

The *Kuranty* in Context: Dutch Lading Lists and Their Russian Translations Part 1*

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There is a great deal of recent scholarship exploring how foreign news reached early modern Russia and what its impact there was. Of particular importance is the study of the *kuranty*, the translations of Western newspapers and pamphlets. By examining closely what may seem to have been an unusual choice to translate from Dutch newspapers – the cargo lists of Dutch ships from the East Indies – this article suggests how it might be possible to contextualize the news translations more broadly than has been done to date. It is important to examine the significance of the news where it originally appeared, since its significance in the Russian context may be quite different. And it is also important not just to focus on the Russian government's interest in the political news that informed its foreign policy. Over a period of decades, the importance given certain topics may have changed. The interests of the translators themselves – among them Andrei Vinus – may help to explain why they selected particular items for translation from the substantial quantity of foreign news which began to arrive in Moscow regularly upon the establishment of the foreign postal connection in 1665. The article is published in two parts, the first one here covering the background and the analysis of the evidence up through 1665. The second part, to appear in a subsequent number of the journal, will deal with the lading lists of 1667 and 1671 and the complex analysis of the context within which they may have been of particular interest in Moscow.

Keywords: *Vesti-Kuranty*, news, information broadcasting, 17th-century Russia, Dutch ships, exotic goods

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Изучение доставки и влияния иностранных известий в Московской Руси является темой многочисленных новых исследований. Особое внимание уделяется «курантам» – переводам западных газет и брошюр. Среди них особый интерес вызывает внимание переводчиков к передаче информации «материального мира» – многочисленным размещениям списков товаров, привезенных из Восточной Индии голландскими кораблями. В статье обсуждаются возможные контексты, объясняющие выбор из газет именно такого редкого материала. Выявляются значение и источники этих публикаций. Отмечено несовпадение оценки важности информации по различным вопросам в русской и зарубежной среде. Вопреки традиционному мнению о том, что для русского правительства в первую очередь переводили политические известия, показано, что изучаемые материалы нередко были посвящены и другой тематике. Так, например, в них содержатся подробные списки экзотических товаров, число которых поражает и требует объяснения. Существующие переводы таких списков разных десятилетий демонстрируют изменение интереса с течением времени. Автор полагает, что выбор газетных статей для переводов, отражая преимущественно интерес правительства, зависел и от личного выбора переводчика (например, таковым был известный Андрей Вinius), от его интересов. Отмечено, что становление иностранной почты в 1665 г. привело к расширению ввоза иностранных газет и актуализации новостей торговли. Статья публикуется в двух частях, в первой представлены анализ западного контекста публикации списков товаров в Голландии на примере переводов двух источников (1628 и 1646) и документация об интересе к новостям о голландских морских делах со стороны России (до 1665). Вторая часть исследования будет посвящена переводу списков за 1667 и 1671 гг. и анализу сложных вопросов об интересантах этой информации.

Ключевые слова: «Вести-Куранты», новости, трансляция информации, Россия XVII в., голландские корабли, экзотические товары

In recent decades there have been major advances in the publication and analysis of the *kuranty* (куранты), the seventeenth-century Russian translations of foreign newspapers and other news sources. The most recent volumes in the ongoing series of text publications, *Vesti-Kuranty* [Вести-Куранты] (hereafter – B-K), include not only carefully edited and indexed editions of the translations but also, thanks to Prof. Ingrid Maier, the concomitant printing of the most likely foreign sources which she has identified and her analysis of the accuracy of the translations¹. Stepan Shamin continues to publish important studies of the *kuranty* texts that await inclusion in the series and to broaden our knowledge of the texts which in some cases were disseminated in manuscript copies outside the Muscovite chanceries². There is a steady stream of new discoveries of translated texts

¹ In particular, among Maier's numerous publications, note (B-K VI/2), containing her monograph-length introduction to her publication in the same volume of the foreign newspaper sources for the translations published in B-K VI/1 and her commentaries about the accuracy and completeness of the translations.

² Among his many publications, note [Шамин, 2011; Шамин, 2020].

along with the determination of their sources. As a result of such work, we have learned a great deal from the historical linguists about the Russian language and skill of the translators and from the historians who have expanded our knowledge of the contexts in which the translations appeared. However, much research is still needed if we would hope to establish why particular texts were of interest to translate and whether the existence of the translations had much of an impact on government policy or more broadly outside of the chanceries. Currently, conclusions about such matters usually are based on hypotheses and unproven assumptions. If in the first instance, the foreign news that was of interest in Moscow related to international politics – the wars, the negotiations, the activities of the political elites – such hypotheses rarely have invited elaboration. Yet a careful examination of what is known from the *kuranty* and the degree to which that information may have been actually brought to bear in the government's foreign policy suggests that such assumptions may need to be revised. Moreover, there is a lot in the *kuranty* and what we might call “*kuranty*-like” translations which would seem to have little to do with political questions. Any attempt to understand why such texts were translated and whether or not they might have had any “relevance” to the concerns of Muscovites may necessitate broadening the examination of the contexts in which the texts can be situated both outside and within Russia. Why a particular item might have been deemed important for the publisher of a Western newspaper might be very different from why that same report attracted attention in Moscow.

This essay explores through a case study how we might attempt to broaden our understanding of the history of the *kuranty* in order to suggest lines for future research³. The subject here is several translations made in Moscow of the lading lists of the Dutch East Indies convoys. Why might Dutch newspapers regularly publish such detailed lists of the goods which provided the economic foundations of the Dutch Golden Age? Did these lists constitute accurate “news”, or might they better be seen as “advertising”? Who in Moscow could have found the detailed information in the lading lists to be of interest, especially if many of the products were unknown and not ones imported by Dutch and other merchants via the sea route to Arkhangelsk? We tend to assume the choices about what to translate from the western newspapers were governed by the interests of those who shaped Russian foreign policy, ultimately by the tsar himself. Yet might there not be an alternative explanation, suggesting that the personal interests of the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery (Посольский приказ) were important?

³ This essay anticipates the thematic and methodological emphasis and incorporates materials drafted by the author for a collaborative but yet unpublished book project with Prof. Ingrid Maier (Uppsala) on foreign news in Muscovy [Maier, 2004; Maier, 2006]. That draft contextualizes very broadly the *kuranty*, with reference to their sources, European events, other Muscovite “news” sources, and Muscovite political priorities and cultural history. The book examines systematically and in some detail the period between ca. 1620 and 1665 (the establishment of the Muscovite foreign post) and then more selectively examples for the remainder of the seventeenth century, with new material on some of the “curiosities”, on readership and and the possible dissemination of the news beyond the confines of the chanceries.

The Dutch context for the lading lists

Given the dependence of the Dutch economy on international trade, news about commercial shipping was one of the staples of the Dutch newspapers. Dutch convoys generally sailed according to regular schedules each year; their arrival was anxiously anticipated. So there would be reports on the impending arrival of ships from Smyrna (today's Izmir in Turkey), the West Indies, and Arkhangelsk, as well as the annual fleets from the East Indies. Delays due to bad weather, shipwreck or the capture of the ships by pirates or hostile powers were news, and, if not yet confirmed, the cause for speculation. While by no means all such reports included cargo lists, the newspapers printed lading lists for both the East and West Indies Dutch fleets and for English or French ships whose imports might be obtained by Dutch merchants. This was information presumably important for anticipating market prices and profits.

The Dutch East Indies Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, hereafter – VOC), incorporated in 1602, became one of the commercial powerhouses of the seventeenth century. Its colonies and commercial network in South, Southeast and East Asia supplied a major part of the economic riches for the Dutch Golden Age. The company normally dispatched two return fleets each year from the Indies, the first generally departing from Batavia (today Jakarta, Indonesia) in late autumn, the second, usually the smaller one, in early winter⁴. As the century progressed, ships routed via Ceylon (Sri Lanka) often were part of the second return fleet (Ill. 1 on the color page).

Always very precise in their record-keeping, the VOC administrators in the ports of departure would draw up detailed lading lists for the cargoes of each ship in the fleet. Generally, before the ships would dock in the Netherlands, a copy of the lading lists would be brought ashore by fast packet boats sent out to meet them⁵. Even before all the ships in one of the return fleets would have docked, it was in the interest of the VOC to have the lading list for the entire convoy published as a kind of advertising for the merchants who during the

⁴ An overview of the VOC shipping is in [Bruijn et al., vol. 1]. Vol. 2 and 3 of the study, based on the data in the VOC archives (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag. No. 1.04.02), list all the VOC ships individually, with details about size, date of construction, dates of main voyages, etc. The online database thus makes it possible to check references to individual ships that are found in the headers to the lading lists and in some separate news reports.

⁵ An example is the report on the Indies fleet published in the Amsterdam newspaper [Courante uyt Italien en Duytslant 1660/28, 10 July] (hereafter – *CID*), in which there was information dated 9 July that on the previous day, the director of the VOC had learned from a galiot that ten ships of the return fleet were about to land. The article then confirmed their sighting and indicated nine were from the first return fleet expected that year, the tenth having been sent out the previous year but forced to turn back for repairs. Of these ten ships, four docked on 10 July, the day the paper was published, and the remaining six docked on 18 July. The article further indicated that two more ships were expected (the second return fleet). Following this article, the newspaper published the lading list for the ten return ships which the VOC had provided in advance of their all having reached port. Publication dates for the Dutch newspapers are according to the Gregorian Calendar (N. S.) as are the dates of the events they reported. Receipt and translation dates in Moscow are according to the Julian Calendar (O. S.). Occasionally for clarity we cite both calendar dates in the form O. S. / N. S., the difference in the seventeenth century being 10 days.

upcoming months would bid on the goods in several Dutch cities⁶. The early Dutch press pioneered in the inclusion of paid advertising, although most commonly it was for new books and would be separated from the rest of the news by its placement at the very end of the final news item, just below where the lading lists would be printed [Pettegree, Weduwen, p. 82–84]. Our concern here is the published versions of the lading lists, not the details (which would require examination of the vast VOC archives) about the realities of the Dutch markets or the company's profits. Since there are major lacunae in the files of Dutch newspapers which have survived, to supplement that evidence, we have examined as well the annual volumes of *Hollandtze Mercurius* (hereafter – *HM*), published in Haarlem by Pieter Casteleyn starting in the 1650s. Every volume of these news books includes the lading lists for the annual fleet arrivals of that year, either drawn directly from the information supplied by the VOC or copied from the newspapers, in particular the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* (hereafter – *OHC*) published by his brother Abraham Casteleyn. Taken together, this material illustrates well the ways in which the reports of the VOC Indies fleets appeared in the press.

Although there were some exceptions, the lading lists printed in the press combined the statistics for each individual ship's cargo into a single listing for the entire fleet. Thus, readers would know for each category of goods the total quantity which was expected. The exceptions to this aggregation of the data can be of particular interest for what they reveal about the point of origin of goods and the changes over time in the assortment of what was arriving in the Dutch markets. Even though for the period that concerns us here the most valuable part of the cargoes was the spices (first of all pepper), the quantities and varieties of fabrics, especially cottons from India, grew in importance⁷. By the end of the seventeenth century, the most valuable part of the trade was the textiles, most of them obtained by the Dutch stations in Bengal and shipped on vessels that stopped in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)⁸.

⁶ The Haarlem newspaper [Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdagse Courant 1669/32, 10 Aug.] (hereafter – *OHS*) published from what must have been a VOC press release not only the lading list for two of the return ships but a schedule of upcoming auctions and a listing of the quantities of a number of products that would be sold. On 2 August 1670, the same newspaper reported that four VOC ships from Ceylon and Batavia had just arrived but noted that the cargo list had not yet been made public. However, the word was that there were 1300 bales of Pepper, 12,000 pounds of Bengal silk, etc. (*OHS* 1670/31). The important Amsterdam newspaper [Tijdinghe uyt Verscheide Quartieren, 1670/31] (hereafter – *TVQ*), published on the same day, reported the arrival of the ships but made no mention of the cargo. The next issue of the Haarlem newspaper [Oprechte Haerlemse Dingdaegse Courant 1670/31, 5 Aug.] (hereafter – *OHD*) printed the lading list for those ships, the quantities of both the pepper and silk in fact substantially larger than what rumor had suggested.

⁷ An unusually long and detailed lading list for the return fleet of 1661 not only breaks down the cargoes by individual ship but for several of them lists the cotton textiles separately from the other goods (*HM*, vol. 12, p. 99–101).

⁸ See [Bruijn et al., vol. 1, p. 189–194] for a summary discussion of the cargoes and how they changed during the seventeenth century. There is, of course, a large literature on the early Asiatic maritime trade. One of the pioneering studies, based on extensive research in the VOC archives, is [Glamann], which provides a great deal of information on products, markets, prices, etc. with statistical comparisons of changes over more than a century, starting in 1620.

The information in the lading lists was not necessarily a precise indication of what would actually reach the Dutch market, since occasionally a ship whose cargo had been inventoried for the lists in the Indies never arrived or would make it to port only months later. When the newspapers published the initial, comprehensive lading list, the fate of every ship in the fleet might not be known, and generally there was no immediate qualification of whether part of the shipment might have been lost. In his yearbooks, which were generally printed in the spring of the following year, Pieter Casteleyn could include both the lading list and additional information about the fate of the ships. Each return fleet brought back often detailed reports on the latest developments affecting the eastern trade, which Casteleyn might print but which generally would not be included in the newspaper reports, focused as they were on immediate events. A further limitation in the accuracy or value of the lading list information was that the goods they listed might have been damaged during the long voyage and not be saleable. Nonetheless, the lists probably were a reasonable guide for merchants to estimate pricing. Here we will examine in sequence the several Russian translations of the Dutch lading lists. We have translations for the return fleets of 1628, 1646, 1667 and 1671. It is possible to offer reasonable hypotheses in each case why there would have been an interest in translating the list. The circumstances involving the lists of 1667 and 1671 are complex and invite the much broader, if speculative, treatment in second installment of this article. It is important at the outset to keep in mind the limitations of the evidence. Not only are the files of Dutch newspapers incomplete, but so also are the files of the *kuranty*. Thus, we cannot know whether these few examples of the translated lading lists are exceptional, or whether they might fortuitously preserve evidence of some more sustained interest in Moscow about the tracking of the Dutch Indies fleets. Even though the lading lists were being published on a regular basis in the Netherlands, it is impossible to know for certain how many of those lists were actually received in Moscow and, if they were, whether they were deemed of sufficient interest to translate.

The lading list of 1628 and its Russian translation

Fortuitously, copies of the two leading newspapers of Amsterdam which reported on the arrival of the return fleets in 1628 have been preserved, along with the Russian translation of the lading list and some other evidence suggesting how that news from Amsterdam arrived in Moscow. On 10 June 1628 (N. S.), the as yet untitled newspaper published by Broer Jansz (which in the next year would begin to appear under the title *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren*, hereafter – TVQ) published in full the lading lists enumerating for each of the five ships (which he named) in the East Indies fleet all of its goods and the aggregated cargoes for three ships which had arrived on the same day, June 2, from Dutch Guinea (the Dutch West India Company's fleet from Fort Nassau, today Ghana). The other well-known Amsterdam newspaper, *Courante uyt Italien en Duytslant* (hereafter – CID), also published on 10 June a report about the return fleets, but rather than

include the detailed cargo listings for each ship, aggregated for each of the two return fleets the amounts for each cargo item (Ill. 1).

The two newspapers presumably had received the same information, which included the names of all the ships, the indication of which chamber within the VOC was responsible for each vessel, and the date (7 November, 1627) of the departure of the VOC convoy from Batavia. Even though it totaled the statistics for the cargoes, *CID* published the chamber information and the departure date, whereas *TVQ* did not. *CID* also included the names of the ships, which had arrived from Guinea, whereas *TVQ* did not name them. The distinct differences in the two newspaper reports make it clear that the Russian translation was based only on *TVQ*. Both newspapers indicated the arrival of the fleets was on 2 June, although in fact two of the East Indies ships did not dock until 28 June, more than two weeks after the publication of the news reports⁹. First in importance in the 1628 cargoes was pepper, the total in the five ships from the East Indies nearly 65,000 sacks, which is apparently the equivalent of over 1.8 million kg. The cargoes contained a lot of saltpetre (Salpeter). There were some barrels with porcelain, which we know the VOC was having manufactured to specification in Chinese kilns. Persian and raw white Chinese silk were in the cargoes and some quantities of diamonds. Only one of the ships had some sandalwood. The same ship was distinctive too as the only one carrying textiles – relatively small quantities of “Betilies” and painted cloths (geschilderde Deeckens) – both known from the later lading lists. The later lading lists included a much broader assortment of textiles. Guinea supplied some gold, lemon juice and, interestingly, nearly 17,000 kg of elephant tusks.

The translation of this lading list does not necessarily indicate that there was a particular interest in its contents in Moscow. In fact, the entire number of *TVQ* containing it was translated, the list not singled out for special attention¹⁰. In this period in Moscow, when foreign

⁹ As the online database of VOC Asian shipping [Bruijn et al.] reveals, the East Indies fleet had sailed from Batavia on 6 November 1627 (this date differs by one day from that mentioned in the report in *CID*). Even though both newspapers state that the ships had arrived home on 2 June, in fact that was the case only for the *Wapen van Delft*, *Galiassse*, and *Frederik Hendrik*, the two ships named *Hollandia* arriving on 28 June.

¹⁰ The copy of the translations from this number of *TVQ* is in [РГАДА. Ф. 155. Оп. 1. 1628 г. Д. 1. Л. 58–61, 78–84, 58–61]. They include on fols. 58–61 a proclamation by King Gustavus Adolphus dated 22 March (O. S.) and on fols. 82–84 the lading list. See the publication in (B-K I, c. 115–117, 120–122). The editors divided the translation into two separate packets (№ 22, 23). In subsequent references to the *Vesti-Kuranty* series, following the page numbers, packet numbers (№) provided by the editors are cited in the form № 23.78 to facilitate the precise identification of the texts in question (information on a particular manuscript sheet is added after the point). Clearly the ordering of the folios from the original archival scroll as it presumably had existed in the seventeenth century had subsequently been rearranged at the time it was unglued into individual sheets, with the material from *TVQ* separated by translations from other sources. In the absence of a title at the top of the first page of the newspaper, the translator has “created” one on the basis of the first article, a report from Breslau dated 24 May (№ 23.78). The copy of the Swedish king’s proclamation also was published in at least one German newspaper, but in the context of the Russian manuscript, it seems clear the translation was made from the Dutch one (cf. [Maier, 2006, p. 455], citing the Hamburg *Wochentliche Zeitung* 1628/21).

newspapers were not being received on a regular basis, those that arrived tended to be translated in full or at least without major omissions and condensation. Even though it seems the surviving Russian translation files have significant lacunae, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that several issues of *CID* (published 3 March, 18 March, 1 April, 22 April) and at least one other issue of *TVQ* (published 17 June) were sources for the translations found in the manuscripts along with the ones which definitely came from *TVQ* of 10 June¹¹. There is a distinct possibility that at least the most recent of these newspapers (the two issues of *TVQ*) could have been in a packet of news sent directly to the tsar by the well-known merchant Isaac Massa, who had more than once been in Moscow, was involved in Dutch diplomacy with Russia, and seems to have had at least an unofficial “contract” to supply the tsar with foreign news¹². He wrote the tsar from Haarlem on 30 June 1628 a newsletter with which he would have been able to enclose the 10 June and 17 June copies of *TVQ*¹³. Probably he wrote his letter shortly before the departure of the next Dutch ship to Arkhangelsk. Its Russian translation was made on 15 September upon its receipt in Moscow. Thus, that may also be posited as the date when the lading list was translated, more than three months after it had been published in Amsterdam. As is the case with most of the Russian translations of the foreign newspapers, the identity of the translator is never indicated. At this time, the most likely translator would have been one Boris Borisov,

¹¹ The following conclusions may need to be qualified by allowing for the possibility that some of the news articles in question could have derived from German newspapers, not the Dutch ones. We know that often news reports were translated and thus reprinted in another language. That said, given the extensive overlap of the translated texts with the Dutch sources, it seems most likely that *CID* 18 March 1628 is the source for (B-K I, c. 130–131, № 24.110–24.115), where the translator has mistakenly used the date in the header for the opening article (from Venice), which he did not translate, instead of the correct date for the subsequent article with news from Vienna which he did. *CID* 1 April is the source for (B-K I, c. 125–127, № 23.94–23.101). *CID* 22 April is the source for (B-K I, c. 127–129, № 23.102–23.109), breaking off in the middle of the article datelined Luyck (but mis-translated as Lübeck). *TVQ* 10 June is the source for (B-K I, c. 115–116, № 22.58–22.61; c. 116–117, № 23.61–23.66; c. 120–122, № 23.78–23.84). *TVQ* 17 June is the source for (B-K I, c. 117–120, № 23.67–23.77). The source(s) for (B-K I, c. 122–125, № 23.85–23.93) have yet to be identified. Even though at least two articles (B-K I, c. 124, № 23.89–23.90) overlap in content with ones published in *CID* 25 March, that does not seem to be their source. Possibly the material comes from two numbers of *TVQ* which are no longer extant to check. One of them would have been that published on 22 April, which might have contained the entry datelined Bergen op Zoom, 18 April (B-K I, c. 125, № 23.93). It is not the same as an article with the same dateline published in *CID* 22 April.

¹² Dutch merchants in Russia on numerous occasions turned over to the Russian officials copies of the newspapers they received. So it is possible that someone other than Massa was responsible for handing in the papers used in the translations we have and may have acquired the originals from a different individual in Holland. The March and April issues of *CID*, which we assume to have been received, likely would have arrived in one of the earliest Dutch ships in the navigation season, whereas the June issues of *TVQ* must have arrived in a later sailing timed to reach Russia (and be able then to head back home) before winter weather set in.

¹³ His letter of 30 June is published in (B-K I, c. 132–133, № 25).

Carge van de vyf Schepen ghecomen van Batavia met den Generael Carpen- tier / den tweeden Junij.	
t'Schip Hollandia.	
15132.	Sacken Peper.
88000.	Pont Noten Muscater.
220.	Sockels Folpe.
4.	Legghers gewerkelde Noten.
38404.	Pont Nagelen.
1050.	Catti Indigo.
180.	Catti Aloë.
17895.	Pont Stadit China.
21275.	Pont Saliga.
16.	Balen met Porceleyn.
20502.	Pont Gerassineert Salpeter.
12923.	Catti witte rontse Chinese Zijde.
150.	Balen Zijde van perien.
81.	en drie bierendeel Carraet Diamanten van Bozneo.
21.	Stuck Diamanten bande Cuff.
11.	Stuck Bezar-steenen.
15.	Catti 6. stepl sijne Muscus.
t'VVapen van Delft.	
18116.	Sacken Peper.
106624.	Pont Nagelen.
53538.	Pont Noten.
14263.	Catti Japons Coper.
100.	Balen Zijde van Persien.
9440.	Stuck Porceleyn.
t'Schip Galjas.	
4457.	en een half Sacken Peper.
13535.	Pont Nagelen.
142200.	Pont Noten.
304.	Sockels Folpe.
1098.	Verilles.
40.	Stuck geschilderde Verckens.
116.	Pont Cactorn tot een Mouster.
10.	Piccol Sandel hout.
t'Slants Schip Hollandia.	
7340.	Sacken Peper/wegende 426720. Pont Holl.
22016.	Pont Nagelen.
90.	Sockels Folpe.
27135.	Pont Gerassineert en Ongerassineert Sal- peter.
6.	Mere stucken wegende te samen 14660.
Item tot Ballast int ruyt vooz de Generale Compa- gnie Geschut gescheept.	
t'Schip Frederick Henrick.	
19750.	Sacken Peper.
104005.	Pont Nagelen.
34300.	Pont Noten.
230.	Sockels Folpe.
201.	Balen Persische Zijde.
7975.	Pont ongerassineert Salpeter.
31011.	Stuck Porceleyn.
Ladinge van de drie Guineische Sche- pen/den selfden dito ghearriveert.	
1027.	Pont 4. once vier en half Engels Gout.
33750.	Pont Oliphants Tand.
25.	Laften Maniquete.
87.	Oer-hoofden Lamoen-sap.
Ladinghe van vyf Schepen / uyt Batavia met den Generael Carpentier / den 12. November 1627. ghecomen / ende den tweeden Junij 1628. in t'Vaderlandt ghearriveert. t'Schip Hollandia vooz Amsterdam. t'VVapen van Delft vooz Delft. Galias vooz Hoorn. t'Slants Schip Hollandia vooz Rotterdam. Ende Fredrick Hendrick in Zeelandt.	
64795.	Sacken Peper. 284604. Pont Nagelen.
318038.	Pont Noten. 844. Sockelen Folpe.
55612.	Pont Salpeter. 451. Balen Persische Zijde.
40451.	Stuck Porceleyn. 1098. Verilles.
14263.	Catti Japons Coper. 4. Legghers ghe- werelde Noten. 1050. Catti Indigo. 180. Catti Aloë.
17895.	Pont Stadit China. 21275. Pont Saliga.
12923.	Catti Chinese Zijde. 81. Car- raet Diamanten van Bozneo. 11. Stuck Diaman- ten van de Cuff. 11. Stuck Bezar-steenen. 15. Catti sijne Muscus.
Ladinghe van de drie Guineische Schepen den self- den dito ghearriveert, te weten, d'Arcke Noë, ende de Oliphant voor Amsterdam, ende de Orangien-Boom voor Zeelandt.	
1027.	Pont 4. Once vier en half Engels Gout.
33750.	Pont Oliphants Tand. 25. Laften Ma- niquete. 87. Oer-hoofden Lamoen-sap.

1. The lading lists in the Dutch newspapers of 1628. The condensed list in CID 10 June, p. 2 (right). The full list in TVQ 10 June, p. 2 (left)

a foreigner (whose origins have not been determined) first employed in translation for the Ambassadorial Chancery in 1621, where he continued to work over more than three decades (for his biography, see: [Беляков и др., С. 67–69]). A specialist for Dutch and German, he was involved in a number of important diplomatic missions to Sweden, Denmark and the Hanse cities of northern Germany, and on more than one occasion was among the translators who tested the language ability of others who were applying to be employed by the chancery.

While it is of interest to establish the accuracy of the newspaper translations made in Moscow, there are always uncertainties about whether problems might be the fault of the translator or the fault of the

copyist for whom a word would have been unfamiliar or illegible. That said, it seems that on the whole the translation of the lading list is quite precise. With the exception of a couple of the fractional amounts, the numerical statistics for all the cargoes are accurately reproduced. The Russian translation omitted the names of the ships and separate heading for the Guinea fleet, thereby conflating its cargo with that of the fifth ship in the East Indies fleet. The occasional foreign place name was omitted or rendered in an odd fashion, perhaps because it was unfamiliar: van Borneo > *melkovo*; Chin(ese) > *chepuchinnyi* (чепучинный); Japons > *indeiskaia*. The unusual *chepuchinnyi* is a term that could designate at least in a general way a substance used in medical treatment. However, the translation of Betilies as *chepuchinnovy koren'* (the same translation as for Radix China [China root]) is wrong: Betilies (Bethilles), attested in many of the other lading lists, is a kind of fine muslin. A few terms, transliterated from foreign sources (Galiga > *kalgan*; Bezoar-steenen > *kamen' bezuinyi*), may have been in common use by the seventeenth century. As Clare Griffin discusses, a good many of the ingredients in the medicaments prepared by the tsars' apothecaries were herbs that originated in East or South Asia and which could have been known from translations of Western herbals, the earliest of them done in the sixteenth century [Griffin, ch. 2 and passim]. The VOC played a significant role in supplying Europe with Bezoar stones and China root [Borschberg, 2006; Borschberg, 2010]. Mace (Folye) has been mistakenly transliterated in the Russian text as *folga*, probably because "y" and "g" would easily have been confused in the Fraktur (Gothic) typeface of the newspaper. There are a few puzzles, such as Indigo > *divimed* (the term used later was *krutik*) and Maniguete > *magnetovyi kamen'*.

When placed in the context of the other extant *kuranty* translations from 1628, the lading list certainly does not leap out as necessarily being of particular importance to the Russian government. A major part of the surviving translations concerns political events scattered across Europe. There are several long texts (including one translation from a Dutch pamphlet) relating to the French siege of Huguenot La Rochelle and the English effort to support the Protestants there. Immediately adjoining these texts in the current archival file is the declaration by King Gustavus Adolphus to peoples in the northern German lands in connection with his aims against Poland and the Holy Roman Empire.

The lading list translation of 1646

The situation is different with the next translation of a Dutch lading list, made probably in 1646. In this case, there clearly has been some conscious selectivity by the translators in the Ambassadorial Chancery at a time when the Russian government was gathering information pertaining to trade by the foreign merchants and their agents, in which the Dutch played a significant role. So far, we have not located a copy of the original Dutch lading list of 1646, and the Russian version may in any event not be a full

representation of its contents. However, there is evidence which can help to contextualize the decision to translate it.

The current archival files of *kuranty* translations include a great deal of material ostensibly dating from 1646 [РГАДА. Ф. 155. Оп. 1. 1646 г. Д. 6]. However, there are important unresolved questions about the actual dates of many of the texts. The current order of the folios may or may not preserve the seventeenth-century order. Individual folios or groups of them may later have been shuffled around and folios lost. At the same time though, an argument can be made that some thematic groupings of chronologically disparate material may have been produced in the Ambassadorial Chancery not long after the translations of individual items had been made. That is, translated letters and news reports may consciously have been brought together because of a particular focus of their content and thus tell us something about what may have been the real interest in the material.

Our lading list is contained in just such a group of texts: translations, excerpts, and notes from the foreign correspondence of many of the most important Dutch merchants in Russia. The noted scholar of Russo-Swedish relations, G. V. Forsten, citing Brandenburg and Swedish sources, wrote more than a century ago that between mid-October and mid-November 1645, as many as 400 foreign letters from Riga, Reval and Narva had been intercepted and opened by the Russian authorities [Форстен, с. 212]. This perustration of foreigners' mail seems to have been common at least near the end of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich's reign and the beginning of that of his son Aleksei Mikhailovich¹⁴. There are various explanations as to why there might have been a particularly intense period of such perustration in the mid-1640s. Forsten suggested that Aleksei Mikhailovich had a particular animus toward foreigners. While that is possible, a monocausal explanation probably oversimplifies the matter. One might more plausibly attribute the interest in the contents of foreign mail to the connection of some of the writers with the drawn-out and ultimately unsuccessful negotiation about the possible marriage of the Danish/Holstein Prince Waldemar to the tsar's daughter, Irina Mikhailovna. The failure to persuade Waldemar to convert to Orthodoxy so that the marriage could take place was a bitter disappointment to those who had advocated it. The negotiations came at a moment of increasing tension between Denmark and Sweden, and there were fears that the Swedes might in fact be preparing to attack Russia. So to monitor foreign correspondence that passed through Swedish-held territory was a high priority. Some of the intercepted letters were correspondence of individuals who had played a direct role in the negotiations with Denmark, among them the merchant Peter Marselis, who both worked for the Danish mission, had undertaken assignments for the Russian government and in his later career

¹⁴ For a general treatment of perustration of foreigners' mail in Muscovy, see: [Waugh] who includes a summary of the example which is the focus here.

would be an important agent for the tsar¹⁵. A close examination of what appears to be a distinct packet of intercepted and translated correspondence containing the lading list suggests that while the Russian officials certainly were interested in obtaining the latest political news, they were paying very close attention to the commercial dealings of the correspondents, who were exchanging a great deal of specific information (as one might expect for merchants) about certain goods, their prices, and their availability. The lading list of 1646 was appended to an undated letter written to one Thomas Swan (Томас Сван/Шван) by his nephew in Amsterdam (B-K III, c. 86, № 24. 26–27). The translation of his letter opens with a very interesting report from the Indies about the nomad invasion of China, which may well be the first news to have reached Russia about the Manchu conquest with the taking of Beijing in late spring 1644 and the suicide of the last Ming Dynasty emperor¹⁶. After relating this, the letter pointedly indicated that, as a result of the events, silk from China presumably would not be shipped, and this would make the silk obtained via Russia the more valuable. The report about China and the lading list were brought by nine ships from the East Indies whose arrival was expected in Holland. The VOC records of its East Indies ships make it clear that this must have been the return fleet of 1646, whose nine ships had departed from Batavia on 18 December 1645 and arrived home between 30 June – 3 July 1646¹⁷. The wording of the letter would seem to suggest it had been written before the ships actually had docked (that is, on the basis of the publication of the lading list presumably just a few days earlier, anticipating their imminent arrival). The cargo of the 1646 fleet included pepper, cloves, nutmeg, what the translator rendered as “nutmeg blossoms” (цвѣт мушкатный) – probably the leaves of the seed coat of nutmeg fruit, which in other lading lists was called “foelie” – cinnamon, saltpetre, indigo (three varieties, assuming the translator’s *krutik* is accurate), diamonds, silk (two varieties, one specified as Persian). Presumably there were many other items listed in the original document, but the writer in Amsterdam simply summarized them as various cotton textiles and products from Thailand

¹⁵ For the Marselis correspondence in 1645, see: (B-K III, c. 15–21, № 1–7).

¹⁶ This report is short enough so that it might well have been printed in a newspaper along with the lading list. The officials of the VOC based in the Indies would always send long reports about the affairs of the larger region which affected company business. Some of these reports were more fully quoted or summarized in Pieter Casteleyn’s Haarlem newsbook. See, for example: (*HM*, vol. 5 (reprint ed. of 1675), p. 90–95), first a text entitled “Den standt der Nederlanders in Oost-Indien”, and then a much longer account entitled “Der verwoesting der Tartaren in China”. The text on China could, of course, have come from a different source. As we shall discuss further in Part 2, later in the century the translator and chancery official Andrei Vinus owned a number of books with information on the Dutch in the Indies and on events in that region. His library contained an extensive set of *HM*. Unfortunately, we do not know exactly when Vinus acquired the books.

¹⁷ The number of ships returning in 1645 (two fleet sailings) was seven; the return fleet in 1647 included 10 ships, but one was wrecked en route. Most likely the lading list would still have included it and its cargo, even if only nine of the ships arrived. There is no reason to think this specific collection of intercepted correspondence includes any letters from 1647.

(Siam) and China¹⁸. The significance of the inclusion of this information in the commercial correspondence between Amsterdam and Moscow and the decision to translate it can be appreciated from a look at the specific context in which the letter and its translation were preserved. In the archival file which contains materials dated to 1646 [РГАДА. Ф. 155. Оп. 1. 1646 г. Д. 6. Ч. 1–3] the lading list is in a collection of translations and summaries made from a great many letters sent to the foreign merchants in Moscow by their agents and family members both within Russia and from abroad¹⁹. The summary statistics the translators included, which possibly encompass the more detailed material that precedes them from this set of letters, are truly impressive. There were several large packets, each containing a number of individual letters which the addressee of the packet was expected to deliver to his associates. David Nikolasz Ruts (Давыд Миколаев Рутц) received two packets of 20 letters and others containing 13 and 6. In all 32 letters were addressed to Ruts, 27 letters to Thomas Swan, 18 to Hartmann Schwelengrebel (Артман Свеллингребель); 15 to the De la Dale brothers (Ондрей де Ладал, Петр де Ладал), and so on. While more work is needed on the history of these entrepreneurs – the correspondents named are almost a Who's Who of the most important foreign merchants in Russia – it seems that most of them in one way or another were associates of David Ruts. The

¹⁸ The terminology in the translation for the quantities of the goods is somewhat puzzling and hard to decipher in part because the measurements recorded in the Indies might vary depending on the source of the item. According to the Russian translation, the pepper was measured by the *kul*, specified as containing 60 *funt* (¶Ч кулеи перцу въсом всякой кул по 3 фунтов), an equivalency probably written on the original list. The lading list for the 1652 fleet (*HM*, vol. 3 (4th ed.), p. 70) is unusual in specifying “77023 Sacken of 38512 Picol 68 cat. Peper.” The lading lists commonly measured the pepper by the catty, which normally contained 1.25 Dutch pounds (pont = 494 gr.). The lading list for the 1654 return fleet specifies that 1 picol is 120 pont, and 1 catty is one and one-fifth (understood – pont) (see: *HM*, vol. 5, p. 89); however, the lading list of 1660 states 1 picol is 130 pont and one catty one and one-third (*HM*, vol. 11, p. 115). Given what we know about the normal size of the cargoes, the 90,000 (¶Ч) *kul* of pepper more logically could have been 90,000 picol in weight, which would be the equivalent of over 11 million pounds, a huge but not impossible figure (the return fleet in 1655 was carrying 6.5 million pounds of pepper). One of the varieties of silk was measured in *gildens* (Dutch: gulden/gilders, the standard currency, whose value was equivalent to about 10 grams of silver). The diamonds also were measured in *гилденс*. One wonders though whether this might be a mistake on the part of the translator, a misreading of the adjective specifying place of origin as “Guinees”. The Persian silk was measured in *tai*, a term referring simply to a bundle or bale (but of unspecified weight). Lading lists normally would specify raw Persian silk by weight (*pont*), but finished textiles might be measured by the piece (*sticks*, *pieces*). There is at least one example where a lading list included “16213 pont Persiaense Sijde in 88 balen” (*HM*, vol. 21, p. 107). Lading lists for English Indies ships might commonly use the term “bales”. Possibly the Amsterdam correspondent had already done some “translation” of the quantities in the original lading list, by placing a gulden value on certain products and in his summary note at the end indicating the various other goods (the cottons etc.) had been purchased at a cost of 23 barrels of gold.

¹⁹ The relevant part of the deposit for our discussion here is the second one, from which the texts (fols. 20–61) have been published in (B-K III, c. 84–94, № 24). The manuscript inventory for [РГАДА. Ф. 155. Оп. 1. 1646 г. Д. 6. Л. 5], available on-line through the RGADA website, includes a nineteenth-century explanatory caption for file No. 6: “Translation from printed and manuscript news, sent from Pskov and Novgorod, as well as from letters submitted to the Ambassadorial Chancery by foreign merchants concerning various happenings at European courts”.

correspondents wrote from Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Danzig, Riga, and Pskov, and one sub-group of the letters included 15 from English merchants in Livorno who were writing to London. It is impossible to know exactly the dates of many of the letters. Often there is a month and a day, but no indication of the year. However, internal evidence suggests that they date between late summer or early autumn 1645 and the end of summer 1646. Likewise, it is impossible to know when the translations were done, whether this is an accumulation of letters translated at one time (in that event, no earlier than the most recent of the letters) or whether it is an accumulation of letters translated as they were intercepted, the work spread over year or more. In reading and translating the letters, the chancery staff made notes as to whether they contained only family information (in which case, there was no translation of details) or contained enclosures – for example, price sheets or printed news. The printed newspapers apparently were removed and dealt with separately²⁰. Political news in the body of the letters themselves tended to be translated or at least summarized – for example, there were references to the hopes for the conclusion of the peace negotiations underway at Münster to end the conflict between the Netherlands and the Spanish Habsburgs. The language of the original letters is never specified, but one might assume it was Dutch (possibly German). Who did the translations also is unknown, though very likely it was the same Boris Borisov who might have translated the lading list of 1628. Still active, he had accompanied an embassy to Denmark in 1642, and in October 1644, had supplied the Apothecary Chancery with a translated list of medicines needed for members of Waldemar's suite [Беляков и др., с. 68].

The collection of this material from the foreigners' correspondence is particularly noteworthy for the amount of translated information, some of it quite detailed, regarding trade, and specifically the trade in silk. The Dutch merchant network was heavily involved acquiring and trans-shipping silk, which was coming into Muscovy from Persia, in many cases brought by the Armenian merchants who were agents for the shah's monopoly of the Persian silk trade. That silk then would be acquired by Russian merchants, usually the elite rank of them (the *gosty*) and they in turn would sell at least some of it to the Dutch, who would ship it out of Arkhangelsk to Amsterdam or Hamburg. References in the translated letters to the East Indies trade seems to have focused in particular on how the silk it was bringing to Europe either from Chinese or Persian sources was affecting prices that could be obtained for the silk coming out of Russia (in particular the varieties termed *ardaskii* and *leziiskii*, the latter at least specific to what was produced in Persia). Thus, the disorders in China and the anticipation that the next year's Indies

²⁰ Given its proximity in the archival file to the packet of intercepted correspondence, likely the translation of news published in (B-K III, c. 82–84, № 23), was made from some of those enclosures. It may well be that other packets of translated news published under separate numbers in (B-K III) also had arrived with the correspondence that is our focus here. However, the copies of those translations are not preserved in the archival file right next to the translations of the intercepted letters.

shipments would be insignificant were positive developments which could increase the prices in Amsterdam for the silk out of Russia.

This information also has to have been of interest both to the Russian government and to the elite Russian merchants who were involved in the silk trade. While there are some uncertainties as to the exact date, it was precisely in this period that a group of the elite Russian merchants petitioned the tsar to curb what they saw as unfair competition and price fixing by the foreign merchants. Some of those they named were among the merchants who had received the letters discussed here. Even though it is not clear that at this time the government responded by restricting the activity of the Dutch merchants, exactly this kind of concern about foreign competition would lead to the issuing of the New Trade Statute in 1667 which severely curbed where foreign merchants could trade in Russia. Moreover, the petition by the merchants in ca. 1646 is remarkable in the way it anticipated a similar complaint to Peter the Great at the end of the seventeenth century by Ivan Pososhkov, who blamed the economic advantage the foreign merchants had on their ability to correspond regularly with their agents abroad through the postal network. The petitioners in 1646 wrote:

And they, sovereign, living in Moscow and in towns, travel through Novgorod and Pskov to their land five, six or ten times a year with news of what goes on in the Muscovite state, why certain goods are bought and which goods fetch high prices in Moscow, and the undertake to prepare such goods, and all this is done thanks to their frequent news and in letters where they conspire together²¹ [ААЭ, т. 4, с. 14–25, № 4, с. 18].

At very least here, the opening of this batch of foreigners' letters would seem to indicate genuine concern in the Kremlin about the issues the Russian merchants raised. One should not conclude, however, that any of the translations were shared with those merchants, since such translated information was generally regarded as confidential, for the use only by government officials. Whether any products but the silk listed in the 1646 lading list would have attracted special attention is impossible to know, although there is ample evidence that spices such as those included in the Dutch cargoes from the Indies were being purchased for the tsar's court and apothecary in some cases by his agents who attended the annual fair in Arkhangelsk at the end of the navigation season.

²¹ The petition has been reprinted in [Демкин, вып. 2, с. 99–108]. The interest of the government in the Volga trade with Persia well antedates the merchant complaint of 1646 and must have been the focus of some attention by the government when the Holstein embassy (that included the well-known Adam Olearius who would later write one of the major foreign accounts of Muscovy) was in Moscow to negotiate permission to establish trade to Persia via Russia. The would-be husband of Irina Mikhailovna, Waldemar, was the Prince of Holstein, and some of those involved in the Danish mission regarding the marriage had also been involved in the earlier negotiations at the time of the Holstein embassy. Another packet of translations from intercepted mail includes some of Olearius' correspondence with his contacts in Moscow (Б-К III, с. 39–44, № 10). For Pososhkov's petition, see: [Посошков, с. 273–274].

The return fleet of 1665 and its fate

In order to contextualize the decision to translate the lading list of 1667, it is useful first to examine evidence about the interest in Moscow in news concerning the Netherlands during the immediately preceding years. Of central importance was the reporting about the Second Anglo-Dutch War, declared by the Dutch on 4 March 1665 and settled by the Treaty of Breda on 17 July 1667. The ability of the Ambassadorial Chancery to keep track of events was considerably enhanced by the establishment of the regular international postal connection between Moscow and Riga in 1665²². Of course political news from and about the Dutch Republic had long been of interest in Moscow, given the importance of Dutch merchants in the Russian trade. In 1664 and especially 1665, even before the new international postal route to Riga was up and running, there is a long series of translated reports in which it was possible to trace a number of key moments in Anglo-Dutch relations. Diplomatic efforts to head off open conflict, the expectation that they would fail, and also military preparations for war were mentioned in reports translated as early as late summer 1664 (B-K VI/1, c. 104, № 12.7; c. 105, № 13.2). There was a quite detailed report of what would prove to be one of the final catalysts, the English attack not far from Cadiz on a Dutch fleet from Smyrna in December 1664 (B-K VI/1, c. 106, № 14.16)²³. A document translated probably no earlier than the end of March 1665 seems to have derived ultimately from a single-sheet broadside publishing a decree issued on 27 January by the Dutch Government establishing levels of prize money to be given privateers who might capture English ships (B-K VI/1, c. 114–115, № 21)²⁴. The last-minute efforts of France to head off the conflict

²² For a recent, detailed re-examination of the establishment and first years of the international post, see: [Yo].

²³ The source for the translation is *OHD* 1665/4, obtained by Andrei Vinius on 28 February from a Dutch merchant. The entire first page of *OHD* 1665/4 was devoted to reports about the battle and related events. For another contemporary Dutch report on the battle, see (*HM*, Vol. 16, p. 16), the report printed in *OHD* 1665/4 immediately above the one chosen to be translated in Moscow. Another contemporary account was printed in the Amsterdam *Ordinarise Middelweeckse Courante* (hereafter – *OMC*) 1665/4, published on 27 January, the same day as *OHD* 1665/4.

²⁴ The editors have assigned this a date of 31 March 1665, apparently because it is found on consecutive folios following translations from Dutch newspapers done on that date. So far it has been impossible to locate either a copy of the original broadside or of a Dutch newspaper that might have printed it, if such was the source used in Moscow. The last dated entry in the translation that preceded this text (B-K VI/1, c. 109, № 16.3) is from Amsterdam, 13 February, referring to another Dutch decree (dated 26 January) about maritime restrictions following receipt of the news concerning the attack at Cadiz. A possible source would be *OHS* 1665/7, 14 February, but there is no extant copy to check. Either that number or one of the immediately succeeding ones could have included the text of the decree of 27 January. Such decrees were issued both as single-sheet broadsides and in pamphlet form. A pamphlet containing the decree of 27 January (but, with a different preface to what is in the Russian translation, hence not the direct source) is (*Extract Uyt 't Register van de Resolutien*). In his massive compendium and discussion of Dutch history (the relevant volume published in 1668), Lieuwe van Aitzema quoted both the decree of 26 January and that of 27 January and subsequently discussed the material [Aitzema, vol. 11/2, p. 710–713, 866, 871, 873]. A close comparison of the translation in (B-K VI/1, c. 114–115, № 21) with the Dutch original remains to be done, but we note that the translator did add Russian ruble equivalents for the values in Dutch guilders and seems to have shortened considerably at least the final section of the decree.

were mentioned in a translation done on 27 April, after the actual declaration of war. Translations from newspapers sent by Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin from Pskov in late June included brief accounts of the failure of the French effort to mediate (B-K VI/1, c. 109, № 17.10; c. 105, № 22.33, 22.36–37). Reports published beginning in late June documented growing tension between France and England, in part due to English attacks on French shipping. Such accounts, if condensed and speculative, were translated in some of the *kuranty* by late summer and early autumn (там же, c. 132, № 25.84; c. 143, № 30.64–65; c. 153, № 34.83). News printed on 20 February 1666 (N. S.) in *OHS* 1666/8, delivered by the first Muscovite postmaster, Jan Van Sweeden, on 26 March (O. S.) and translated, emphasized the imminence of conflict between England and France and the involvement of the armies of the Archbishop of Münster against the Dutch (там же, c. 166, № 40.30–32). A report out of Königsberg, dated 23 February 1666, in German newspapers from Van Sweeden's next mail delivery on 8 April, elaborated in some detail the English grievances with France for its supporting the Dutch, King Charles II having sent Louis XIV a letter indicating his intention of going to war (там же, c. 162–163, № 38.45–46). Apparently, the same news packet delivered by Van Sweeden contained a copy of *OHS* 1666/10, from which the translators compiled material from three articles under a header datelined London, 22 February. The opening sentence of the translation reported that a French courier had just delivered Louis' declaration of war against England (там же, c. 163, № 38.48). A separate packet of translations (possibly from news that had arrived in the next mail?) included an item from Riga, 22 February, with a condensed summary of the actions of several of the powers in the conflict: the French declaration of war against England, a promise from Brandenburg to support the Dutch, the inclination of the King of Spain to support England, the dispatch of English troops to support the forces of the Archbishop of Münster in their attack on the Dutch, and a dispatch of Swedish troops with the same aim (там же, c. 165, № 39.29). The translator selected from an article in *OHS* 1666/9 only the sentence indicating that Brandenburg had now agreed to send troops in support of the Dutch (там же, c. 167, № 40.34; B-K VI/2, c. 490). Even though the Dutch negotiated support from Denmark, this failed to convince Münster to continue negotiations with The Republic for a peace settlement (B-K VI/1, c. 177, № 44.145–147)²⁵. However, the bishopric's precarious financial position, given the failure of the English to send a promised subsidy, seems to have led quickly to a renewal of negotiations, and a report in *OHD* 1666/16 and *OMC* 1666/15, from Amsterdam, 19 April, indicated that a treaty had been drafted (B-K VI/1, c. 179, № 45.152; B-K VI/2, c. 503)²⁶. The treaty was in fact signed on 19 April in Cleve. A German translation of it in a separate brochure served as the basis for its translation in Moscow, often very

²⁵ For the Dutch agreement with Denmark, see: (*HM*, Vol. 17, p. 30), and for the defensive alliance with Brandenburg [*Ibid.*, p. 33–38].

²⁶ The news was confirmed in a longer report datelined Stettin 23 April in that same packet of translations (№ 45.153–154), and in *kuranty* based on Dutch newspapers delivered on 10 May by Van Sweeden, where the report out of Stettin was dated 27 March (B-K VI/1, c. 182, № 47.125).

precise but also with some significant condensation (B-K VI/1, c. 187–190, № 49.156–161; B-K VI/2, c. 300–305)²⁷. A Dutch newspaper report from the Hague dated 23 May described the celebration of the peace there. It probably was printed in a newspaper on or immediately after that date and would have arrived in Moscow and been translated before the end of June (B-K VI/1, c. 187, № 48.186–187).

The naval actions in the Anglo-Dutch war seem to have attracted the greatest attention from the translators in Moscow. More than one report included data on the Dutch and English fleets, in one case with considerable detail (B-K VI/1, c. 110–111, № 18)²⁸. This description of the two fleets apparently dates to late April, anticipating what would be the first major sea battle of the war. The Battle of Lowestoft involved the maneuvering of the two fleets over several days, with the actual fighting occurring on 3/13 June 1665 [Fox, ch. 6, p. 83–101]. Reports during May in German newspapers were at least summarized by the translators: information on the movement of the huge English fleet under the command of the Duke of York and speculation that a major battle was imminent (B-K VI/1, c. 117–119, № 22.37–37). An English summary of the Battle of Lowestoft treating it as a great victory was translated twice in Moscow on 16 July from a supplement to the *Königsb. Sonntags Post-Zeitung* (B-K VI/1, c. 123–124, № 23.57–58; c. 126, № 23.63–64)²⁹. Two substantially longer Dutch accounts, possibly laying out some accurate details of the engagement but also lauding Dutch heroism at the same time that they were identifying scapegoats, were included in one issue of *CID* (1665/25,

²⁷ As Maier indicates (B-K VI/2, c. 304), one cannot be certain that the German pamphlet is the exact source used in Moscow. However, there is no reason to posit that the Moscow translation was based on the Dutch original used for the German edition. A copy of the Dutch text was published in [HM, Vol. 17, p. 55–59], probably copied from a separate Dutch pamphlet. As will be discussed in Part 2, it is likely that a copy of that volume of HM, published in 1667, was received in Moscow in late summer or early autumn that year.

²⁸ Such reports, which might include a complete list of ships – their names, commandants, the number of cannon and crew – seem to have been standard features in Dutch newspapers; many such lists were published as broadside separates. Since we do not have the direct source for the *kuranty* translation, it is hard to know whether it is but a condensation and summary based on one of the more complete listings. However, the nature of the summary suggests that the condensation might have been done in Moscow, where details about Western warships would likely have been unfamiliar. The ultimate source in this case would have been complete lists such as those published by Pieter Casteleyn in his annual compendium (HM, vol. 16, p. 69–71).

²⁹ This is an unusual instance of two different translations apparently having been made from the same source, the copy of the Königsberg newspaper in fact preserved in the archive in Moscow and bearing a notation that it had been translated. See Ingrid Maier's commentaries in (B-K VI/2, c. 150–151, 281–282). The caption heading in the newspaper supplement confuses the dating of the event, indicating the battle spread over three days (the dates given in N. S.), which seems to have been true of some of the preliminary maneuvering, even though the serious fighting occurred only on 3/13 June. The German report used by the translators is from London, 6 June (this would have to be O. S., the Julian calendar still used then in England), even though one of the two Russian translations renders the date as 16 June (thus "corrected" to N. S.). Maier leaves open the possibility that in fact two different German sources might have been used here. The battle was the first major sea engagement of the war, involving huge forces on both sides. Contemporary English pamphlets, published within days of its having taken place, consistently portrayed it as a great English victory. They can be viewed in the Early English Books Online subscription database with a simple search using the terms "fleet" and "1665". For contemporary Dutch treatments, including a translation

published in Amsterdam on 20 June, N. S.). One of these was translated essentially completely and the second with some condensation in Moscow on 15 or 16 July along with portions of other articles about the battle and its aftermath in which at least one of the Dutch commanders was being accused, if falsely, of having fled the scene (B-K VI/1, c. 136–138, № 27.91–97, № 20; c. 547–549, pp. 2.70–73, 99–102; B-K VI/2, c. 465–472; 676–677, ил. 12)³⁰. This news thus would have reached Moscow within about five weeks of when it was published. Other, shorter news items dealt with some of the immediate aftermath of the battle, describing casualties, celebrations and subsequent naval actions (B-K VI/1, c. 120, № 23.47; c. 127–128; c. 133, № 25.87; c. 135, № 26.79–80). Both sides claimed victory, even though relatively few ships were destroyed (significantly, one was the Dutch flagship, whose explosion killed the chief admiral). The English clearly were justified in claiming the immediate advantage, but the fact is that the Dutch fleet survived to fight another day and under more effective leadership. As [Fox, p. 100] summarizes, “the fruits of victory were decidedly disappointing”.

In the Netherlands, the critical issue was whether English efforts to blockade the Dutch ports would be successful. Contemporary newspaper accounts included a great deal about the military escorts for merchant convoys, reports about the arrival of the fleets from the Mediterranean and the East Indies, and in many cases lading lists of all the goods they brought, crucial information for anticipating market prices of the goods whose sale fueled the Dutch economy. In temporary control of the seas after Lowestoft, the English hoped to be able to intercept a Dutch fleet commanded by the talented Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, the “greatest seaman of the age” [Fox, p. 133], which had raided English outposts along the coast of Africa and then crossed the Atlantic where it had spent some time attacking English shipping in the West Indies. In its opening article *OHD* 1665/26, 30 June, printed a report from Guadeloupe, 11 May, with information on De Ruyter’s raids in the Caribbean³¹.

from one of the English accounts, see: [Aitzema, vol. 11/2, p. 765–776; *HM*, vol. 16, p. 72–74]. It is important to note that the published statistics about fleet strength and any translations or summaries made from them do not of themselves provide an accurate indication of the relative strengths of the two navies. See the analysis in [Fox, chs. 3–4, p. 36–65]. Regardless of the precise numbers, it is clear that huge forces were involved. The Muscovite translation is included in a packet titled “Translation from Dutch newspapers” received on 28 May from the Dutchman Werner (Вахромей Петрович) Müller [about Müller, see: Amburger, p. 128–129]. The manuscript originally had indicated Vinus supplied the newspaper(s), but then his name was crossed out and the credit given simply to Müller.

³⁰ The heading to the translation indicates that the newspaper was handed in by the Hamburger Philip Verporten (Van der Poorten) and Dutchman Werner Müller and translated on 16 July. The copy of the original newspaper, preserved in Moscow, has an inscription indicating the translation was done on 15 July. This copy can be viewed as well in the on-line Dutch database, Delpher, where the Russian inscription has been partially cut off. On the circumstances involving the accusation against the Dutch admiral, see: [Fox, p. 124–125].

³¹ Since it is very likely Andrei Vinus was responsible for the translations from the Dutch newspapers at this time, of some interest is the fact that his library contained a copy of (Prins Jeurian), the diary of de Ruyter’s raids on the English outposts. The book was dedicated to Nicolaas Witsen, who might well have sent a copy to Vinus. Vinus’ own notation on the book seems to indicate he acquired it in 1667/68 (the year 7176). See: [Книги из собрания Андрея Андреевича Вiniusа, с. 149, 153].

This newspaper, presumably received in Moscow as early as the beginning of August, was mined by the translators for several items, including the opening lines of the report from Guadeloupe and reports about the Battle of Lowestoft (B-K VI/1, c. 127–130; B-K VI/2, c. 472–474). The English received intelligence in early July that De Ruyter was headed home. To avoid the English warships in the Channel, his and other Dutch fleets would sail around Scotland and come down along the Norwegian coast (politically under Denmark) in order to approach Dutch ports from the east. The English were busy trying to persuade a reluctant Denmark to break with The Republic and thus assist in interdicting the Dutch ships. Without waiting for the conclusion of those negotiations, Whitehall dispatched a fleet on 17 July hoping to intercept De Ruyter. However, he managed to slip through untouched and returned home in triumph with his prizes³². Soon after he would be appointed to the supreme command over the Dutch fleet. Some of the English ships turned back, but a squadron proceeded to the still neutral harbor of Bergen (arriving there on 1 August), where, as it turned out, there was a large Dutch merchant flotilla, including some of the richly laden ships from the East Indies. Not having received instructions from Copenhagen, the local Danish commandant refused to allow the English warships into the harbor, giving the Dutch (whose vessels were well armed) time to mount what would turn out to be an effective defense against the English attack³³.

The Dutch merchant ships were from the convoy of the return fleet whose return home proved to be one of the most troubled of all the VOC Indies fleets. The first return convoy, consisting of 11 ships, had left Batavia on 23 December 1664. One of its ships was wrecked near the Cape of Good Hope in February 1665. At the Dutch station there, the second return fleet (two ships that had sailed from Batavia on 31 January 1665) joined it, the convoy then departing for home on 22 April. On account of the war, the ships had sailed north around the British Isles, before turning south along the Norwegian coast, where some stopped in Trondheim but most of them in Bergen. When De Ruyter's fleet arrived to convey the Bergen ships home, severe storms scattered them en route. Only three of them managed to reach Dutch ports in the third week of September, some of the

³² De Ruyter's brief report about his return voyage was published as a news separate (Brief Van de Heer Vice-Admiral de Ruyter). A diary or log of his expedition was published as (Journael, Gehouden op 's Lants Schip de Spiegel); (*HM*, vol. 16, p. 90–96) included a lengthy account of the voyage, accompanied by a fold-out engraving showing some of the action off Africa. The Dutch embassy to Moscow, headed by Jacob Boreel, was on its way home when it learned in Lübeck the news of De Ruyter's brief stop in Bergen, information that Boreel immediately sent on to The Hague (Scheltema, vol. 1, p. 278–279). The Dutch mission had arrived in Lübeck on 25 July and departed from there to Hamburg on the 29th [Witsen, vol. 2, p. 260–261]. See also: [Fox, p. 103–105].

³³ For a good summary treatment of the whole episode, see: [Fox, ch. 7, p. 102–119]. A monographic treatment of the battle by a naval historian, which we have not yet consulted, is [Breet]. The battle of Bergen obviously attracted considerable attention in the Netherlands, where it was the subject of an impressively illustrated broadside (Verhael van het Scheep-gevecht, voor Bergen).

others not making it home for weeks afterwards³⁴. Two of the ships were captured by the English. One which had been forced to return to Bergen was wrecked when it finally sailed, and yet another took refuge at Glückstadt on the Elbe and made it back only in mid-May 1666. Nonetheless, the VOC issued the lading list for eleven return ships of the first return fleet, including the cargoes of the two ships taken by the English and the one which had never made it past the Cape of Good Hope. If printed anticipating the arrival of the first ships of the return fleet in the second half of September, the list would have seriously mis-represented the cargo totals that actually made it back to the Netherlands that year from the Indies. The two ships captured by the English were amongst the richest prizes in the convoy, the object of uncontrolled plunder when brought to port. The important naval official and famous diarist Samuel Pepys recorded from his visit to them that he saw:

The greatest wealth lie in confusion that a man can see in the world. Pepper scattered through every chink, you trod upon it; and in cloves and nutmegs, I walked above the knees – whole rooms full – and silks in bales, and boxes of Copperplate, one of which I saw opened [quoted by: Fox, p. 114].

There is no preserved copy of a Dutch newspaper in which the list might have been published; so we cannot know for sure whether it appeared in the current news and when. One candidate would have been the *OHC*, which was publishing the lading lists regularly in the 1660s and which was the most likely source for the copy of the list which Pieter Casteleyn printed in the volume of *HM* for 1665, along with information about the Bergen battle and the subsequent fate of the ships³⁵. Casteleyn also printed the lading list for the eight ships of the English East Indies fleet that had made it home in August, and pointedly summarized that the value of its cargo was 3 million (presumably guilders), whereas that of the Dutch fleet was 11 million (*HM*, vol. 16, p. 109). Even if the translators in Moscow could have received a copy of a Dutch newspaper with the list (theoretically that was possible), there is no evidence of a translation.

³⁴ Specifically, the data from the VOC ship listings in [Bruijn et al.]: the *Slot van Honingen*, the largest in the fleet, and *Phoenix* were captured by the English on 13 September; two arrived safely on 17 September (*Walcheren*, the flagship, and *Brederode*); one (*Rijzende Zon*) made it back on 8 October via Kronberg in Denmark, and another after a long delay (not clear where it was) on 28 November; three returned to Norway, one (*Amstelland*) setting out again only to be wrecked just off the Dutch coast on 25 October (most of its cargo recovered) but the other two (*Jonge Prins* and *Kogge*) waiting to return until late March 1666. The *Wapen van Hoorn*, which had taken refuge at Glückstadt, returned home only in mid-May. The two ships that had sailed via Trondheim made it to port with some delay, one (*Ooievaar*) arriving on 20 September 1665, the other (*Nieuwenhove*) on 31 October.

³⁵ See: *HM*, vol. 16, p. 107 (the lading list), and p. 134 for the summary about the fate of each of the ships). A letter written to the Dutch authorities by the commandant of the fleet from his ship in Bergen on 14 August was published by Casteleyn (*Ibid.*, p. 106–107). It seems likely that the commandant would have enclosed in his letter a copy of the lading list; his message presumably arrived in the Netherlands by fast packet boat a good many days before the first of the Indies ships reached home. In that case, one might assume the VOC could have had the list published as early as the end of August or first week in September.

It is clear though that the news of the returning fleets and the related events along the Norwegian coast was being followed closely, reports often based on information that arrived via fast packet-boats. On 25 October 1665, the translators in Moscow received copies of several Dutch papers: *OHS* 1665/39, *OHD* 1665/40, *CID* 1665/39, and *Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant* 1665/39 from which they extracted information about the storms in the aftermath of the Bergen battle and the fate of the ships that were heading home (B-K VI/1, c. 140–144, № 30; VI/2, c. 475–483)³⁶. Those translations referred to the location where the ships had been as “the Danish land”; so it is uncertain whether the officials in Moscow would have had a clear idea of the geography involved and the underlying strategic issues explaining the actions of the fleets. Assuming that descriptions of the actual battle had appeared in the Dutch papers, those accounts would have been in the issues published not long before the ones known to have made it to Moscow. Yet, even if lacking published details, the Moscow translators obtained via one of the tsar’s most trusted agents a very accurate and concise account explaining what had happened in Bergen (even if the port was not named) and what the fate of the ships had been. The description was in a letter Peter Marselis had written on 14 September from Copenhagen, where he reported first news relating to Polish affairs and then explained how the English had failed to obtain Danish permission to attack the shipping in Bergen and had been driven off with considerable losses (B-K VI/1, c. 145–146, № 31.68–70)³⁷. Before heading home, the Dutch had generously rewarded the local commandant, but the storm had cost them several ships, taken as prizes by the English.

A new set of summary statistics about Dutch and English fleet strength, reported in March 1666, anticipated the most famous naval battle of the war, which extended over four days from 1/11–4/14 June [Там же, c. 160,

³⁶ One of the items, from Elsinore, 22 September, mentioned Bergen, but in condensing the article from *OHD* 1665/40, the translators omitted the name of the port (B-K VI/1, c. 142–143, № 30.63–64). The sources for the other reports relating to the ships that had been in Bergen are reports from Amsterdam, 17 and 21 September, for which copies of the source newspapers have not been found. Given those dates, it seems the likely candidates would be *OMC* 1665/38 or *OHD* 1665/39, both published on 22 September. While there is no evidence about the newspaper source or the date when the translation was done, a very condensed summary of several reports (B-K VI/1, c. 226, № 63.320–319, folios in reverse order) includes news from Amsterdam relating to the Indies return fleet in 1665, an item specifically from Norway dated 8 September mentioning the battle at Bergen and the departure of the Dutch ships for home. Amsterdam news dated 11 September clearly was based on the report sent ahead from the Indies fleet, mentioning the news from the Indies about the sighting of the comet that had appeared in late autumn in 1664, just before the fleet had sailed from Batavia.

³⁷ The translation from Marselis’ letter and other Dutch manuscript newsletters follows immediately (and with no break) in the original archival scroll the set of translations from the printed Dutch newspapers received on 25 October (*Ibid.*, c. 140–144, № 30). So it is reasonable to posit that both the printed and manuscript news arrived in the same mail packet. It is not clear to whom Marselis addressed his letter, though most likely it would have been a report for the tsar sent via the Ambassadorial Chancery.

№ 37.119–121]³⁸. Thanks to the action on the fourth day, the Dutch could legitimately claim a victory, but there were huge losses on both sides, with exaggerated intelligence and news reports misleading both governments about the extent to which the enemy had been weakened. In fact, the outcome did little to change the status quo and ensured that the war would continue unabated. Within little more than a month, there was yet another major encounter of the fleets, this time resulting in an English victory in the so-called St. James Day Fight (July 25), see: [Fox, p. 288–295]. In early August, the English staged a successful raid on the Dutch coast, managing to burn a large number of merchant ships, and just prior to the signing of the Peace of Breda, a bold Dutch raid on the lower Thames (13 June 1667) resulted in the destruction of several major English warships³⁹.

The Four Days' Battle obviously attracted the attention of the translators in Moscow. They selected out of a longer article in *TVQ* 1666/22 from London, 21 May, a passage about the king's reviewing the fleet on the eve of its sailing (B-K VI/1, c. 195–196; B-K VI/2, c. 516–517). Apparently, the same mail had also brought copies of *OHD* 1666/22 and *OHS* 1666/23, published on 1 and 5 June respectively, and at least one other Dutch paper published on or soon after 5 June. From these the translators extracted brief indications that both fleets had sailed, and a battle was imminent (B-K VI/1, c. 197–198; B-K VI/2, c. 521). Reports excerpted from German newspapers received on 29 June contained similar indications that the fleets had sailed (B-K VI/1, c. 200–201, № 53.197–198). Van Sweeden's mail delivery on 12 July included several Dutch newspapers, the ones which can be identified being *OMC* 1666/23 (published 15 June), *OHS* 1666/24 (12 June) and *OHS* 1666/25 (19 June) (B-K VI/1, c. 202–206, № 54; B-K VI/2, c. 522–530)⁴⁰.

³⁸ For a full treatment of the actual battle, see: [Fox, p. 182–270, 330–340]. The statistics in the Russian translation (probably derived from a newspaper report published some three months prior to the battle) show in the English case the overall fleet strength (larger than the forces actually engaged in the battle). The newspaper summary for the Dutch is only for the squadron raised by Amsterdam and its immediate region and thus does not include the several other squadrons from the other provinces. English failures in obtaining in timely fashion and accurately assessing intelligence reports (including information actually published in the *London Gazette*) provide a case study in the importance of rapid communication and clear-headed analysis for effective decision making, see: [Fox, p. 141–158]. The flawed decision to divide the fleet in order to head off a supposed French naval threat in support of the Dutch had a major impact on the outcome of the battle. As Fox summarizes (p. 168), "The truth was that the whole English campaign had been built around non-existent threats. Nearly every piece of intelligence the high command had received about the French was false, out of date, or had been misinterpreted". In the immediate aftermath of the battle, reports of a great English victory led to celebration in London, this a reminder the way premature news from a conflict could turn out to be totally erroneous, compounded by wishful thinking [Ibid., p. 271–272].

³⁹ (*HM*, vol. 18, following p. 88) has an engraving with two scenes, one showing the Dutch raid on the Thames. It is very likely that this engraving (or a separate version of it) served as the source for a contemporary painting by Willem Shellinks now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Inv. No. AM SA 22660).

⁴⁰ It is possible that this "packet" includes translations made from originals that arrived in more than one mail delivery. It would not be unusual for a newspaper published in Haarlem on 9/19 June to have arrived by 12/22 July. However, the final entry in the packet (copied on a new sheet), with news from Amsterdam dated 12/22 June (presumably published on or right after that date) would have taken but a month to reach Moscow, a not impossible, but still a very fast delivery.

The earliest of the reports extracted from them by the translators indicated again that the fleets were at sea, but the most recent of the newspapers contained long accounts of the battle, which the translators condensed. In the case of the report from Amsterdam, the section about the events of the ten days leading up to the actual battle was largely ignored. But the resulting translations still were much longer and more detailed than was typical for the *kuranty* of this period. Several other articles in *OHS* 1666/25 were translated at least in part, and at the end of this long packet of news was yet one more Amsterdam report (dated 22 June, hence probably from another Dutch paper published in the following week) with news just received from London about the allegedly horrified reaction there to the battle⁴¹.

Since it appears most of the information about the battle received in Moscow came from the Dutch press, the news was one-sided, undoubtedly providing an inflated picture of how decisive the victory had been. The English fleet had fought well. Both fleets took huge losses, but more serious for the English was the loss of major warships during the bold raid on the lower Thames. England was in a precarious financial situation. In contrast, the Dutch economy was saved by the safe arrival, unscathed, of the richly laden return fleet from the East Indies. However, the imminent danger posed by the French invasion of Flanders, which both the Dutch and English perceived as a major threat, persuaded the two sides to end the war.

Periodicals and continuing editions used in the article

Early imprints⁴²

CID *Courante uyt Italien en Duytslant* (Amsterdam)

HM *Hollandtze Mercurius* (Haarlem)

Königsb. *Sontags Post-Zeitung* (Königsberg)

Ordinaris Dingsdaeghsche Courant (Amsterdam)

OHD *Oprechte Haerlemse Dingdaegse Courant* (Haarlem)

OHS *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant* (Haarlem)

OMC *Ordinarise Middelweekse Courante* (Amsterdam)

TVQ *Tijdinghe uyt Verscheyde Quartieren* (Amsterdam)

⁴¹ The long description of the battle published in *OHS* 1666/25 also appeared in *CID* 1666/25, see: B-K VI/2, c. 527). Since several other articles from the Haarlem paper were drawn on by the Russian translators, that makes it the most probable source for the translation in № 54.229–233. While we cannot know exactly when and whether the translator Andrei Vinius would have received a copy of the best Dutch maritime atlas of the period (he would cite it in compiling a geographic “dictionary” in August, 1667), several of the maps it contained would have enabled the translators to follow very closely the events of the naval war off the Dutch and English coasts and in the larger area of the North Sea.

⁴² Most of the Dutch newspapers may be accessed on-line via <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten>, although the database does not contain all extant copies. Copies cited which are not extant have been documented from [Weduwen]. The German newspapers may be accessed via <https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>. For inventories of the Dutch and German newspapers received in Moscow in the seventeenth century and still preserved in RGADA, see respectively [Maier, 2004] and [Simonov].

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