closely parallels Bolognetti's dispatch: *ibid.*, 648-655.

²²² *Ibid.*, 624.

²²³ KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 204.

cials²²⁴. He was not the only Jesuit making such reports²²⁵. Cutting Possevino out of the final phase of the negotiations seems to have been done at the request of the Emperor or of his officials, who may have felt he was usurping their role in the negotiations. The negotiations henceforward were to be facilitated by the regular nuncios Bolognetti and Malaspina, even though Cardinal Bolognetti was also suspected at the Imperial Court of partiality toward Báthory and was scheduled to be replaced in March by the new nuncio to Poland²²⁶. While defending Possevino against the accusations of Jesuits in Prague and Vienna, the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva²²⁷ went to Cardinal Gallio and asked that henceforward Possevino confine his work as nuncio to the several papal seminaries he had helped to found in northern and eastern Europe. Gallio took the matter to Gregory XIII, who agreed to this arrangement. On February 9 Gallio wrote Possevino and asked him to put aside the Szatmár dispute and go to Braunsberg (Braniewo) where he was to await priests being sent from Rome for work in Sweden²²⁸.

There can be little doubt that Possevino admired the energetic Báthory more than the enigmatic Rudolf, a preference shared by most historians. He certainly developed a closer working relationship with the Polish King than with the Emperor. Early in the negotiations Possevino complained about the procrastination of the Imperial bureaucracy, as did many others, but in the later stages of the negotiations it was Báthory's stubbornness and touchiness over his dignity that had become the roadblock to a solution, and Possevino had worked hard to bring the King to accept the Imperial compensation as an offer made in good faith. Paramount always for Possevino in the negotiations were the twin goals of Gregory XIII: harmony between the two great Catholic monar-

²²⁴ Pitačić to Henricus Blysem, February 1585: LUKÁCS II, 767-769, 16*. Pitačić was born at Sisak, Croatia, c. 1548, entered the Society 18 August 1566 at Vienna, and died 13 January 1608 at Eberndorf. Blysem was born at Bonn, Germany, c. 1530, entered the Society in Rome in 1555, and died 24 April 1586 at Graz.

²²⁵ Ioannes Nicholas Donius [born c. 1538 in Baelen-sur-Nèthe, Belgium; entered the Society 1 July 1556 at Cologne; died 4 April 1594 at Vienna], the Jesuit rector at Vienna, reported to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva that the Imperial Vice Chancellor Schelm was calling Possevino unsteady, inconsistent and a traitor to the Emperor; 11 February 1585: *ibid.*, 769. Acquaviva replied with a defense of Possevino, but indicated that he hoped that Possevino would soon be released from his diplomatic activities, something that Possevino himself had repeatedly requested of Acquaviva: *ibid.*

²²⁶ Zane's dispatch of 15 January 1585: KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVJÁNSZKY, 204.

²²⁷ Acquaviva was born 14 September 1543 at Atri, entered the Society at Rome 12 July 1567, was elected General 19 February 1581, and died 31 January 1615 at Rome.

²²⁸ Acquaviva to Father Gregor Roseff (born 22 July 1538 at Landshut; entered Society 15 September 1559 at Vienna; died 15 February 1623 at Augsburg), rector at the Imperial college, 21 February 1585; LUKÁCS, II, 832n; the Polish Provincial, Giovanni Paolo Campano (born 25 January 1540 at Reggio Emilia; entered Society 15 September 1563 at Rome; died 27 April 1592 at Rome), who much admired Possevino, defended Possevino in letters to Acquaviva, 27 February and 1 March 1585: *ibid.*, 832n and 836n. Acquaviva's decision to petition Gregory XIII for Possevino's removal from the negotiations was probably motivated by fear that hostility to Possevino might foster a general hostility to Jesuits at the Imperial court. For Gallio's letter to Possevino: *Opp. NN.* 330-245.

chs of eastern Europe and the projected alliance against the Turks. His personal admiration for Báthory was totally subordinate to these major ends.

Possevino blamed Malaspina and others for stirring up the hostility at the Imperial court that led to his dismissal. He traced that hostility to his having rebuffed Malaspina when the nuncio made accusations of avarice and speculation against the previous nuncio, Bonomi. Possevino also felt that Malaspina resented his prominent role in the negotiations, even though he was a mere priest and not a bishop like the other nuncios²²⁹. Given the hostility toward him both by Malaspina at Prague and by Bolognetti at the Polish court²³⁰, Possevino had become a liability to papal diplomacy, even though he had the best knowledge of the whole Szatmár dispute and still enjoyed Báthory's favor.

On February 27 Possevino wrote a long letter to Malaspina²³¹. It is polite on the surface, but at points Possevino's resentment emerges, especially when he notes that he was deliberately prevented from seeing the most recent documents from Prague about the negotiations. In fact, Báthory himself had informed him about their contents. Possevino took pride in the fact that his phrasing had been used to get around the problem of inheritance through the female line and that he knew the territories in question better than the court officials in Prague, thanks to his personal inspection of the places in question during his tour of Transylvania. He made a point of his papal authorization to carry on the negotiations—his letter suggests that he had not yet received notice of his dismissal. But he did acknowledge several times that he was held in suspicion by officials at the Imperial court²³².

In fact Possevino kept in contact with Báthory on the negotiations: at the end of February, just before departing for Braunsberg, he wrote the King that «I no longer doubt that the whole business will be carried to an excellent outcome». He went on to encourage Báthory to cultivate the Emperor's friendship since will bear «richer fruit for the Christian commonwealth»²³³. Báthory replied that Possevino letter was «most welcome to us» and that as he had often told Possevino, he would not allow Rudolf to surpass him in generosity and that the agreement with the Emperor will be confirmed and that he was now much more certain of his goodwill and that he was sending the Emperor delegation to work on the friendship pact²³⁴.

THE FINAL AGREEMENT

Although Possevino did not participate in the final negotiations, they were soon complete very much in accord with the arrangements he had labored so

²²⁹ Possevino defended himself and made charges against Malaspina in a letter to Acquaviva, 27 August 1585: LUKÁCS II, 832-836.

²³⁰ MPV VII, 749-768.

²³¹ ASV Nunz. Germ. 95 247-250.

²³² Ibid., 247.

²³³ Opp. NN. 330 249.

²³⁴ Ibid., 251. Dated the end of February. On May 7 Zane reported to the Venetian government that Rudolf, in agreement with Archduke Ernest and the Hungarian Council, had accepted «all the conditions [presumably Berzeviczy's emendations] requested by the King of Poland in recompense for Szatmár». KÁRPÁTHY-KRAVIÁNSZKY, 208.

long to work out between the two monarchs. Long as the Szatmár negotiations had lasted, they took less time than the agreement between Argentina and Chile noted at the beginning of this essay. Two documents state the conditions of the final agreement, both nearly identical in content. The first was signed by Rudolf on 22 June 1585²³⁵. The second by Báthory on July 6²³⁶. The documents implicitly allow continuous possession by the Báthory family through both male and female lines. The Polish document alludes to a friendship pact as a motive for the agreement²³⁷. In return for all claims to Szatmár and Nemethy Báthory on behalf of his family in perpetuity accepted the city of Nagybánya along with the town and villages pertaining to it and all their emoluments on the traditional basis of ownership. To these were added the villages of Zazár, Bozonta and Tötfalu but subject to the same obligations as other Hungarian vassals toward the Habsburgs but without an oath or act of homage on investiture. On the extinction of the Báthory line, the lands were to return to the Hungarian crown. In addition to those three villages listed above, five more were added (Zinirwarallia, Parlag, Wywaras, Felseofalw and Buli). For these five villages the Báthory family was to pay the usual tribute²³⁸. The formal investiture ceremony took place at Nagy-bánya on August 20. Rudolf was represented by Count Franz von Révay and Franz Nagyváti. Báthory's delegation was led by Martin Berzeviczy, the chancellor of Transylvania²³⁹.

The actual transfer of land held little historical import. The long delays in reaching the agreement were, however, disastrous for Gregory XIII's hopes of a Balkan crusade against the still menacing Ottoman Empire. The early 1580s presented the Christian powers with a rare opportunity, since the Turks were engaged in a protracted war (1577-1590) on their eastern flank against the Persians²⁴⁰. Stephan Báthory was a gifted military commander, as was his chancellor Zamoyski. On 15 May 1585 Báthory fell into deep depression, mainly over a rebuff by the Polish parliament, but the long and frustrating Szatmár negotiations undoubtedly contributed to his psychological deterioration. The depression continued almost down till his sudden death 12 December 1586²⁴¹. Seven years later Rudolf became engaged in a long and unsuccessful war (1593-1606) against the Turks in which Sigismund Báthory, Stephan's successor as Prince of Transylvania, sided with Rudolf. But he neither had Stephan's military gifts, nor was he he

²³⁵ Printed in Gooss, 210-211.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 211-214.

²³⁷ «... *Maiestas eius Caesarea ut suum vicissim animum uti integerrimum, ita huiusmodi mutuum ac verum benevolentiam atque amicitiam stabiliendam, non minus propensum, quam publici boni et tranquillitatis studiosissimum, testatum redderet, eo condescendit, ut huiusmodi compensationis medio locum assenserit*». *Ibid.*, 212.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 213-214.

²³⁹ For the Imperial document, *ibid.*, 215-216. For that of Báthory's representatives, *ibid.*, 216-218.

²⁴⁰ In a letter to Cardinal Gallio (27 August 1583) Bolognetti expressed optimism about a successful crusade in the Balkans. MPV VI, 499-502.

²⁴¹ DAVIES, I, 432.

King of Poland²⁴². In 1597 Sigismund resigned his lands in favor of Rudolf; imperial occupation set off intense opposition and Sigismund attempted a futile comeback, only to resign again in 1599²⁴³.

SUMARIO

Gregorio XIII abrigaba la esperanza de unir Venecia, el Emperador Rodolfo II y Esteban Báthory de Polonia, en una alianza contra los turcos, pero Báthory insistía en que Rodolfo le devolviese sus tierras ancestrales (Szatmár y Nemethy), que Maximiliano II le había quitado en 1561; Maximiliano, de 1565 a 1567, tuvo prisionero a Báthory, aun cuando se trataba de un embajador. Más tarde Báthory fue elegido príncipe de Transilvania (1571) y rey de Polonia (1576). Tras la negociación de paz entre Polonia y Moscovia, llevada a cabo por Possevino, Báthory volvió a sus antiguas reclamaciones ancestrales, y una guerra contra Rodolfo II parecía inminente, la cual destruiría las esperanzas del papado de una liga contra el Turco. Possevino desempeñó el papel más importante como mediador en unas lentas negociaciones que se extendieron desde 1582 hasta 1585. Anteriores historiadores prácticamente hicieron caso omiso de estas negociaciones, aunque ellas dejaron centenares de documentos.

Gregorio XIII nombró a Possevino mediador, a instancias de Báthory. Possevino urgió a Báthory a aceptar una compensación alternativa, si el Emperador no le devolvía sus tierras ancestrales en Transilvania. Aunque Báthory suscitó el espectro de la guerra, éste no pasaba de ser sino una amenaza vacía, pues no era probable que el Parlamento polaco apoyara una guerra para conseguir unas tierras en Transilvania. En junio de 1581, Possevino mantuvo consultas con Rodolfo y sus principales consejeros. Rodolfo aceptaba la mediación papal pero rechazaba las reivindicaciones de Báthory — Szatmár era una conquista legítima en tiempo de guerra — pero insistía en que deseaba la paz y la amistad con el Rey polaco, y abría la puerta a una compensación alternativa. Pero ¿cuál iba a ser, y en qué consistiría, esta compensación? Sobre esto giraron interminablemente las negociaciones durante tres años. A complicar más las negociaciones sobre una justa compensación, vino a sumarse un pacto de amistad y comercio que ambos monarcas querían, y la convicción de Báthory de que la Corte imperial no respetaba su dignidad. Los dos monarcas intentaron ganar el apoyo del Sultán. Una y otra vez, Possevino tuvo que viajar desde Polonia a Praga, para consultar sobre las ofertas y las reivindicaciones. Así Possevino, desde septiembre de 1583 hasta enero de 1584, intervino en una reunión de delegados de ambos monarcas en Cassovia, reunión, que no consiguió apenas nada.

El final de 1584 y los inicios de 1585 produjeron por fin una solución definitiva y amistosa. El pacto de amistad y la compensación por Szatmár no deberían estar íntimamente relacionados entre sí. Rodolfo entregó Nagybánya y un número de poblados húngaros a la familia Báthory y permitió que se pudiera heredar por línea femenina, pero a Báthory no se le exigió que pronunciara un juramento de lealtad a Rodolfo a cambio de las posesiones. Los acuerdos finales fueron firmados en Junio y Julio, y se atuvieron a las condiciones estipuladas por Possevino, pero el papado, en febrero de 1585, destituyó a Possevino de su cargo de mediador, porque el emperador y sus consejeros creían que era demasiado favorable al rey polaco.

²⁴² On the «long» war against the Turks, see Jan Paul NIEDERKORN, *Die europäischen Mächte und der «Lange Türkenkrieg» Kaiser Rudolfs II. (1593-1606)* (Vienna 1993) and Kenneth M. SETTON, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia 1991).

²⁴³ P.F. SUGÁR, P. HANÁK, and T. FRANK, editors, *A History of Hungary* (Bloomington 1990) 131.