

Offprint of

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How Well Was Muscovy Connected with the World?

Daniel C. Waugh and Ingrid Maier

In its broad outlines the story of Russia's „westernization” beginning in the late Muscovite period is well known, if often emphasized to the detriment of the study of Muscovite traditional culture. We are familiar with the growing Muscovite diplomatic engagement with Europe, the evidence of a developing taste for Western art, the increasing corpus of translations of various kinds of foreign literature. The importance of the Diplomatic Chancery (*Posol'skii prikaz*) as an agent of change has long been understood, even as details concerning the operation of Muscovite foreign policy still are in need of monographic study. Among the questions regarding which there still is no consensus is: How well informed was the Muscovite government concerning its neighbors and more distant polities which might have a bearing on the making of foreign policy? To answer this question properly would require the careful study of all the voluminous foreign relations files. Our goal here is rather more limited — to explore ways in which the acquisition and translation of foreign news sources, the translations are what we may generically term the *kuranty* (<*courant*), may shed light on Muscovy's connectivity with Europe. In particular we address the methodological challenge of trying to determine the transit times for the receipt of foreign news in Moscow during the 17th century.¹

In early modern Europe, significant changes occurred in the ability of those engaged in political or economic decision making to acquire the information necessary to their tasks. The Venetians are generally credited with developing the model for

1 This essay is part of a book the authors are writing on Muscovite acquisition of foreign news. Previous, largely unsystematic, attempts to estimate transit times may be found in the rather careless article by B. V. Sapunov, *Iz istorii mezhdunarodnykh kul'turnykh svyazei Rusi v XVII v.* ('*Vesti-Kuranty*'), in: *Kul'turnoe nasledie Drevnei Rusi*, Moskva 1976, pp. 200–205; for ca. 1620 to 1650, but primarily for the mid–1630s and the 1640s, in the valuable monograph by R. Schibli, *Die ältesten russischen Zeitungübersetzungen (Vesti-Kuranty), 1600–1650. Quellenkunde, Lehnwortschatz und Toponomastik* (*Slavica Helvetica* Bd. 29), Bern etc. 1988, esp. pp. 73–78; for the reign of Tsar Fedor Alekseevich, in S. M. Shamin, *Dostavka i obrabotka v Posol'skom prikaze inostrannykh gazet v tsarstvovanie Fedora Alekseevicha*, in: *Issledovaniia na istochnikovedeniiu istorii Rossii (do 1917 g.)*, Moskva 2003, pp. 121–134; idem, *Inostrannaia pressa i integratsiia Rossii v evropeiskuiu politicheskuiu sistemu (1676–1682 gg.)*, in: *Evropeiskie sravnitel'no-istoricheskie issledovaniia. Evropeiskoe izmerenie politicheskoi istorii*, Moskva 2002, pp. 40–63. The most careful treatment of the subject is that by Ingrid Maier in her introduction to Part 2 of the forthcoming *Vesti-kuranty 1660–1662, 1664–1670 gg. Chast' 1. Teksty; Chast' 2. Inostrannye originaly k russkim tekstam* [hereafter abbreviated V–K VI]; here ch. 2, esp. sec. 2.4.

permanent diplomatic representation and intelligence gathering.² Networks of news correspondents emerged; their regularly produced newsletters could be forwarded in a timely fashion as a European-wide postal system developed.³ Some have argued that the new postal communications were the key to the emergence of modern Europe⁴; whereas others have emphasized the change in news dissemination resulting from the invention of the modern newspaper in the early 17th century.⁵ That is, news now came to be published on a predictable and regular basis in a form accessible to an increasingly broad readership. What often is insufficiently appreciated is the degree to which Muscovy participated in these new developments in European communications.

While Muscovy was late in developing permanent representation abroad, even in the 16th century its diplomats were expected to acquire foreign news. There was a limited degree of the acquisition and translation of foreign sources about „news-worthy” events, but systematization of the process of obtaining foreign news developed only gradually during the 17th century.⁶ In trying to write the history of this process, we are handicapped by the fragmentary nature of some of the evidence and by certain interpretive challenges. Until the 1660s, with the establishment of the regular foreign post, we find periods of intensive acquisition and translation of foreign news, but these generally are connected with specific diplomatic initiatives or the cultivation of certain foreign merchants or agents either in Muscovy or abroad. A normal procedure was for Muscovite officials in border towns to obtain news from newly arrived foreigners and forward it to Moscow and to engage in a certain

2 The classic treatment of this subject is G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, London 1955. Stimulating examples of current work on the early modern intelligence networks may be found in the studies emerging from the Medici Archive project (<http://www.medicini.org/>) and in the work of Mario Infelise on the Venetian materials, reported in the Bremen conference „Places of News: The Creation of International News Networks in Early Modern Times. International Workshop. December 6–8, 2007.”

3 The best-known example is the news network of the Fuggers. A sampling of their reports may be found in *News and Rumor in Renaissance Europe* (*The Fugger Newsletters*), ed. and introd. by G. T. Matthews (New York: Capricorn, 1959).

4 W. Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur: Reichspost und Kommunikationsrevolution in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 189), Göttingen 2003.

5 H. Böning, *Welteroberung durch ein neues Publikum. Die deutsche Presse und der Weg zur Aufklärung. Hamburg und Altona als Beispiel* (Presse und Geschichte – Neue Beiträge. Bd. 5), Bremen 2002.

6 For an overview of the various mechanisms for news acquisition, see E. I. Kobzareva, *Organizatsiia v Rossii XVII v. sbora informatsii o zapadnoevropeiskikh sobytiakh*, in: *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta. Ser. 8. Istoriiia*. 1988, No. 3 pp. 13–22, which is based on the more extended treatment in her unpublished *kandidat* dissertation; the paper by Daniel Waugh delivered at the International Conference on Muscovite History, Oxford, in 1975, „Diplomatic Channels as a Source for Foreign News in Muscovy” (accessible on line at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/dwaugh/publications/diplsourcesfornewsoxfordpaper1975.pdf>).

amount of cross-border espionage.⁷ Foreign news sheets, printed and handwritten, arrived in packets of letters addressed to agents such as David Ruts or Peter Krusbjörn in Moscow and were turned over to the Diplomatic Chancery.⁸ In what seems to have been an exceptional early example, the translators attached to a Russian embassy which spent several months in Stockholm in 1649 acquired on a weekly basis foreign newspapers and translated selections from them.⁹ What we do not know in this case is the schedule of how this news may have been transmitted back to Moscow.

In order to assess the timeliness and value of the news which was being acquired, ideally we would have not only the Russian translations but the foreign originals. Therein lies one of the real challenges in using this evidence. Historians of the news in Europe have only begun to scratch the surface as far as manuscript newsletters are concerned. Most have yet to be edited by scholars; they are scattered in numerous archives, often uncatalogued and, for the unpractised eye, often quite illegible. Matching a manuscript source with a printed news item in a newspaper which may have been based on it is an almost impossible challenge, since we can almost never be certain exactly what newsletters were in the hands of the publishers.¹⁰

If we confine ourselves to printed newspapers as sources, the task is somewhat easier, although the challenge often lies then in the uneven preservation of the newspapers. For the first half of the seventeenth century, runs of them are at best spotty. While for certain papers the situation improves later in the seventeenth century, there are still major gaps in holdings, both for German and, with one exception, for Dutch newspapers. Even though people have known since early in the 19th century about the range of foreign newspapers received in Muscovy, it is only rather recently that the holdings still in Moscow have been catalogued.¹¹ Interestingly, most of the preserved 17th-century German newspapers there are unique copies, not found in any

7 See, for example, N. Ogloblin, *Voevodskie vestovye otpiski XVII v. kak material po istorii Malorossii*, in: *Kievskaiia starina XII* (1885) pp. 365–416.

8 Examples are in *Vesti-kuranty 1645–1646, 1648 gg.*, ed. by S. I. Kotkov et al., Moskva 1980 (abbreviated V–K III). While there is a very extensive newer literature on foreigners in Muscovy, for an introduction to the history of foreign agents there, see S. A. Belokurov, *O Posol'skom prikaze*, Moscow 1906, pp. 72–75.

9 The texts are in *Vesti-kuranty 1648–1650 gg.*, ed. S. I. Kotkov et al., Moskva 1983 (abbreviated V–K IV). See the study by I. Maier, *Newspaper Translations in Seventeenth-Century Muscovy. About the Sources, Topics and Periodicity of Kuranty 'Made in Stockholm' (1649)*, in: *Explorare necesse est: Hyllningsskrift till Barbro Nilsson*, ed. P. Ambrosiani et al., Stockholm 2002, pp. 181–190.

10 For a tiny sampling of manuscript news and its printed reports, see K. H. Kremer, *Johann von den Birghden 1582–1645: Kaiserlicher und königlich-schwedischer Postmeister zu Frankfurt am Main*, Bremen 2005, pp. 380–392.

11 See V. I. Simonov, *Deutsche Zeitungen des 17. Jahrhunderts im Zentralen Staatsarchiv für alte Akten (CGADA)*, Moskau, in: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch 1979*, pp. 210–220; I. Maier, *Niederländische Zeitungen ('Couranten') des 17. Jahrhunderts im Russischen Staatsarchiv für alte Akten (RGADA)*, Moskau, in: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch 2004*, pp. 191–218.

other repository. The printed sources for Muscovite news compilations were primarily German and Dutch; even though the foreign originals frequently have annotations that they had been translated, rarely can we match those extant copies with the extant translations. This means then that locating the sources for the Muscovite translations requires a painstaking search in various European repositories, a task made the more difficult by the fact that increasingly as the 17th century progressed, the Muscovite translators were excerpting and condensing the originals, not translating in their entirety or literally.¹²

With these caveats in mind, we shall now illustrate the possibilities for learning about transit times for foreign news to Muscovy. First we will see what the foreign newspapers themselves reveal; then we will explore the evidence contained in the translation files. These examples, drawn primarily from the Dutch newspapers, are selective, preliminary to the compilation of a more comprehensive data set, a process which is still underway.

The publication of newspapers in the Netherlands developed rapidly in the 17th century, and the Dutch papers acquired a reputation for their extensive coverage and relative accuracy. Some of them were frequently received in Moscow and served as the basis for Russian translations. Unlike the German papers, the Dutch ones generally contain a colophon with the date of publication; like the German ones, they were issued on a predictable basis on certain days of the week. Certain newspapers appeared twice a week, some even had a third weekly number. Within any given issue of a paper, the news was presented with some consistency. Some papers organized it in strict chronological sequence, beginning with the earliest dateline. More commonly, the information was grouped by region, and within a given region multiple entries organized chronologically, with the earliest item first. In such papers then, there may be several chronological sequences of material, with items from the same city bearing different dates, depending on the source. The most recent items in any given issue naturally are the ones closest to the place of publication. Thus, for example, the Haarlem (Holland) paper would leave Dutch news until the end, often inserting just before printing an item dated the same day that the paper appeared. Depending on the source of the news and its distance from Holland, a given issue of a Dutch paper might contain items dated a month or two prior to the publication date, although for the most part the information would be datelined no more than two or three weeks prior to the printing date. Comparison of a series of issues of any given Dutch newspaper for a particular period reveals regularities in the transit times for news from particular locations, reflecting what we know about the regularity

12 A summary table of the foreign originals which have been identified for the first five published volumes of the *kuranty* translations is in I. Maier, Verbalrektion in den „Vesti-Kuranty“ (1600–1660). Teil 2: Die präpositionale Rektion (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Slavica Upsaliensia 45), Uppsala 2006, pp. 453–459. The entire part two of the forthcoming V–K VI is devoted to the foreign originals identified by Ingrid Maier for the *kuranty* of 1660–1670. See also her comments in V–K VI, ch. 2, secs. 6.1–6.3.

with which newsletter writers provided information to their customers and the regularity with which the posts were delivered. Naturally there could be some fluctuation depending on exigencies of weather or other uncontrollable factors.

With these considerations in mind, Table 1 presents „transit times” for news published in selected Dutch newspapers for 1646, 1666 and 1678.¹³ The transit time is that between the reporting of the event at the datelined location and its publication in the Dutch press. The four issues used for 1646 were published in Amsterdam; the rest are from Haarlem. The number of examples for each location is given in parentheses. Certain locations of apparently minor consequence have been omitted where they appear in only one report. Amsterdam also is not included – reports from it are very numerous, most dated either the day before or the day of the publication of the paper.

Table 1. Transit times (elapsed days from dateline of item to publication date) for news in printed Dutch newspapers

	range for 1646	range for 1666	range for 1678
Lisbon	(1) 31		(1) 31
Cadiz		(3) 31–35	(1) 30
Madrid		(5) 25–32	(1) 18
Naples			(4) 26–31
Rome	(2) 21–22	(10) 22–25	(4) 22–25
Milan		(3) 28	(1) 23
Livorno		(3) 22–25	(2) 20
Venice	(3) 16–23	(11) 16–19	(3) 15–18
Marseilles	(1) 22	(4) 19–22	(1) 17
Paris	(2) 11–15	(19) 9–13	(2) 7–8
Prague	(2) 14–15		

¹³ The sources for 1646 are the four newspapers reproduced in the appendix to V–K III, namely: *Tydinge uyt verscheyden Quartieren*, 1646/13 (Amsterdam, 31 March); *Courante uyt Italien ende Duytschlandt, &c.*, 1646/15 (Amsterdam, 14 April); *Europische Saterdaegs Courant* No. 16 (Amsterdam, 21 April); *Europische Dingsdaegs Courant* No. 18 (Amsterdam, 1 May). For 1666, the figures are based on 13 issues of the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (including both Saturday and Tuesday numbers) published between January 2 and July 5. For 1678, we have used five issues of the same paper: two Saturday editions, two Tuesday editions and one Thursday edition, dating from March 31–May 1. Note we assume that the dates are all Gregorian Calendar (New Style). The publication dates are definitely New Style, as are items from Catholic and some other cities. For the purpose of this calculation, we assume the Dutch publishers converted any Old Style dates from Protestant cities into New Style ones, although we cannot be absolutely certain that was consistently the case. So it is possible that for certain locations, the transit times would need to be adjusted by the ten-day difference between the calendar at place of origin and calendar in the place of publication. In general, the data for these particular papers seem to be consistent with the assumption of the uniform use of the Gregorian Calendar.

Vienna	(2) 18	(9) 15–18	(4) 13–14
Regensburg	(1) 12		(1) 12
Nuremberg	(1) 9	(1) 12	
Köln	(2) 5	(1) 5	(1) 5
Münster	(4) 5–7		
Frankfurt	(2) 7	(1) 11	(2) 7–8
Leipzig	(3) 11–16		
Warsaw		(4) 17–24	
Stockholm	(1) 21	(5) 18–25	
Copenhagen	(1) 15	(3) 8–12	(4) 8
Danzig		(10) 11–15	
Lübeck			(1) 5
Hamburg	(4) 7–10	(11) 5–9	(1) 5
Bremen		(2) 7	
London	(2) 10–12	(17) 9–15	(4) 6–8
Oxford		(5) 12–17	
Brussels	(1) 5	(3) 7	(5) 4–5
Antwerp	(3) 5–7	(3) 3–4	(4) 3–4
Nimwegen			(4) 3–4
Hague		(4) 2–3	(9) 2–3

Since the samples are small, individual years may have their peculiarities, and not all times of the year are represented, the times illustrated here are at best merely suggestive.¹⁴ For a good many instances, there seems to have been little change over the

14 Finding convenient tabulations of transit times for the seventeenth-century postal routes (independently of any calculation based on newspaper reports) is not easy. For the first preserved newspaper, the Strassburg *Relation* of 1609, Behringer lists transit times for news in issue no. 26 as follows: from Rome 21 days, Venice 15, Vienna ten, Prague seven, Köln two (Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur*, p. 359). One can compare a few of the times in Table 1 with the advertised claim of Johann von den Birghden for his mail service connecting Frankfurt am Main with various parts of Europe in 1634:

Frankfurt to	Paris	5 days	Frankfurt to	Hamburg	9 days
	London	10		Lübeck	10
	Antwerp	3		Stockholm	16
	Brussels	3		Leipzig	3
	Amsterdam	6		Nürnberg	2
	Hague	6		Regensburg	3
	Köln	1.5		Berlin	6
	Münster	4		Venice	8
	Basel	4		Rome	12

Where these routes overlap with the ones most likely supplying the Dutch papers, we can see reasonable correlations in the relative elapsed times for the post to Amsterdam: from Rome 18

four decades – that is, it is hard to discern a distinct increase or reduction in elapsed times. The consistency in travel times from Rome and Venice is quite striking.¹⁵ In general, it seems that news from the Iberian Peninsula could be expected to take a month, that from Italy apart from Venice three to three and a half weeks, about what it would take for news from Stockholm or Warsaw. News from Venice took more than two weeks, Vienna approximately two weeks. Among the instances where times decreased are Paris and London. In the case of the latter, the Anglo-Dutch naval war in 1666 could explain what might seem to be the relatively long elapsed time in that year. Even with the apparent improvement of communication with London, it normally took a week or more for news from it to be published. For Hamburg, the last half of the dates for 1666 are consistently five days, suggesting that some kind of express delivery began in late winter or spring that year. In a related development, there seems to have been an improvement in the deliveries from Copenhagen. Communication along the long-established route from Vienna also improved by a day or two. It is important to remember that datelines often were only for an intermediary transit point in the communications network. News from the Ottoman Empire generally traveled via Venice or Livorno. Thus we need to add to the transit times from those cities to Holland another month to month and a half minimum, meaning that Constantinople news would be around two months old before seen in print in the Netherlands.

As this example suggests, the communication networks in Europe had indeed achieved consistent timetables by the middle of the seventeenth century, albeit with some gradual improvements in speed continuing. A number of developments were responsible, among them the regularization of the Imperial post and competition from regional postal networks. While better communications helped make possible regular publication of newspapers, conversely the demand for regular transmission of news stimulated the improvements in the post. Publishers of the respected Dutch papers owed their success to having predictable sources of news and the means then to distribute their papers rapidly. With this information in mind we can now turn to the question of where the news went after it left the printing press in Holland and in particular how long it took to get to one of its more distant destinations, Muscovy. Let us start by looking at the evidence in the Muscovite news files; then we will provide some comments on the postal networks.

days, Venice 14 days, Münster two days, Nürnberg eight days, Regensburg nine days. See Kremer, Johann von den Birghden, pp. 347–350; cf. von den Birghden's advertisement for 1626, pp. 189–191. For a map of the postal routes to Frankfurt in 1627 which von den Birghden was attempting to control, see p. 183.

15 In the case of Rome, there is a regular alternation between 22 and 25 days, reflecting possibly two different sets of newsletters being received by the paper or a conscious policy of holding over for the next edition some of the news received in the previous mail. News received at the last minute before printing was not uncommonly summarized at the very end of a number of the *Haerlemse Courant* and then given fuller treatment in the next edition, which appeared a few days later but bore the original dateline of the article.

Muscovite secretaries were generally quite careful to note from whom and when a given packet of news was received, although unfortunately many of the archival manuscripts now lack a header as a result of folios having been lost or re-shuffled. Where it suits their purpose, historians of Muscovy fall back on the argument that „much has been lost” as a way of explaining why, for example, a work supposedly written at an early date is known only from late copies. Of course it would be a mistake to assert the opposite – little has been lost. The picture from the archival files is that of considerable unevenness. There can be lengthy runs of seemingly complete materials, then large gaps, which may or may not be the result of systematic loss. While for certain periods prior to the mid-1660s the extant news files contain impressive detail and seem to be quite complete, we cannot assume that, where we now have gaps, at one time there had been unbroken sequences of news files. Even with the establishment of the foreign post in 1665, we have gaps in the sequences, but at least for the last third of the century, we have a reasonable certainty that those now missing files once existed. In general we may suppose that more news was received and processed than we now have. However, we should not suppose that there were mechanisms in place prior to 1665 to ensure regularity of the kind that we have noted, for example, in the evidence about the relationship between the Dutch newspapers and their sources. That is, it seems safest for now to conclude that news acquisition from abroad in Muscovy was uneven for roughly the first two-thirds of the seventeenth century. The unevenness is reflected both in quantities of material and in the amount of time it took to reach Moscow.

Where we have reason to think the archival files are more or less intact, the evidence suggests that translations would be grouped into „packets” received on a specific date. A packet might consist of a single item or several, based on a mixture of print and manuscript sources.¹⁶ In cases where there was more than one item, and where different types and languages of the sources were involved, only one heading for the several items in the packet might contain information on the receipt or translation date. This information may in fact apply as well to other items in the packet even if they contain no similar specific indication. Any given packet could contain items quite divergent in date – thus a foreign merchant might have turned over to the

¹⁶ Typical examples of „packets” would be RGADA, f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 1, fols. 260–276 (published, V–K III, No. 20); f. 155, 1646, No. 6, pt. 2, fols. 243–259 (V–K III, No. 22); f. 155, 1666, No. 11, fols. 20–29 (V–K VI, Nos. 36, 39); f. 155, 1666, No. 11, fols. 95–98, 109–124 (the order of folios is jumbled) (V–K VI, Nos. 37, 42). Unfortunately the editors of the V–K series decided to organize the texts by the chronology of internal datelines of given segments of news, in the process thus breaking up the often more logical sequence whereby the manuscripts preserved the news in the order in which it was received. See the brief comments on this issue in Daniel Waugh’s review of the first V–K volume, *The Publication of Muscovite Kuranty*, in: *Kritika* IX/3 (1973) pp. 104–120; Ingrid Maier’s meticulous analysis of the composition of the „packets” in her introduction to V–K VI, ch. 2, secs. 4.1–4.2. Unfortunately the work on the forthcoming V–K VI volume had already progressed under the editorship of the late V. G. Dem’ianov to the stage where it is now impossible to undertake a proper re-ordering of the material before this volume will appear.

Diplomatic Chancery a printed newspaper which had appeared three months previously, along with correspondence containing news which had been written down only a month and a half earlier. It is not uncommon for the manuscript news letters to have information more up to date than that found in the printed sources. We further note that even in cases where a packet consisted of a relatively compact grouping of printed newspapers, the dates of their publication might extend over two, three or more weeks. Thus, within a given issue of a newspaper we may have multiple reports from a single location but of different date, and, where multiple issues of newspapers are in the one packet, we might find half a dozen news items from a single city, extending in date over a month or more.

These considerations mean that simply averaging out time of transit tells us little. If we are to know the timeliness of particular news, we need to analyze each individual case within its own context. Furthermore, as should be obvious, just determining time of transit says little about the news value of an item. It may be accurate, it may not. It may pertain to matters which, even if occurring only a little over a month earlier, no longer are of any current value. Even if long delayed, the information could, on the contrary, be of critical importance.

With all these caveats in mind, what data emerge from the files?

Table 2. Selected transit times for news items in Dutch newspapers received in Moscow¹⁷

	V-K III 19: <i>TVQ</i> 13/1/166; r 8/4/46; 95 days	V-K III 39: <i>CID</i> 19/5/1646; r 26/6/46; 49 days	V-K III 45: <i>CID</i> 30/6/46; r 1/8/46; 73 days	V-K III 45: <i>ESaC</i> 30/6/46; r 31/8/46; 73 days	V-K III 59: <i>CID</i> 21/3/48; r 1/5/48; 52 days	V-K IV 52: <i>CID</i> 2/7/50; r 28/8/50; 68 days	V-K VI 1: <i>ODC</i> 23/3/60; r 16/5/60; 65 days	V-K VI 1: <i>HSC</i> 27/3/60; r 16/5/60; 61 days
Venice	118		88	81,77, 81	67	83		75
Genoa							95	
Rome		69	93		73	89		72
Marseilles		69					105	69
Lyons			94					
Basel	112							
Vienna	114		90	81	69			78
Linz		64		81				
Regensburg					67			
Breslau					73			
Prague	110		86	80	66			
Dresden		62						
Leipzig	110							
Nuremberg	107	57			60	79		
Frankfurt			79, 78					
Münster	105		77		56			
Köln		53	77, 79	?102	56	72		55

¹⁷ The column headings include reference to the published location of translations from the newspaper in the V-K series; identification of the title and publication date of the Dutch paper; the date of receipt/translation of the Dutch source in Moscow; and, in bold face, the number of days elapsed between publication date and receipt date. The date of publication is Gregorian (New Style), the date of receipt Julian (Old Style); so the elapsed time calculations add 10 days to the OS date. The numbers within the table then are elapsed times from dateline of report to its receipt/translation in Moscow. There is no attempt here to include all the datelined items for any given issue of a newspaper. There are a few anomalies in the data, indicated by question marks. The questions for Hamburg are that in the first case, the dateline is identical with the publication date of the newspaper, in the second, only one day prior to that date; so perhaps the editor added ten days to an original dateline which had already been converted to N.S. The newspaper abbreviations are: *TVQ Tydinge uyt verscheyden Quartieren* (Amsterdam); *CID Courante uyt Italien en Duytslant* (Amsterdam); *ESaC Europische Saterdagse Courant* (Amsterdam); *ODC Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant* (Amsterdam); *HSC Haerlemse Saterdagse Courant* (Haarlem).

	V-K III 19: <i>TVQ</i> 13/1/166; r 8/4/46; 95 days	V-K III 39: <i>CID</i> 19/5/1646; r 26/6/46; 49 days	V-K III 45: <i>CID</i> 30/6/46; r 1/8/46; 73 days	V-K III 45: <i>ESaC</i> 30/6/46; r 31/8/46; 73 days	V-K III 59: <i>CID</i> 21/3/48; r 1/5/48; 52 days	V-K IV 52: <i>CID</i> 2/7/50; r 28/8/50; 68 days	V-K VI 1: <i>ODC</i> 23/3/60; r 16/5/60; 65 days	V-K VI 1: <i>HSC</i> 27/3/60; r 16/5/60; 61 days
Königsberg							86	
Danzig							75	75
Rostock								71
Lübeck								66
Copenhagen							74	
Hamburg	105	?	80	?	62, 59		69	69,65,72
Bremen		54		?103				
London				89, 74		77	75	59
Dover						76		
Dublin						89		
Edinburgh						86		
Bruges		54	77					
Ghent		54			56			
Brussels		54						
Antwerp		53	77, 75			72	65	63
Breda			75	?101				
Amsterdam				74				

Note in Table 2 that the particularly long times evidenced for the first newspaper seem to be atypical. The same packet containing that paper (handed over by the Dutch commercial agent Peter de Ladal) also included another news source in which on average the news seems to have been a month or more fresher than in the copy of the *Tydinge uyt verscheyden Quartieren* [=TVQ]: For example, Hamburg news in this second source may have been delayed by only as much as 64 and 74 days (vs. the 105 of the TVQ), and Leipzig news took some 77 days (as opposed to 110). In contrast to that issue of TVQ, the second of the newspapers listed, a copy of the *Courante uyt Italien ende Duytslant* [=CID], arrived in Moscow relatively soon after its date of publication. We know in this case that it came through the Baltic via a correspondent of another of the Dutch merchants based in Pskov. The paper was received in Pskov on June 10, some 33 days after its publication, and arrived, apparently with some delay, in Moscow 16 days later. A later issue of the same newspaper (column 3 in the table) was received in Moscow from the Swedish agent Peter Krusbjörn, from whom the Muscovite government obtained a good many news reports. The time lapse from publication in this case was substantially longer, although it appears that in the same packet Krusbjörn supplied news from a source

some three to four weeks fresher. While Swedish agents' information arrived via the Baltic route, it is important to keep in mind that prior to the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post in 1665, a good deal of the foreign news was also coming via Arkhangelsk. Naturally this fact might be expected to affect transit times and presumably the mix of news sources. Yet in the one example adduced here in the table, the copy of *CID* received in August 1650, there is no evidence of unusual delay compared to what we have seen in cases for the Baltic route. The particular packet containing this paper, which was obtained by the Arkhangelsk *voevoda* from a newly arrived Dutch ship, seems to have taken a relatively quick 20 days in transit from Arkhangelsk to Moscow. In another example, it seems that the time in transit from the northern port was as much as a month.¹⁸ It is worth remembering that news might arrive from the shorter Baltic route at any time of year, whereas that from Arkhangelsk would be confined to the few months of summer navigation.

Compare these data for the period between 1646 and 1660 with those encompassing the period when the now year-old postal connection with the West was operating in the first half of 1666. The data in Table 3 concern both Saturday and Tuesday issues of the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* which we know for certain were received in Moscow. This listing includes the datelines in the original paper, not just the items actually translated in Moscow.

Table 3. Transit times for news in copies of the Oprechte Haerlemse Courant received in Moscow between March and July 1666

	OHSC 9 27/2/66; r 26/3/66; 38 days	OHSC10 6/3/66; r 8/4/66; 44 days	OHSC11 13/3/66; r 23/4/66; 52 days	OHSC12 20/3/66; r 23/4/66; 45 days	OHSC13 27/3/66; r 23/4/66; 35 days	OHDC 16 20/4/66; r 23/5/66; 44 days	OHSC 25 19/6/66; r 12/7/66; 34 days	OHDC 27 6/7/66; r 27/7/66; 31 days
Aleppo					126			
Smirna			107	64				
Lisbon					71			
Cadiz		78		74				59

¹⁸ See V–K IV, No. 58. Other examples of communication by courier from Arkhangelsk to Moscow include an elapsed time of 25 days in July and August 1612 and 29 days in July of 1613. See J. Margeret (Marzheret), *Sostoianie Rossiiskoi imperii. Zh. Marzheret v dokumentakh i issledovaniakh* (Teksty, kommentarii, stat'i), ed. An. Berelovich et al., Moskva 2007, pp. 309–311, 179–280, 294–295. J. W. Veluwenkamp, *Archangel: Nederlandse ondernemers in Rusland 1550–1785*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 75, notes that given the speed of traveling on the ice, in winter a person might take a fortnight (*in veertien dagen*) to travel the route. This seems almost impossibly fast.

	OHSC 9 27/2/66; r 26/3/66; 38 days	OHSC10 6/3/66; r 8/4/66; 44 days	OHSC11 13/3/66; r 23/4/66; 52 days	OHSC12 20/3/66; r 23/4/66; 45 days	OHSC13 27/3/66; r 23/4/66; 35 days	OHDC 16 20/4/66; r 23/5/66; 44 days	OHSC 25 19/6/66; r 12/7/66; 34 days	OHDC 27 6/7/66; r 27/7/66; 31 days
Madrid				66, 64				
Malaga		75						57
Milan						71		59
Naples						72		
Rome	59		73	61		68		56
Venice	53	59	67	54	47	61	49	50
Livorno								54
Marseilles			70	54				
Paris	49, 46	53, 50	63, 60	47	43, 40	57, 54	42, 45	43
Cleve	61	46			35	43		
Warsaw						59		
Vienna	52			53	49		48	
Neuburg				48	43			
Danzig	48	52		49	42	50		43
Copen Hagen		52	66					
Helsingor	49				43		45	39
Stockholm	63			56	61			
Hamburg	42	45	56	43, 42	36	44		35
Bremen			56					
London	50, 46	54	60	50, 47	44, 40	48	42	43, 40
Plymouth			65	54	50			
Yarmouth	50		64					
Ostende	45	44	59	43	36			
Wesel	41			42				
Middelburg		44				43		35
Deventer	41	44			36			
Vlissingen							35	34
Antwerp	40	43	57, 54	41				
Rotterdam			54					33
Texel			54				35	
Hague	40	43	53	42, 41	34	42	34	33
Amsterdm	39	42	53	40	33	41	33	32

A number of observations may be made here. First of all, the transit times on the whole are substantially faster than they had been prior to the establishment of the post. Yet note the 35–52 day range of elapsed times from publication of the news reflected in the single postal delivery of April 23, 1666. This alerts us to the possibility that where the time elapsed from publication is, say, over forty days, we should not simply assume that reflects a particular delay in the arrival of the post. In fact, it seems that starting nearly at the moment of its inception in 1665, the bi-weekly postal service between Moscow and Riga ran pretty much on schedule.¹⁹ The optimal time for receiving news from the Netherlands was something less than five weeks from the date of publication of a newspaper, assuming that the paper appeared within a day or two prior to the departure of the post to the East.²⁰ The fastest possible delivery would take a month. We need further data if we are to determine whether there was any significant difference in transit times depending on the season of the year. There is always the possibility that at any given moment a delivery might be delayed due to illness or some other mishap or weather that even the hardy postal riders could not overcome.²¹

The data above all relate to Dutch news sources. While we will not attempt to illustrate in similar detail what we might learn about the German ones, a few comments are in order. As we might expect, the German newspapers which were most regularly received in Moscow were those printed in Northern Europe and especially in the Baltic region.²² Thus we know that Hamburg, Berlin, Danzig and Königsberg papers enjoyed particular popularity. In trying to extract data from the German papers, we encounter a number of challenges. Unlike in the case of the Dutch papers, the German ones rarely include a date of publication, although where we know the day of the week when a paper normally appeared, the date often can be calculated. More serious is the issue of what calendar was used where the paper was published and whether the publisher adjusted datelines to reflect his local calendar or simply left dates in their original form. We have made the reasonably safe assumption that the Dutch papers we have been looking at consistently used New Style dating. We should not assume that the German papers, if appearing in a Protestant city where

19 The incomplete information in the *kuranty* files (RGADA, f. 155, 1666, No. 11) documents receipt of the Riga post in Moscow under the first postmaster, Jan van Sweeden, for the following dates in 1666: March 9, 26, April 23, May 10, 23, June 15, 29, July 12, 27, August 9, 24, October 9. From the internal dates of the *kuranty* we can reasonably extrapolate deliveries for the dates not explicitly mentioned to fill in a schedule of approximately two week delivery intervals.

20 For comparison, we can look at copies of the Dutch merchants' correspondence turned over to the Diplomatic Chancery in Moscow in 1646, where we can estimate two months elapsed in communication between Moscow and Amsterdam. See V–K III, No. 33.

21 See, for example, the cases cited by S. M. Shamin where the postal network was experiencing problems, *Dostavka*, pp. 123–124.

22 See Maier in V–K VI, ch. 2, esp. secs. 1.4, 2.5.1.

the calendar was Old Style, consistently used Old Style dating in reporting the news.²³

While we may then be uncertain of transit times for particular news items from the German papers, we can determine that those papers might provide Moscow with more up-to-date news than might be obtained from the Dutch sources. In at least one instance, we know that a Hamburg newspaper took only 22 days and in another a Danzig paper took no more than 24 days to reach Moscow. Annotations about receipt dates on some numbers of Königsberg papers of 1667 and 1668 show that they arrived in Moscow within 25 days of the date of publication.²⁴ The 22 days from Hamburg seems to have been about the fastest possible transit time. We need keep in mind that we have other examples of delay in delivery by a week or more beyond the optimal times.

A second consideration in regard to the German papers is that the ones regularly received in Moscow reported news from the Baltic and Eastern Europe which was bound to be fresher than that obtained via the Dutch sources. Understandably, if a report from Stockholm or Warsaw first went to Amsterdam or Haarlem and only then, once printed, began the long road to Moscow, it could not be expected to arrive there in less than 50–60 days. This fact has to have been understood in Moscow, even though the translators in the Diplomatic Chancery selected a disproportionately large amount of East European news from the Dutch papers (in which it tended to occupy relatively little space) at the same time that they drew heavily on the German ones for such news. Apart from considerations of transit time, the reportage on Eastern Europe in the selected German papers was the more extensive. In some instances, it seems that the translators of the Muscovite Diplomatic Chancery mined some packets of the German papers almost exclusively for their news from Poland.²⁵

We will conclude this exploratory survey of transit times for the news with some comments on Muscovite postal communications. Here we should make clear that what we are dealing with is *not* the older *iamskaia gon'ba* of Muscovy, which was an internal communications network, was not just an express delivery service for messages, and in any event operated on demand, not any regular schedule.²⁶ Rather, our focus must be on the foreign post, concerning which the basic source of information is still I. P. Kozlovskii's magnum opus published nearly a century ago. As Kozlovskii recognized, by establishing the foreign post, the Muscovite government was connecting the state with the larger European-wide system of communications; this move had important implications for Muscovite cultural history. Insufficiently appreciated is the fact that the contract of the first Muscovite postmaster, the Dutchman Jan van Sweeden, very explicitly established that the rationale for creat-

23 Ibid., esp. sec. 1.5.

24 Ibid., sec. 2.4.1.

25 For example, V–K VI, esp. No. 41; also, Nos. 84, 86.

26 I. P. Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty i pervye pochmeister v Moskovskom gosudarstve*, 2 vols, Varshava 1913, I, p. 31.

ing the post was the acquisition of foreign news.²⁷ The service would also accommodate letters for the foreigners in Muscovy and the Muscovite government's exchanges with its embassies sent abroad, but those functions were not part of the initial plan.²⁸

Van Sweeden's bi-weekly post ran from Moscow via Novgorod and Pskov to Riga. When the post passed into the hands of the Marselis family in 1668, and in connection with the truce of Andrusovo which laid the basis for permanent Muscovite-Polish diplomatic representation, a second route was added through Smolensk to Vilna. This then meant that news deliveries might be expected on a weekly basis, or even more frequently. Hiring a Muscovite entrepreneur and contracting with a foreign postmaster could not guarantee results; we know from the documents published by Kozlovskii that various problems arose in the functioning of the two routes. In general though, the foreign post seems to have made a qualitative and quantitative difference in the acquisition of foreign news in Moscow.²⁹ The translations in the *kuranty* make it quite clear that much more news was being received on a much more regular basis than had ever been possible in earlier decades. Rarely now did translators do more than excerpt a few news articles from the great many which regularly came in through the post.³⁰

Ideally we would provide precise data on travel times along the postal routes, not only within Muscovite borders but beyond. Data for the Russian side are few, since the issue of the exact schedule seems to have arisen in the first instance only where

27 See my transcription of his contract, in D. C. Waugh, *Seventeenth-Century Muscovite Pamphlets with Turkish Themes: Toward a Study of Muscovite Literary Culture in its European Setting*, Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University 1972, Appendix IIc, pp. 510–512 (available on-line at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/dwaugh/publications/vansweedcontractdissappIIc.pdf>). Oddly, Kozlovskii understates the accomplishments of van Sweeden, perhaps because he was too much influenced by the complaints about the Dutchman's service launched by his competitors, the Marselis family. See Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, I, pp. 62–64. Also, Kozlovskii (*ibid.*, p. 103n) seems to have misunderstood the explicit, rather limited mandate given van Sweeden. The „bias” against van Sweeden dates back to early sources: a „doklad” compiled in January 1700 begins its overview of the history of the Muscovite post with Leontii Marselis in 1668 (*ibid.*, II, No. 100, pp. 455–458).

28 Leontii Marselis's contract of June 1, 1668 explicitly broadened the functions his post was supposed to serve. See Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, I, pp. 104–105.

29 For deliveries under van Sweden, see note 19 above. For comparison, in 1676, the *kuranty* files (RGADA, f. 155, 1676, No. 8) document the following deliveries: August 30 (Riga post), September 2 (Vilna); Sept. 7 (Riga), Sept. 15 (Riga), Sept. 16 (Vilna), Sept. 21 (Riga), Sept. 23 (Vilna), Sept. 29 (Vilna), October 8 (Vilna), Oct. 13 (Riga), Oct. 15 (Vilna), Oct. 20 (Riga), Oct. 27 (Riga), November 1 (Vilna), Nov. 3 (Riga), Nov. 5 (Vilna), Nov. 9 (Riga), Nov. 14 (Vilna), Nov. 16 (Riga), Nov. 20 (Vilna), Nov. 26 (Vilna), Nov. 30 (Riga), Dec. 4 (Vilna), Dec. 6 (Riga), Dec. 17 (Vilna), Dec. 24 (Vilna), Dec. 28 (Riga), Dec. 29 (Vilna). The postmaster who succeeded the Marselises, Andrei Vinius, argued for closure of the Vilna route as a cost-saving measure. A document from 1696 (Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, II, No. 97, pp. 197–199) lists the number of deliveries for each year from 1685 to 1696 and indicates that beginning in 1692, there was a steady decline in the route. The problems started earlier though.

30 On the translation techniques, see Maier, V–K VI, ch. 2, Chapter 5.

some deviation from the schedule happened and a complaint was lodged. Thus we know from a Muscovite document that in 1669, the intended travel time on the Riga to Moscow route was eleven-twelve days.³¹ The intent was that from Moscow to the border just beyond Pechory would take seven days, but ten-eleven days seem to have been more normal. On the Vilna to Moscow route the planned time was eight-nine days, the time divided roughly in half on each side of the border. When a second contract was negotiated with the Vilna postmaster Bissing, the Vilna to border time was set at a perhaps more realistic five days, and the border to Moscow time at five-six days. Yet at least one complaint from Vilna in May 1669 indicated that the posts from Moscow were taking as long as 16 days to reach the border.³² With the withdrawal in the 1670s of the Polish and Muscovite residents from the capitals to which they had been posted, one of the main rationales for the Vilna post was removed, and the service began increasingly to experience problems. Merchants in Moscow shifted their business to the more reliable Riga post.

The Swedish agent Johann Kilburger provided what seems to have been a rather optimistic nine-eleven day transit time for the Riga post, and claimed that the route from Moscow to Hamburg would take 21 days via Vilna and 23 days via Riga.³³ The transit time for least one of the Hamburg newspapers received in Moscow would seem to confirm that his estimates for travel to Hamburg were accurate under optimal conditions. Once the communications between Hamburg and Holland improved in the 1660s (where, as noted above, Hamburg news might appear in Dutch papers in a rapid five days), we can estimate that the fastest possible postal communication from Moscow to the Netherlands would occupy approximately four weeks.³⁴ This figure is consistent with what we have derived from our examination of news transit times from the Netherlands, which indicate that fast delivery might take somewhat

31 For this material see the similar summary in Shamin, *Dostavka*, pp. 123–124. Most of the details are in Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, I, esp. pp. 116–120, 145, and II, esp. docts. nos. 11, 19, 47, 60. The undated and somewhat damaged No. 11 is of particular interest for its detail about exact arrival and departure times and the state of the not always carefully transported mail bags.

32 Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, I, p. 145.

33 Cited *ibid.*, I, pp. 163–164.

34 In 1641 Hamburg issued a new regulation for the city's postal courier service, specifying travel time *by foot* (!) for the couriers to destinations including the following: Köln seven days in summer, nine in winter; Amsterdam six days in summer, seven in winter; Danzig twelve days in summer, 13 in winter; Copenhagen, five days both summer and winter. See M. Teubner, *Das Hamburger Stadtbotenwesen bis zum Ausgang des 17. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Archiv für Post und Telegraphie* 54 (1926) pp. 214–220; here p. 217. As Teubner notes though, in fact the city courier service did not go to Köln (or, one wonders, to Amsterdam?). At least for Köln and, beyond it, Antwerp, the Imperial horse post run by the Taxis family was faster and was preferred. See also G. Ahrens, *Das Botenwesen der Hamburger Kaufmannschaft (1517–1821)*, in: *Archiv für deutsche Postgeschichte* 1962/1 pp. 28–42, where he indicates (p. 41) that the city introduced a horse post to Danzig in 1648, Amsterdam in 1650 and Lübeck in 1652. Behringer notes that the Hamburg to Copenhagen travel time for the post was three days (Im Zeichen des Merkur, p. 425).

more than thirty days. All this travel was on land routes: despite the very substantial maritime trade connecting the Baltic with Western Europe, to travel by sea from, say, Hamburg to the Netherlands, would take longer and be subject to the vagaries of weather.³⁵

In conclusion, we might ask several questions in order to pose an agenda for future research. How significant was it that the Muscovite government improved the regularity and speed of its communications network for acquiring foreign news in the 17th century? To put it another way, did that fact really make a difference, in, say, the ability of Muscovy to carry on an effective foreign policy? To a considerable degree, the answer here can only be part of a broader question: were the international communications networks in the 17th century effective for any government's foreign policy needs? Clearly Muscovy was not alone in understanding that good communications were necessary. After all, during the Thirty Years War, the Swedes recognized the necessity to develop their own postal network to ensure reliable communications and very quickly stepped in to take over the Imperial network in the territories they controlled in Germany. Similarly, during the protracted negotiations culminating finally in the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648, the various parties supplemented the existing postal networks with their own couriers, to ensure both speed and confidentiality.³⁶ One provision of the Russo-Swedish peace treaty at Kardis in 1661 was a guarantee of unhindered postal communications across the borders separating the two countries' territories in the Baltic.³⁷ This has to be an indication that there was already an interest in Muscovite government circles which would lead only a few years later to the contract with van Sweeden. As most students of the Muscovite post assert, the key figure behind this development was probably A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin.

35 It is still necessary to systematize the information about the development of the postal networks in Northern Europe in the 17th century. A recent treatment of the Swedish and Brandenburg initiatives, but one skewed in the direction of the Imperial post, is by Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur*, 210ff, 230ff, 243ff. For the Baltic, see P. Pētersone, *Entwicklung und Modernisierung des Post- und Transportwesens im Baltikum im 17. Jahrhundert*, *Acta Baltica* 38 (1997) pp. 199–218. For Sweden, an introduction is H. Droste, *Sending a Letter Between Amsterdam and Stockholm: A Matter of Trust and Precautions*, in: *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. H. Cools et al., Hilversum 2006, pp. 135–146. Kremer's monograph „Johann von den Birghden" details the activity of one of the key postmasters and publishers, who attempted to establish his place within the Imperial network and was then happy to work for the Swedes as they took control of the post in a major part of what is now Germany. For the routes connecting Danzig and Hamburg, see especially several older articles by A. Gallitsch, including: *Der Hamburg-Danziger (pommersche) Postkurs*, in: *Archiv für Post und Telegraphie* 65 (1937) pp. 69–80; 102–111; and: *Danzigs ältere Postgeschichte*, in: *Archiv für Post und Telegraphie* 64 (1936) pp. 220–233.

36 On the relationship between the negotiations and the strengthening of the postal network in Northern Europe, see Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur*, pp. 227–231.

37 Pētersone, *Entstehung*, p. 211.

Whatever we may conclude about the effectiveness of communications (something that can only be assessed after careful examination of case studies of diplomacy in action), we must be careful not to judge the situation in the 17th century by our modern standards of instant information. Maybe, in fact, it made little difference whether most news arrived in three weeks, four weeks or a month and a half. If negotiations were involved, naturally they could be affected by some new development on a distant battlefield, but all the parties continually had to accommodate themselves to the limitations of a communication system which transmitted information often only with substantial delays. Arguably it was better for the Muscovite government to be informed, even with delays of anywhere from a month to three or four, than not to have been informed at all. Yet the slowness of communications may not in fact have put Muscovy at a disadvantage.³⁸

We cannot always know what was important to the Muscovite government in that increasing torrent of foreign news it received. It is easy enough to discern a focus on Sweden, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire.³⁹ The Thirty Years War was reported often in excruciating detail that could hardly have meant much.⁴⁰ Surely the negotiations leading to the end of the war had to be of interest, where the outcome would have some bearing on foreign relations in Eastern Europe. But why translate in its entirety the whole book that was the Peace Treaty of Osnabrück?⁴¹ And was

38 A good example of the improvements in Muscovite knowledge about foreign parts can be seen in the case of its information about England. Despite the long involvement with English merchants coming to Muscovy, it seems that knowledge about England remained limited well into the 17th century. E. I. Kobzareva does a good job of tracing how this situation changed between the 1640s and 1670s. See her unpublished *kandidat* dissertation and its summary in: *Izvestiia o sobytiakh v Zapadnoi Evrope v dokumentakh Posol'skogo prikaza XVII veka. Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk*, Moskva 1988. Compare for the 16th century the rather negative assessment of Moscow's knowledge, in K. Rasmussen, *On the Information Level of the Muscovite Posol'skij prikaz in the Sixteenth Century*, in: *Forschungen zur Osteuropäischen Geschichte* 24 (1978) pp. 88–99, and for the 17th century the too optimistic view, limited by its being based on ambassadorial reports and not taking into account the *kuranty*, in M. A. Alpatov, *Russkaia istoricheskaia mysl' i Zapadnaia Evropa XII–XVII vv.*, Moskva 1973, pp. 323–329.

39 For a decent overview of Muscovite foreign policy, see: *Istoriia vneshnei politiki Rossii. Konets XV–XVII vek (Ot sverzheniia ordynskogo iga do Severnoi voiny)*, ed. A. V. Ignat'ev et al., Moskva 1999, here esp. chs. 4, 6.

40 That said, V. F. Porshnev adduces some examples of how the acquisition of certain news was important for Muscovite diplomacy during the war. See V. F. Porshnev, *Tritsatiletniia voina i vstuplenie v nee Shvetsii i Moskovskogo gosudarstva*, Moskva 1976, esp. ch. 6.

41 The translation is in V–K IV No. 1, from: *Friedens Instrument, Wie solches von beyderseits Plenipotentiarien Käyserlichen und Königl. Schwedischen zu Osnabrück... N.p., 1648*. The *kuranty* also include a translation from an edition printed in Dordrecht of the Treaty of Münster concluded between Spain and the Netherlands in January 1648 (V–K III, no. 58). Information about the conclusion of the Treaty of Münster on October 15, 1648, which, with the Treaty of Osnabrück, constituted the Peace of Westphalia, was translated in Moscow from a manuscript newsletter (V–K IV, no. 3) and reported in greater length in printed newssheets turned over to the Diplomatic Chancery by David Ruts on December 5, 1648 (OS) (*ibid.*, no. 4). The *kuranty*

that deemed any more significant in Moscow than the lengthy list of miraculous cures at the shrine at Hornhausen, which also was translated in its entirety?⁴² Why the particular interest in the false messiah, Shabbetai Zvi, whose movement in 1665 and 1666 shook the Ottoman Empire and even began to disrupt commerce in major European cities?⁴³ There are plausible explanations to be found – for example, in the eschatological concerns in Muscovy heightened at the time of the church schism. Yet how urgent was it to know the progress of Shabbetai? By the time many of those interested in the movement responded to the news, the supposed messiah had already apostasized. One can certainly appreciate why Muscovite clerks would have marked for special attention information in the *kuranty* about the plague in England in late 1665: such news might even be distributed to border commanders in order that they more rigidly screen entrance into Muscovy.⁴⁴ But that news could also have arrived along with the plague, not sufficiently in advance of its spread to do any good.

A very preliminary examination of the evidence suggests that the mechanisms for obtaining a broad spectrum of foreign news on a regular basis may at any given moment have been of less importance than what might be learned by border commanders or negotiators in conference with their counterparts. Connecting Muscovy to the international postal network might facilitate information gathering, but in the first instance it was still very specifically focused news transmitted via courier

files do not now contain a translation of the second Treaty of Münster.

- 42 There are actually two texts on Hornhausen, published in V–K III, nos. 48, 49 (and, the draft copies, appendix nos. 8, 9). In this case we also have the explanation as to how they must have arrived in Muscovy, probably in a packet sent from Stockholm at the end of August 1646 by Christian Schimmelaar, who had worked for Peter Marselis, to the Swedish resident in Moscow Peter Krusbjörn. In his letter to Krusbjörn, Schimmelaar refers to various notables visiting the shrine. See V–K III, No. 51, p. 145. The source for No. 48 is: Gründlicher unnd Warhaffter Bericht von dem Wundersamen Heilbrunnen...in dem Stifft Halberstadt... N.p., n.d. [1646] (copy in Dresden, SLUB, Hist. urb. Germ. 723,56); and for No. 49; Weiterer Bericht Von dem wundersamen Heyl-Brunnen Welcher von einem Knaben [...] zuerst erfunden worden [...] Gedruckt im Jahr 1646 (copy in Herzog August Bibl. [Wolfenbüttel], Mx 85[2]). On these accounts, see the unpublished paper by I. Maier, O vnov' naidennykh originalakh k *Vestiam-Kurantam*: novosti o tselitel'nom kolodtse (1646 g.).
- 43 On the Shabbetai texts and their sources, see: D. C. Waugh, News of the False Messiah: Reports on Shabbetai Zevi in Ukraine and Muscovy, in: *Jewish Social Studies* XLI (1979), 3–4 pp. 301–322; I. Maier (together with W. Pilger), Polnische Fabelzeitung über Sabbatai Zwi übersetzt für den russischen Zaren (1666, in: *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie* 62 (2003) pp. 1–39; I. Maier, Acht anonyme deutsche und polnische Sabetha Sebi-Drucke aus dem Jahre 1666. Auf der Spur nach dem Drucker, in: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 2008, pp. 141–160; I. Maier (with W. Schumacher), Ein Medien-Hype im 17. Jahrhundert? Fünf illustrierte Drucke aus dem Jahr 1666 über die angebliche Hinrichtung von Sabbatai Zwi, in: *Quaerendo* (forthcoming); Maier, V–K VI, ch. 2, secs. 3.5.1, 3.5.2; I. Maier and D. C. Waugh, “The Blowing of the Messiah’s Trumpet” (in: *Proceedings from an international conference held in Bremen, Germany, 5-8 December 2007*, ed. by Brendan Dooley; Ashgate Publishing, forthcoming).
- 44 The texts in question are RGADA, f. 155, 1666, No. 11, esp. fol. 59; publication will be in V–K VI, ch. 1, tentatively no. 65 (but mis-dated in the draft copy of V–K VI to 1666).

which would be the most important and timely. Thus, during the wars in Ukraine in the 1670s, every effort was made to keep track of the latest developments in Polish politics and the machinations of Cossack Hetman Doroshenko.⁴⁵ While this would mean careful perusal of the imported German newspapers, it seems likely that the most important channel of information was the Muscovite *voevoda* in Kiev. The importance of timely acquisition of any news was obviously directly proportionate to the significance of that news.

A second set of questions takes us beyond the acquisition of foreign news. The networks which provided it were, after all, not inseparable from the networks providing internal information, including the old *iamskaia gon'ba*. That is, naturally the Muscovite government had to communicate with its provincial representatives throughout a farflung empire. As Kozlovskii suggested, the experience with the establishment of the foreign post served as a model for attempts to create other postal routes – to Arkhangelsk, Ukraine, and Astrakhan, for example.⁴⁶ Yet it is not clear that the initial efforts resulted in much improvement in the regularity and rapidity of communication along those routes.⁴⁷ There is little evidence that even well into the Petrine period much had been accomplished to improve communications within the empire. We should hardly be surprised, given the natural obstacles which had to be overcome by the creation and maintenance of expensive infrastructure. It was one thing for Peter to spend money on often ill-fated projects to build a canal system for transporting goods, another to figure out how to maintain and improve

45 See the passing comments on this interest in A. Popov, *Russkoe posol'stvo v Pol'she v 1673–1677 godakh. Neskol'ko let iz istorii otnoshenii Drevnei Rossii k evropeiskim derzhavam, Sanktpeterburg 1854*, p. 58. See also Ogloblin, *Voevodskie vestovye otpiski. The Malorossiiskie dela* (Ukrainian Affairs files) are an important source for further study to learn more about this effort to obtain intelligence.

46 His conclusion on this point (p. 165) is a rather optimistic reading of the facts he adduces. See his discussion of the effort to improve the communications with Arkhangelsk, pp. 135ff and with Ukraine, pp. 142–144. Leontii Marselis submitted a proposal in June 1669 to establish a regular Arkhangelsk post during the summer navigation months; he provided in support a letter from the Dutch merchants. However, a note on the file some three weeks after its submission indicated that the idea had been rejected (Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty*, II, No. 20, pp. 28–29). It was taken up again much later; see *ibid.*, II, pp. 207ff. Improvement of communications with Kiev was given some priority, although whether the example of the foreign post had anything to do with it is a good question. The government instructed the Kievan *voevoda* in 1670 and again in 1674 to establish a postal service for sending regular news reports (*vsiakie vestovye pis'ma*) to Moscow (*ibid.*, II, No. 32, pp. 41–42). In contrast to the normal time of 15–20 days for messages from Kiev to reach Moscow, the express service was to take six-eight days.

47 For some vivid examples of the problem of travel along Russian roads earlier in the Muscovite period, see I. Ia. Gurliand, *Iamskaia gon'ba v Moskovskom gosudarstve do kontsa XVII veka, Iaroslavl 1900*. A recent contribution on the topic of Muscovite roads, but one primarily concerned with the imposition of maintaining them on the local population, is C. Goehrke, *Die Strasse in der Alltagswahrnehmung russischer Bauern des 17. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Rude & Barbarous Kingdom Revisited: Essays in Russian History and Culture in Honor of Robert O. Crumme*, ed. Ch. Dunning et al., Bloomington, Ind. 2008. Prof. Goehrke kindly provided the authors with a copy of his article in typescript.

roads. Parts of the Russian north might communicate with the capitals only a few times a year and then, it seems, rather unpredictably.⁴⁸ Peter's misguided early attempts at provincial reform were as much as anything an effort to try to overcome the challenges of Russia's vast spaces and unevenly distributed resources by focusing decision-making regionally. Among the problems which then emerged though was the failure to organize the communications between these new provinces and the central government.

Surely if we are to understand the challenges faced by the effort to rule far too large a territory through far too centralized processes of decision-making in Imperial Russia, we will need to look more closely at communications within the empire. The issue here is not merely that of an effective infrastructure for rapid movement. As we know, bureaucratic procedure was perhaps what most needed to be changed. And in fact there is a whole chain of related factors connected with the need to de-centralize decision making, to ensure the competence of local officialdom, etc. Ironically, it was the limitations of the system of communications between St. Petersburg and the periphery which enabled enterprising commanders to act in ways which almost overnight added new territories to the Empire in the 19th century. While a subject of great relevance to the scholarship of Andreas Kappeler, whom we honor in this volume, that topic must be addressed by others.

48 See D. K. Uo [D.C. Waugh], *Istoriia odnoi knigi: Viatka i „ne-sovremennost” v russkoi kul'ture Petrovskogo vremeni*, S.-Peterburg 2003, esp. pp. 91–94. We still need a serious study of communications in Petrine Russia. The rather thin treatment of the Russian post by A. N. Vigilev, *Istoriia otechestvennoi pochty*, 2nd ed., Moscow 1990, says little about communications between the capital and the provinces.