

The Debate on Faith with the Greeks by Arseny Sukhanov in a historical context

Andrey Bogdanov

(Institute of Russian History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow)

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One of the brightest Russian publicistic works of the 17th century, relevant to this day, was not conceived as a pamphlet regarding the primacy of the Russian Church in world Orthodoxy. *The Debate on Faith with the Greeks* was part of the ambassadorial report of the Russian diplomat Arseny Sukhanov, written and edited by him in Wallachia in the summer of 1650¹. Sukhanov's duty was to give grave responses to every insult made by foreigners against Russia. This work is shown in the references. The reason was serious: the Greek monks burned the books of the Moscow press, published on behalf of the tsar with the blessing of the patriarch, as containing heresy. Russian Orthodoxy regarded this as an insult, which was punishable by Article 1 of the Council Code of 1649; the perpetrators should have been "strictly found by all sorts of investigations" and burnt². Sukhanov conducted an investigation into the burning of the books. During the discussions, he persuaded the Greek clergy to abandon the accusation of heresy on Russian books and rituals and liberated his opponents from this article. At the same time, he clearly formulated the official view of Moscow on the opinion of the Greeks that Eastern patriarchs can be "teachers of faith" for Russians.

The draft autograph of the church part of Sukhanov's report to the Ambassadorial prikaz was preserved³. It was written on a paper taken by a diplomat on a trip in 1649—1650⁴ and intended for the most important documents. Subsequently, the manuscript was attached to one of the hand-written books, which Arseny enthusiastically collected, rewrote, edited, and supplemented. This is one of the two *Russian Chronographs* of the author's edition: a list with abundant notes and comments, but without an extensive text

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¹ The *Debate* was edited from June 6 (the last date of the final, then repeatedly corrected text) to September 23, 1650 (the author's departure on another, very difficult diplomatic task).

² Sobornoe ulozhenie 1649 goda [Council Code of 1649]. Moskva, 1961. P. 70. (In Russ.)

³ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 181, File 659, Items 348–360. The Chronograph of Sukhanov preceding the draft *Debate* dates back on paper to the 1650s. (Bogdanov A.P. Avtograf "Prenii s grekami o vere" Arseniia Sukhanova [Autograph «Debate on Faith with the Greeks» by Arseny Sukhanov] // Istochnikovedenie otechestvennoi istorii [Source study of Russian history]. Moskva, 1989. P. 175–205. (In Russ.)).

⁴ On paper identical in the design of the watermark and in the intervals between the pontusos, he wrote a petition, satisfied by the tsar on May 9, 1649; a reply to the Ambassadorial prikaz from a trip not earlier than February 11, 1650; a translation from the Greek language of *Prophecies over the Coffin of Constantine the Great*, filed in the order «in the evening» on December 9, 1650 and glued into the column after the political part of the article list, before *Debate* (Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, f. 52, inv. 1, d. 22 (1649), l. 1, 76; d. 8, l. 35–36).

based on the Trinity edition of the Nikon Chronicle, which made famous his second *Chronograph*, edited in the early 1660s⁵.

The autograph preserved the first two editions of the church part of the report, which Sukhanov clarified and supplemented during the summer of 1650, before he again plunged himself into political affairs in the autumn. The third, final version was submitted by him to the Ambassadorial prikaz on December 9, 1650 “in the evening”, the day after his return to Moscow, as part of a complete report on the diplomatic mission of 1649—1650. This is a manuscript of the clerks’ scribes, fluently corrected by Arseny. Similar to the draft autograph, the authorized list has no title, beginning (as was customary in the ambassadorial reports) with a description of the circumstances of this part of his diplomatic mission. The general purpose of the mission is indicated at the beginning of the 1649—1650 Article List. Placed after the political report at the end of the scroll written on the columns, the third edition needed to restore part of the text that had been lost due to dilapidation⁶. At the same time, it became the basis of a rich Old Believer manuscript tradition after Nikon’s reforms, when it was officially believed that the Greeks, whom Sukhanov had discussions with, were right, and his position in the dispute reflected Russian ignorance⁷.

Arseny did not participate in the disputes, during which the scribes called his text the *Debate on Faith with the Greeks*; in science, this name was fixed by Metropolitan Makarius (Bulgakov). However, it is noteworthy that the handwritten tradition is based not on the list submitted by Sukhanov to the Ambassadorial prikaz, but on the author’s list, so far not discovered, which did not contain clerical errors of the ambassadorial manuscript. This suggests that, staying away from the disputes between the Nikonians and the Old Believers, Arseny himself put the manuscript into circulation. However, this did not happen in the course of Nikon’s reforms, when the *Debate* sounded like an uncharacteristic call for rebellion for Sukhanov, and even before his departure for the new embassy in 1651, Arseny never challenged the will of the tsar, whom he presented in the *Debate* as the supreme guarantor of the right faith. It is the Russian tsar who “shines with his piety in the universe, like the sun shines in the middle of the earth, and in everything is jealous of the first pious tsar Constantine the Great, the Church of Christ supplies cleanly, and protects from all heresies”⁸. It is obvious that the state ideas that Sukhanov defended as the representative of Russia

⁵ Russian National Library, F. XVII.17. Code as amended by Sukhanov 1661—1663. About it see: *Nasonov A.N.* Istoriia russkogo letopisaniia XI — nachala XVIII v.: Ocherki i issledovaniia [History of Russian chronicle writing of 11th — early 18th century: Essays and research]. Moskva, 1969. P. 486—487. (In Russ.); *Kagan-Tarkovskaya M.D.* Mladshie redaktsii “Povesti o dvukh posol’stvakh” [Junior editions of «A Tale of Two Embassies»] // *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury Instituta russkoi literatury AN SSSR (Pushkinskii Dom)*. T. XXX [Proceedings of the Department of Old Russian Literature of the Institute of Russian Literature of the USSR Academy of Sciences (Pushkin House). V. 30]. Leningrad, 1976. P. 304—306. (In Russ.); *Kloss B.M.* Nikonovskii svod i russkie letopisi XVI—XVII vekov [Nikon’s chronicle and Russian chronicles of the 16th — 17th centuries]. Moskva, 1980. P. 274—280. (In Russ.)

⁶ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 8 (1649), Items 37—71.

⁷ The results of the study of the handwritten tradition of the *Debate*, numbering 54 lists, are summarized in the monograph: *Bogdanov A.P.* “Preniia s grekami o vere” 1650 g.: Otnosheniia Russkoi i Grecheskoi tserkvei v XI—XVII vv. [«Debate on Faith with the Greeks», 1650: Relations between the Russian and Greek churches in the 11th—13th centuries]. Moskva, 2020. (In Russ.)

⁸ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 181, File 659, Item 358. This was said, among other things, at the wedding ceremony of Alexei Mikhailovich in 1645, where Arseny was obliged to be present. Two lists of the rite of the wedding: Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 135, Section IV, Subject 1, File 12. The third list, following the ceremony: *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika*. Ch. VII [Ancient Russian vivliofika. Part 7]. Moskva, 1788. P. 234—303. (In Russ.)

in the debate with the Greeks were also his ideas. This follows from the study of his work on the *Debate* and all the compositions written during the service, which the educated monk rarely left.

The Debate on Faith with the Greeks was not conceived as publicism — it stated the position of the Moscow government, set forth by its official representative. Sukhanov was not engaged in publicism, his personal hobby was collecting books, service — monasticism, public activities — church administration and state diplomacy. His father's estate not far from Starodub suffered greatly during the Time of Troubles and was transferred to the Polish—Lithuanian Commonwealth under the Truce of Deulino of 1618. Anton Putilovich Sukhanov and his brother were almost beggars. Anton, as the remark says on one of his manuscripts, managed to get a job as a clerk deacon in the Kolomna Golutvin monastery. With the support of Bishop Raphael of Kolomna, he took monastic vows under the name of Arseny and was ordained a deacon⁹.

At the end of 1632, the young man who loved books was among the brethren of the Chudovsky Monastery in the Moscow Kremlin. Already on August 23, 1633, he became the archdeacon — chief clerk of the affairs of Patriarch Filaret. For a month and one week, Arseny was, in the words of Adam Olearius, “the chancellor and right hand” of the tsar's father and the first person in the state¹⁰, and after his death for more than a year — the archdeacon of Patriarch Joasaph. Then for two years, he immersed himself in books, participating only in court ceremonies, obligatory for the Chudov's brethren. A new turn in the life of the book lover was the trip in 1637—1639 to Kakheti “to correct and establish the holy Orthodox Christian faith”. A group of enlightened monks, led by the cathedral elder of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, the former Ipatiev Archimandrite Joseph, had, according to Sukhanov, to figure out how the Kakhétians “believe, and whether they have any foreign articles of other faiths, may they have something wrong, and we are ordered to speak to them about that, so that they will correct themselves in that”. In the ambassadorial mandate, the demand to “examine and reconnoitre” sounded even stricter; in Moscow, they suspected the deviation of the Kakhétians from the rules of the apostles and holy fathers and, most terrible, the presence of Catholic influence in their Church¹¹.

Secular ambassadors headed by knyaz Volkonsky-Sherikha settled political affairs with tsar Teimuraz. However, without the correction of their faith, the conversion of the Kakhétians to Russian citizenship seemed doubtful. Gentiles were accepted into citizenship, allowing them to maintain their faith¹². Deviations from Orthodox truth

⁹ All important facts of Arseny's biography have been established: *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. I. Biografiia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part I. Biography of Arseny Sukhanov]. Moskva, 1891. (In Russ.); *Kagan M.D.* Arsenii (v miru Anton Sukhanov) [Arseny (secular name Anton Sukhanov)] // Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi [Dictionary of scribes and bookishness of Ancient Russia]. Issue 3 (17th century). Part 1. Sankt-Peterburg, 1992. P. 98—103. (In Russ.)

¹⁰ *Bogdanov A.P.* Patriarkh Filaret. Ten' za tronom [Patriarch Filaret. The shadow behind the throne]. Moskva, 2014. (In Russ.)

¹¹ Article lists of secular and ecclesiastical embassies: Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 110, Inventory 1, File 3 (1635—1641), Part IV; File 4 (1637—1640). On the mission see: *Belokurov S.A.* Poezdka startsa Arseniia Sukhanova v Gruziiu (1637—1640 gg.) [The trip of the elder Arseny Sukhanov to Georgia (1637—1640)] // Khristianskoe chtenie [Christian reading]. 1884. No. 3—4. (In Russ.); *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. I. Biografiia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part I. Biography of Arseny Sukhanov]. Moskva, 1891. P. 123 et seq., XVII—XXX. (In Russ.)

¹² Attempts to christianize, for example, the peoples of the Volga region, were undertaken both under Mikhail and under Alexei Mikhailovich, but the mass christianization of the nobility of gentile subjects became a reality only under tsar Feodor (*Bogdanov A.P.* Tsar'-reformator Fedor Alekseevich: starshii brat

were treated with apprehension, identifying and “correcting” them among all Christians who wanted to live in Russia, including the “Greeks”, as the representatives of the Orthodox East were generally called¹³. The differences between Georgian and Russian worship were recorded in the Article list of the ecclesiastical embassy, separately from the report of secular ambassadors. Belokurov rightly believed that the text was drawn up and submitted to the Ambassadors' prikaz by Arseny, the second person in the church delegation, since its head Joseph went almost blind during the trip¹⁴. However, the work with the Kakhetians, as described in the document, was joint.

The members of the delegation saw deviations from the blessing with two fingers, desecration of the faith by “German” frescoes, churches without crosses, altars not fenced off from the church, etc. They asked the local clergy about everything, inquiring where the malfunctions came from, and expressing doubts about the veracity of the answers. Subsequently, Sukhanov began to record even more clearly the differences between the Greek service and the Russian one and no less inquisitively inquire about the reasons for the “non-corrections” in the possessions of the Jerusalem Patriarch.

The reasons for the deviations from the right ritual were the destruction of the Kakhetian churches and the death of almost all the priests. This is recorded in the Article list and in the letters by tsar Teimuraz to Moscow. At the same time, Teimuraz referred to the antiquity of the Kakhetian Church in comparison with the Russian one and the “testimony” of the truth of its Orthodoxy from four Eastern Patriarchs: Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, who came to Georgia and did not reproach the local clergy in any way, since Georgians “keep the law” as they do¹⁵.

The Russians did not accept these arguments. “That the Georgian land received baptism a long time ago is known to everyone from the chronicles,” the ambassadors answered, “and now we see that you hold the Christian faith in your hearts. But in church deanery and decoration, and in the divine liturgy, and other things, you have a great disagreement with the holy catholic and apostolic church, and you do not hold the rank and approval of the church according to the tradition of the holy apostles and holy fathers”. The Russians, as the conciliar elder Joseph stated in a tough dispute, have every right to judge this, since “the great lord, His Holiness Joasaph, by God’s mercy the patriarch of the reigning city of Moscow and the entire great Russian kingdom, blessed us for that”.¹⁶

There is no doubt that this is true. The clergymen, sent to Kakheti with the tsar’s order, could not act without the blessing of Patriarch Joasaph, to whom Archdeacon Sukhanov, shortly after returning to Moscow, administered the last sacraments. Patriarch Joasaph was considered “not audacious” towards the tsar, but within the limits

Petra I [Tsar-reformer Feodor Alekseevich: elder brother of Peter I]. Moskva, 2018. P. 354–356. (In Russ.).

¹³ *Oparina T.A.* “Ispravlenie very grekov” v russkoi tserkvi pervoi poloviny XVII v. [«Correction of the Faith of the Greeks» in the Russian Church in the first half of the 17th century] // *Rossii i Khristianskii Vostok* [Russia and the Christian East]. Issue II—III. Moskva, 2004. P. 288–325. (In Russ.)

¹⁴ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 110, Inventory 1, File 2 (1640); *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. I. Biografiia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part I. Biography of Arseny Sukhanov]. Moskva, 1891. P. 153.

¹⁵ Cf.: *Perepiska na inostrannykh iazykakh gruzinskikh tsarei s rossiiskimi gosudariami* [Correspondence in foreign languages of Georgian kings with Russian sovereigns]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1861. P. 7–9, 37–38. (In Russ.) (original and translation).

¹⁶ *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. I. Biografiia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part I. Biography of Arseny Sukhanov]. Moskva, 1891. P. 142, 144–145. (In Russ.)

of his power, he acted firmly, like his successor Joseph¹⁷. Both were “humble” only in comparison with Philaret, Nikon, and Joachim. Under Joseph Sukhanov, he became a hieromonk of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery and the builder of its courtyard — the Epiphany Monastery in Kitay-Gorod. In this position, Arseny received the blessing of the patriarch in 1649 to study ranks and rituals in the Holy Land. He sent the Ambassadorial prikaz to Sukhanov, in which he then reported.

Arseny's new trip, like the mission to Kakheti, had a secular and ecclesiastical meaning. It was also reflected in two reports. However, this time Sukhanov was the only ambassador, with a small team¹⁸, without the comrades indicated in the report. The purpose of the mission, according to the case of the Ambassadorial prikaz on the trip and Arseny's Article list, was only “the description of holy places and Greek church ranks” by the decree of the tsar and the blessing of the patriarch¹⁹. In fact, the political part of the mission is reflected in the first report placed before the church one. In Moscow, where they were suspicious of the Greeks who came to Russia more and more often²⁰, the Patriarch of Jerusalem Paisius unexpectedly appeared²¹. Wandering around the world in search of alms, he ended up in the Kiev Metropolis, which united the Orthodox of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and was formally subordinate to his enemy, the Patriarch of Constantinople. Patriarch Paisius was used by Bohdan Khmelnytsky to convey to Moscow another request for military assistance²². The hetman sought to drag Russia into the war with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth without commitments on his part. He counted on the youth of Alexei Mikhailovich, who, having assumed the throne at the age of 15, was overwhelmed by a passion for great achievements, especially in matters of piety. In general, the calculation turned out to be correct, but the moment was unfortunate.

When Sukhanov set off with Patriarch Paisius to the East in June 1649, having an unspoken, but the first priority task — to understand Khmelnytsky's intentions, a wave

¹⁷ Bogdanov A.P. Russkie patriarkhi ot Iova do Iosifa [Russian patriarchs from Job to Joseph]. Moskva, 2015. P. 376—400. (In Russ.)

¹⁸ Companions of Sukhanov in 1649—1650 were the Chudov Hieromonk Pachomius, who returned to Moscow at the beginning of 1650, and the Trinity Deacon Iona the Little, who completed the journey and left the *Tale and Legend of the Journey to Jerusalem and Tsargrad*.

¹⁹ Belokurov S.A. Startsa Arseniia Sukhanova “Stateinyi spisok” i “Preniia s grekami o vere” [Elder Arseny Sukhanov «Article list» and «Debate on Faith with the Greeks»]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1883. (In Russ.); Belokurov S.A. Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. II. Sochineniia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part II. Works by Arseny Sukhanov]. Issue 1. Moskva, 1894. P. 1—22, 216—218, 103—114 (the order of the texts in scroll No. 8 is confused by the publisher), 213—216, 218—220 (from d. 22). (In Russ.)

²⁰ Since the 16th century until Sukhanov's mission: Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, Book 1, 2, 3, 5; Columns from 1525, the number of which increased greatly in the first half of the 17th century (Inventory 1, Register 2); 326 letters of 1557—1648 in Inventory 2, without which the arrivals and departures of the «Greeks» were indispensable.

²¹ Documents of Paisius's «arrival» and relations with him: Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 7 (1649), p. 1—2. See also: Kapterev N.F. Priezd v Moskvu ierusalimskogo patriarkha Paisiia v 1649 g. [Arrival to Moscow of the Jerusalem Patriarch Paisius in 1649] // *Priboavlennii k izdaniu Tvorenii sv. otsev v russkom perevode za 1891 g.* [Additions to the publication of the Creations of St. fathers in Russian translation for 1891] Book 1. Moskva, 1891. (In Russ.); Kapterev N.F. Snosheniia ierusalimskikh patriarkhov s russkim pravitel'stvom s poloviny XVI do kontsa XVIII stoletia [Relations between Jerusalem patriarchs and the Russian government from the middle of the 16th century to the end of the 18th century] // *Pravoslavnyi Palestinskii sbornik* [Orthodox Palestinian Collection]. V. 15. Iss. 1 (43). Sankt-Peterburg, 1895. (In Russ.)

²² Cf. Khmelnytsky's «lists» to the tsar 1648—1651: *Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei. Dokumenty i materialy*. V 3 t. T. 2. [Reunification of Ukraine with Russia. Documents and materials. In 3 volumes. Vol. 2. Moskva, 1953. (In Russ.)

of urban uprisings (1648—1650) spread across Russia. To save the country, the Zemsky Sobor drew up and, before Arseny's departure, approved the Code of 1649. In it, the main goal of the sovereign was declared to be the defense of Orthodoxy. Intercession for Orthodoxy was motivated for the Russians at subsequent councils (1651, 1653) to suffer for the "brothers" oppressed by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the lands of Little and White Russia. The war stopped Russia's movement to the Far East and led to an economic disaster. It ended before the death of Sukhanov, who became disillusioned with the idea of "brotherly love" with the Little Russians, just like the Moscow government²³.

Arseny's mission eloquently predicted such an outcome. The diplomat vividly conveyed the character of Khmel'nitsky and his assistants, who easily passed from demands for military assistance to threats to ravage Moscow by uniting with any of its enemies. However, the messages of Sukhanov and his fellow diplomats only provoked the tsar, who imagined himself to be omnipotent²⁴. Arseny's mission did not immediately take on a political character. Sukhanov, before leaving Moscow, asked for the state support from the sovereign: "According to your sovereign's decree, the great lord Joseph, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, sends me to Jerusalem with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, to inspect the holy places and their Greek church ranks, and nothing is said to me about your sovereign's salary and assistance."

According to the report of the Duma clerk of the Ambassadorial prikaz Volosheninov, the tsar on May 9, 1649 ordered to give the envoy to the East money and supplies, as "for the Georgian service" of Joseph's delegation²⁵. From that day on, Arseny began his mission in the Article list, although he actually left Moscow with Patriarch Paisius only on June 10. The same document opens the case of the Ambassadorial prikaz on his trip²⁶. Using the petition, Sukhanov turned the pilgrimage to the Holy places planned by the patriarch into an embassy associated with Khmel'nitsky's initiative.

The next document in the case of Arseny's mission contains detailed instructions that he received along with the sovereign's salary and fully complied with. In July 1649, having passed the Little Russian cities of Konotop and Kiev, Sukhanov clearly reported on the military forces of the Cossacks, their victory at Zbarazh, and the campaign in Lithuania with the Tatars, as well as on the patriotic sentiments of the Little Russians. In February 1650, Sukhanov sent to Moscow the acquired text of the treaty with the Cossacks that was ratified by the Polish king and the Sejm²⁷. The trip turned out to

²³ *Bogdanov A.P.* Ukraina i motivatsiia voyn Rossii (1653—1700) [Ukraine and the motivation of Russia's wars (1653—1700)] // *Istoriia russko-ukrainskikh otnoshenii v XVII—XVIII vekakh* (K 350-letiiu Pereiaslavskoi Rady). Biulleten' Nauchnogo soveta RAN "Istoriia mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii i vneshnei politiki Rossii". Vyp. 2 (2004—2005 gg.) [History of Russian-Ukrainian relations in the 17th — 18th centuries (To the 350th anniversary of the Pereyaslav Council). Bulletin of the Scientific Council of the Russian Academy of Sciences «History of International Relations and Russian Foreign Policy». Issue 2 (2004—2005). Moskva, 2006. P. 51—70. (In Russ.); *Bogdanov A.P.* Ukraina v politike Rossii XVII veka [Ukraine in the politics of Russia of the 17th century] // *Problemy russkoi istorii* [Problems of Russian history]. Issue 6. Magnitogorsk, 2006. P. 235—269. (In Russ.)

²⁴ *Talina G.V.* Tsar' Aleksei Mikhailovich: lichnost', myslitel', gosudarstvennyi deiatel' [Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich: personality, thinker, and statesman]. Moskva, 1996. (In Russ.); *Talina G.V.* Vseia Velikiia, i Malyia, i Belyia Rossii samodержavie [All the Great, and Small, and White autocracy of Russia]. Moskva, 2005. (In Russ.)

²⁵ *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. II. Sochineniia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part II. Works by Arseny Sukhanov]. Issue 1. Moskva, 1894. P. 213. (In Russ.)

²⁶ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 22 (1649), Item 1; File 8, Item 1.

²⁷ *Belokurov S.A.* Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. II. Sochineniia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part II. Works by Arseny Sukhanov]. Issue 1. Moskva, 1894. P. 214—216. (In Russ.)

be successful precisely for the political part of the mission. In the capital of Moldavia, Iasi, Arseny, strictly according to the embassy protocol, presented the tsar's letter to the hospodar Vasile Lupu²⁸. The patriarchal letter, with which the pilgrims traveled, were not awarded in this way. Sukhanov was dissatisfied with Patriarch Paisius, because of whom he could not continue his journey to Jerusalem. He refused to follow to his diocese, because he was afraid that by order of the Patriarch of Constantinople Parthenius, whose possessions lay on the way, he would be killed²⁹. Arseny calmly collected political information until the end of October when he received evidence of the appearance of the self-proclaimed "son" of the tsar Vasily Shuisky.

Thus, the case began on the capture of the dangerous adventurer Timofey Akidinov, who was trying to gather military forces in Little Russia³⁰. Khmelnytsky, having concluded a favorable treaty of Zboriv with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and having established power over the Hetmanate, was not averse to using the impostor's card in relations with Moscow. He provided "Thief Timoshka" with security and food. The wave of uprisings, which began with the Salt Riot in Moscow, rolled unceasingly through the cities of Russia until the next spring it reached Pskov and Veliky Novgorod. Sukhanov realized that the party of False Dmitry I was being played: he, too, was initially supported by small private forces of the interventionists. On November 10, having bought horses and hired a guide, he "rode hastily" with this news to Moscow, carrying also Polish and Cossack documents obtained in Iasi. On December 11, 1649, in the first hour of the day, Sukhanov already "told" Volosheninov the news. The orders to catch the "thief" were given. On January 26, 1650, the Duma clerk sent Arseny on his way back, according to the tsar's decree, with the task of "checking out" the content of the peace treaty between the king and the Sejm with the Cossacks, the quality of the reception of Russian ambassadors by the king, "and to learn about the thief Timoshka, and about the Tatars, and write about that to the sovereign."³¹

The head of the Ambassadorial prikaz ordered Arseny to "write" and not "report", because he hoped for his successful journey to the Holy places. In February 1650 in Kiev, Sukhanov collected information about the Polish Sejm and sent it to Moscow. On April 9, he handed over to Patriarch Paisius new tsar's gifts in the Wallachian capital of Targovishte, in a monastery, where he then conducted an investigation about the insult to the sovereign's honor by the Athos monks and a debate on faith with the Greeks. On April 10, Arseny presented the sovereign's letter to the Wallachian ruler Matei I Basarab (Vodeh), who received it according to the protocol³². On May 5, Sukhanov

²⁸ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 8 (1649), Item 2.

²⁹ In the Article list of 1651–1653, Sukhanov told how Patriarch Paisius in 1651 himself liquidated Parthenius with the help of hired assassins. The Jerusalem Patriarch became the main negative character of the entire book about the journey (*Belokurov S.A. Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. I. Biografiia Arseniia Sukhanova* [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part I. Biography of Arseny Sukhanov]. Moskva, 1891. P. 255. (In Russ.); *Zharova I.Yu. "Proskinitarii" Arseniia Sukhanova: istoriko-literaturnaia osnova i zhanrovo-poeticheskoe svoeobrazie teksta. Dis. ... kand. filol. Nauk* [«Proskinitary» by Arseniy Sukhanov: the historical and literary basis and genre-poetic originality of the text. Ph.D. Thesis in Philological Sciences]. Moskva, 2013. (In Russ.)).

³⁰ See about him: *Panchenko A.M. Akundinov (Akidinov, Ankudinov, Ankudinov) Timofei Demidovich* [Akundinov (Akidinov, Ankudinov, Ankudinov) Timofey Demidovich] // *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi* [Dictionary of scribes and bookishness of Ancient Russia]. Issue 3. Part 1. Sankt-Peterburg, 1992. P. 53–55. (In Russ.)

³¹ *Belokurov S.A. Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. II. Sochineniia Arseniia Sukhanova* [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part II. Works by Arseny Sukhanov]. Issue 1. Moskva, 1894. P. 6. (In Russ.)

³² Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 8 (1649), Items 6–8.

questioned the monks who had arrived from Poland about the “thief Timoshka”. On August 1, he was convinced that the impostor was living at Khmelnitsky’s place. Finally, on September 23, the hetman’s ambassador to Wallachia confirmed that Khmelnitsky “ordered to give the thief fodder,” although the Cossacks forbade him to gather an army against Moscow. Arseny, who frightened Patriarch Paisius with an investigation into the burning of Moscow books, demanded a letter from him to Khmelnitsky about the extradition of the “thief” to Russia. The patriarch agreed and even asked Arseny to write the text of this letter. With it, Sukhanov left Paisius on September 30, who conveyed greetings to the tsar’s family in Moscow strictly according to protocol³³.

The journey through Moldavia and the epidemic-ridden Polish lands was difficult. On the way, Arseny collected information about the moods of the Cossacks, some of whom wanted to fight against Russia with the Poles, others — to go into Russian citizenship. On November 4, he arrived in the hetman capital Chigirin and began negotiations, to which a significant part of his Article list is devoted. The general scribe and the hetman himself made many claims to Sukhanov that the tsar did not accept them in citizenship and did not send troops to protect them. If the tsar did not do this, the Cossacks threatened to unite with the Turks, Tatars, Wallachians, Romanians, and Hungarians for a campaign against Russia. Khmelnitsky, as if secretly, told Arseny (but did not confirm in writing) that the king, who had peace with the tsar, incited the Crimean Khan to fight against him. The hetman asked to secretly convey his request regarding citizenship to the tsar, promising that “for him, sir, the whole Greek country and all ... piety” the peoples of the Balkans will stand, “so that we all may be united.”³⁴

A farce with promises to tsars Alexei Mikhailovich, Feodor Alexeevich, Ivan Alexeevich, and Peter Alexeevich of assistance in restoring the cross over Sophia of Constantinople was later played out many times. Arseny showed in the Article list the absurdity of the promises of loyalty from the Cossacks, who, asking for help from Russia, did not betray “the thief Timoshka”. The general clerk and the hetman insist in vain that they, as on the Don, “will not betray any fugitive people,” even the murderer of the king “will not be handed over here.” Sukhanov stood his ground, debunking the legend of the impostor and using the passionate desire of the Cossacks to receive military assistance from the tsar, without binding themselves to any obligations. They did not even want to send ambassadors or write to the tsar, hoping that Arseny would convey their secret desire to become subjects of Russia. Finally, on November 11, 1650, the general scribe showed Arseny the letter to the sovereign about the expulsion of the “thief Timoshka” from the “Cossack towns”³⁵. Sukhanov checked its reliability and made sure that Khmelnitsky really sent the impostor to Hungary, however, giving him an escort, carts, and fodder³⁶. Arseny’s mission was completed.

On November 13, Sukhanov left Chigirin and on December 8 arrived in Moscow. On the evening of December 9, he outlined, in addition to what was said, Khmelnitsky’s speeches about his lifelong alliance with the Crimean Khan, who would not go to Moscow without the hetman; that the sultan is against the alliance of the Crimea and the Cossacks, but cannot interfere, fearing their strength in the conditions of the war between Turkey and Venice. Arseny collected information about the exchange of the

³³ Ibid, Items 9—11.

³⁴ Ibid, Items 12—28 (cit. Items 19, 22).

³⁵ *Belokurov S.A. Arsenii Sukhanov. Issledovanie. Ch. II. Sochineniia Arseniia Sukhanova [Arseny Sukhanov. Study. Part II. Works by Arseny Sukhanov]. Issue 1. Moskva, 1894. P. VI—IX. (In Russ.)*

³⁶ Russian diplomacy then pursued the False Shuisky in the Baltic States, Sweden and East Prussia, achieving his extradition in 1653 from Holstein. He was exposed and quartered in Moscow.

hetman's embassies with the Doge of Venice and the Turkish sultan; about the sudden attack of the Cossacks and Tatars on Moldavia under the guise of rumors about their march to Moscow, when the hospodar barely saved his family in the forests; about the negotiations of the hospodar with the sultan and the hetman, to whose son (Yuri) the hospodar promised his daughter; regarding the situation on the border of the Hetmanate with the Poles and preparations for a new war³⁷.

Sukhanov set off to the East again in the winter of 1651. From the case regarding the trip, opened by his petition for salary, satisfied by the tsar on May 9, 1649, it follows that his second stay in Moscow (December 8, 1650 — February 24, 1651) was as short-lived as the first one (December 11, 1649 — January 26, 1650). The title ecclesiastical mission continued and ended on July 26, 1653, when Sukhanov submitted to the Ambassadorial prikaz the Article list of 1651—1653³⁸. He crowned his trip to the Holy Land with the creation of a fundamental book for the tsar and the new Patriarch Nikon — *Proskinitary*³⁹.

Arseny's business qualities, shown in Georgia, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Right-Bank Ukraine, refute the notions of a book polemicist that have developed in historiography. The very task of the trip "to describe holy places and Greek church ranks" does not look favorable when comparing the *Dispute on Faith* of 1650, the Article list of 1651—1653, and *Proskinitary*. The latter describes the church life of Orthodox Christians in the East so frankly that Sukhanov, when finalizing the author's lists into a presentational copy, smoothed out its naturalism⁴⁰. The political life of the Greek clergy looked especially obscene — with mutual conspiracies, murders, and a change of power by bribing the Turks. Compared to the Article list submitted to the prikaz, many terrible details in "Proskinitary" were reduced.

In the spring of 1651, Sukhanov again joined Patriarch Paisius in Wallachia and finally went with him to the Holy Land. Having overcome many dangers, the diplomat explored the Holy Land, visited Cairo and Alexandria, looked around the Mediterranean, and returned home in 1653, submitting a new report to the Ambassadorial prikaz. It is not known how he would have behaved if he had not been in Palestine when the Greek making of the sign of the cross with three fingers was announced in Moscow, which he denounced as a novelty, the only correct one and when the reprisals began against the Old Believers in February 1653. Having returned in the summer, Arseny was almost immediately sent by the new Patriarch Nikon back to the Greeks: unofficially,

³⁷ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 8 (1649), Items 29—34.

³⁸ As part of «Proskinitary»: Russian National Library, Collection of Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, File 317.

³⁹ The Guide to the Orthodox East, used until the early 19th century, includes an abridged version of the Article list, a Historical Description of Jerusalem ("Collected from the writings on the City of Jerusalem"), and an Overview of the Palestinian Church Service ("Taktikon"). The author's lists with editing, by seniority: State Historical Museum, Synod. collection No. 575 and 574; No. 573 (derivative clean copy). The censored edition with the appendix of the full edition of the Article list, *Debate* and petitions: Proskinitarii Arseniia Sukhanova s risunkami i planom: 1649—1653 gg. [Proskinitary by Arseny Sukhanov with drawings and plan: 1649—1653] // Pravoslavnyi Palestinskii sbornik [Orthodox Palestinian collection]. V. 7. Iss. 3 (21). Sankt-Petersburg, 1889. (In Russ.)

⁴⁰ His appeal to the Greeks of the Bethlehem monastery: "All of you *shit* in the church and you made it a stable", Arseny softened that the Greeks "defecate" in the church, and then wrote the word in Greek. In the edition of the text: «you made a stable out of the church.» Arseny left the phrase "the shah sends ... to choose good guys *for bed*", but the publishers threw out the highlighted words (Proskinitary by Arseny Sukhanov with drawings and plan: 1649—1653] // Pravoslavnyi Palestinskii sbornik [Orthodox Palestinian collection]. V. 7. Iss. 3 (21). Sankt-Petersburg, 1889. P. 55—58, 108. (In Russ.)); see State Historical Museum, Synod. collection No. 574, 573, and 575.

without the tsar's letters to the Turkish authorities and reporting to the Ambassadorial prikaz. In 1655, Sukhanov returned to Russia as a simple pilgrim, but with a whole library of ancient books bought in the Athonite monasteries⁴¹, and he did not hesitate to add the note to the Proskinitary, which was accusatory for the Greeks "On the Greek ranks in brief": a formal list of striking deviations of the Eastern clergy from the Right faith. Just before the Schism of the Russian Church at the Local Council of 1656, which anathematized the "heretics" who were baptized with two fingers, as Arseny demanded in the *Debate*.

By that time, Bishop Paul of Kolomna was burned to death in a log house, and Avvakum Petrov was freezing to death in Siberia, although he had not yet written anything like the *Debate*. Sukhanov, on the other hand, lived quietly in the Trinity-Sergius Monastery, if the position of the cellarer can be called tranquil, since he was responsible for the vast economy of the monastery (1655–1660). The reasons for this are clear: Arseny did not show disobedience to the tsar and the patriarch. In addition, in the summer of 1655, he was declared the "godfather" of the Nikonian correction of church books. This was done by Epiphanius Slavinetsky in the Preface to the *Church Book* in 1655, where Nikonian corrections of ancient Russian rituals were consistently made until 1658 according to Little Russian books based on new Western editions of Greek books (everything as described in the *Debate*)⁴². Epiphanius assured the reader that the editing was being done according to the oldest Greek manuscripts brought by Sukhanov. In reality, these invaluable books were never used. They remained unused in Nikon's basement, and were lifted from there and rewritten when he was removed from Moscow in 1658, and sent after him to the Resurrection New Jerusalem Monastery, with the exception of 48 books taken to the Print Yard for belletristic purposes⁴³.

When Nikon went to New Jerusalem in 1658, Sukhanov moved to Moscow, to his long-beloved Epiphany Monastery, and became the head of the sovereign's Print Yard (1661–1664). The position required a lot of economic work, but Sukhanov found time for his favorite pastime — reading and editing books. In addition to numerous marks on manuscripts, there are two lists of the *Russian Chronograph*, edited and supplemented by him. Arseny began Russian history with the recently appeared Legend of Slovene and Ruse, emphasizing that Russian history is not inferior to the antiquity and glory of world history. To clarify the story about the history of Russia, the scribe used the largest Nikonian chronicle of the Trinity edition. However, even this did not completely satisfy him, forcing him to attract a lot of other sources. Arseny managed to quietly leave a difficult position associated with many disputes and accusations in order to live out his last years in the Trinity (he died on August 14, 1668). Epiphany's fate and intercession kept him alive when, from the mid-1660s, the *Debate* was spread by the Old Believers in Moscow, and the Solovetsky uprising, the banner of which was also the *Debate*, broke out only a month and a half before the death of the scientist, diplomat and book publisher.

After Sukhanov's death, the official Church declared the *Debate* a malicious production of the "schismatics." Indeed, the work had many Old Believer versions and

⁴¹ Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, Fonds 52, Inventory 1, File 6 (1655).

⁴² Dmitrievsky A.A. *Ispravlenie knig pri patriarkhe Nikone i posleduiushchikh patriarkhakh* [Correction of books under Patriarch Nikon and subsequent patriarchs]. Moskva, 2004. (In Russ.)

⁴³ Belyaev I. [D]. *Perepisnaia kniga domovoi kazny patriarkha Nikona* [Census book of the household treasury of Patriarch Nikon] // *Vremennik Obshchestva istorii i drevnostei Rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* [Chronicle of the Society of Russian History and Antiquities at Moscow University]. Book 15. Section II. Moskva, 1852. P. 1–136. (In Russ.)

editions. Even without additions, they can be easily distinguished from the original. For the scribes, Arseny's clear business language seemed too easy for such an important topic, it was complicated and burdened. Only Metropolitan Makarius (Bulgakov), referring to the documents of the Ambassadorial prikaz, returned the authorship to Sukhanov⁴⁴. Kapterev placed the ideas of the *Debate* at the center of a fundamental study of Russia's relations with the Orthodox East⁴⁵, but he was also wrong in the conclusion that these ideas were rejected by Nikon's reforms. The changes made under Nikon to the Russian church rite have survived to this day. However, a study of the sources available today showed that the ideas, formulated by Sukhanov on the basis of a deep Russian tradition, developed during Arseny's life and after him as if Nikon did not exist. After Sukhanov, the authors of major historical works developed and improved the ideas of his *Debate* and the *Chronograph*, and the compilers and scribes of short chronicles and chronographers available to all the people without a doubt expressed the same thoughts as Arseny. If Sukhanov deemed it necessary to emphasize the sanctity of the tsardom in the *Debate*, then the enlightened Tsar Feodor Alekseevich, during the coronation in 1676, made this idea the main one in the changes in his coronation rite, and it was only strengthened in 1682 by tsars Ivan and Peter⁴⁶.

There is nothing surprising. Sukhanov, during his state service, formulated the essential features of the sovereign ideology. It was not his fault that the tsar and the patriarch for some time deviated from the ideas that united subjects in the Russian autocratic Orthodox tsardom. Arseny's official report became a banner of protest against this particular case in publicism, which gave rise to the Schism.

⁴⁴ *Macarius (Bulgakov), Met. Istoriia Russkoi tserkvi* [History of the Russian Church]. V. IX. Moskva, 1882. P. 148—158. (In Russ.)

⁴⁵ *Kapterev N.F. Kharakter otnoshenii Rossii k pravoslavnomu Vostoku v XVI i XVII stoletiiakh* [The nature of Russia's relationship to the Orthodox East in the 16th and 17th centuries]. Sergiev Posad, 1914. (In Russ.)

⁴⁶ *Bogdanov A.P. Tsar'-reformer Fedor Alekseevich: starshii brat Petra I* [Tsar-reformer Feodor Alekseevich: elder brother of Peter I]. Moskva, 2018. P. 294—352. (In Russ.)