Subscription information:

*Revista Română pentru Studii Baltice şi Nordice [The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies] (RRSBN)* is a biannual multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing the results of research in all fields which are intertwined with the aims of The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies (www.arsbn.ro). The magazine is published in cooperation with Cetatea de Scaun Printing House, Targoviste, Romania (www.cetateadescaun.ro).

**Annual subscription:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Online: free download (<a href="http://www.arsbn.ro/RRSBN.htm">www.arsbn.ro/RRSBN.htm</a>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lei</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ordering information:**

Asociaţia Română pentru Studii Baltice si Nordice (ARSBN)
35 Lt. Stancu Ion St., 130105 Târgoviste, Romania
Telephone: (004) 0724403094, Fax:
E-mail: editorial@arsbn.ro
Online store: http://www.arsbn.ro/store.htm

**Advertising:**
The ARSBN offers the companies the possibility to advertise their products and services in the pages of RRSBN. For more details, please contact the secretary of ARSBN at e-mail: asociatie@arsbn.ro

**Exchanges:**
The magazine is open to any suggestions of publications exchange coming from publications with a similar profile or from any kind of scientific publications from Baltic and Nordic states.

**Quality process:**
Although by its peer-review process and quality standards we are striving to produce good quality articles, the RRSBN makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability or availability with respect to the articles presented in print or on the site.

© Copyright by Asociaţia Română pentru Studii Baltice şi Nordice
# Table of contents

**Editor’s Foreword**  
*Silviu Miloiu* ......................................................................................................................... 5

**Articles:**  
Wallachian settlers in the Baltic Sea region. A humanist tale of migration and colonization, and its implications for the mental maps of early modern Europe  
*Stefan Donecker* ................................................................................................................................. 9

British Reactions to Charles XII’s Stay in the Ottoman Empire  
*Costel Coroban* ............................................................................................................................... 29

Data pertaining to the outbreak of the Lithuanian insurrection (25 March 1831), retrieved from Swedish diplomatic sources  
*Veniamin Ciobanu* ............................................................................................................................ 65

Relations between Transylvania and the Nordic countries in the 19th century as seen in Romanian periodicals. A quantitative and qualitative analysis  
*Mihaela Mehedinți* ............................................................................................................................. 87

*Kišinev or Linkuva?* Rumors and threats against Jews in Lithuania in 1903  
*Klaus Richter* ................................................................................................................................. 117

Germany’s policy and the diplomatic agenda of Romanian neutrality (1914-1916). The Prospect of a plan for an alliance with Sweden  
*Claudiu-Lucian Topor* ......................................................................................................................... 131

The Nansen Commission and the Romanian Prisoners of War’s repatriation from the Russian territories  
*Ioana Cazacu* ......................................................................................................................................... 145

Pre-World War II Romania from Latvian Perspective: An Envoy’s views  
*Ēriks Jēkabsons* ..................................................................................................................................... 161

**Event:**  
90 years from the establishment of diplomatic relations between Finland and Romania: exhibition of historical documents ......................................................................................... 183
Editorial Foreword

Silviu Miloiu

President of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, E-mail: silviu.miloiu@arsbn.ro

This issue of Revista Română pentru Studii Baltice și Nordice [The Romanian Journal of Baltic and Nordic Studies, RRSBN] carries selected papers presented in approximately half of the panels of the second international conference for Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania entitled Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages. The general aim of this conference was to investigate the encounters between the Baltic and the Black Sea regions’ societies since the Middle Ages. The goal was to unearth the complexity of these bonds not only at state level (political, diplomatic, military, trade relations), but also the encounters, forms of syncretism or networks of a commercial, social, cultural, religious nature which are beyond or beneath the state relations and are presumably not only richer, but more interesting and challenging for a researcher as well. Additionally, parallels between the two regions as two buffer zones situated in-between the great empires or great powers of modernity were also assessed. Papers dealing with the effects of world wars, totalitarianism and the Cold War either as comparative approach or in terms of relations, confluences and influences were also invited. Furthermore, the conference also welcomed research results dealing with diasporas, émigré communities or individual destinies in the frame of the general theme of the conference. As such, this conference constituted a real change of research paradigm, relatively little having been previously achieved in this respect. The results of the conference as the two issues of our review will prove were notable.

A number of twenty-eight speakers belonging to twenty-three institutions from nine European countries approached these issues from various angles, the largest number of participants being constituted of historians, alongside whom stood specialists in international relations, minority studies, political sciences, etc.

In the editing of this issue, we have focused on the panels dealing with “Settlements, transfers, encounters and clashes in the Modern Age” and “Baltic, Nordic and Black Sea regions in the international relations:
intersections, meetings, crosscurrents” to which the papers signed by Stefan Donecker, Klaus Richter, Mihaela Mehedinți, Costel Coroban, Veniamin Ciobanu and Claudiu-Lucian Topor belonged.

Let us take a closer look at each of these papers individually. Stefan Donecker and Klaus Richter’s papers approached their subjects from the perspective of histoire croisée, the former researcher studying the humanist hypothesis of a Wallachian origin of Lithuanians and Latvians, while the latter considering the cultural transfers and the role of rumors as manifesting between Kišinyev and Lithuania in a charged climate marked by the wave of anti-Jewish pogroms occurring in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. The scholarly fantasy circulated by University of Wittenberg’s scholars regarding a Wallachian migration to the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea endured for about one century and half. This prompts Donecker conclude that on the mental maps of Central European scholars, “Dacia respectively Wallachia were not too civilized […], but still civilized enough to provide a reputable and very prestigious ancestry. A Wallachian origin was, indeed, an honorable genealogy."

The outbreak of a pogrom in 1903 in the Russian guberniya of Bessarabia spread the fear among Jews within the Russian Empire. The expression to be treated “as in Kišinev” was tantamount to pogroms and was enough reason to create panic among the members of this community. The implications were manifold, not the less important of which was the determination of the Jews to defend themselves if such attacks happened or were supposed to take place. Richter also compares the disruptions caused by anti-Semitism in two very different areas of the Russian Empire, the growing industrial city of Kišinev, on the one hand, and the still rural northern part of Lithuania “in order to contextualize anti-Jewish violence in Lithuania on the larger scale of the Russian pogroms.”

Mihaela Mehedinți approaches in her contribution the relations between Transylvania and the Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland) in the 19th century as seen in Romanian periodicals from Transylvania, especially in Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură, Familia and Gazeta de Transilvania. The article challenge the assumptions that because of distance the Nordic states were perceived as remote areas and little was known about them. Mehedinți concludes that “in the 19th century, Transylvanians’ image of the Nordic countries is well shaped and has mainly positive connotations” and “the amount of information they had at their disposal was rather large and capable of preserving their representations of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland”.

The papers of the panel “Baltic, Nordic and Black Sea regions in the international relations: intersections, meetings, crosscurrents” provide
interesting insights into three important events unfolded in the Black and Baltic seas rim areas: Swedish King Charles XII’s Stay in the Ottoman Empire, the outbreak of the Lithuanian insurrection (25 March 1831), and the discussion regarding a Romanian-Swedish pro-German alliance going on in the first part of World War I. The first topic is assessed in the light of British documents, the second from the perspective of Swedish documents and the third is based on Romanian diplomatic documents. Costel Coroban investigates the mixture of superhero and tyrant British perception of King Charles XII. The balance was however tilted towards the negative image which spread into Britain mostly as a result of his largely overestimated cooperation with the Jacobites, the archenemies of the Royal House of Hanover, which led to the arrest of Count Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy in London.

Veniamin Ciobanu approaches the Swedish outlook of the Lithuanian insurrection of March 1831 in the light of the anxiety manifesting in the Stockholm political and diplomatic circles that the severance of the ties between Lithuania and Russia may influence the attitude of the Norwegians who were likewise unhappy with the Swedish rule upon their country imposed at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. No wonder that the Swedish paid increased attention to the events unfolding at the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea and that they unreservedly condemned the Lithuanian aspirations.

Finally, Claudiu-Lucian Topor brings new evidence to a topic which still reserves many new avenues of interpretation to the interested researcher: the Romanian foreign policy in the first two years of World War I. Masterminded in Berlin in summer 1915 among the interested military circles and promoted by the pro-German Romanian envoy to Germany, the project of a Romanian-Swedish alliance to act under the umbrella of German strategic policy, aimed at winning the final victory on the Eastern Front and possibly on the Western Front, too. Utopian as it may seem today, the plan enjoyed the support of certain circles, but finally died out because of the Swedish clinging to their neutrality and of the Bratianu Government understanding of national interest.

Two articles have been selected for this issue from two other panels of the conference. The first article signed by Ioana-Ecaterina Cazacu discusses the role of the Nansen Commission and the Romanian Prisoners of War’s repatriation from the Russian territories, a topic on which the author has already achieved two other notable recent contributions. In order to understand the stakes ahead this Commission, one may recall that the Nansen Commission was capable of repatriating no less than 427,885 POWs, 19,188 of whom, as Cazacu provides evidence of, were Romanians.
Ēriks Jēkabsons of the University of Latvia studies the relations between Romania and Latvia at the beginning of World War II when a permanent Latvian Legation was set up in Bucharest under envoy Ludvigs Ėķis. The remarkable Ėķis’ reports reveal not only the highlights of the Romanian-Latvian relations, but also the priorities and anxieties of Romanian foreign policy in these years full of drama in which both Romania and Latvia were to witness aggression and domination from the two totalitarian European empires, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. As Ėķis concludes, “the Latvian Envoy’s reports reveal striking similarities in the destinies of the two countries and nations in the tragic time”.

The architecture of this issue is completed by the recalling of the exhibition entitled “90 years from the establishment of diplomatic relations between Finland and Romania: exhibition of historical documents” organized by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies in cooperation with such prestigious institutions as the Embassy of Finland in Romania, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, the “Royal House” National Museal Complex of Targoviste, the National Museum of Romanian History of Bucharest, the Cetatea de Scaun Printing House and the like. The itinerant exhibition travelled from Targoviste where it opened on 8 April 2010 to Bucharest, Constanta, Tulcea, Slobozia and Galati. The speeches included in this issue were held on 30 June 2010 at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the National Museum of Romanian History of Bucharest.

It is our hope that this issue of RRSBN will breed new academic debates with regard to the topics approached herein. It is also our aim to target not only the community of scholars with an interest in these topics in the light of their research interest, but also to answer the general public interest not only in Romania but also abroad. To achieve these goals, a great support was provided by the Niro Investment Group which generously sponsored this publication and to which we extend our full gratitude. The same applies to the other sponsors of the second international conference for Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania, such as the embassies of Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden, the Consulate of Latvia, the City Hall of Targoviste, Valahia University of Targoviste, the Lithuanian company based in Romania Arvi Agro, and last but not least to our longstanding collaborators of Cetatea de Scaun Printing House.

**WALLACHIAN SETTLERS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION. A HUMANIST TALE OF MIGRATION AND**
COLONIZATION, AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MENTAL MAPS OF EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Stefan Donecker
Alfried Krupp Wissenschaftskolleg Greifswald, E-Mail: stefan.donecker@eui.eu

Acknowledgments
The article is based on a paper presented at the Second International Conference of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages, at Târgovişte, May 20-22, 2011. I would like to express my gratitude to the organisers for their kind invitation. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Stiftung Alfred Krupp Kolleg, Greifswald, which generously funded the underlying research on migration narratives in early modern thought, and the Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft (project MOEL-415), whose support enabled me to explore the life and writings of Friedrich Menius.

Abstract:
During the 1550s, humanists at the University of Wittenberg in Germany first suggested that Wallachians from present-day Romania had migrated to the Baltic Sea, settled in Livonia and became the ancestors of Estonians and Latvians. This colonization allegedly took place at some time in the 5th or 6th century AD. Although such a theory seems bizarre from a modern point of view, it was considered a perfectly reasonable hypothesis by contemporary scholars. For approximately 150 years, up to the early 18th century, the idea of a Wallachian colonization of Livonia retained its place in the historiography of the region, before it was refuted by the more sober-minded approach of enlightenment historians. The paper provides an overview of the scholarly theories on a kinship between Wallachians, Estonians and Latvians that were formulated between 1550 and 1700. Although these fanciful hypotheses are not supported by any discernible historical facts, they provide important insights on the position of Wallachia and Livonia in the symbolic geography and the mental maps of the early modern res publica litterarum.

Rezumat:
În anii 1550, umaniștii de la Universitatea din Wittenberg, Germania, au sugerat pentru prima dată că valahii din România de azi au migrat spre Marea Baltică, s-au stabilit în Livonia și au devenit strămoșii estonienilor și letonilor. Această
colonizare se presupune că a avut loc la un moment dat, în secolul al V-lea sau al VI-lea d. Hr. Deși o astfel de teorie pare bizară din punct de vedere modern, aceasta a fost considerată o ipoteză perfect rezonabilă de către cercetători contemporani. Pentru aproximativ 150 de ani, până la începutul secolului al XVIII-lea, ideea unei colonizări valahe a Livoniei a reținut locul său în istoriografia regiunii, înainte de a fi respinsă de abordarea mai echilibrată a istoricilor iluministă. Lucrarea oferă o imagine de ansamblu a teoriilor științifice privind o înrudire între valahi, estonieni și letoni, care au fost formulate între anii 1550 și 1700. Deși aceste ipoteze fanteziste nu sunt sprijinite de fapte istorice perceptibile, ele oferă perspective importante cu privire la pozițiile Valahiei și Livoniei în geografia simbolică și în hărțile mentale de la începutul res publica litterarum moderne.

**Keywords:** Livonia, Wallachia, migration, genealogy, mental maps, early modern historiography

**Introduction**

In May 2011, the Second International Conference of the *Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies* discussed historical encounters and mutual influences between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea Region, from the Middle Ages up to the present. The nations and societies of Eastern Europe’s two great inland seas indeed share, as the conference’s proceedings proved, a fascinating and multi-faceted history, with manifold interactions of a political, diplomatic, economic as well as a cultural nature. To the numerous historical connections between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea littoral, I would like to contribute a rather unusual addition: the settlers from Wallachia who colonized the lands of the eastern Baltic 1,500 years ago and became the ancestors of Estonians and Latvians.

Apparently, the connection between the Baltic and the Black Sea region is, in this particular case, a purely imaginary one: In historical reality, there have never been any Wallachian colonizers in the eastern Baltic area, and the forefathers of the Latvians and the Estonians certainly did not come from present-day Romania. Yet humanist scholars of the 16th and 17th centuries believed they did, and their opinion in this peculiar matter certainly deserves closer scrutiny.

In the history of historiography the distinction between fact and fiction tends to be blurred: Fictionality is, as the eminent German medievalist Hans-Werner Goetz\(^1\) has pointed out, an inadequate criterion

---

\(^1\) Hans-Werner Goetz, “‘Konstruktion der Vergangenheit’. Geschichtsbewusstsein und ‘Fiktionalität’ in der hochmittelalterlichen Chronistik, dargestellt am Beispiel der Annales
for the evaluation of historiographic texts. If an occurrence that would be regarded as “fictional” by modern scholars corresponds to the firm conviction of a historical author, it is, as Goetz argues, the latter’s truth, irrespectively of any present-day evaluations. To us, as modern researchers, the idea of a Wallachian colonization on the Baltic shores seems rather strange – but to early modern men of letters, it was a legitimate and plausible hypothesis. As I intend to show in the following pages, it provides interesting insights into the way 16th and 17th century scholars perceived the lands situated at the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea. As an expression of the mental maps of eastern Europe in the early modern Republic of Letters, the tale of these elusive Wallachian pioneers is far more than just a random humanist fable.

Caspar Peucer, the *Chronicon Carionis* and the “Discovery” of the Wallachian Settlers

In 1565, one of the most influential tomes of early modern historiography was published at Wittenberg, the center of Protestant humanism in Germany: *Chronicon Carionis*, the “Chronicle of Carion”, in a revised version edited by Caspar Peucer (1525-1602), the rector of Wittenberg University.\(^2\) The impressive, four-volume history of the entire world bears the name of Johannes Carion (1499-1537), mathematician and astrologer at the court of Elector Joachim I. of Brandenburg. Carion was the author of a comparatively modest chronicle, published in 1532.\(^3\) After his untimely death – attributed by contemporaries to his excessive drinking habits –, his teacher, Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560), the influential humanist and close collaborator of Luther, revised Carion’s chronicle and published two greatly improved and expanded volumes in 1558 and 1560, covering the world’s history from the Creation to the reign of Charlemagne. Melanchthon himself died in April 1560, and his son-in-law Caspar Peucer continued his work on the chronicle. The two final volumes were published in 1562 and 1565. The chronicle retained the name of its original author, *Chronicon Carionis*, mainly out of respect for the deceased

---

2 Philippus Melanthon and Casparus Peucerus, *Chronicon Carionis exposition et auctum [...] ab exordio mundi usque ad Carolum V. Imperatorem* (Wittenberg: Kraft, 1580).
scholar, since the final version, after meticulous revisions, bears little resemblance to Carion’s original text.

The *Chronicon Carionis*, in the revised version of Melanchthon and Peucer, was a great success, one of the main achievements of Wittenberg humanism. It was reprinted repeatedly and became the quasi-official history textbook of Lutheran Europe. Generations of German and Scandinavian scholars received their initiation to universal history from Melanchthon and Peucer, and the influence of the *Chronicon Carionis* on 16th and 17th century historiography can hardly be overestimated.

To Philipp Melanchthon, the history of the eastern Baltic area was a topic of particular interest. He was greatly alarmed by the Muscovite attack on Livonia in 1558 and followed the subsequent developments in the region closely. After Melanchthon’s death, Peucer retained this emphasis on Livonian history, with the result that the eastern Baltic is well-represented in the *Chronicon Carionis* – the first major work of universal history that devoted considerable attention to the region and its history. According to Melanchthon’s methodology, any historical inquiry had to take the origins of the local population into account: “Knowledgeable men have always sought the origins of nations,” Melanchthon had stated programmatically. Consequently, the *Chronicon Carionis*, in particular Peucer’s fourth and final volume, contains several interesting speculations on the origins and ancestry of the Estonians and Latvians.

The most remarkable passage, in this respect, establishes a genealogical connection between the indigenous inhabitants of Livonia and the Wallachians of the lower Danube: “In addition to the Germanic and the Slavonic tongue, one can observe three more languages [in Livonia] which are distinct from the former and also differ from each other. One of them, which is called ‘Estonian’, relates, in certain words, to the Latin language, though in a very corrupt form, so that it is truly not dissimilar from Latin. For this reason, several people have remarked, based on the

---

8 In the original Latin “Heneta lingua”, the Wendish language.
9 Estonian, Latvian and Couronian. The latter was usually regarded as a separate language by early modern observers.
argument of name and language, that the Lithuanians are descendants of the Wallachians – who are Latin colonists – and that the Livonians in the vicinity of Reval, in turn, descend from the Lithuanians. The name of the people of Reval also alludes to the Wallii or Wallachi.”

Caspar Peucer implies that this extraordinary theory is not his own idea: Aliqui annotarunt, “certain people” have remarked that the Livonians descend from the Wallachians. Among Melanchthon’s pupils there were several young Baltic German noblemen from Livonia who had been attracted by the reputation of the University of Wittenberg, and it seems likely that some of them provided Caspar Peucer with information about their native land, including the alleged Wallachian ancestry of the Estonian peasants. Paul Johansen11, one of the leading 20th century experts in this field, has singled out a certain Hermann von Nehmen, a rather insignificant student from Dīnaminde (Daugavgrīva12), as one of Melanchthon’s and Peucer’s main informers on Livonian matters. Another possible source would be Hermann Wittekind, a former pupil of Melanchthon. His teacher’s recommendation secured Wittekind a position at the cathedral school in Riga, and he regularly corresponded with Melanchthon and updated him on developments in Livonia.13

The main argument for the existence of a Wallachian colony in the Baltic area is the similarity between Estonian, Lithuanian and Latin. The reference to Estonian is, in this context, rather surprising. A certain resemblance between Latvian and Latin seems less far-fetched; both languages do, after all, belong to the Indo-European family. A similarity between Latin and Finno-Ugric Estonian is far more difficult to imagine.

Peucer, however, was unfamiliar with the languages of Livonia and had, probably, received misleading statements from his local informers. As a result, he tended to confuse Estonian and Latvian.14 Peucer probably wanted to refer to Latvian when he commented on similarities between Latin and one of the barbarian languages of Livonia, but got it wrong and wrote “Estonian” instead. Previously, in the introduction to the fourth volume, he had avoided this mistake and clarified that the language

10 Melanthon and Peucerus, 477.
12 In this paper, I use the historical German toponyms with the modern Estonian and Latvian names added in brackets.
13 Stupperich, 276-277.
14 On one occasion, Peucer claimed that the inhabitants of Reval called their city “Danopil”, “the castle of the Danes” – a Latvian equivalent to Estonian “Tallinn”, which would have been the appropriate designation in this context. Cf. Melanthon and Peucerus, 477.
derived from the Wallachian settlers was called “die lettische Sprach”, “the Latvian tongue”.

Another factor, which certainly contributed to Peucer’s uncertainty, was the alleged reference to the Wallachians contained in the name “Reval”: Nomen Revaliensium ad Wallios seu Wallachos alludit, “the name of the people of Reval alludes to the Wallachians”. Peucer was infamous for his creative etymologies and his enthusiasm for superficial similarities between random unrelated ethnonyms and toponyms. According to this method, Riga had been founded by the Rugii, mentioned by Tacitus as inhabitants of northern Germany, and Narva derives its name either from the Nervii in Gaul or the Neuri in distant Scythia. Livonia itself is named after the Lemovii, an obscure tribe documented only in a single occasion in Tacitus’ Germania, or the Leuonoi who inhabited Scandinavia, according to Ptolemy. “I enjoy following and retaining etymologies,” Peucer explained, “which demonstrate the nature, the customs and the character of a nation as well as its dwelling places.”

This onomastic method, rather absurd from a modern point of view but perfectly acceptable to the standards of 16th century scholarship, led Peucer to the conclusion that the second syllable of the name Re-val indicates that the city’s founders had been Wallachians. Together with the alleged similarities between Latin and the local indigenous idiom, this evidence implied that Livonia had once been colonized by Romanian-speaking settlers from the lower Danube. The supposedly convincing reference to Wallachians in the name Reval seems to have prompted Peucer to shift the emphasis from southern Livonia (where a linguistic similarity between Latin and Latvian would have been somewhat plausible) to the north of the country, resulting in the unlikely connection between Indo-European Wallachians and Finno-Ugric Estonians.

Yet despite all its shortcomings, Peucer’s theory of a Wallachian colony in the eastern Baltic area proved very influential: The authority of the Chronicon Carionis and its prominent authors was undisputed among 16th and 17th century scholars, and the tale of the intrepid Romanian settlers, implausible as it might seem from a modern point of view, enjoyed considerable credence for more than a century.

Lithuanian Examples: Prince Palemon and the Romans

15 Melanthon and Peucerus, 304.
18 Cf. Donecker 2010, 228-239.
According to Caspar Peucer there was no direct connection between the Wallachians and the peasants of Livonia: *A Walachis [...] Lituanos, ab his Livonios ad Revaliam ortos esse*: the Livonians descend from the Lithuanians, and the Lithuanians, in turn, from the Wallachians. This is quite an important detail, because it indicates the origin of the entire theory: The idea that the eastern Baltic littoral is populated by descendants of the Wallachians is, essentially, based on Lithuanian traditions.

Early modern scholars claimed that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had been founded by exiled noblemen from ancient Rome, famously led by a certain Palemon. The tale was first recorded by the Polish chronicler Jan Długosz (1414-1480) and has been a feature of Lithuanian historiography since the early 16th century, when it was first elaborated in the chronicles of the so-called Second Redaction. The alleged Roman origins of the Lithuanians became extremely popular in the latter half of the 16th century, after the Union of Lublin (1569) reduced Lithuania to an inferior position in the Polish dominated *Rzeczpospolita*. A Roman heritage was an extremely prestigious genealogy that provided the Lithuanian elites with a viable argument for an improved standing in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

In 1564, Vilnius humanist Augustinus Rotundus (1520-1582) introduced a new name for the Lithuanian founding hero: In his *Conversations of a Pole with a Lithuanian*, Rotundus claims that the Roman prince who later became known as Palemon had, initially, been called Publius Libo. Two years later, Rotundus promoted his new version of the Lithuanian origins in a Latin tract, *Epitome Principum Lituaniae*. Through

---

19 Melanthon and Peucerus, 477.
21 According to the original version of the story, Prince Palemon had been a contemporary of Emperor Nero in the first century AD. Later reformulations of the story moved him to the fifth century AD and stated that he and his followers had fled the tyranny of Attila and the Huns. Cf. Donecker 2010, 230-231.
23 [Augustyn Rotundus,] *Rozmowa Polaka z Litwinem 1564*, ed. J. Korzeniowski (Kraków: Wydawn. Akademii Umiejętności w Krakowie, 1890), 67; [Augustinus Rotundus,] “Epitome Principum Lituaniae a migratione Italorum P. Libone vel, ut Lituanica historia scribit, Palemone Duce usque ad Jagellones,” in *Studya nad stosunkami narodowościowemi na Litwie*
the name Publius Libo, the Roman genealogy was extended to include Livonia as well as Lithuania. The ancient Roman colonizers had, supposedly, not only founded Lithuania, but had subjugated the lands further to the North as well, which became known as Libonia or Livonia after the conqueror’s eponymous leader. It is hardly a coincidence that this tale appeared at a time when Lithuania was heavily involved in the Livonian War: If Livonia had once been the patrimony of their Roman ancestors, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania could legitimately claim the land against the competing ambitions of Muscovy and Sweden.24

The one major criticism voiced against Palemon, Libo and the alleged Roman origin of Lithuanians and Livonians was both simple and convincing: A Roman colony in the Baltic was not mentioned by any ancient source, and the Romans had never been shy to record their conquests. Thomas Hiārn (ca. 1638-1678), an eminent 17th century Livonian historiographer, voiced the skepticism shared by many of his contemporaries: “The Romans, who never failed to document everything that furthered their glory, would have never remained silent if they had possessed these lands.”25 Other scholars like Friedrich Menius (ca. 1594-1659) and Olaus Hermelin (ca. 1658-1709), professors at the University of Dorpat (Tartu), meticulously searched the ancient records for all prominent persons named either Palemon or Libo – and it seemed quite unlikely that men like Quintus Remmius Palaemon, a freed slave who later became a famous grammarian, or Marcus Scribonius Libo Drusus, who had been accused of necromancy and driven to suicide during the reign of emperor Tiberius, would have colonized Lithuania or Livonia.26

Nevertheless, numerous place names seemed to indicate that there had been some Roman influence on the eastern Baltic region, after all: Lithuania was supposedly a corrupted form of l’Italia, Lettonia was similarly deduced from Latium, and the city of Libau (Liepāja) and the river of the same name retained the name of Publius Libo. Romova, the temple site of the pagan Prussians mentioned in the medieval chronicle of Peter of

24 Niendorf, 60.
Dusburg, allegedly alluded to ancient Rome. For 16th and 17th century historians and ethnographers, who, like Caspar Peucer, relied heavily on the comparison of ethnonyms and toponyms, these were grave arguments indeed. Even more importantly, the linguistic similarities between classical Latin and the local idioms in Latvia and Lithuania seemed beyond doubt.

Summarily, the ancestors of Latvians and Lithuanians could not have been the Romans themselves – or else their exploits would have been recorded in ancient sources – but they spoke Latin, or a language similar to Latin, and retained a faint memory of Italy, its cities and provinces. These criteria soon led early modern commentators to turn towards present-day Romania: The Wallachians spoke a language that was acceptably close to Latin, and they lived much closer to Lithuania and Livonia, which made it seem far more likely that they had colonized the Baltic lands, rather than the Romans themselves. As scholars increasingly questioned the Lithuanian tradition, the Wallachians consequently began to replace the Romans as the ancestors of the Baltic nations.

Wallachians and Heruls in the 17th Century

After Caspar Peucer, in the 1565 edition of the *Chronicon Carionis*, had introduced the Wallachian hypothesis to the academic elites of protestant Europe, it became a well-established feature in the historical accounts on Livonia. Matthias Strubycz, secretary of the Duke of Courland and author of the “Short and Accurate Historical-Geographical Description of the Duchy of Livonia” (*Brevis atque Accurata Livoniae Ducatus Descriptio Historico-Geographica*, 1577), was the first domestic historiographer who referenced Peucer’s Wallachians in his writings. Among 17th century historiographers, the most notable proponent of the Wallachian genealogy was the infamous academic adventurer, bigamist and heretic Friedrich Menius, the first professor of history at the *Academia Gustaviana* at Dorpat (Tartu).

In 1635, Menius published the first systematic inquiry into the origins of the Estonians and Latvians, entitled *Syntagma de origine*

---

27 Donecker 2010, 229.
Livonorum.30 Previous scholars like Peucer, Strubycz or Moritz Brandis, who compiled a history of Livonia on behalf of the Estonian nobility around 1600, had only touched the topic en passant in their writings. According to Menius, the Wallachians arrived in Livonia in the late 6th century AD, the last major group of settlers before the arrival of the first German merchants in the 12th century. In the preceding centuries, as Menius painstakingly explains, Livonia had been repeatedly invaded, conquered and colonized by a bewildering variety of Suebic and Gothic tribes and all kind of Scythian and Slavonic barbarians. The Wallachians intermingled with the local population and became the ancestors of both Latvians and Estonians. Their Latin heritage was the reason for the erroneous assumption of certain historiographers – Menius does not mention the Lithuanian humanists by name, but it is quite obvious to whom he is referring – who believed that Livonia had been colonized by Roman refugees.31

When scholars like Caspar Peucer or Friedrich Menius wrote about the Wallachi, they referred to the Romanian-speaking population of the lower Danube region, in its entirety – not only to the Principality of Wallachia, in the strict sense, but also to the inhabitants of Moldavia and Transylvania. According to Peucer, the Wallachians were the descendants of Roman and Byzantine soldiers who had been settled in the province of Dacia by the emperors.32 They later rebelled against their masters, instigated by the Sarmatians, who encouraged them to found colonies of their own and settle in Livonia and Lithuania. Friedrich Menius believed that the Wallachians were the offspring of intermarriages between Romans and Goths – a genealogy with far-reaching implications, to which I will return in the conclusion of the paper.

By the mid 17th century, a new variation of the Wallachian hypothesis appeared. The somewhat generic term Wallachi for the inhabitants of the former Roman province of Dacia was replaced by a reference to the Heruls as the alleged ancestors of the Livonians. The Heruls, a somewhat elusive barbarian gens of the migration period documented in Greek and Roman sources between the 3rd and the 6th centuries33, had been supposedly rediscovered in northern Germany in the early 16th century. Nicolaus Marschalk († 1525), a humanist at the

31 Menius, 532.
32 Melanthon and Peucerus, 457-458.
33 For a detailed, up-to-date discussion of the Heruls and the complex and shifting ethnic identities associated with the ethnonym, see Roland Steinacher, “The Herules: Fragments of a History,” in Neglected Barbarians, ed. F. Curta (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011) [forthcoming].
University of Rostock, reported that their descendants, the *Weruli*, lived in Mecklenburg, in his immediate vicinity.\(^{34}\) It seems that Marschalk’s conjecture was inspired by the name of the local castle at Werle, in the vicinity of Güstrow – yet another of the onomastic speculations that were so typical for 16\(^{th}\) century historiography.

Wolfgang Lazius (1514-1565), rector of the University of Vienna, Habsburg court historiographer and one of the great men of letters of the mid 16\(^{th}\) century, referred to Marschalk’s suggestion in his monumental volume on “The migrations of certain tribes” (*De aliquot gentium migrationibus*, 1557). He approved of the existence of Herulian remnants in Mecklenburg and added a peculiar detail: the text of the Lord’s Prayer in the language of these “Weruli”.\(^{35}\) Any reader familiar with the inhabitants of Livonia could not fail to notice that the text recorded by Lazius was identical with the Lord’s Prayer in Latvian. From the perspective of early modern scholars, this conformity proved that the Latvians were descendants of the ancient Heruls.

Lazius had remarked that the “Werulian” prayer resembled corrupted Latin – a hint eagerly seized by Livonian historiographers looking for the origin of the local population: The Heruls were the perfect candidates to replace the Roman colonists of the Lithuanian chronicles and the Wallachians of Peucer and Menius as the ancestors of the indigenous Livonian peasantry: a famous tribe of the migration era, well documented in ancient sources and vaguely associated with eastern Europe, which spoke a kind of garbled Latin (which could explain the allegedly Latin toponyms in Livonia) and was, as Lazius had shown, closely related to the Latvians.

Only in 1858, the famous Baltic German historian Carl Schirren\(^{36}\) was able to show that generations of Livonian scholars had based their theory either on a major misunderstanding or even on a forgery: Lazius had copied the prayer text which he attributed to the “Weuli” of Mecklenburg from Sebastian Münster’s “Cosmographia” (1550). There, it is correctly identified as the Lord’s Prayer in the language of the peasants in the vicinity of Riga.\(^{37}\) It remains uncertain why Lazius decided to borrow


\(^{35}\) Wolfgang Lazius, *De gentium aliquot migrationibus* […] (Basle: Oporinus, 1557), 787-788.


the text, transfer it from Livonia to Mecklenburg and attribute it falsely to the descendants of the Heruls who supposedly lived there. Lazius was known to forge sources if that helped him to underpin his theories, but in this case he had no reason to do so – the genealogy of Heruls and Latvians was, to him, an issue of peripheral importance. It is equally possible that Lazius had no ulterior motives and simply confused his references. But regardless of his intentions, the one and only reason to include the Heruls in the genealogy of the Livonians was utterly invalid.

The dubious foundation of the Herulian hypothesis did not bother 17th century scholars: The Heruls started to replace the Wallachians as the ancestors of the Livonians, in particular the Latvians. As such, they were favoured by some of the most prominent local historiographers like Thomas Hiärn and Olaus Hermelin in Livonia, Albert Koialowicz in Lithuania or Christophorus Hartknoch in Prussia. The connection to the lower Danube area and present-day Romania was, however, retained. According to the prevalent opinion, the Heruls had originated from the Roman province of Dacia and later colonized Livonia. Alternatively, it was suggested that they originally came from the Baltic, migrated to Dacia, adopted the Latin language there and subsequently brought it back to Livonia, their homeland, when they returned. This opinion was endorsed by Olaus Hermelin, an influential Swedish professor at the University of Tartu during the 1690s: “It seems very likely,” Hermelin wrote, “that the Latvian language and the Latvian nation originate from a tribe that migrated from Dacia in the years after Emperor Aurelianus. [...] The Heruls had received Dacia in the 6th century from Justinian. Based on the similarity in language and manners, it is probable that the Latvians and Lithuanians originate from them. This means that the Latin language was not brought to Livonia by the Romans, but rather by autochthonous inhabitants who had once left this land and were now returning.”

Conclusions: Livonia and Wallachia, Migrations and the Politics of Antiquity

Long-distance migrations of valiant conquering tribes, distant settlements and remote colonies were one of the favorite topics among early modern historiographers. The English clergyman William Nicholls

38 Hiärn, 22-25, 57; Hermelin 586; Albertus Wiivk Koialowicz, Historia Litvanæ Pars prior; de rebus Litvanorum Ante susceptam Christianam Religionem, conjunctionemque Magni Litvaniae Ducatus cum Regno Poloniae libri novem (Danzig: Förster, 1650), 6; Christophorus Hartknoch, Alt- und Neues Preussen Oder Preussischer Historien Zwey Theile [...] (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Hallervorden, 1684), 94-96, 222.
39 Hermelin, 586.
(1664–1712), to quote but one example, verbalized his contemporaries’ fascination with migration in 1696: “[T]here is nothing more famous in Ancient History, than these transmigrations of Inhabitants from one Country to another. Every one knows of Cadmus’s Plantation in Boeotia, of his brother Cilix in Cilicia, of Dido’s in Africa; of the Colonies settled by Evander, Æneas, and Diomedes in Italy; to say nothing of our English Brute and the swarming Invasions of the Saxons and Danes, and a hundred other Instances. For there is hardly any Nation almost, but owes their Original to some Colony planted there, within the reach of History.”

In 1750, the historiographers’ preoccupation with large-scale migration received a lapidary comment in the authoritative “Universal-Lexicon” of Johann Heinrich Zedler: “There is hardly anything more common in history than the constant talk about the so-called migrations of various peoples.”

To early modern men of letters, migration was not only an important feature of the human condition, but literally the driving force behind all human history. The unquestionable belief in the literal truth of the Old Testament meant that all humans were descendants from Noah’s family, implying that everybody had, at one time or the other, migrated from the stranded Ark at Mount Ararat or the Tower of Babel on the Plains of Shinar. Among the previously mentioned Livonian historiographers, Friedrich Menius was particularly outspoken in his emphasis on the universality of migration: Christian scholars could never possibly agree to the tales of autochthony found in Tacitus and other ancient sources, since the Holy Scriptures unequivocally testify that all mankind originated from Noah. No nation can therefore claim to be indigenous in the land it currently inhabits.

---

42 Menius, 517. Menius’ statement mirrors the opinion of French scholar Jean Bodin, who belonged to the most authoritative theorists of historiography in the early modern period. Bodin had vehemently criticized the German humanists who prided themselves on the autochthony of the old Germans that Tacitus had described: “Althamer, imitating Tacitus, […] wrote that the Germans were born in Germany itself and were not descended from any other race. […] What more stupid, shall I say, or more impious can be imagined than this? The ancients, of course, in a certain sense deserve indulgence; but modern people are either guilty of great error or of sin, both because they contradict the statements made by Moses about primitive times in the Holy Scriptures […] and because they separate these races altogether from association and friendship by assuming for them no source other than the ancestral soil.” Jean Bodin, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, ed. B. Reynolds (New York: Norton, 1969), 334-335.
When confronted with surprising cultural similarities – linguistic resemblances, religious practices, traditions and customs etc. – between distant populations, early modern scholars tended to rely on complex narratives of long-distance migration as an explanation: Cultural carriers allegedly broke away from their original settlements and moved to other parts of the world. Alternative modes of explanation – such as the transfer of cultural traits between stationary ethnic groups through imitation, i.e. “diffusion” in the terms of modern cultural anthropology43 – were hardly considered during the 16th and 17th centuries. According to this prevalent migration paradigm, the alleged similarities between Latvian, Lithuanian and Latin and the ominous toponyms in Livonia which seemed somewhat Roman-inspired had to be explained as the result of Roman colonisation in the Baltic area, later rationalized as an indirect Romanesque influence with Wallachian or Herulian settlers as the intermediaries.

In his famous 1994 monograph “Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment”, Larry Wolff emphasized the role of scholarly antiquarianism in the “philosophical geography” of the 18th century. In their perception of the lands that became categorized as “Eastern Europe”, enlightenment authors repeatedly referred to the various tribes that had inhabited the area in antiquity. Contemporary observations and recent travelers’ reports were combined with scholarly knowledge drawn from classical Greek and Roman literature to conceptualize Eastern Europe as the barbarian antithesis to the civilized West – a process aptly characterized by Wolff as a “collapsing of chronology”.44

A similar argumentative technique was employed by previously mentioned scholars like Friedrich Menius and Olaus Hermelin, roughly a century before the enlightenment “invention” of Eastern Europe. References to the ancient inhabitants of Livonia and the putative ancestors of the Estonians and Latvians enabled 17th century scholars to express their opinions on contemporary matters, and sometimes contained thinly veiled allusions to controversial political issues. The various theories on Wallachian and Herulian settlements in the Baltic might seem, at first glance, to be little more than eccentric creativity of armchair intellectuals, but they provide modern researchers with interesting perspectives on the world-view of the respective scholars. It was, I believe, no coincidence that

humanist men of letters constructed a link between the Baltic and the Black Sea area, fictitious to us but quite factual to them.

What conclusions can thus be drawn from the idea that Livonia had been colonized by settlers from present-day Romania? How did 16th and 17th century men of letters perceive the Baltic and the Black Sea littoral, and the connection between these two regions established by the putative migration of Wallachians and Heruls?

In the first place, the Livonian-Wallachian migration theory indicates that both lands, Livonia as well as Wallachia, were seen as fringes of European civilization, where major migrations and colonizations could occur without being noticed. This was, after all, the main reason why the Wallachians were preferred to the Romans in these tales of descent. If the Romans had colonized Livonia, it would have been mentioned in ancient sources. If the settlers had been Wallachians, from the frontier of the Roman-Mediterranean world, close to barbarian Scythia, such a migration could have easily remained unnoticed.

Secondly, and possibly more importantly: The Wallachian respectively Herulian theory bestows a rather prestigious genealogy on the Livonian peasants. Wallachians were indeed ancestors to be proud of: For Friedrich Menius, the Wallachians were *ex Italis et Gothis mixti*45 – the offspring of the union between the noble Romans and the warlike Goths, both of whom were extremely popular during the 17th century. The prestige which the ancient Romans, as the founders of European civilization, had acquired in the wake of the humanist rediscovery of classic antiquity is beyond dispute. The Goths, however, were almost equally renowned among the scholars of 17th century north-eastern Europe. Swedish chroniclers had developed an extremely elaborate historical narrative which extolled the deeds of the Goths, the alleged ancestors of the Swedes. The bravery of the Goths, they claimed, was unmatched, and it was complimented by their unswerving loyalty, an exemplary godliness and all kinds of innate virtues. So-called “Gothicism” provided the ideological foundation of the expansionist policies of the Swedish kingdom during the 17th century, and exerted a considerable influence on historiography and learned antiquarianism all over north-eastern Europe.46 When Menius credited the Livonians with a Roman-Gothic heritage, he implied that they

45 This explanation is omitted in the 1848 reprint. It can be found in the original edition: Friedericus Menius, *Syntagma De Origine Livonorum* (Dorpat: 1635), 74.
were, in a way, the “best of both worlds”, combining Roman civilization and Gothic valor.

Olaus Hermelin’s version of the tale is equally appreciatory: According to his treatise, the Herulian ancestors of the Latvians managed to acquire Latin culture and Latin civilization all by themselves. They did not depend on anybody else to civilize and enlighten them, but accomplished this feat independently from any foreign influence – in the course of their migration to Romania and back. Hermelin’s academic readers would not have failed to recognize and appreciate this remarkable achievement.

It was no mere coincidence that scholars like Menius or Hermelin constructed such a prestigious origin for the peasants of Livonia. The so-called “peasant question” was an issue of considerable importance in the struggle between the local Baltic German nobility, determined to preserve their traditional liberties and privileges, and the centralization efforts of Swedish absolutism. Swedish demands for a better treatment of the Estonian and Latvian peasantry were an apt measure to exert pressure on the nobility, whose prosperity depended on the strict system of serfdom.47 A prestigious Wallachian-Herulian genealogy was a powerful argument: If the Latvian or Estonian peasants were the descendants of such noble ancestors, it would be most inappropriate to maintain the status quo and force them to endure humiliating serfdom. It is hardly surprising that both Menius and Hermelin, as professors at the University of Dorpat with close ties to Swedish centralism, advocated such a benevolent interpretation of ancient Livonian history.

In the historical imagination of early modern scholars, the past of different European regions was linked by a web of far-reaching migrations. The alleged connection between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea area allowed 17th century scholars to express a positive attitude towards the indigenous peasants of Livonia. On their mental maps, Dacia respectively Wallachia were not too civilized – which would have been incompatible with a credible migration theory, as the Romanian-Lithuanian example had shown –, but still civilized enough to provide a reputable and very prestigious ancestry. A Wallachian origin was, indeed, an honorable genealogy.

References:

A. Early Modern Sources


Melanthon, Philippus and Casparus Peucerus. *Chronicon Carionis expositum et auctum* [...] *ab exordio mundi usque ad Carolum V. Imperatorem*. Wittenberg: Krafft, 1580.


Menius, Fridericus. “Syntagma de origine Livonorum.” *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum* 2 (1848) : 511-542.


**B. Modern Literature**


BRITISH REACTIONS TO CHARLES XII’S STAY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Costel Coroban

“Ovidius” University of Constanța, E-mail: coroban_costel@yahoo.com

Acknowledgments
The article is based on a paper presented at the Second International Conference of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages, at Târgovişte, May 20-22, 2011.

Abstract:
In 1709 the Great Northern War took an unfortunate course for Sweden, as following Charles XII’s defeat at Poltava, he was forced to retreat to Bender in the Ottoman Empire, where he would remain for 5 years. The Swedish King’s retreat in the Ottoman Empire also reverberated in Britain, which at the time was involved in the War for Spanish Succession (1709-1714), and consequently sought for tranquillity at the North and Baltic Sea. While politicians were worried about the Swedish fleet, a worry which only aggravated after George I’s accession to the British thrones in 1714, writers such as Daniel Defoe and others could not refrain from expressing their admiration for the ‘Warrior King’ Charles XII. Soon after his return, Charles XII would even be associated with the Jacobite faction, rival to the House of Hanover which at the time ruled Britain. The purpose of this paper is to offer an overview of the whole spectrum of British publications and reactions regarding Charles XII’s sojourn in the Ottoman Empire, during his stay’s duration (1709-1714) and up to his death and the immediately subsequent period.

Rezumat:
În 1709, Marele Război Nordic a urmat un curs nefericit pentru Suedia deoarece ca urmare a înfrângerii lui Carol al XII-lea la Poltava, el a fost forțat să se retragă la Bender, în Imperiul Otoman, unde va rămâne timp de 5 ani. Retragerea regelui suedez în Imperiul Otoman a avut, de asemenea, reverberații în Marea Britanie, care la acea vreme era implicată în războiul de succesiune spaniol (1709-1714), și, prin urmare, căuta liniștea la Marea Nordului și la Marea Baltică. În timp ce politicienii erau îngrijorați de flota suedeză, o îngrijorare care doar s-a accentuat după urcarea lui George I pe tronul britanic în 1714, scriitori cum ar fi Daniel Defoe și alții nu au putut să se abțină de la exprimarea admirăției lor pentru „războinicul rege” Carol al XII-lea. Curând după întoarcerea sa, Carol al XII-lea a fi fost chiar asociat cu fațiunea iacobită, rivala Casei de Hanover ce guverna la
acea vreme Marea Britanie. Scopul acestei lucrări este de a oferi o imagine de ansamblu a întregului spectru de publicații și reacții britanice cu privire la sălășluirea lui Carol al XII-lea în Imperiul Otoman, începând din perioada şederii sale (1709-1714) și până la moartea sa și în perioadă imediat următoare.

**Keywords:** Charles XII of Sweden, Bender, George I, London Gazette, Daniel Defoe

**Introduction**

Although the name Demirbaş Şarl might not mean a lot to a history amateur, it is not the case of a professional, who knows the fact that it hides the ‘nickname’ acquired by Charles XII⁴⁸, the King of Sweden⁴⁹, during his five years long stay in the Ottoman Empire (1709-1714).

This name, Demirbaş Şarl, derives from the allocation awarded to him by the Ottoman Empire, as in Turkish demirbaş means ‘fixed rent’. Sultan Ahmed III⁵⁰ was very generous in his treatment to the Warrior King Charles XII,⁵¹ as we shall see, offering him not only money but even the required means for founding a real Swedish enclave in the Ottoman Empire.

The subject is widely treated by Romanian but also by foreign scholars,⁵² being especially interesting, because it brings together two

---


⁴⁹ He was actually not the 12th king of Sweden bearing the name Charles (Karl), but the 6th, as earlier kings used numerals based on myths and legends. See Frans Gunnar Bengtsson, *The life of Charles XII, King of Sweden, 1697-1718* (London: Macmillan, 1960), passim; Ragnhild M. Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969).

⁵⁰ Ahmed III (أحمد الثالث, regnant 1703-1736), was the son of the Sultan Mehmed IV, being born in Dobruja at Dobrich, and is known especially for his good relations with France and for the commencement of Lâle Devri during his reign. For a detailed sketch of the Ottoman Empire during the early modern age as well as the XIXth century see Stoica Lascu, ‘Modernizarea Turciei și interferența relațiilor otomano-turco-europene în viziunea profesorului Halil Inalcik. Cu prilejul împlinirii a 90 de ani [The Modernization of Turkey and Ottoman-Turkish-European Interferences in the Vision of Professor Halil Inalcik. On the Occasion of His 90th Anniversary],’ in *Revista Română de Studii Eurasiatice* III 1-2 (2007): 311-320.


⁵² For more on this interesting “long stay” and especially for his view on the nearby Moldova and Wallachia see Silviu Miloiu, Oana Lăculeacu, Elena Dragomir, *O concepție Românească a Nordului* [A Romanian Conception of the North], vol. I (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de
different cultures (the one of Early Modern Northern Europe and an Oriental civilization on the other hand), in an episode which is maybe comparable to the history of the Byzantine imperial guards, which were made up of Varangians/Vikings (Væringjar; Greek: Βάραγγοι, Βαριάγοι) during the IX-X centuries.

King Charles XII’s fame also derives from the fact that he was the last absolute king of Sweden and that he participated in the Great Northern War. This very war will be the cause of Charles XII’s retreat in the Ottoman Empire.

As it is well known, the conflict began in 1700 when King Charles XII was opposed to Czar Peter the Great of Russia, Frederick IV of Denmark and Augustus II of Saxony. While Denmark and Saxony were not a big concern for Sweden, this was not whatsoever the case of Peter the Great’s Russia. During these restless times, Britain and the Netherlands

Scaun, 2009), 12-14. Also see: Amira Alessandro, Storia del soggiorno di Carol XII in Turchia [History of the stay of Charles XII in Turkey] (București: Nicolae Iorga Press, 1905); Veniamin Ciobanu, Charles XII et les Roumains – Carol al XII-lea și Românii (București: Domino, 1999); Veniamin Ciobanu, Les pays Roumains au seuil du 18e siècle. Charles XII et les Roumains (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984); Federico-Ernst von Fabrice, Anecdotes du Séjour du Roi Charles XII de Suède a Bender (Hamburg : 1760) ; G. L. Ionescu-Gion, Călătoria lui Carol al XII-lea prin Țara Românească [Charles’ XII Travel through Wallachia] (București: 1890); Nicolae Iorga, ‘Charles XII a Bender’ Revue Historique du Sud-Est Europeen 4-6 (April-June 1926); Nicolae Iorga, ‘Karl XII och Românien’ Svenska Dagensbladet (12 December 1929); Mihail Kogălniceanu, Fragments tires de Chroniques Moldaves et Valaques pour servir a l’histoire de Pierre le Grand, Charles XII, Stanislas Leszczynski, Démétre Cantemir et Constantin Brâncoveanu (Iași : 1845) ; V. Mihordea, Carol XII la Tighina [Charles XII in Tighina] (Bucharest : 1943).

These valuable bibliographic indications are found in Silviu Miloiu, O concepție Românească a Nordului [A Romanian Conception of the North] vol. II Repertoriu de documente și trimiteri bibliografice [Vol. II Repertoire of Documents and Bibliographic References] (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2009), 75, 77-81.


The subject also enjoyed resonance in the official London Gazette, see: The London Gazette, no. 4961, 2 February 1711, p. 1; no. 4989, 8 April 1712, p. 1; no. 4998, 29 April 1712, p. 1; no. 5094, 10 February 1712, p. 2; no. 5105, 21 March 1712, p. 1; no. 5120, 12 May 1713, p. 4; no. 5122, 19 May 1713, p. 5; no. 5272, 26 October 1714, p. 2; no. 5277, 13 November 1714, p. 1; no. 5330, 17 May 1715, p. 1.

Petru I the Great (Pyotr Alexeyevich Romanov, regnant 1682-1725), the architect of the Russian Empire.

Coroban, 2010a, 133.


31
would confront France and Spain in the Wars of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the larger part of Europe thus becoming engulfed in wars.\textsuperscript{57} Peter the Great of Russia, Frederik IV of Denmark and Norway, and August the Strong of Saxony and Poland-Lithuania saw the expansion of the Swedes as a threat to their own position in the Baltic area and thus formed the Northern Alliance, hoping to at least maintain the status quo. This is the basis of the future Swedish-Hanoverian hostility. As the allies would soon find out, ‘pacifying’ Sweden would be difficult to obtain, as Charles XII swiftly acted against them. First the King of Sweden invaded Denmark, forcing his cousin, Frederik IV, to settle for peace as soon as 1700 (the Peace of Travendal), while in the same year defeating a Russian army three times more numerous at Narva.

Then, moving against Saxony and Poland-Lithuania, he defeated the armies of August the Strong at the Battle of Kliszów (1702), and again at the Battle of Fraustadt (1706) followed by the Treaty of Altranstädt (1707, guaranteed by the British and the Dutch\textsuperscript{58}), finally installing Stanisław Leszczyński as king of Poland-Lithuania and thus obtaining a favourable peace.

The Defeat at Poltava and the Retreat to the Ottoman Empire

‘For it is customary with the Turks not only to defray the expenses of ambassadors to their place of residence, but plentifully to supply, during the time of their sojourn, the needs of the Princes who take refuge among them’ \textit{Voltaire}\textsuperscript{*}

‘When will you help my lion devour this Czar?’ \textit{Mâh-Pâre Emetullah Râbi‘a Gül-Nûş Valide Sultan}\textsuperscript{**}

\textsuperscript{57} Irene Scobie, \textit{Historical Dictionary of Sweden} (Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2006), 105
\textsuperscript{58} Henry L. Snyder, ‘The Formulation of Foreign and Domestic Policy in the Reign of Queen Anne: Memoranda by Lord Chancellor Cowper of Conversations with Lord Treasurer Godolphin’ \textit{The Historica Journal} 11, 1 (1968): 155
\textsuperscript{**} The mother of Sultan Ahmed III, apud Voltaire, 190.
The greatest trial was the well-known battle of Poltava of 27 June 1709, when the 30,000 Swedes of Charles XII were defeated by the almost double in size army of Peter the Great. Several thousands prisoners were then taken by the Russians, while Charles XII and his ally, Mazepa, managed to save themselves by passing the borders into the Ottoman Empire and arriving in Bender (Tighina) together with approximately 1,500 troops.

Certain difficulties were encountered at the crossing of the Bug River, and the royal convoy had to resort to buying extraordinarily expensive, but nonetheless extremely necessary supplies from the Ochakiv Pasha. The boats they received from the local authorities were so small that the crossing of the Bug took 3 days. This fact allowed the avant-garde of the Russian cavalry to reach the Swedes from behind, many of the falling prisoners or drowning in the struggle.

Charles XII reached Bender on the 1 August 1709, when he was received with royal honours by his friend, the seraskier (general) Yusuf Pasha. Initially the Swedes were offered tents to live in, as it was the custom for the military camps of the time. Cannon volleys were shot in honour of the new guests and Yusuf Pasha warmly welcomed them in the name of Sultan Ahmed III, even offering Charles XII the keys of the city and inviting him to live within the city walls. Although the King of Sweden initially refused, preferring the lifestyle of the Swedish military camp at Varnitza (a small establishment near Bender), he trusted Yusuf Pasha and his good intentions and eventually accepted. He was also considering that

---

59 All dates are in the Old Style, unless specified otherwise. For the New Style 11 calendar days must be added. Thus 27 June 1709 becomes 8 July 1709.

60 The second greatest defeat of Sweden would taken place at Perevolotchina, where the rest of the Swedish land army, lead by general Löwenhaupt, has been cleared, Ciobanu, 1999, 70; Voltaire, 165.


62 Hurdubeţiu, 153.

63 Ivan Stepanovych Mazepa (or Mazeppa, b. 1639 – d. 1709) was the Hetman of Ukraine (of the Cossacks) from 1687 to 1708. He played an important role during the Battle of Poltava. Generally, his fame is negative in Russian language historiography, because he was an enemy of Peter the Great and an ally of Charles XII. More so, the Russian Orthodox Church has maintained an anathema over his name even to the present days. See M. Hrushevsky, *Illustrated History of Ukraine* (Donetsk: BAO Press, 2003), 382.

64 In the Romanian lands Peter the Great’s victory was welcomed, in the hope that this Christian Orthodox leader would take some actions for improving the fate of all Orthodox peoples under the Ottoman Empire, Hurdubeţiu, 153; Ciobanu, 1999, 80.

accepting the invitation would make Yusuf Pasha’s task of protecting him from the Russians a lot easier.

Initially it was thought that his stay would only last for a short while, and that Charles XII would seek to return to Pomerania or Sweden as soon as possible, but there were different causes which contributed to the prolonging of this famous ‘visit’. First of all, Charles XII’s foot was wounded during the battle of Poltava, but the most important factor was his ambition of halting the expansion of Peter the Great of Russia by keeping Poland allied to him and eventually also attracting the Ottoman Empire in this alliance, since communicating with the Sultan was considerably easier from within his Empire. Still, the avant-garde of Charles XII’s small host was exploring the possibility of eventually joining the army of the allied general Krassow in Poland. Such a reconnaissance expedition was undertaken by a troop of Cossacks and Zaporozhians under general Gyllenkrook in September 1709, but his unfavourable report was confirmed by himself being captured in Chernivtsi by the Russians, with the help of the Wallachian Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.

Despite these facts, if King Charles XII really wanted to return to his territories it is hard to believe that he would have been stopped. The ongoing Spanish War of Succession was coming to an end, which meant that the attention of the other European Powers would again turn towards the East, and consequently to limiting Peter the Great’s ascension. Almost all the Great Powers offered to help Charles XII when receiving news of his retreat to the Ottoman Empire: France offered to send a ship to the Black Sea in order to bring him home, while the Dutch came with a similar offer; Austria offered him free pass through Hungary and the Holy Roman Empire, but Charles XII refused all these offers, also maybe in the desire of

---

66 The only thing upon which these rivals agreed upon was their enmity towards the Hanoverian succession to the British thrones in 1714. See Costel Coroban, *Politică și alegeri în Anglia de la Glorioasa Revoluție la Marea Reformă 1688-1746* [Politics and Elections in England from the Glorious Revolution to the Great Reform 1688-1746] (Iași: Editura Pim, 2010b), 62.
68 This opposed Great Britain and Holland versus France and Spain.
avoiding a shameful appearance in his capital, after having achieved so many victories in the past.

Regarding the Ottoman Empire, Charles XII instructed his messenger, Neugebauer, to petition the Sultan for an escort to Poland, and also to gather information whether the Ottomans would join Sweden in a commercial agreement – which was actually an alliance proposal. The received answer was only partially favourable, and completely evasive in the issue of Charles XII’s plea for an escort. But the King of Sweden found the answer to his liking, as he planned to stay longer, in order to better advocate his case against Peter the Great to the Sultan.

Returning to the Swedish camp at Tighina, the Ottomans’ hospitality was really outstanding. The Treasury subsidized King Charles XII with 45 pounds per day, besides the supplies required by his ‘court’, which although seemingly very simple, had the same guards and servants as any court of the time. Also, there was a time of prayer every day of the week, and three masses were held on Sunday, each one accompanied by drums and trumpets.

The number of the King’s companions, including generals, officers, bodyguards, priests and other members of the suite, was 400 initially, increasing to approximately 1,000 in the end. While during the beginning most of them lived in military tents, with the winter’s arrival they had to build proper houses in order to be better protected from the cold.

A local problem was the probability that the Dniester might flood the camp during the winter (with the sudden melting of the snow), but Charles XII, in his usual stubbornness refused to move the camp further away from the river. It seemed that the Dniester was also impressed by the Swedish King, as no floods were reported during 1709 (sic!). In the same legendary logic, the rumours were that a deer herd was constantly following the King’s ‘court’, which consequently during their stay in the Ottoman Empire did not miss game meat.

It is doubtless that these kinds of stories are fictional, but their appearance would not have occurred provided the King had not been as popular among the locals as he was. It can even be said that the Turks, Tatars and other inhabitants of those time’s Tighina were fascinated with him. This fascination is mostly the result of the heroic stories about his deeds, but was also fuelled by the King’s exceptional personality, who in comparison to other European royalty of those times, felt more at ease on

---

69 Ciobanu, 1999, 79.
70 Brownig, 235.
71 Ibid., 232.
72 Voltaire, 192.
the battlefield and not in the company of ladies, at the same time despising wealth and grandiosity. Even more, his refusal to serve wine and the regularity and humbleness of his prayers made him seem like a Muslim. A certain episode is very well known, when a Turk allegedly tapped his shoulder and assured him that had Allah provided the Turks with a Sultan like him, they would have conquered the whole world.

In the meanwhile, at the level of international relations, new alliances were forged in Charles XII’s detriment (consisting of his older enemies: Prussia, Russia and the dethroned Augustus II of Poland, who was now ruling in Saxony). The immediate effect of this alliance was the invasion of Poland (although this implied the breach of the Treaty of Altranstädt), and also the invasion of Livonia and Volhynia by Russia, and of Scania by Denmark. This state of affairs was dangerous for Sweden, which also suffered from its King’s absence.

Back in Charles XII’s camp at Tighina, everyday life quickly became one of military routine and strictness, after the first few moments of enthusiasm and uniqueness. Charles XII began every day by reading a chapter from the Bible, afterwards attending morning prayers. Then followed different negotiations and business, and lunch were always frugal. Afternoon was reserved to military drill and horse riding, and many times it happened that he had to change his horse. Upon his return, he would assist evening prayers, after which sometimes he would even fall asleep with his clothes still on.

His rare moments of free time were dedicated to analyzing military tactics and strategies (it is said that he wrote two volumes of notes during his stay in the Ottoman Empire) and to playing chess, together with general Poniatowski or with his minister, Grothusen. Charles XII also appreciated Racine’s or Corneille’s tragedies, Mithridates being his

---

73 Brownig, 232.
74 Ibid.
75 Ciobanu, 1999, 73.
76 Voltaire, 190.
77 Brownig, 239.
78 Count Stanislaw (or Stanislas) Poniatowski (1676-1762), was a noble of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and general of the Swedish army.
79 Christian Albert Grothusen, Swedish noble and minister of Charles XII, (Voltaire, 191). Interestingly, in chess there is a famous strategy problem called ‘Charles XII at Bender’ which displays a complicated arrangement of the pieces during a fictional chess game played in the Swedish camp at Varnitsa (a village near Tighina, to not be confounded with Varnitsa in the Prahova County or Varnitsa in the Arad County). For more details see: http://www.chessproblem.net/viewtopic.php?f=44&t=308.
favourite piece, because he saw in it a reflection of his own fate, but he also enjoyed the chivalric legends told by his servant, Hultmann. In general the King maintained a good mood towards his soldiers and subjects while staying at Bender (appreciating their humour and discussing their complaints thoroughly). Sometimes he even joked about his court, as was the case of those who were too well dressed, according to his Protestant religious viewpoint. Just like his archenemy, Peter the Great, he would not participate in the festivities that were organized in the camp, or would leave immediately after their opening.

Regarding the communication with Sweden (which was now governed by the Senate – a council of the most prominent nobles), initially there was no regular post in those parts, but starting with 1710 a post system linked to the Austrian one through Hungary was created. Despite this fact, Charles XII sought to discourage any communication with Sweden, sending letters there monthly or even rarer. More so, sometimes he would read the correspondence received or sent by his soldiers.

A controversial aspect was the King’s finances during the period of his retreat in the Ottoman Empire, because it is apparent that he had enough money to finance diplomatic and military endeavours, but his source is rather unknown, as his treasury was captured after the defeat he had suffered at Poltava. Expenses such as sending diplomatic gifts to the Crimean Khan Devlet II Giray, to the Pasha of Ochakiv or to the seraskiers of Bender are somehow inexplicable. One possible source could be the fortune of his ally, Mazepa, a quarter of which he inherited after his death on 2 October 1709 at Bender, and the daily allocation provided by the Sultan. The Sultan also helped him in borrowing large sums of money, and some sources say that during 1709-1710 he was funded by France, which had the habit of sponsoring absolutist regimes (after all, the Sun King also gave money to the ‘absolutist’ King James II of England, who was

---

80 The title refers to Mithridates VI Eupator, the ancient King of Pontus (120-63 a.Chr.) and archenemy of the Roman Empire.
81 Brownig, 240.
82 Devlet II Giray (1648-1718) was the Khan of Crimea between 1699-1702 and 1709-1713 (being succeeded after 1713 by Qaplan I Giray, who was at his second reign, which would last until 1715). The Crimean Khans allegedly were direct descendants of Genghis Khan. See www.hansaray.org. It seems that Devlet II Giray has been toppled on the official reason of mistreating Charles XII of Sweden, but considering that they shared the same interests against Russia and were allies, such an accusation seems to have been simply forged in order to cover the usual political-economic reasons for the replacing of the Crimean Khans by the Sultan.
83 Brownig, 241.
dethroned following the Glorious Revolution of 1688\textsuperscript{84}), plus that France was in very good relations with Sultan Ahmed III of the Ottoman Empire. It is further suspected that the money received from France actually remained in Constantinople, where they were used in earning the benevolence of the Ottoman statesmen, thus not actually reaching Tighina.\textsuperscript{85}

The main secretaries of Charles XII during his stay in the Ottoman Empire were chancellor Müllern and Karsten Feif\textsuperscript{86}, the later being the one in charge with home affairs. Charles XII trusted his chess partner the most, minister (Christian Albert) Grothusen, but also Stanislaw Poniatowski\textsuperscript{87}, the commander of his personal guard, and baron Fabricius von Holstein-Gotorp\textsuperscript{88}, who was sent to him by his ‘grand vizier’ in Sweden, Baron von Görz\textsuperscript{89}, and who would remain together with the King until 1714, proving to be a hard-working and loyal man.

If initially, as we have seen, Neugebauer’s negotiations with the Porte remained unfruitful, Charles XII decided to send Stanislaw Poniatowski in a similar mission, namely of turning the Ottoman Empire against Russia using the time’s means (bribery and palace intrigues), in which general Poniatowski would prove to be efficient. He even presented

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} Coroban, 2010b, 48, 51, 61.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Brownig, 241.
\item \textsuperscript{86} “Kasten Feif was the son of Peter Feif and grandson of the Scot, James Fife who had originally migrated to Sweden from Scotland. Kasten was born to Peter and his wife Maria Hoff in Stockholm in September 1662. Apparently in 1670 Kasten was sent to Finland as a hat-maker, but his master’s business failed, and Kasten returned to Sweden. Through his knowledge of the Finnish language he obtained work in royal service. Twenty years later he joined the chancellery and from then on was steadily promoted in the civil service. By 1697 he was registrar and in 1704 a senior secretary. His ennoblement followed in 1705. Two years later he transferred to the Finnish chancellery. He apparently became one of King Karl XII’s ‘right hand men’ particularly whilst the king was away on campaigns. The great Northern War saw him take on military duties as ‘Ombudsråd’ in ‘Krigs Expedition’. Kasten allegedly issued the passport for ‘Peter Frisk’ (Karl XII’s pseudonym) in 1714... Feif had become a Swedish baron n 1715 and married Anna Kristina Barckhusen (1674-1724). Kasten died on 17 March 1739.’ Taken from University of St. Andrews Institute of Scottish Historical Research, The Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern European Biographical Database (SSNE), Record ID: 6281, http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne/index.php, accessed 4 November 2010.
\item \textsuperscript{87} See note 29.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Fabricius Ernst Friedrich von Holstein-Gottorp, for the letters exchanged with Charles XII or with the minister Görtz see The Genuine Letters of Baron Fabricius, Envoy from his Serene Highness the Duke Administrator of Holstein to Charles XII of Sweden… (London: Printed for T. Beckett and P. A. Dehondt, at Tully’s Head, in the Strand, MDCCLXI). This volume was initially published in Hamburg in 1760, and then translated into English in the version indicated here.
\item \textsuperscript{89} Georg Heinrich von Götz (1688-1719), diplomat and statesman.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the Sultan with a portrait of the Czar painted in Amsterdam with the
legend ‘Petru Primus Russo-Graecorum monarcha.’\footnote{Hurdubeţiu, 155.} There were also
rumours in Constantinople that the Grand Vizier Çorlulu Ali Pasha\footnote{Ciobanu 1999, 77.} (who
was in charge of the external policy) had received gifts from P. A. Tolstoi,
the ambassador of Peter the Great, in order to maintain his country neutral
to Russia’s expansion. Sultan Ahmed III either refused to believe these
rumours or he preferred to further observe the evolution of the Great
Northern War, as he only deposed Ali Pasha after receiving the news of the
Swedish general Magnus Stenbock against the Danes\footnote{Ibid., 74.} - which had
invaded Scania\footnote{Hurdubeţiu, 154.} - at Helsingborg (27 February 1710).\footnote{Brownig, 248.}

It was thought that the new Grand Vizier, Numan Köprülü Paşa,
would be more favourable to Sweden’s interests, but he proved to be a
hesitant person, probably leading parallel negotiations with Poniatowski
and receiving his gifts as well as also discussing with the Russian envoy. At
least he seems to have realized the fact that Russia’s expansion could not
bring anything good for the Ottoman Empire, and some preparations
started to be made for an eventual re-conquest of the Azov. In his turn, he
was replaced by Mohammed Baltacı (his name also appears in many more
versions, such as Baltadji, Baltadgi or Baltaji, and his origins were Italian), a
vizier who really acted in Sweden’s favour. Even more, Swedish intrigues
were augmented by the Crimean Khan, which after all was at the Northern
border of the empire and felt first the effects of the Russian expansion. In
1710 when Peter the Great addressed an ultimatum to the Sultan asking
him to hand over Charles XII, according to the existent treaties between
Russia and the Ottoman Empire, his messengers were arrested and locked
up. Then, on 30 November 1710, in a solemn assembly of the Divan, the
declaration of war on Russia was decided, much to Poniatowski’s and
Charles XII’s satisfaction. According to the Ottoman customs of those
times,\footnote{Voltaire, 212.} the Russian Ambassador Tolstoi was rendered half naked and
exposed to the public of Constantinople on a really unimposing horse, after
which he was locked up in the (Yedikule Hisari) Seven Towers fortress.\footnote{Brownig, 249.}

Encouraged by these circumstances, Charles XII wrote to his sister
Ulrika that he trusted the future and that after all Sweden’s situation would
improve. More so, he even threatened the Austrian Emperor in a letter that,
leading a Turkish host, he would occupy his country and the rest of Germany.\textsuperscript{97} Although it is true that his sojourn to Bender was beneficial in turning the Ottoman Empire against Russia, many historians agree that had he returned to Sweden as soon as possible he would have been of better use to his country, but as we have seen, the young King’s character and the factors earlier discussed, caused him to take a different decision.\textsuperscript{98}

Returning to the war that just broke out between the Ottoman and the Russian Empire, it is interesting to notice that the Sultan, besides asking the Russians in an ultimatum to return Azov, Poland and the Cossack lands to him, he also added the destruction of Sankt Petersburg as a condition, and even the returning to Sweden of the territories taken by Peter the Great, of the prisoners and loot captured. The Czar of course refused such demands and consequently the war commenced in February 1711 by the invasion of Poland. On 28 January Charles XII had emitted a declaration to the Polish people denouncing the violation of the Altranstädt Treaty by the current King, Augustus II the Strong, and showing the Polish people that Augustus sold himself to the Czar, and would have to repay him by ceding a part of Poland:

‘With great labour and danger, and with great sacrifice of Swedish blood, we have restored the noble Polish nation to freedom, we cannot without sorrow see them groan once more under the lawless rule of King Augustus. Our feelings are what they always have been, and we have spared no expense or labour to restore freedom to your country and the throne to your legitimate King. For that reason we have concluded an alliance with the Ottoman Porte and the great Khan of Tartary, for the sake of Polish freedom. For this purpose we send a numerous army, under our crown General Potocki, into your country, and we are intending soon to follow ourselves with a more powerful host. Every Pole who has a heart for the welfare of his fatherland, his aged parents, his wife and his children, every Pole in whom the former feeling of Polish self-respect has not been extinguished by the yoke of slavery, and every Pole who desires to see the end of his country's misery, all these will hasten to range themselves under our banner.’\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{97} Apud Hurdubețiu, 155.  
\textsuperscript{98} Brownig, 250.  
\textsuperscript{99} Brownig, 251-252.
But this manifesto was not successful, and the military expedition that followed did not receive the sympathy of the local Polish population. In the meanwhile, Peter the Great’s army was joined by the army of the Moldavian Prince, Dimitrie Cantemir, but together they would suffer a defeat at Stănilești on the Pruth river (18-22 July 1711), on which the Czar commented that it was just like Charles XII’s defeat at Poltava. The latter had been invited by the Grand Vizier to join the battle, but he refused, thinking that it would not be appropriate for a King to join the suite of a minister. Still, when he received the news of the Turkish-Tatar victory, he visited the camp of Grand Vizier Mohammed Baltacı and Khan Devlet II Giray and congratulated them for the great host that they assembled, also noticing in irony that it is a pity that great army would not actually get to fight. He was referring to the Treaty of Huşi that had been agreed upon by the Ottoman Empire and the Russians on 21 July 1711. Although the Ottoman Empire obtained the Azov, the demolition of the Tagarnog fortress and a few other ones, besides the halt of Peter the Great’s influence over the internal affairs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, for Charles XII’s Sweden this treaty meant losing their possible southern ally.

Khan Devlet II Giray agreed with Charles XII, himself confessing that Peter the Great had been totally surrounded and could have easily been captured. On the other side, the news of the peace was enthusiastically received in Constantinople. To Charles XII’s unrest, the Treaty of Huşi also stipulated that both Augustus II the Strong of Poland and Peter the Great agreed to let him pass freely to Sweden, with an escort of 6,000 cavalry supplied by the Grand Vizier Baltaci, and it is not surprising that the King of Sweden started feeling slightly unwanted. He did not directly refuse this warranty, but he asked for another 30,000 infantry troops and a large sum of money as a loan.

100 Voltaire, 216.
101 They had sealed the Treaty of Lutsk, on 13 April 1711. Peter the Great styled himself the defender of Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians, Hurdubeţiu, 155.
102 Stiles, 131.
103 Hurdubeţiu, 156.
104 The ratification of this treaty only took 10-12 hours, a unique case in the history of diplomacy, Ciobanu, 1999, 78.
105 Peter the Great would not respect these conditions after escaping the danger of being captured by the encirclement of Grand Vizier Mohammed Baltaci.
106 Voltaire, 224.
107 Brownig, 252-254.
108 Ibid., 255-256.
Peter the Great’s breach of the Treaty of Huşi made Sultan Ahmed III remove Mohammed Baltacı from the office of Grand Vizier, to which Yusuf Pasha\(^{109}\), a statesman favourable to Charles XII, was appointed. When the situation started looking like there would be a new conflict between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires, a new treaty was signed, to the dismay of Charles XII of Sweden, who started thinking it might be the time for returning to Sweden. But now Augustus II the Strong of Poland and Peter the Great denied him safe passage, while the Ottomans were also not eager to meet his increasing demands (and escort of 6,000 sipahis and 30,000 Tatars, plus a loan). Thus, King Charles XII of Sweden had to remain for another two years in the Ottoman Empire.\(^{110}\) Initially he was ‘invited’ to Demotika\(^{111}\) (or Demotiki\(^{112}\)) (12 February 1713, near Adrianople, today Edirne), from where he would depart on 20 September 1714, passing to the Holy Roman Empire through Wallachia,\(^{113}\) and arriving back to Sweden, where in honour of his admiration for the Ottoman navy he would build the Jarramas (Yaramaz) and Jilderim (Ildîrîm) ships.\(^{114}\)

**Political Reactions**

‘You may be sure that her Maj’\(^{15}\) is not willing to engage in another Warr, or draw herself into the Quarrells of the North’ *Viscount Bolingbroke*

In 1709 Britain was ruled by Queen Anne Stuart (1702-1714) and was still heavily involved in the Wars of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), during which the Duke of Marlborough would earn his glory. It was during these times and those of William of Orange (1688-1702) that some seeds of conflict were planted between England and Sweden, a fact which

---

\(^{109}\) Gürcü Ağa Yusuf Pasha, Grand Vizier between 1711-1712.

\(^{110}\) Brownig, 258-260.


\(^{112}\) Stiles, 132.

\(^{113}\) *The London Gazette* no. 5277 (13 November 1714): 1, ‘Vienna, Nov. 7. N. S. Letters from Piresti in Wallachia of the 21\(^{st}\) past relate, that the King of Sweden was arrived there, having avoided passing through the Capital Town of that Province; and that Genera Sparre with his Troops from Bender was expected in 4 or 5 Days... ‘tis reckoned he will enter Transylvania about the middle of this Month These letters confirm, that before his Swedish Majesty’s departure from Demotica... the Porte having refused him the Loan he asked, he would not accept any present in Money... [his generals – ed.] being informed that their meeting him in Transylvania or Hungary would be very uncertain, ... to set out yesterday for Prague, and if he does not come that way, to go on to Pomerania...’

\(^{114}\) Hurdubeţiu, 156-157.
could have only resulted in a negative image of Charles XII in the eyes of the British government.

Still, before the Battle of Poltava, Queen Anne’s main minister, Lord Godolphin, had high hopes of convincing Charles XII to join the British against the French in the ongoing war. This was largely an unfeasible project because it would have firstly required a state of peace between Sweden, on one side, and Russia and Denmark, on the other side. Then, had Sweden joined Britain against France, it is highly possible that Russia would have tried to balance the scales by moving against Sweden.115

It is interesting to notice that in a memorandum of a conversation of Lord Chancellor Cowper with Lord Godolphin, dated 1 September 1707, it is appreciated that ‘Sweden agreed w[i]th Emp[ero]r-a zealous Protestant-to enter into nearer measures w[i]th him, if Denmark and Czar not offended. To be made easy in the subsisting his Troops.’116 Thus, Charles XII is seen as ‘a zealous Protestant’ thanks to his initiative of negotiating with the Emperor on behalf of the Silesian Protestants.117

In spite of being officially allied (but not required to effectively lend each other military help in offensive actions118) with Sweden, the British did not appreciate the fact that the Swedish navy was controlling the Baltic Sea, as this affected its own trade119 with Russia, Denmark and Norway, Finland and Poland-Lithuania. Not only that more was imported from Sweden than it was exported to, but the Swedes also insisted that their ships were to be used, while British merchants complained that they were treated very harsh by the Swedish burghers, unlike the French or the Dutch traders.120

115 Snyder, 156.
116 Ibid., 155.
118 Snyder, 156.
119 During 1697 to 1714 the annual value of the British imports from Sweden (including Finland) varied from 143,000 l (pounds) to 246,000 l, averaging to 182,000 l, while exports were much lower, varying between 70,000 l in one year and as low as 22,000 l in another. The trade with Denmark and Norway averaged to 76,000 l for imports and 43,000 l for exports. Trade with Russia varied even more, with a mean value of 124,000 l for imports, and a close average value for exports: 107,000 l. During the last three years of the period considered trade to Archangel had to be diverted to St. Petersburg. For the Baltic countries area, the Eastland Company imported on average 146,000 l every year, and exported 137,000 l. The main British exports were woollen cloth and fabrics, hardware, metals (iron, lead, tin), tobacco, sugar, rice and other produce from the colonies in America. Source: J. F. Chance, ‘England and Sweden in the time of William III and Anne’ The English Historical Review (from now on EHR), Vol. 16, No. 64 (October 1901): 677.
120 Chance 1901, 678-684
is important to note that as much as \( \frac{3}{4} \) of Britain’s woollen manufactures were exported to Russia and the Eastland Company,\(^{121}\) and all this trade passed through the Baltic Sea. The Swedish fleet also kept under blockade the ports that the Russians had taken from them with their land armies.\(^{122}\)

A short and clear example of English enmity against Sweden is the negative opinion\(^ {123}\) of Bolingbroke (St. John, Queen Anne’s Secretary of State) on Sweden and Charles XII, as he complains about the "unaccountable . . . and intolerable" Swedish attacks upon the English navy. Continuing to express his total discontent for Charles XII’s warlike policy and ambitions, and threatening the feeble Swedish navy with the might of the British fleet he shows that Sweden "is reduced to the last extremities, oppressed by taxes,\(^ {124}\) starved by the decay of trade, and dispeopled, as well by the frequent draughts of recruits, as by the pestilence."\(^ {125}\)

On the Swedish side, since Charles had to stay in the Ottoman Empire, someone else ruled Sweden for him, and that person was Georg Heinrich von Görtz (1688–1719), diplomat and statesman.\(^ {126}\) He was one of the few who, despite widespread popular discontent, believed that Sweden’s power had not been depleted, and hence made a perfect prime minister \textit{avant la lettre} for the bold and adventurous king.\(^ {127}\) To the British it seemed that all he did was ruin Sweden by continuing Charles XII’s military ambitions even though he was away at Bender. Görtz attracted the enmity of both the commercial bourgeoisie and the nobles because of the following factors: the uproar caused by his announced four years delay in paying the merchants’ loans,\(^ {128}\) his unexpected issuing together with Casten


\(^{122}\) Chance, 1901, 697.

\(^{123}\) Also see \textit{The London Gazette} no. 5478 of Saturday, October 20, 1716.

\(^{124}\) Also see \textit{The London Gazette} no. 5508 (29 January 1717).

\(^{125}\) \textit{Apud} Howard D. Weinbrot, ‘Johnson, Jacobitism and Swedish Charles: “The Vanity of Human Wishes” and Scolarly Method’ \textit{English Literary History}, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Winter 1997), 950.

\(^{126}\) The British envoy in Sweden durint 1709-1717 was Robert Jackson, see Murray.

\(^{127}\) It is no wonder that upon Charles’ return to Swedish territories, Görtz quickly greeted the King and even obtained greater power, being made responsible only to His Majesty.

\(^{128}\) Actually being forceful loans, these de facto extortions were called in Swedish by the very gentle names of "förskottar till kronan" (1710 and 1713), "förskottar till Pommerska Arméen" (1716), "förskottar till flottans utrusting" (1716) - \textit{i.e.} loan (Germ. Vorschuss) to the Crown, loan for the purpose of paying the armies in Pomerania, loan for the fitting out of a
Feif of copper coins in April 1716 and the fact that he was a stranger especially attracted the hostility of the prospective heirs and their entourage.

Charles XII’s minister to London was Count Gyllenborg, who after the defeat at Poltava hastily complained about the now miserable situation of his country and asked for Britain and Holland not to abandon Sweden. There were even discussions for a treaty of defensive alliance. But this does not mean that ‘Charles at Bender was not less confident, and little less feared, than Charles at Warsaw or in Saxony.’ It was feared that after his first failed attempt of passing through Poland, he would try again this time with an impressive army of Turks and Tatars by his side, and nobody would be able to stop him.

For example, Sir Robert Sutton, the British ambassador to Constantinople, reported that Swedes, Cossacks, Wallachs, Poles, 10,000 Turks and a greater host of Tatars could follow Charles XII in Poland. Later letters, from 25 March/4 April 1711, further increased the size of Charles XII’s imaginary army by 80,000 janissaries and sipahis and another 40,000 Tatars. Similarly, in Poniatowski’s correspondence the number of 80,000 troops was advanced. Sir Robert Sutton and the Dutch ambassador, Count Colyer, worked against Charles XII’s envoy and always sought to prevent a war from starting between the Ottomans and the Russians. But the French ambassador, Des Alleurs, supported Charles XII’s bellicose efforts.

As we have seen in the last sub-chapter, many times were the Ottomans ready to attack Russia, but most of the time they either stopped because the Grand Vizier had been changed, or they quickly sued for peace after insignificant victories. As the historian J. F. Chance brilliantly puts it, ‘the hostilities began and ceased, reopened and ceased again, so waxed and fleet, etc. See Jonas Berg, Bo Lagercrantz, Scots in Sweden (Stockholm: Nordiska Museet, 1962), 8.

129 Although Casten Feif was born in Sweden, it should be noted that Scottish warriors did not go to Sweden to serve under Charles XII out of special devotion to the Jacobite cause. A romantic view is also that they were “fascinated by the commanding personality of one of the most extraordinary monarchs the world has ever seen”, as it is said by George A. Sinclair, ‘The Scottish Officers of Charles XII’ The Scottish Historical Review, Vol. 21, No. 83 (April 1924), 178.

130 Of which Ulrika Eleonora, the sister of Charles XII named after their mother, would succeed him.

131 Chance, 1903, 85-86.

132 Chance, 1901, 690-691.

133 Ibid., 691.

134 Ibid.
waned the terror of Charles’s return, so were the western allies uneasy or content, the king of Denmark inclined to or averse from terms, Augustus and Peter anxious or indifferent to see the neutrality enforced.’ The Great Powers feared that Charles XII’s remaining forces on the continent (most of them under general Krassow), would cease being neutral, and they were right, as Charles XII sent instruction to Sweden that no treaties should be signed without him being informed first. The news reached Britain and her allies in June 1710, and this meant that Krassow’s men might take the offensive, even though they were not in a good shape at all. Charles XII also forbade Krassow to allow his men to serve as mercenaries for the neighbouring powers, so on 4 August 1710 an additional convention was signed between England, Holland, Austria, Prussia, Hanover and other states in order to form a joint force able to keep Krassow’s army in check. Soon, given the situation that the Ottoman Empire did not hurry to follow Charles XII’s intrigues, it became apparent that this joint force was not that necessary as expected, and supplying men and money for it was a problem for Britain, as troops were needed elsewhere.

Contrary to Sir Robert Sutton’s concerns regarding the Swedes, Secretary of State St. John believed that Britain should not interfere on the continent and that ‘the Muscovite and the Pole’ should not be helped against Sweden, so that a balance of power could be kept. In a letter dated 29 December 1710, in the imminence of the Ottoman invasion of Russia, he calls to moderation regarding British implication in the problems of the North:

136 Chance, 1901, 692.
137 Ibid., 692.
138 Ibid., 692-693.

'The Rupture of the Turks, and their attacking Muscovy or Poland, would not have any great or immediate influence on our affairs were we well secured from any Enterprize on the side of Pomerania. But that is the capital point at present, and ought to be fenced against with the utmost precaution, since the King of Sweden has openly avowed his dislike of the Neutrality, and at the same time increased his Troops to a considerable number. These steps leave no room to doubt of his intentions, when he shall have an opportunity of employing that Corps. And therefore as the danger seems to be very imminent on that side, the remedy ought to be applied both very quickly and effectually. You may be sure that her Majty is not willing to engage in another Warr, or draw herself into the Quarrells of the North. But if the Empire should be embroiled, there are so many inconveniency's that will apparently ensue, that there seems to be no way of avoiding them, but by putting it out of the power of the King of Sweden to disturb the Neutrality from that Quarter. We would rather see this done by the Princes chiefly concerned, than have an immediate hand in it ourselves. But it is agreed that some timely and effectuall measures must be taken to prevent the recalling of Troops from the Service of the Allys, and quiet our apprehensions on that side.'

The situation in Britain was aggravated at the end of 1710 when news came from Constantinople that the Sultan was preparing to go to war against the Russians. Charles XII issued a manifesto, besides the one to the Poles, to the attention of the Sweden’s allies, including Britain, threatening to revise his attitude and act irrespective of their interests if they continued to act against him:

‘Quod si autem praeter omnem spem et exspectationem quisquam amicum animum exuens remorum aut obstaculum ipsi objiceret, tum cum in eo fuerit, et justis armis ipsi sit sequendus conjuratus hostis, declarat Sua Regia Majestas se non posse eundem alio quam aggressoris loco habere.’

140 Chance 1901, 693-694.
141 Ibid., 695.
This manifesto was issued because, as we have seen, at the moment of the breach of the Treaty of Altranstädt and the Peace of Travendal by Peter the Great and Augustus the Strong (by their interference in Poland in 1709), Sweden’s allies, including Britain, only reacted by formal protests even though they were bound as guarantees of the treaty. The only one who explained himself was George of Hanover, the future King of Great Britain.142

Grievous reports from Vienna and the Hague augmented the danger posed by the Ottomans and Charles XII (who, as we have seen, did not even join the Ottoman army, considering it would have been unfit for a King to join an army commanded by a Grand Vizier and not other royalty). St. John even believed Charles XII’s threats of attacking the Holy Roman Empire with the help of France. Britain needed to deploy 20,000 soldiers as contribution to the army meant to neutralize Krassow’s corps, so Marlborough had to part of three of his battalions. Eventually, the allies could not decide where to deploy these troops and who was to lead them (either George of Hanover or his daughter’s husband, who was the Prince of Prussia, or Augustus II the Strong), so their initiative failed.143

Hanover also worried Charles XII would invade the Holy Roman Empire, and in the hope of attracting Charles XII’s friendship they offered him a loan of 250,000 crowns for the safety of Bremen and Verden. Charles XII accepted the loan, but only through private dealers, adding that an alliance to Hanover is preferable to one to Prussia. In 1712, given the weakness of Sweden, now ruled by letters from the Ottoman Empire, Denmark occupied Bremen-Verden, and three years later would trade it to George I of Hanover (1714-1727) in exchange for his help against Charles XII.

In January 1711 the British decided to send Captain James Jefferyes to Bender to directly negotiate with Charles XII, since he had previously travelled with the Swedish army and was even taken prisoner at Poltava. He reached Bender on 28 April 1711, which was about the time when Charles XII’s protest manifesto reached The Hague and consequently Britain. The British government was perplexed and did not know whether they should back Russia and Poland or give in to Sweden’s demands. Accordingly, St. John writes that ‘Every measure that occurs to one’s thoughts is immediately attended by a crowd of objections; and yet the necessity of resolving on something presses us very hard.’144

142 Ibid., 695.
143 Ibid., 694.
144 Ibid., 696.
Efforts were made in the purpose of a truce, but Charles XII would not even hear about it, as he was on the losing side in the Great Northern War and this would have meant wasting all his efforts at Constantinople. This is the moment when in England arose a wave of sympathy for Sweden. Its source was compassion for the losing side but also the realization that Russia was much more of a threat than Sweden. After all, Krassow’s Swedish army in Pomerania was almost non-functional, while the same could be said about the help Charles XII’s mustered from the Ottomans. St. John wrote to Commander Marlborough on 10 July 1711 that “The Muscovites are, without dispute, in greater forwardness than the Turks, and the King of Sweden in little condition to support that fierté which he put on when he protested against the act of neutrality”.

Regarding Captain James Jefferyes’ negotiations with Charles XII, he sent a letter dated 8 July 1711 to London informing the government that Charles XII refused to recognize any arrangements about Krassow’s army in Pomerania taken without his consent, refused to suspend the blockade of Peter the Great’s new ports at the Baltic, and again reminded Queen Anne of her duty to uphold Sweden’s interests in relation to Denmark and Saxony, while his interests regarding Russia would be supported by the Porte. These harsh responses convinced the British that they cannot collaborate with Charles XII, and made them remember again how the ‘groundless and intolerable’ Swedish blockade of some of Peter the Great’s ports hurt their commercial interests. Thus, the British government ultimately did not oppose to the invasion of Sweden’s Pomerania (decided by a resolution adopted on 14 August 1711 at The Hague) by Denmark and Saxony with the complicity of Prussia. Still, Secretary of State St. John, in a letter to Whitworth and Marlborough (12 and 10 July 1711), warned that although

‘the States hope that these Princes will go no further than barely to deliver themselves from the apprehension which they are under of that Body [Krassow’s Swedish army in Pomerania – ed.]. Your Grace sees how little likely it is that King Augustus and his allies will exert much moderation in their success, and how destructive it may prove of the Ballance of Power in the North, and of the Protestant interest in Germany, if those provinces of Sweden should be subdued and

---

145 He was referring to the agreement of the allies to render his army in Pomerania under Krassow neutralized.
146 Chance, 1901, 697.
parcellled out. . .. The Dutch have had the whole conduct of this affair; if they get as well out of it, I shall have a great opinion of their ability or of their luck.’147

And he maintained the same tone, defending Sweden again in a letter to Orrey, dated 24 July 1711:

‘To enter into an actual Warr with Sweden, either by employing the Corps of Neutrality, or by payinig the Saxon troops whilst they are employed according to the desire of King Augustus, is contrary to the inclination of all our Ingagements. On the other hand to stand by and behold the Destruction of Crassau's army, and the conquest of Pomerania, has something very mean and cruel in it.’148

Around this time the news of Peter the Great and Dimitrie Cantemir’s defeat at Stănilești on the Pruth (of 22 July 1711) reached Britain, along with information regarding Marlborough’s successes in the Netherlands, which would lead to negotiations regarding the Treaty of Utrecht in October 1711 (the treaty would only be agreed upon 18 months later, in 1713). The British government received the news of the Russians’ defeat positively, while their advance within the Holy Roman Empire inside Swedish territories was seen as a breach of the balance of power.149

The British Whig government was eager to end any hostilities with France but this meant that it also no longer had an excuse not to interfere in the Northern affairs. In preparation for that moment, Whitworth was dispatched to Carlsbad where he met Peter the Great in October 1711, and afterwards followed him to St. Petersburg. But he could not do much in the purpose of obtaining commercial benefits for Britain or alienating Russia from France or from Denmark, and he was not even helped by the fact that the British and Dutch envoys at Constantinople had mediated the Ottoman-Russian peace.150

A new phase of the Northern problem arrived with the defeat the Swedish general Magnus Stenbock (who in 1710 defeated the Danes again at Helsingborg, as we have seen), during the winter of 1712. This meant that the last land army was eliminated. The German states of the Holy Roman Empire which were affected by these military manoeuvres held a

147 Ibid., 698.
148 Ibid.
149 Murray 2.
150 Chance 1901, 698-700.
congress, but it proved to be inefficient in taking any actions. Affected by these events, Charles XII yielded to Queen Anne of Great Britain’s offers of mediation, but he confessed that he ‘had reason to look upon her offers as words of course and compliment rather than anything in reality.’

But the King of Sweden would soon be infuriated when during the spring of 1712, the British envoys at Constantinople, Sutton and Colyer, put a stop to his plans of again turning the Ottoman Empire against the Russians. They acted in the belief that the Swedes were allies of the French, and that their irruption into Poland would hurt the British war effort, as new resources would have been required for the Northern front. Still, Charles XII could not afford to lose the support of Queen Anne, so he responded positively to Her Majesty’s envoy’s offers of providing mediation, the promise of sending a fleet to the Baltic within a year and the upholding of the guarantees and treaties between them. The fleet would not be sent, as the arrival of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 meant the advent of Britain as a world commercial power, and as such, one no longer affected by the status of the Baltic.

Returning to the British’ fear of Swedish-French collaboration, one must not consider it as irrational, because after all, as we have seen in the first part, Louis XIV had offered to help Charles XII return from Bender, furthermore had supported Charles XII’s envoys at Constantinople and also sent aid to general Magnus Stenbock. Still, there is plenty of evidence that besides these moments, one cannot talk of a proper Swedish-French collaboration. Charles XII himself mentions this in his letters, and he further asserts that as a member of the Holy Roman Empire, he could not become allied with Louis XIV. This is also confirmed by the correspondence between Louis XIV and his ambassadors at the Porte, so indeed, while this concern of the British had some fundaments, it certainly did not correspond to reality. While this fear of France was explainable but unnecessary, the fear that helping Sweden would offend the Czar was very real. St. John (Bolingbroke) advised that nothing should be done against Russia, who now controlled the Baltic, without the help of either the Dutch or the French, which was not a feasible project. Chance (1901, 703-74) writes that ‘During the remainder then of Anne’s reign the help her ministers could give to Sweden was confined to diplomatic negotiation, to exhortations which ‘were ineffectual, and threats which were disregarded.’

---

151 Ibid., 701.
152 Ibid., 701-702.
154 Chance 1901, 1702.
Gyllenborg, the Swedish minister in London, always reminded of the agreements of 1700 between England and Sweden, but he was countered by the government with the fact that those agreements had a defensive character, while any British intervention at this moment would prompt Russia to respond with war. It is interesting to ponder whether the British answer would have been different had Charles XII been located in Sweden and not so close to the Russian Empire, and within the borders of an enemy of it. Queen Anne’s government still did not abandon hope of obtaining peace for Charles XII, and thus in July 1713 her envoy at The Hague, Strafford, held a meeting of the foreign ministers in the purpose of discussing a peace project between Sweden, Denmark and Russia. On 7 August 1713 he even directly proposed that the Danes stop their offensive actions, to no avail.

In the meantime, Charles XII’s situation worsened with his move to Demotika, closer to Constantinople, and he witnessed the ratification of a third Ottoman-Russian peace. Gyllenborg again reminded the Queen of the necessity of respecting the treaties between Britain and Sweden and even suggested that a public declaration in this respect on her behalf would completely eliminate any trace of Swedish mistrust that might have appeared in regard to Her Majesty’s envoys in Constantinople. Still, every British effort was rebutted by new claims and pretentions of Charles XII. He reinstated the Baltic blockade, and announced that he would not accept an imposed peace, when the intervention of Prussia came.

Prussia’s new King, Friedrich Wilhelm (1713-1740), proposed an alliance with Britain, Holland and Hanover or only with Britain alone, in the purpose of winning back Sweden’s provinces from Denmark, but the plan failed, although it received British sympathy. Letters directly from Charles XII were received with the same sympathy, but instructions were given to the British diplomatic envoys that they should avoid any discussion of direct British aid. Practically, the British were only willing to help by papers and words. They did so in February 1714 when they proposed that Charles XII should ally himself with Prussia, who in turn would intervene in Holstein-Gottorp in Sweden’s interests, in exchange for Stettin.

---

155 Murray, 1-2.
156 Ibid., 704.
157 Murray, 7.
158 Ibid., 704-707.
159 The London Gazette no. 5183 (19 December 1713): 1.
161 Chance 1901, 710.
This plan also failed because Prussia did not go on to provide the required help. By this time the British merchants, whose interests in Russia and the Eastland were seriously hurt by Charles XII’s renewed blockade, convinced the British government to take action for securing peace once again. Messages were sent to The Hague, Paris, Copenhagen, and St. Petersburg, in which threats were made and it was affirmed that Sweden was an important nation for the Queen and she would not witness its dismembering. Some states, like Holland, answered only too late, while others completely ignored these messages, thinking that Britain is too divided by internal factions and very prone to betraying its alliances. The British threats were met with jokes, as the Swedish minister Görtz writes from Berlin: ‘Je vous dis à regret que tout l’on sauroit prêcher à la Cour icy de la vigueur de la Cour Britannique n’est regardé que comme des chansons,’ and as a Danish stateman declares: ‘se mocquoit des menaces de l’Angleterre, etant convaincu qu’Elle n’oseroit rien faire par la crainte qu’Elle a pour le Czar, qui ne manquerait pas de faire massacrer les Marchands Anglois, et de se saisir de leurs effets.’

Despite these discouraging responses from the continental powers, Britain persevered and a fleet of three ships (the Woolwich, Dolphin and Flamborough) under Captain Archibald Hamilton were sent to inspect the situation and try to save as many traders as possible in the Baltic. But six days after he received his instructions, Queen Anne died, and was succeeded by her cousin, George I of Hanover (1714-1727), during whose reign the Anglo-Swedish relations changed quite a lot.

Britain successfully faced its first important Jacobite rebellion in 1715, when the forces of John Erskine, Earl of Mar, acting in the name of the Old Pretender, were defeated at the battles of Preston and Sheriffmuir. There were discussions with Charles XII and the Jacobites in

162 Murray, 3-4.
163 Ibid., 710-711.
164 Ibid., 711.
165 The London Gazette no. 5317 (2 April 1715): 1.
166 Murray, 7.
167 Chance 1901, 711.
168 Murray, 9.
170 His naming as a Secretary of State during the reign of George I appears in The London Gazette, no. 5154 (8 September 1713), p. 1.
171 James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766), son of the exiled Roman-Catholic James II of England, and whose birth, among other factors, lead to the Revolution of 1688.
Sweden took some actions\textsuperscript{173} (some supply ships were sent), but in a very limited manner since the Swedish army was heavily needed on the continent.\textsuperscript{174}

This rebellion took place in the context of the Hanoverian succession, when the Earl of Mar, a Tory, was quickly catalogued as a Jacobite traitor by the Whig politicians in London, which recently ascended to power thanks to the change of dynasty. In vain had the Earl of Mar sent letters of loyalty to George I of Hanover, as he was removed from his position as Secretary of State in Scotland, which led to his hasty and reckless, as he soon found out, assumption of the Jacobite cause.\textsuperscript{175} After his defeat, the Jacobites who could escape went back to France together with James Francis Edward Stuart (The Old Pretender), where they would again begin to seek help against George I of Great Britain and Hanover.

Charles XII, after the return from his stay in the Ottoman Empire in 1714,\textsuperscript{176} instructed his minister, Görtz, to surreptitiously journey to the Netherlands in search of finances. The purpose was to revitalize what was left of Sweden’s maritime power. The only ones interested in funding Charles XII’s fleet were the Jacobites. They were those English, Scots, Irish and Welsh who were still loyal to the dynasty of James II Stuart of England, exiled during the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689. James II having died in 1701, they now gathered around his son, Francis Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender). In 1715-1716, the Pretender attempted to invade Britain in order to prevent the succession of George I of Hanover, but failed. Through the Swedish envoys in London and Paris (Gyllenborg and Sparre, respectively), Görtz\textsuperscript{177} tried to obtain an agreement from the Jacobites that money would be secretly loaned to Charles XII in exchange

\textsuperscript{173} The London Gazette no. 5530 (16 April 1717), p. 2.
\textsuperscript{176} The London Gazette no. 5269 (16 October 1714); no. 5369 (1 October 1715), 1; no. 5448 (3 July 1716); 1;
\textsuperscript{177} The London Gazette no. 5541 (25 May 1717), 2.
for Sweden helping a new Jacobite invasion. British counterintelligence was well aware of these negotiations. Eventually the government of George I arrested Gyllenborg, furthermore publishing his documents. This was done in the hope of internationally isolating Sweden, as the British Hanoverian monarch feared a Russian-Swedish-Jacobite alliance.  

**Literary and Historiographical Reactions**

‘On what Foundation stands the Warrior's Pride?  
How just his Hopes let Swedish Charles decide;  
A Frame of Adamant, a Soul of Fire,  
No Dangers fright him, and no Labours tire;  
O'er Love, o'er Force, extends his wide Domain,  
Unconquer'd Lord of Pleasure and of Pain;’  
Samuel Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (Lines 192-197)

Just like there were various British diplomatic/political reactions to Charles XII’s Sweden during and after his retreat in the Ottoman Empire, these political and military events also echoed in the literature of the time, especially in the work of Daniel Defoe. Swedish poets have of course also been inspired by the endeavour of Charles XII, and to go even further from literature and into popular culture, there is even a chess problem called ‘Charles XII at Bender.’

Still, sometimes the endeavours of Charles XII were also viewed as:

‘distant Battles of the Pole and Swede,  
Which frugal Citizens o’er Coffee read,  
Careless for who shall fail, or who succeed.’

This was not the case of the ‘Scots gentlemen’ (considered to be actually Daniel Defoe, but I would dare say that Kasten Feif might have played a role in the writing of this book, since he travelled with Charles XII and served as his secretary for home affairs, and later would serve in the Swedish government), who published ‘The History of the Wars of his late

---

179 Geijer and Tegner have described Charles XII as a war hero, while Heidenstam and Strindberg portrayed him in a negative image. See Moerk.
180 For the chess problem see footnote 32.
181 Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent* (London: John Bell, MDCCXCI), xi.
Majesty Charles XII King of Sweden From his First Landing in Denmark to His Return from Turkey to Pomerania.'\(^{183}\) In the very Preface he informs us that:

‘The subject is as fruitful of Great Events, as any real History can pretend to, and is Grac’d with as many Glorious Actions, Battles, Sieges and Gallant Enterprizes, Thing which make a History Pleasant, as well as Profitable, as can be met with in any History of so few Years that is now extant in the World’\(^{184}\)

The rest of the book is filled with valuable reference to Charles XII’s stay in ‘Turkey:’

‘the Turks received his Swedish Majesty with great Hospitality; and treated him with a great deal of Courtesy; but there was not yet so much as any Prospect of obtaining Assistance from them in the Grand Affair’\(^{185}\)

The rest of the paragraph continues with a description of how the Russian (‘Czarish’) ambassadors were better received and treated at Constantinople than their Swedish counterparts. As we have seen, this was not always the case, as the Grand Vizier’s benevolence often was for sale, but at least this fragment shows us that the British did not uniquely believe that Charles XII would be immediately offered a great host to lead against Europe by the Sultan.

Then, regarding the Tatar Khan, we are told that:

‘the said Cham [Khan – ed.] became so embark’d in the King of Sweden’s interests, that he not only shew’d him all possible Acts of Humanity and a princely Generosity; but undertook to influence the Grand Seignior in his Favour and in his Interests’\(^{186}\)

\(^{183}\) The History of the Wars of his late Majesty Charles XII King of Sweden From his First Landing in Denmark to His Return from Turkey to Pomerania. The Second Edition. With a Continuation to the Time of his Death (London: A. Bell, W. Taylor, J. Osborn, MDCCXX).

\(^{184}\) Ibid.

\(^{185}\) Ibid., 209.

\(^{186}\) Ibid., 210.
While in the next fragment it is revealed that the Swedish soldiers taken prisoners by Peter the Great ‘were sent to the Frontiers of Muscovy, on the South and East Sides, as to Asoph [Azov – ed.], Astracan [Astrakhan – ed.], and the Borders of the Turks dominions.’\textsuperscript{187} The description of the Ottoman dignitaries is not neglected, and it is somewhat exact: ‘The Bassa [Pasha – ed.] of Aleppo, called Mehemet, a Friend to these Measures [war against Russia – ed.], was just before this made Vizier Azem in the Place of Kuprioglu; and the Mufti being brought to join with him, the Grand Seignior made a Shew of being very hearty in the Interests of his Swedish Majesty; and tho’ at first he seem’d something difficult, was at last brought over fully to espouse him…’\textsuperscript{188} Mention is also made of ‘the Hospodore [Hospodar/Domn – ed.] of Moldavia… and had by his means laid up a very great Magazine of Provisions for his Army at Jassy his Capital City.’\textsuperscript{189}

What follows is an account of the Battle of Stănilești on the Pruth River with the acknowledgement that the Ottoman army lost the rare chance of proving its might to Europe.\textsuperscript{190} It must be noted that the account of Charles XII’s adventure in the Ottoman Empire receives a reduced space in this book (about 40 pages, out of a total of 397), in comparison to the number of pages dedicated to the affairs of the Swedish homeland or of General Krassow’s army in Pomerania, and ends with the King who ‘enter’d Transylvania, and came to Hermanstadt the [text missing from the Book – ed.] of March […] traversed the whole Kingdom of Hungary and Empire of Germany, and passing Incognito […] arrived at Straelsund, to the infinite joy and satisfaction of his subjects.’\textsuperscript{191} It is very interesting to note that in the introduction of the next section of the book, the author confesses that: ‘As to those Things in his Swedish Majesty’s story, which have some Relation to Great Britain, I shall speak of them with all the Caution and Prudence, that the Duty to our Government requires of me, and endeavour as little as possible, to concern the History of our Country, with that of the King of Sweden.’\textsuperscript{192} This of course means that the text can, from the start, be considered inaccurate regarding Swedish-British relations, while still offering the opinion of a British man on Swedish affairs.

Regarding the later period, of the so-called Swedish-Jacobite plot, there are two 1717 pamphlets signed by Daniel Defoe: \textit{What if the Swedes...}
Should Come? With some Thoughts About Keeping The Army on Foot, Whether they Come or Not and A Short Narrative Of the Life and Death Of John Rhinholdt Count Patkul, A Nobleman of Livonia, Who was Broke alive upon the Wheel in Great Poland. In both these accounts Charles XII as well as the Jacobites are discredited, the former for his absolutism and the latter for their disposition of sacrificing Britain to a former power for their own interest. This defamatory tone does not match the one of The History of the Wars, of His Present Majesty Charles XII nor the one of a different, undated (but considered to also have been written in 1717) pamphlet, called A Short View of the Conduct of the King of Sweden.

There are, of course, numerous later references in British literature and popular culture to Charles XII, but they do not represent the purpose of the current approach. Nevertheless, Samuel Johnson’s The Vanity of Human Wishes (1749) has reached a certain degree of popularity that warrants for its memento here. It is written in the same style as the post-1720 Swedish literature (i.e. it portrays Charles XII in the negative image of a tyrant who contributed to Sweden’s downfall). While Defoe and the other writers at least mentioned about Charles XII’s sojourn in Turkey, Johnson refers to his defeat at Poltava and subsequent retreat in the following verses:

‘Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa’s Day:  
The vanquish’d Hero leaves his broken Bands,  
And shews his Miseries in distant Lands;  
Condemn’d a needy Supplicant to wait,  
While Ladies interpose, and Slaves debate.’ (Lines 210-214)

This is perhaps one of the most negative depictions of Charles XII’s retreat in the Ottoman Empire, which is barely referred to as ‘distant Lands,’ where the King waits in misery and supplication, while others take the initiative in Europe.

Conclusion

Needless to say, the impact of Charles XII’s alleged collaboration with the Jacobites inspired Defoe a lot more than the Swedish King’s

---

193 Wright, 27.  
194 Ibid., 28.  
195 See Lord Byron, Mazeppa (dramatic poem, 1819). For fiction see: E. M. Almedingen, The Lion of the North: Charles XII King of Sweden (1938).  
196 See Weinbrot, Horne.  
197 See Moerck.
endeavour in the Ottoman Empire, which in turn mostly contributed to Charles XII’s becoming a super-hero icon of the early eighteenth century. This very super-human image of Charles XII made the British fear his opposition so much that they vastly overestimated his involvement with the Jacobites, leading to an unprecedented event in the Westphalian system of international relations: the arrest of Count Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy in London, and the publishing of his diplomatic documents.
References

A. Published documents and memoirs
_____ *Documente privind istoria românilor* [Documents Regarding Romanian History], Hurmuzaki Collection XVI, Bucureşti: 1912.
_____ *The Genuine Letters of Baron Fabricius, Envoy from his Serene Highness the Duke Administrator of Holstein to Charles XII of Sweden*.... London: Printed for T. Beckett and P. A. Dehondt, at Tully's Head, in the Strand, MDCCCLXI.

B. Newspapers
*The London Gazette*, no. 4961, 2 February 1711; no. 4989, 8 April 1712; no. 4998, 29 April 1712; no. 5094, 10 February 1712; no. 5105, 21 March 1712; no. 5120, 12 May 1713; no. 5122, 19 May 1713; no. 5154, 8 September 1713; no. 5155, 12 September 1713; no. 5183, 22 December 1713; no. 5260, 14 September 1714; no. 5269, 16 October 1714; no. 5272, 26 October 1714; no. 5277, 13 November 1714; no. 5284, 7 December 1714; no. 5317, 2 April 1715; no. 5330, 17 May 1715; no. 5351, 30 July 1715; no. 5369, 1 October 1715; no. 5530, 16 April 1717.

C. Books and articles


_____. *The History of the Wars of his late Majesty Charles XII King of Sweden From his First Landing in Denmark to His Return from Turkey to Pomerania. The Second Edition. With a Continuation to the Time of his Death.* London: A. Bell, W. Taylor, J. Osborn, MDCCXX.


Ionescu-Gion, G. L. *Călătoria lui Carol al XII-lea prin Țara Românească [Charles’ XII Travel through Wallachia].* București: 1890.


Mihordea, V. Carol XII la Tighina [Charles XII in Tighina]. Bucharest : 1943.


Rowe, Nicholas, *The Fair Penitent*. London: John Bell, MDCCXCI.

**D. Web Postings**

**DATA PERTAINING TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE LITHUANIAN INSURRECTION (25 March 1831), RETRIEVED FROM SWEDISH DIPLOMATIC SOURCES**

**Veniarmnin Ciobanu**

“A. D. Xenopol” Institute of History, E-mail: veniamin@xenopoliasi.alstr.ro

Acknowledgments

63
The article is based on a paper presented at the Second International Conference of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages, at Târgovişte, May 20-22, 2011.

Abstract:
Similarly to the Polish insurrection of November 1830, the Lithuanian one, occurring in March 1831, retained the attention of the Swedish diplomacy from the very beginning. This was made possible, in the first place, by the fact that the events were connected by a strong link of causality, in the sense that they aimed at severing Poland and Lithuania from the political-institutional system of the Russian Empire and at reconstituting the old one, i.e. the Polish-Lithuanian Union. But the latter’s victory would have first resulted in the radical upheaval of the ratio of forces in North-Eastern Europe, which could have also affected the Swedish-Norwegian political-institutional system, since it was assumed that the Norwegians would not have spared any time in following the Lithuanian and Polish example by denouncing the personal union with Sweden. Moreover, the revolutionary wave sweeping over Europe in 1830 was not one to avoid Sweden. Unlike other areas, the Swedes that opposed King Karol XIV Jan’s government went no further than to criticise it, despite the fact that both the criticism and the programme of the opposition kept increasing in boldness. The Swedish diplomacy therefore approached the issue of the Polish and Lithuanian insurrections from the same perspective, taking particular care to observe their evolution, placing itself in a position of reserveless condemnation of such behaviour. The documents transcribed in the following pages are the diplomatic reports of N. Fr. Palmstjerna, the chargé d’affaires of Sweden in Petersburg, and were selected from the Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, the Petersburg fund, 1821, Jan.-iuni. They sometimes contain very detailed information pertaining to the early phase of the Lithuanian insurrection. By introducing them to the academic circuit, we express our hope that they will contribute to the expansion of the research horizon of the history of North-Eastern Europe from the first half of the 19th century.

Rezumat:
Ca și insurecția din Polonia, izbucnită în luna noiembrie 1830, cea din Lituanie, declanșată în luna martie 1831, a reținut, chiar de la început, atenția diplomației suedez. În primul rând, pentru că ambele evenimente erau într-o strânsă legătură de cauzalitate, în sensul că urmăreau desprinderea Poloniei și a Lituaniei din sistemul politico-instituțional al Imperiului Rusiei și reconstituirea celui vechi, anihilat de ocația rusă, anume Uniunea Polono-Lituaniană. Or, victoria acestora ar fi produs o răsturnare radicală a raportului de forțe din Europa de Nord-Est, în primul rând, și care ar fi putut afecta și sistemul politico-instituțional suedo-norvegian, de vreme ce era de presupus că norvegienii nu ar fi întârziat să ia exemplul polonezilor și lituanienilor și să denunțe uniunea personală cu Suedia. În plus, valul revoluțiilor care s-au declanșat în Europa în anul 1830 nu a ocolit nici Suedia. Spre deosebire de alte zone, suedezii care se
opuneau guvernării regelui Karol al XIV-lea Jan s-au limitat doar la critici la adresa acesteia, deși atât criticele, cât și programul opoziției deveneau tot mai îndrăznețe. Așadar, din această perspectivă a abordat și diplomația sueză problema insurecțiilor din Polonia și din Lituanie, ale căror evoluții le-a urmat cu o atenție deosebită și față de care s-a postat pe poziția condenmării lor, fără rezerve. Documentele reproduse în aceste pagini sunt rapoartele diplomatice ale lui N. Fr. Palmstjerna, însărcinatul cu afaceri al Suediei la Petersburg și au fost selectate din Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, fond Petersburg, 1821, Jan.-iuni. Ele conțin informații, uneori foarte detaliate, referitoare la faza de început a insurecției din Lituanie. Punându-le în circuitul științific, ne exprimăm speranța că ele vor contribui la lărgirea orizontului de cercetare a istoriei Europei de Nord-Est, din prima jumătate a secolului XIX.

Keywords: Russia, Poland, Lithuania, insurrection.

The period following the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) was characterised by efforts to restore the continental political system as it had been before the outbreak of the French revolution of 1789. The two ‘champions’ of this tendency were Russia and Austria. Tsar Alexander I and, later on, his successor, Nicholas I, thought of themselves as the promoters of the antirevolutionary and antidemocratical battles, as well as the keepers of the principle of monarchic legitimacy. They were seconded by the chancellor of Austria, Klemens Wenzel Lothar Napomuk, von Metternich Winneburg, the public figure that embodied the restauration policy. His political system mercilessly took aim against all things connected to the revolution, against the idea of nationality, as well as any tendency to modernise the constitutional principles. He thus defended the interests of the Habsburg Empire, whose existence was threatened by the proliferation of the national and democratic ideas.198

The Greek National Liberation Revolution that broke out in 1821 also contributed to the undermining of the monarchic legitimacy system, however, but without surpassing the extent of a local event. On the other hand, the revolution in Paris of July 1830, resulting in the removal of the Bourbon dynasty from the throne of France, determined a serious crisis in the system. As is known, the restoration of the Bourbons was the work of immigrants interested to restore the old nobiliary privileges. But the revolution of July, bringing to power the rich bourgeoisie, proved once more that, as had been the case with the English Dynasty of the Stuarts, removed from the throne in 1649 in well-known circumstances and

restored in 1660 just to be removed once more due to the so-called ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688, a restored monarchy could not last for long.

Under the direct influence of the French revolution of 30 July, the opposition against the monarchic legitimacy principle grew stronger throughout Europe. The first results were recorded within the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, a ‘child’ of the Vienna Congress, formed through the union of Holland with Belgium and Luxembourg. On 25 August 1830, a national and bourgeois revolution broke out in Brussels, resulting in the proclamation of Belgium’s independence on 4 October of the same year. Almost at the same time another insurrection emerged, the one in Poland of November 1830, preventing Tsar Nicholas I from sending troops to France in order to stifle the revolution. However, this provided him with the long awaited for opportunity to liquidate the semi-autonomous status of the Kingdom of Poland created by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Shortly afterwards, the Italian Revolution took place, although it was soon smothered by Austrian troops.

On this background a new insurrection debuted in North-Eastern Europe, i.e. that of Lithuania, on 25 March 1831. As the one in Poland, the insurrection in Lithuania was a reaction to the repression unleashed by the tsarist authorities against the liberal movements starting with the year 1820. In their proclamations, the participants in the insurrection denounced the severance of Lithuania from the Russian Empire and its union with the Kingdom of Poland. Still, there was no common point of view of the insurgents regarding the political future of Lithuania, since some of them were pleading for the creation of an independent Lithuanian state.

In the initial stage of the insurrection there was no unitary leadership, but the insurgents took advantage of the absence of the Russian army, which was in Poland countering the revolution taking place there, and obtained control of almost the entire territory of Lithuania. Vilnius and Kaunas, however, remained under the control of the Russian authorities. In May 1831, the leadership of the insurrection was taken over by A. Ilgaudas, while the Polish insurgents started providing regular support to the Lithuanians. An interim Polish government was constituted in Lithuania at Ilgaudas’s general quarters, after which the insurgents succeeded in occupying Kaunas, but lost the battle for Vilnius due to the fact that they

199 Ibid., 379.
200 Ibid., 379–380.
were overwhelmingly outnumbered by the Russian troops. Consequently, the insurgents started to withdraw, but during the withdrawal A. Ilgaudas was shot by an officer under his command. As a result, the mentioned interim government was dissolved and the insurgent administration in the region was abolished. The consequences were soon to follow: the Russian control became stronger, the inhabitants were forced to pay requital, the taxes grew and the military forces of the Kingdom of Poland were dissolved. The Kingdom of Poland lost its autonomy, becoming a Russian guberniyia, the active participants to the insurrection were the victims of retaliation, including the closing down of the University of Vilnius, in 1832.

The revolutionary wave that swept Europe in 1830 did not steer clear off Sweden. Unlike what happened in other areas, the Swedes who opposed king Karol XIV Jan’s governing did not go further than to criticize him, although both the criticism and the programme of the opposition became bolder and bolder. Thus, in May 1830, one of the representatives of the liberal movement in Sweden, Johan Gabriel Richert, published alongside baron C. H. Anckarsvärden *The Proposals of the National Representation*, a programme that put forth the idea of an unicameral parliament with two departments, following the model of the Norwegian Storting, nominated through general elections based on a minimal census. One of the enthusiastic propagandists of the new liberal ideas was Lars Johan Hierta, who edited works that endorsed the interests of the industrial and commercial circles. Then, in June 1830, he started editing the magazine entitled *The Evening Gazette*, which enjoyed a large success and contributed greatly to the creation of the Swedish public opinion.

From this perspective, therefore, the Swedish diplomacy approached, in its turn, the issue of the insurrection in Poland and Lithuania, closely watching their evolution and condemning them unreservedly. To this we must also add the fact that in the case of a victory of the insurrections, one of the first consequences would have been the radical upheaval of the ratio of forces in North-Eastern Europe, also affecting the Swedish political-institutional system, since it was to be assumed that the Norwegians would not have waited long before taking the Lithuanian and Polish examples and denouncing the personal union with Sweden. This is why the chargé d’affaires of Sweden in Petersburg, N. Fr. Palmstjerna, at the orders of the minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Gustaf Wettrestedt, made it be known “l’impression pénible que le Roi a éprouvé en apprenant une nouvelle aussi chagrinante pour l’Empereur, que l’était

---

cellle de la révolte de Pologne” to the vice-chancellor of Russia, Karl (Charles) Robert Vasilievici Nesselrode (my Italics.)

On that occasion, however, the Swedish diplomat noticed that the vice-chancellor of Russia “connaissait déjà, par les rapports du Général de Suchtelen, quels étaient les sentiments manifestés par Sa Majesté à cette occasion facheuse” (my Italics).

The Swedish authorities were left with the same ‘feeling of distress’ upon the outbreak of the insurrection in Lithuania, on 25 March 1831, whose evolution was closely watched, as already mentioned, by their diplomatic representative in Petersburg, N. Fr. Palmstierna. He noticed that the Russian military authorities in Lithuania had undertaken a number of measures meant to prevent the outbreak of the insurrection as early as the beginning of March 1831, among which the dislocation of part of the Lithuanian nobility inside Russia. Despite all the precautions, the outbreak of the insurrection could not be avoided. Thus, according to data he had come across and that he forwarded to Stockholm, on 6 April 1831 an uprising occurred among the peasants of Samogitia, triggered by the recruitments to the Russian army and the financial obligations - the costs of the said army’s transportation - imposed on the people by the tsarist authorities. Among the remarks recorded was the one that the Samogitian population was not of Polish origin, but spoke another language, different from Polish. He also informed of the fact that the Russian authorities were not the only ones to take action in order to prevent the uprising from spreading: the nobility in Courland was taking arms to defend the same objective. Nevertheless, he was of opinion that, for the time being, the consequences of this new ‘revolutionary infamy’ would go no further than slight local damage and the momentary interruption or disturbance of the lines of communication, as “comme il en arrive toujours, au malheurs qui retomberont sur les coupables et sur les pauvres dupes” (my Italics).

His attitude towards these disturbances is well illustrated by his statement that the measures ordered by the tsar to smother the riots were salutary, albeit barely short of atrocity. By furthering his investigations on the Samogitian uprisings through the request of information from the vice-chancellor of Russia, he was highlighting the direct connection between the Lithuanian insurrection and the Polish one, since it was believed that both had been caused by secret Polish emissaries who were

203 His report of January 8, 1831/December 27, 1830, to Gustaf Wetterstedt.
204 Ibid.
205 See his report of March 12/February 28, 1831.
206 His report of April 6/March 25, 1831.
207 Ibid.
connected to the local Lithuanian nobility, pointing towards the areas the
insurrection had already spread to\textsuperscript{208}.

His antipathy towards the insurrection is evident from the plethora
of information regarding the Russian troops mobilized against the
insurgents and their collaboration with a part of the Lithuanian nobility,
but also from the phrases he used to refer to them and their initiatives, such
as “mutins” and ‘insolences’\textsuperscript{209}, respectively. To the same effect was
Palmstjern’s approval of Russia’s stance regarding the Polish insurrection,
in the sense that he refused to consider a French initiative concerning the
adoption of some sort of truce by claiming that that particular case was no
longer a mere riot, but a full war against Russia. But the victories the Polish
insurrection was scoring at the time were seen as the main cause of the
generalization of the insurrection in Lithuania\textsuperscript{210}. Russia reacted to the
phenomenon with genuine cruelty, a cruelty the Swedish diplomat
approved of, though, considering it effective\textsuperscript{211}. Since, according to him, the
insurrection in Lithuania was “un malheur incalculable”; even more so as,
despite the reprisals of the Russian authorities, the insurrection would
break again as soon as the Russian troops left an area they thought of as
pacified\textsuperscript{212}.

Thus, by the end of May 1831, the Lithuanian insurrection had
generalized. Since our intention was to signal only the information
pertaining to the circumstances of its outbreak and its first phase of
development, we have not selected the data that allows assessing the
opinion of the Swedish diplomat, N. Fr. Plamstierna, on the events that
took place in the following period, the one that ended with the defeat of the
insurrection. The limited space we have at our disposal, as well as the fact
that many of the discussed reports contain a vast array of information that
does not bear any direct connection with our purpose, persuaded us to
extract from those documents only the paragraphs we have a particular
interest in.

The documents were selected from the Sveriges Riksarkivet,
Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, the Petersburg fund, 1821, Jan.-iuni,
both originals and copies, written, in both cases, in French, the diplomatic
language of the time. They were transcribed so as to match the originals,
with care - to the extent to which it was possible to do so - to observe the
original punctuation, orthography and syntax. The phrase “sic!” was used

\textsuperscript{208} His report of April 9/March 28, 1831 and the annex to the report, of the same date.
\textsuperscript{209} See his report of April 16/4, 1831.
\textsuperscript{210} See his report of April 30/18, 1831.
\textsuperscript{211} His report of May 4/April 22, 1831.
\textsuperscript{212} His report of May 21/9, 1831.
each time we had to transcribe a phrase or a word as it appeared in the text, albeit incorrectly spelled or when we were unable to determine its meaning. We should also mention that the documents from this source are not paginated. Lastly, we would like to add that each document is preceded by a *regest*, and where the text required, by *explanatory notes*.

By introducing them to the scientific circuit, we express our belief that they will contribute, corroborated with other documentary or historiographic sources, to the expansion of the horizons of research in the history of North-Eastern Europe from the first half of the 19*th* century.

* 

1

*Petersburg, March 12 /February 28, 1831*

N. Fr. Palmstjerna, the chargé d’affaires of Sweden at Petersburg, to Gustaf Wetterstedt, minister of state and minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden

The dislocation of a part of the Lithuanian nobility inside Russia, to the effect of preventing the outbreak of disturbances in Lithuania; disputes at the upper level of command of the Russian army operating against the Polish insurgents; causes.

Apostille de Mr. le Baron de Palmstjerna, en date de St. Petersbourg du 12 Mars/28 Fevrier 1831

Il me revient de bonne part, que indépendamment des changemens opérés dans le personnel du corps des Officiers de l’armée de Lithuanie, on s’est vû obligé à éloigner plusieurs propriétaires domiciliés dans ce pays, à fin d’en garantir la tranquillité. On les a fait partir pour les gouvernemens intérieurs.

On prétend, que le départ du Grand Duc, qui doit avoir quitté l’armée, aurait été motivé par une vive explication avec le Maréchal, au sujet de l’emploi du régiment d’Uhlan de S. A. Impériale lors de la bataille du 25. Ce Régiment favori, ayant donné avec beaucoup de bravour (sic !), a éprouvé une perte notable.

_Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, Petersburg, 1831, Jan.-iuni; copy in French language._

*
According to information received from Courland, and not from Vilno, as was expected, a riot had broken out in Samogitia among the peasants in the area; possible causes; the evolution of the riot; the remark that the Samogitian population was not of Polish origin, but spoke a language different from Polish; news was circulating about the measures undertaken by the Courland nobility to prevent the spread of the riot to the area; military action undertaken by the Russian authorities; his opinions on the military force the Russian authorities could oppose to the insurgents, as well as to the consequences “cette nouvelle infamie révolutionnaire”, as he called the Lithuanian insurrection, could trigger; he then informed of tsar Nickolai I’s ukaz, addressed to the Senate of Russia, which specified “avec une sévérité salutaire”, he thought, the measures to be resorted to in order to repress the riot; the difficulties that could have prevented the progress of military operations meant to repress the insurrection; his hopes that the insurgents would soon be defeated.

St. Petersbourg le 6 Avril/25 Mars 1831

Monsieur le Comte

Depuis mon dernier très-humble rapport du 2 Avril/21 Mars j’ai eu l’honneur de recevoir les ordres que Votre Excellence a bien voulu m’adresser en date du 25 Mars.

Dans un moment où la malveillance active des ennemis de l’ordre cherche à répandre partout les bruits faux ou exagérés, je ne crois pas devoir attendre la poste du Samedi pour rendre compte à Votre Excellence de ce que l’on sait ici, dans le public, sur une révolte qui vient d’éclater dans une partie du Gouvernement de Wilno. Je crains que peut-être des informations, venant par quelque autre canal, ne représentent la chose comme beaucoup plus dangereuse qu’elle ne paraît l’être jusqu’à présent. Je prends ainsi le parti d’en écrire par la Poste d’aujourd’hui qui va jusqu’à Åbo, en priant Monsieur de Fordelles d’expédier une estaffette.

La mutinérie a éclaté parmi les paysans de la Samogitie, dans les cercles de Telsch, Schawly et Rossieni; le recrutement et les charges à supporter pour les transports à l’usage de l’Armée paraissent avoir servir de pretexte pour les exciter. On parle aussi d’une dispute entre des Officiers Russes et de jeunes Polonais dans le théâtre d’amateurs d’une petite ville. Quelques Gentilhommes, qui indubitablement sont les
instigateurs, doivent se trouver à la tête de ces rebelles ; mais les informations sont encore, pour autant que je sache, d’autant moins complètes, qu’elles viennent du Gouverneur de Courlande et non de Wilna, où selon les rapports officiels que l’on avait hier, tout était encore tranquille.

Comme cette Province (la Samogitie) était pour le moment dégarnie de troupes, les mutins ont eu beau jeu. On dit qu’ils ont fait prisonniers plusieurs Officiers du Département des vois de communication, employés dans cette contrée pour les travaux du canal de Windau, et qu’ils ont pillé une caisse. Comme les attroupements étaient nombreux et qu’ils menaçaient Polangen (sic !) à une distance assez rapprochée, un Courrier Français, arrivé hier et qui a eu quelque embarras pour passer, a trouvé les Autorités de cet endroit en retraite. Il ne doit y avoir eu qu’environ 150 Cosaques, qui, au besoin allaient également se retirer sur Memel. Il y a aussi des lettres de ce dernier endroit, qui est dans la proximité de ces troubles.

Il faut observer que le peuple dans la Samogitie n’est point Polonais. Il parle une langue particulière.

On dit (s. a.) qu’en attendant l’arrivée des troupes, la Noblesse voisine en Courlande s’arme pour sa défense et pour celle de l’ordre public, contre les mutins.

Au reste, tous les ordres nécessaires on été donné sur le champ pour faire marcher des troupes. On peut tirer de l’Infanterie tant de Dünabourg que des Provinces Baltiques, où se trouvent les Bataillons de réserve du 1er Corps. Il est plus difficile de trouver la Cavalerie dans le voisinage ; cependant on dispose de 2 Régiments de Cosaques. Au besoin, d’ailleurs, les queues de Colonnes du 2d Corps et de celui de la Garde pourraient faire volte face, sans causer aucun affaiblissement, préjudiciable à l’Armée, dont le nombre, dit-on est calculé maintenant jusqu’à 220,000 hommes. J’espère ainsi que l’on peut être tranquille sur les conséquences de cette nouvelle infamie révolutionnaire. Elles se borneront à quelques dommage locale, à l’interruption momentanée ou à la gêne de quelques communications et, comme il en arrive toujours, aux malheurs qui retomberont sur les coupables et sur les pauvres dupes, Il serait possible (s. a.), à la vérité, que la poste d’Allemagne fût interrputée (sic !) pendant quelque peu de temps.

Par le courrier ordinaire prochain, j’espère pouvoir transmettre des notions plus authentiques, si non plus circonstanciées. En attendant, Votre Excellence trouvera ci-près la traduction d’un Oukaze, qui vient d’être adressé au Sénat, et qui ordonne, avec une sévérité salutaire, les mesures faites pour reprimer ces désordres.
Par la traduction ci-jointe d’un Bulletin2, qui encore n’a été publié qu’en Russe, Votre Excellence verra quelles sont les dernières nouvelles de l’Armée. Les boues horribles de la Pologne, que Napoléon appelait un 5me élément, forment un obstacle à toutes les opérations, le debordement de la Vistule en a présenté un autre, mais le moment approche, je l’espère positivement, où ils seront tous vaincus.

Je suis avec un profond respect  
Monsieur le Comte  
de Votre Excellence  
le très-humble et très obeissant serviteur  
N. Fr. Palstierna  
S. E. Mr le Copt de Wettersted, Min. d’Etat et d’Aff. Etr.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D 702, Petersburg, 1831, Jan.-iuni; original in French.

*  

Petersburg, April 9 /March 28, 1831  

N. Fr. Palin to count Gustaf Wetterstedt

Military manoeuvres of the Russian troops; requests data on the uprisings in Samogitia to the vice-chancellor of Russia; it was thought that the rebellion had been caused by secret emissaries from the kingdom of Poland who were connected to the local Lithuanian nobility; a few leaders of the insurrection are named; a conspiracy meant to trigger the simultaneous outbreak of an insurrection in Vilnius is dismantled, and on the the same occasion two of the conspirators are arrested; additional information on the outbreak and evolution of the insurrection in Lithuania, among which the constitution of military detachments by the nobility in Courland and on the manoeuvres of the Russian troops responsible with the smothering of the insurrection; the intention of the ambassador of France in Petersburg to convince the Parisian public that the disturbances in Lihuania were of a local nature only;  

In the Annex: general data on the issue of Luxembourg; new disturbances in Lithuania, caused by the secret partisans of the Warsaw emissaries; the close connection between the insurrection in Poland and that in Lithuania started to take shape, indicating the conflict-stricken areas; news that the Lithuanian rebels disposed of cannons the inhabitants had kept hidden that might have dated back to the French-Russian war from 1812; the possible numbers of the military organized
peasants; the confiscation, from the order of the Russian general Kropoviţki, of all tools liable of being used as weapons by the townspeople of Vilnius.

St Petersbourg le 9 avril/28 mars 1831.

Monsieur le Comte

Les derniers ordres de Votre Excellence sont en date du 25 Mars; mon dernier très humble rapport fut transmis à Monsieur de Forschelle par la poste du 6 n. st. et avec l’ordre de l’expédier par estafette, s’il y avait moyen d’en faire passer

Par mon rapport du 2 n. st., j’ai eu l’honneur de mander à Votre Excellence que j’avais communiqué à Monsieur le Vice-Chancelier la lettre, adressée d’une main Auguste à un correspondant de France et dont une Copie s’est trouvée jointe aux ordres de Votre Excellence en date du 18 Mars. Voici, Monsieur le Comte, les termes du billet par lequel elle m’a été renvoyée. « Sa Majesté l’Empereur en a pris connaissance avec un vif intérêt et retrouvé, comme dans les précédentes, des observations d’une profonde justesse. Dieu donne que des vérité aussi frappantes, des conseils si salutaires portent fruit, et on peut affirmer hardiment que l’Europe sera préservée de plus affreuses calamités ».

Il m’a été positivement assuré qu’à Cronstadt on est déjà occupé à équiper les batimens destinés au voyage que Madam la Grande Duchesse Helène va faire, selon la prescription des Médecins, pour aller prendre les bains de mer en Angleterre. D’après ce qui m’a été dit, l’on prépare une Frégate, un batiment de guerre moindre et une pyroscophe. L’on assure que Son Altesse Impériale sera accompagnée de Madame la Contesse de Nesselrode et du Chambellan Prince Gagarin.

Depuis ma dernière aucune nouvelle de l’Armée n’a été publiée; mais je tien de Monsieur le Comte de Nesselrode que le Maréchal allait commencer son mouvement général le 30/18. Il ne serait pas absolument impossible que Nous eussions la nouvelle du passage encore aujourd’hui.

J’ai demandé et obtenu la permission de passer chez Son Excellence hier, afin d’apprendre si le Gouvernement possédait quelques notions authentiques et plus spéciales sur les troubles de la Samogitie, mais les rapports sont encore peu complets, l’action des Autorités étant paralysée dans les districts insurgés.

On croit, sans les savoir bien positivement que ce sont des émissaires venus clandestinement du Royaume, qui ont saisi l’occasion du recrutement pour provoquer le peuple à la rébellion, à l’aide des intelligences qu’ils avaient parmi la Noblesse du pays. On raconte aussi
que le Général Comte Paç, qui est possessionné (sic !) en Lithuanie, serait à la tête du mouvement, mais le Comte de Nesselrode n’était pas trop disposé à croire ce bruit fondé. Parmi les autres Chefs, on nomme un Comte Zaluski et un Monsieur Narbut, Gentilhomme Lithuanien.

Il paraît certain, que le projet était formé pour opérer simultanément une revolte à Wilna, mais le Général Khrapovitzky, qui ne doit ni ne plaisante (sic !), a découvert et déjoué cette conspiration. Il a fait arrêter plusieurs individus, parmi lesquels le Maréchal de la Noblesse, le même Monsieur Gorski, qui naguères a signé une adresse, remplie de protestations de loyauté et de dévouement ! Cette arrestation est un fait positif, qui m’a été communiqué par Monsieur le Vice Chancelier.

Il y a maintenant quinze jours, au plus, que les premiers mouvements ont commencé, mais l’on ne connait pas exactement l’historique des opérations que les rebelles ont entreprises. On sait cependant qu’ils ont forcé les gardes des douanes, sur la frontière, depuis Yourbourg jusqu’à Polangen, à se retirer sur le territoire Prussien. On avait espéré que ces Gardes, qui sont au nombre de 250 hommes armés et qui avaient l’ordre de se réunir à Polangen, à mesure que l’insurrection avancerait sur eux, auraient pu tenir dans cet endroit ; mais cela n’a pas été le cas, puisque les deux postes d’Allemagne, qui auraient dû arriver par cette route hier et avant-hier, nous manquent, celle de Meitau étant arrivée. Une Estafette, expédiée de Memel, a passé, mais elle avait été visitée par une troupe de paysans.

Dans une douane, qui, si je ne me trompe, est à Gorschdy (Garsden) les rebelles se sont livrés à différents excès, avec une brutalité féroce. Ils ont paru aussi en dedans de la frontières de (l’ancienne) Courlande, nommément dans une terre du Comte de Medem ; mais là ils n’ont fait aucun dégât. En attendant, il est vrai que la Noblesse de Curlande a formé de ses gardes chasse un Corps de 5 à 600 hommes, et qui peut-être pourra être porté jusqu’à 1000. Cette troupe, composée d’excellents tireurs, pourra rendre de bons services.

Le Baron de Pahlen, Gouverneur Général des Provinces Baltiques, est en marche avec 3 Bataillons, mais que je suppose être des bataillons de réserve du 1er Corps et par conséquent non complets. Il a aussi mené avec lui 4 Canons, pris à Riga et commandés un Officier d’Artillerie de l’Armée de Caucase, qui par hazard s’y trouvait en semestre.

Au reste, de tous les côtés on fait marcher des troupes plus nombreuses pour étouffer cette révolte. Il en arrive de Novgorod et de Kowno. La force sera d’autant lus suffisante, que les rebelles ne peuvent être que très mal armés.
Quant à la poste, on a pris des mesures pour la transporter par mer entre Memel et Liebau, pourvu que les rebelles ne penetrent pas jusqu’à ce port, où il n’y aura guères (sic !) de troupes, qui n’est pas très éloigné de Polangen et ou l’appât du pillage pourrait les attirer.

Malgré qu’ainsi les communications directes soient en ce moment précaires, l’Ambassadeur de France expédie aujourd’hui un Courrier ; mais il a paru indécis sur la route à choisir. Comme néanmoins les Courriers doivent toujours trouver moyen de passer, quand même ce serait par un detour, l’Ambassadeur parait se proposer d’en faire partir successivement plusieurs, afin (sic !) de prouver au public de Paris que l’insurrection est seulement locale.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/LID Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, Petersburg, 1831, Jan-iuni ; original in French.

Annex

Apostille de Mr le Baron de Palmstjerna, en date de St Petersbourg,
le 9 Avril/28 Mars 1831

Il est peut-être connû à V. E., qu’il existe un vingtième protocôle de la conférence de Londres, mais qui n’est signé que par les Plénipotentiaires des 4 Puissances, à l’exclusion de celui de France.

D’après ce que l’on m’a dit, ce protocole repond à quelques objections, qu’elle avait élevé contre les articles consignés dans les Protocôles précédens sous le nom de bases. D »après ce que j’apprends, ces objections se sont rapportées aux limites du Grand Duché de Luxembourg, et à la répartition de la dette publique, la France ayant soutenu, que la quote-part (sic !) du Grand Duché devait être defalquée de celle de la Belgique. Comme on m’a promis la pièce, il serait inutile d’entrer ici dans les détails, que je pourrai être dans le cas de devoir rectifier après l’avoir vû.

L’évenement justifie, par malheurs, les appréhensions éventuelles, que j’avais annoncé pour la tranquillité de la Lithuanie, au cas que la guerre se prolongeât dans le royaume de Pologne. C’est aux malheureux retards, causés par la saison qu’il faut attribuer ces nouveaux troubles excités par les émissaires et les adhérents secrets des émissaires de Warsovie. Dieu veuille, que la révolte se borne à la Samogitie. Jusqu’à présent l’on n’apprend pas , qu’elle se soit répandû hors du Gouvernement de Wilna, et la présence des troupes dans les autres provinces, fait esperer, qu’elles resteront tranquilles. On prétend, qu’en dernier lieu le général Khropowitzky a crû devoir prendre la précaution de désarmer les habitans.
de Wilna, et qu’il l’a fait tellement, à la lettre, qu’il n’a laissé qu’une seul hache à l’usage des deux maisons.

Quelqu’un m’a assuré que les rebelles ont des canons. Ne comprenant point comment ils leur seraient parvenus, l’on suppose, qu’ils ont pu être ramassés parmi les débris de 1812, et cachés depuis cette époque ; chose qui ne serait pas impossible. L’on prétend aussi, que le nombre des paysans auxquels les chefs ont taché de communiquer une espèce d’organisation, s’éleverait jusqu’à 12,000.

*Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/LID Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, Petersburg 1831, Jan-iuni, copy in French.

*4*

Petersburg, April 16/4, 1831

N. Fr. Palmstjerna to count Gustaf Wetterstedt

Official details pertaining to the disruptions in Samogitia, still unavailable; Russian infantry and cavalry troops massed in the surroundings of Vilnius, some of them transferred from Cuban; additional data on the numbers of the Russian troops massed against the insurgents, joined by the military force offered by the nobility in Courland and Latvia; various statements of the leaders of the Lithuanian insurrection; the peasants enrolled in the insurgent troops refuse to fight the Russian troops; symptoms of the cholera epidemic in Moscow and Minsk; military governors named in Minsk and Riga.

St. Petersbourg, le 16/4 Avril 1831

Monsieur le Comte

Les nouvelles sur les troubles de la Samogitie ne sont officiellement connues, dans le public, que par l’Article inséré dans l’une des feuilles ci-jointes. En général, on m’assure que ces nouvelles sont maintenant beaucoup plus rassurantes. Il est positif que la route de Polangen est débloquée ; les malles, qui manquaient lors de ma dernière, ont été transportées par Mer de Memel à Liebau, mais celle d’hier doit être venue par la route de terre, comme sont arrivés le Comte Apraxin et un Courrier
Français. L’on dit que le passage, exposé aux attaques, est à présent garni par un Corps de 1500 hommes. On ajoute que déjà il était arrivé aux environs de Wilna un renfort d’Infanterie et de Cavalerie irrégulière, venant de l’intérieur ; parmi cette dernière, il y a un Poulk de Cosaques et un Poulk de Teptiaires, arrivés d’Orenbourg, ainsi qu’un Poulk des Cosaques dits Grebenskié, tirés de la ligne du Couban.

La principale force, destinée contre les rebelles, se compose de 18 Bataillons de Grénadières, qui étaient restés dans les Colonies de Novgorod et dont une grande partie est transportée en chariots. On dit aussi que la Noblesse de Livonie, selon l’exemple de la Courlande, a offert d’armer 3000 hommes.

On ne connaît pas encore le sort de 8 Officiers du Corps des voies de communications, qui lors de la première bagarre sont tombés entre les mains des rebelles. À cette occasion, ils se sont emparés d’une provision modique de poudre et d’une quantité plus considérable de plomb et de fer, qui servaient aux travaux du canal. Ils ont aussi fait du dégât aux écluses.

Les Chefs de ces mutins avaient eù, d’après ce que l’on prétend, l’insolence de déclarer à leurs voisins, les Courlandais, qu’ils respecteraient leurs limites, mais que sous peine de confiscation ! (s.a.) les Gentilshommes, possessionnés (sic !) en Lithuanie, devraient s’y présenter en personne. On voit que ce n’est point la hardiesse des paroles qui leur manque ; mais selon les lettres particulières, les paysans, qu’il ont attroupés, n’en ont guères pour battre. Ils prennent la fuite dès qu’ils rencontrent une force armée.

On avait eù, cependant, ainsi que j’ai eù l’honneur de l’indiquer, quelques appréhensions pour Liebau, où l’on avait pris toutes les précautions possibles ; les propriétés de la Courrone avaient été embarquées. Dirigés par le Colonel d’Üxkull, maître de Police de la Ville, les bourgeois s’y étaient armés et l’on avait débarqué les canons, trouvés à bord de quelques batimens marchands. Mais par suite des combats qui ont eu lieu près de Polangen, Liebau est couvert. La première de ces deux villes a été moins heureuse ; on m’assure que dans la dernière affaire, elle a été presqu’entièrement détruite par un incendie.

D’après les notions répandus hier au soir, il paraîtrait que le foyer de l’insurrection se réduit actuellement à la ville et aux environs de Shawly.

Je suis bien faché de devoir ajouter aux données, qu’une feuille ci-jointe renferme au sujet du Cholera, celle que l’on a de nouveau observé des symptômes de cette épidémie à Moscou ; cependant il n’y avait eù que 4 personnes d’attaquées jusqu’à présent. On a aussi remarqué quelques symptômes suspects à Minsk, où l’Empereur vient d’envoyer, en qualité de Gouverneur Militaire temporaire, Son Aide de Champ Général, le Prince Nicolas Dolgorucki, le même qui a été employé en Perse.
Le Général Comte Serge Stroganoff, de la Suite de l’Empereur, a été envoyé à Riga, pour y gérer les fonctions de Gouverneur en l’absence du Baron de Pahlen.

Je suis avec un profond respect
Monsieur le Comte
de Votre Excellence
le très-humble et très-obeissant serviteur
N. Fr. Palmstjerna.
S. E. Mr le Cte de Wetterstedt. Min. d’Etat et des Af. Etr.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, Petersburg 1831, Jan-iuni ; original in French.

* 

Petersburg, April 30/18, 1831

N. Fr. Palmstjerna to count Gustaf Wetterstedt

Russia’s refusal to consider the French idea of an international intervention in favour of the Polish insurgents, whose victories lay at the bottom of the outbreak of the uprisings in Lithuania; the latter’s extent, that was likely to grow with the arrival in Lithuania of a Polish corps; a few Lithuanian nobles arm the peasants on their estates; the measures undertaken by the provisory insurrectional government of Telsz; other general data.

Apostille No 1 de Mr. le Baron de Palmstjerna en date de St Petersbourg le 30/18 Avril 1831

Ayant fait part au Comte de Nesselrode de ce qui m’a été communiqué par l’Apostille de V. E. en date du 1 Avril, touchant le langage, qu’a tenu Mr. de Sebastiani, après avoir lu une lettre du Roi, j’ai trouvé, que Mr le Vice-Chancelier avait, comme V. E. de la peine à s’impliquer ce que le Ministère Français entend par les garanties (s. a.) qu’il désire. J’ai suggéré l’idée que le désarmement général, dont les autres Puissances donneraient l’exemple, pouvait être l’objet de ce désir : mais le Comte observa, avec raison, que les evenemens de la Pologne n’ont que trop justifié les précautions prises par la Russie : que s’il y avait un
reproche à lui faire, se serait plutôt celui de n’y arriver pas mis encore assez de promptitude et d’étendue : enfin, que cette même cause, quant au moment, met la Russie hors de la question pour ce qui regarde les armements. « Le fait est » me dit le Comte, « que à l’époque de la révolution de Paris, nous étions profondément paisibles, et que, maintenant, il y a par-tout (sic !) des troubles, parmi lesquels ceux de Pologne sont devenus une guerre veritable ».

D’après ce que je crois savoir, la Maréchal Diebitsch a écrit à l’Empereur, qu’il n’ignore point la critique, dont il est l’objet à St Petersbourg : mais qu’il supplie Sa Majesté d’attendre l’issue finale de la campagne, avant de le juger sur ces accusations.

Nous connaissons déjà l’impression, qu’a pruduit à Paris la nouvelle des derniers succès des Polonais : l’Ambassadeur lui-même paraît envisager le retard des opérations, et les entraves qu’elle trouveront, comme le plus grand obstacle, qui puisse s’opposer aux intentions sincèrement pacifiques de son Gouvernement.

V. E. sait, que les troubles de Lithuanie doivent être attribués à la même cause. Je crains, qu’ils ne soient pourtant plus menaçants, que ne le portaient mes dernieres informations. L’avant dernier rapport du Comte Diebitsch le fait déjà suspecter : maintenant venons de voir une tourbe de rebelles à Oschmiana entre à Wilna et à Minsk : ce plus là la Samogitie. En outre, il me revient de nouvelles particulières, mais assez directes, suivant lesquelles l’insurrection embrasse avec plus au moins d’intensité la presque totalité du Gouvernement de Wilna ; si l’on ne s’est pas encore formellement armé, par-tout (sic !), il doit être certain, qu’au moins, on n’attend que l’arrivée d’un Corps Polonais pour se soulever. Si le Général Uminski, dont les mouvemens paraissent trahir ce projet, reussissait à pénétrer jusqu’en Lithuanie, il est à craindre, que l’affaire ne devienne d’autant plus serieuse, que l’on continue à parler, avec quelque inquiétude la fermentation, qui regne aussi dans le Gouvernement de Minsk, et dans celui de Witepsk, où l’introduction recente des lois russes n’a point servi à diminuer le mécontentemen[1]t de la noblesse. Dans toutes ces provinces, il paraît être partagé par deux classes influentes : le clergé, et les juifs.

Il y a quelque temps avant l’arrivée des renforts, que, d’après ce que l’on prétend, les villes de Wilna et de Wilkomirz étaient presque les seuls points du Gouvernement de Wilna, qui fussent bien assurés, moyennant leurs Garnisons, et la capitale notam[2]ment par l’énergie et les menaces du Général Kropowitsky. Depuis peu, on me dit, cependant, que le depart de Mr de Novosiltzoff a contribué à calmer les esprits à Wilna même.

Le premier propriétaire, qui armà ses paysans, s’appelle, dit on, Ruszewski. Le prétendu Gouvernement provisoire à Telsch, a prononcé la
confiscation des grandes possessions de la famille Zoubov en Samogitie, vû qu’elle ont appartenu, jadis, à la couronne de Pologne, et qu’elles en auraient été illégalement aliénées.

D’après ce qu’on m’a assuré une personne, à même de le savoir, il n’y avait point d’insurrection en Wolhinie, à l’époque du 13 Avril ; mais alors le Général Dvernicki venait d’y entrer.

L’envoi des vivres par mer à Danzic, était ordonné avant les troubles de Lithuanie ; c’est un calcul d’économie, mais qui supposait l’occupation des bords de la Vistule.

J’ai vu une lettre d’un des principaux adhérenes de la Reigne de Portugal, qui considère la cause de cette Princesse comme presque perdue. Il accuse amèrement le présent Ministère Anglais.

Lord Heytesbury, qui a demandé un congé, et avec instance, paraît disposé à se retirer du service. J’ai tout lieu de croire, qu’il est fort peu satisfait de lord Palmerston : l’on prétend, même, que l’Ambassadeur s’est crû dans le cas de s’en plaindre directement auprès du Roi.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/LID Huvudarkivet, E2D 702, Petersburg, 1831, Jan-iuni ; copy in French.

* * *

Petersburg, May 4 / April 22, 1831

N. Fr. Palmstjerna to count Gustaf Wetterstedt

The spread of the insurrection in Lithuania; bloody reprisals initiated by the Russian army; his opinion that these measures were effective; the Vitebsk nobility’s refusal to sign a thank you address for the introduction of the Russian lawin Belarus; the state of the insurrection in Volhinia and Podolia; the consequences of the insurrection; his hope that the insurrection would be stifled.

St. Petersburg le 4 Mai/22 Avril 1831

Monsieur le Comte

Il paraît de plus en plus se confirmer, que tout le Gouvernement de Wilna était prêt, naguères, à prendre les armes et il est clair qu’elles ont été prises dans d’autres districts que la Samogitie. Les insurgés d’Oschmiana
formiaient une bande à part. Je ne sais si les détails, que l’on raconte sur cette affaire, sont tous fondés ; mais on prétend (s.a.) que le Clonel de Cosaques du Caucase, qui commandait cette expédition, après avoir passé au fil de l’épée 3 ou 400 paysans et cerné le reste, ordonna à tous les Schlachctic et autres personnages de distinction (s.a.), de sortir de la foule : qu’ils en sont sortis au nombre de 150 : qu’à un signe donné, ils furent tous pendus sur le champ par les Cosaques, moyennant les lacets qu’ils portent toujours avec eux, suivant l’usage des Tscherkesses ; qu’ensuite les paysans ont reçu, chacun individuellement, un correction paternelle, composée de 100 coups de Nogaika; et qu’après avoir eu la tête rasée, afin d’être reconnus en cas de récidive, ils furent renvoyés chez eux. Des personnes bien informées soutiennent que dans ce récit il y a exagération, surtout pour le nombre des pendus.

Quoiqu’il en soit, ces moyens sont efficaces ; mais c’est un terrible inconvénient, que d’avoir sur ses derrières un pays étendu où ils sont nécessaires. Dans le Palatinat d’Augustowe, les Gardes paraissent entourées d’insurrections ; il y a eu une affaire, dans laquelle on a fait prisonniers plus de 1000 insurgés. Il me paraît, de plus en plus, qu’on ne se fie pas trop à la tranquillité d’aucun des Gouvernemens ci-devant Polonais, à moins qu’elle ne soit militairement garantie ; le départ du Grand Duc Constantin, qui en effet doit avoir quitté Bialystok, parait prouver dans le même sens. Du Gouvernement de Mohilev il y a ici une députation, dont l’objet ne m’est pas encore exactement connu ; mais je sais que la Noblesse de Witepsk a décliné l’adresse de remerciement, que le Gouverneur Général, Prince Khawansky a voulu lui faire voter, à l’occasion de l’Oukaze pour l’introduction des lois Russes dans la Russie Blanch.

D’après ce que l’on me dit, l’insurrection ne se repand en Volhinie, que sur le terrain que le General (sic !) Dvernicky peut occuper et encore la Noblesse y évite de se compromettre personnellement (s.a.). En Podolie, les biens d’un Comte Potocki (Frère de ceux connus de Monseigneur le Prince Royal) ont dû être séquestrés, lui-même se trouvant à Paris, où il donne, ainsi que sa femme, tout à fait dans la révolution.

C’est ainsi que la ruine des familles est l’une des conséquences désastreuses de ces troubles. La familles de Zoubow, qui possède de 40 à 50,000 paysans dans la Samogitie, en est spécialement victime ; le Gouvernement provisoire s’est emparé des terres, et les administre à son profit, tandis que les paysans tombent sous le fer des Soldats, ou seront soumis à la vindicte des lois. Les personnes, connus chez nous, dont la fortune est ainsi compromise, sont : Madame la Comtesse Paul de Suchtelen, née Zoubow, et surtout le beaufils (sic !) du Comte de Modène.
Neanmoins, je le repete, les moyens successivement réunis pour contenir ces provinces, sont puissans et j’espère qu’ils suffirent pour y retablir l’ordre. Une Division d’Uhlans, aux ordres du Prince Khilkoff et composée de 24 Escadrons, a dû être détachée, à cet effet, de l’Armée, et se trouve en ce moment près de Wilna : nouvelle preuve de l’état où y étaient les choses.

Je suis avec un profond respect
Monsieur le Comte
de Votre Excellence
le très-humble et très obéissant serviteur
N. Fr. Palmstjerna.
S. E. Mr le Cote de Wtterstedt, Min d. Etat et d’Aff. Etr.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D 702, Petersburg, 1831, Jan-iuni ; original in French.

* 

7.

Petersburg, May 21/9, 1831

N. Fr. Palmstjerna to count Gustaf Wetterstedt

The attitudes of England, France and Prussia regarding the issue of the Polish insurrection; his opinion that the Lithuanian insurrection was “un malheur incalculable” that increased the difficulties that enabled its defeat; reprisals of the Russian troops, whose efficacy was only temporary; another opinion of his, according to which only a decisive victory of the Russians could restore order in Lithuania.

Apostille No 2 de Mr le Baron de Palmstierna en date de St Petersbourg le 21/9 Mai 1831

D’après tout ce que je parvient à apprendre, les Cour de Londres, Paris et de Berlin comprennent trop bien la position de l’Empereur, pour avoir tenté rien qui ressemble à une intervention dans les affaires Polonaises. Si l’on a touché à cette corde, comme cependant j’ai lieu de le croire, c’est avec le plus grand menagement, et en se bornant, pour ainsi dire, aux voeux généraux. On sent qu’afin (sic !) le pouvoir pardonner, il faut commencer par vaincre. Quant aux deux premiers Cours, elles ont fait
sonder, toutefois les dispositions de l’Empereur par rapport au parti qui serait pris « après » avoir opéré la soumission des Polonais : question évêncuelle et toute différente que les traités placent dans la compétence de toutes les parties contractantes au Congrès de Vienne. Je ne sais pas encore ce qui a été repondu.

Le seul moyen d’accmodement, qui, d’après ce que l’on soupçonne pourrait n’être pas envisagé ici comme absolument inadmissible, serait celui de charger par exemple la Cour de Berlin de donner sous main aux Polonais des assurances sûr la manière dont l’Empereur agirait envers eux en cas de soumission absolue. Mais toujours y aurait-il une espèce d’intervention et tout plein de difficultés. Dans l’état actuel des choses je ne prévois nullement qu’un tel projet puisse être serièusement conçu et moins encore exécuté,

L’insurrection de Lithuanie est un malheur incalculable, et les difficultés, pour en venir au bout, ont paru jusqu’à présent s’accroître. V. E. voit qu’elle paraît plutôt se repandre, qu’elle n’est étouffée. Il semble que maintenant les troupes Russes ont pénétré presque dans tous les districts revolts : là où elles paraissent, les rebelles sont battues ; on en tue quelques fois beaucoup, et les autres alors, à moins qu’ils ne trouvent un refuge dans les bois, retournent tranquillement au labourage. Mais du moment que les troupes s’éloignent, la revolte éclate de nouveau dans les endroits qu’elle viennent de quitter ; et c’est un pays ainsi disposé que l’armée dépend pour ses subsistances et pour ses communications ! comme on ne publie que tout au plus un fait isolé, il nous est presque impossible de connaître l’état des choses au juste : mais en ce moment toutes les notions qui nous parviennent concourent à le dépeindre comme inquiétant Quoiqu’il en soit, si l’on remportait une victoire décidée sur l’armée Polonaise, et si Varsovie était occupée, le reste ne tarderait apparemment pas à rentrer dans l’ordre ; mais quant aux remèdes topiques, le mal semble assez grave pour qu’ils puissent y resister longtemps.

Sveriges Riksarkivet, Kabinettet/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D 702, Petersburg 1831, Jan-iuni ; copy in French

References:

A. Archives
Sveriges Riksarkivet [Swedish National Archives], Kabinettet [Cabinet]/UD Huvudarkivet, E2D, 702, the Petersburg fund, 1821, Jan.-iuni.
B. Books and articles
RELATIONS BETWEEN TRANSYLVANIA AND THE NORDIC COUNTRIES IN THE 19TH CENTURY AS SEEN IN ROMANIAN PERIODICALS. A QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Mihaela Mehedinți

Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania, E-mail: mihaela_mehedinti@yahoo.com

Acknowledgments
This paper has been presented at the Second International Conference on Nordic and Baltic Studies in Romania: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and croscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, Târgoviste, May 20-22, 2011. The research for this paper has been facilitated by the programme Investing in people! Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the Sectoral Operational Program For Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013. Priority Axis 1. "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society" Key area of intervention 1.5: Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract nr.: POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185 – “Innovative Doctoral Studies in a Knowledge Based Society” , Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract:
History usually demonstrates that if two areas are remote they tend not to be in contact so often. At a first glance this seems to be the case of 19th century Transylvania’s connections with the Nordic countries, but was this really the case? Or is it more likely that the relations between those two areas were not examined thoroughly enough until now? The present study aims at offering some answers to these important research questions by rendering a comprehensive image of the ways in which Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland were portrayed in three largely circulated Romanian periodicals from Transylvania. Based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the 623 pieces of news published by Foaiul pentru minte, inimă și literatură, Familia și Gazeta de Transilvania between 1838 and 1919 this paper shows that Transylvanians were rather well informed in what concerned the Nordic countries in the 19th century, that they
positively appreciated the literary works that stemmed from this area and that they strongly positioned the Nordic countries within Europe.

Rezumat:
Istoria demonstrează că, de obicei în cazul în care două zone sunt îndepărtate, ele tind să nu fie în contact atât de des. La o primă vedere acesta pare a fi cazul conexiunilor din secolul al XIX-lea ale Transilvaniei cu țările nordice, dar a fost, într-adevăr, acesta cazul? Sau este mai probabil ca relațiile dintre cele două arii să nu fi fost destul de atent examinate până acum? Studiul de față își propune să ofere câteva răspunsuri la aceste întrebări de cercetare importante, făcând o imagine cuprinzătoare a modului în care Suedia, Danemarca, Norvegia și Finlanda au fost prezentate în trei periodice românești de mare circulație din Transilvania. Baze pe analiza cantitativă și calitativă a 623 de știri publicate de către „Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură”, „Familia” și „Gazeta de Transilvania” între anii 1838 și 1919, acest articol arată că ardeleanii au fost destul de bine informați în ceea ce privește țările nordice în secolul al XIX-lea, că au apreciat pozitiv operele literare provenite din această zonă și că integrau cu fermitate țările nordice în interiorul Europei.

Keywords: Nordic countries, Transylvania, Romanian periodicals, quantitative and qualitative analysis, 19th century

Political and cultural contacts between Transylvania and the Nordic countries in the 17th - 19th centuries

Although the geographical distance that separates Transylvania and the Nordic countries is considerable, especially for the means of transportation available in the 17th - 19th centuries, these two rather different areas still managed to remain in contact. This long-lived relation was facilitated by both the local and the international political circumstances in which the two entities evolved in the above-mentioned period.

Highlighting the existing connections between Transylvania and the Nordic countries beginning with the 17th century may seem inadequate for a paper that has as its main topic the 19th century. Nevertheless such an approach represents a necessary step in order to delineate the ways in which such older relations constitute prerequisites for manifesting some sort of interest towards another political entity. Finding information about the Nordic countries in 19th century Romanian periodicals is naturally conditioned by mutual acknowledgement. The present paper will demonstrate that, despite what common sense might suggest, Transylvania and the Nordic countries knew and appreciated each other as far back as the 17th century.
Political connections between Transylvania and the Nordic countries

From a political point of view, Sweden was the Nordic country that was mostly involved in the power shifts that occurred in the South-Eastern part of Europe beginning with the 17th century. Having “the same goal of straining the Ottoman-Polish relations”, although for different reasons, Transylvania’s and Sweden’s diplomatic services had many intrigues to weave and the international context largely facilitated these reciprocal contacts. Sweden wanted a weak Poland as a means of eliminating the latter’s claims to the Swedish throne and Transylvania sought to impede the Polish-Austrian collaboration in order to deprive the Habsburgs’ Empire of an important ally against herself. A common goal of involving the Ottoman Empire in the Thirty Years’ War further bound the two countries. Moreover, Sweden also desired to intensify its relations to the Turks, an objective that could be accomplished through Transylvania’s mediation.

Transylvanian anti-Habsburg projects that were so obvious in the province’s relations to Sweden during the Thirty Years’ War originated in Gabriel Bethlen’s foreign policy views. In an attempt to gain a valuable ally against the Habsburgs’ Empire he signed a treaty with the king of Denmark, Christian IV, at 9 December 1625. The alliance will be later announced by the Danish ambassador to the court of England, an act which sought to convince the king of England to contribute to the financial help that Denmark offered Transylvania and that had already reached the sum of 30,000 thalers.

As it had a certain political impact upon its neighbours in the first half of the 17th century, a relatively central European geographical position and a confessional composition that could be relevant in the unfolding of the Thirty Years’ War, Transylvania could have obtained some advantages from its implication in the conflict. Therefore Prince Gheorghe Rákóczy I carefully considered Gustav Adolf’s proposition for an alliance against the Habsburg Monarchy. Although the Swedish king’s offer was made in 1631 it would only materialise a decade later, when one of his generals,

---

214 Ibid., 63-64.
215 Information about this treaty and about the negotiations between the two Rákóczy princes, on the one hand, and Poland or Sweden, on the other hand, was found in Ion Calafeteanu and Cristian Popișteanu, eds. Politica externă a României: dicționar cronologic (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1986), 72-78.
Tortenson by his name, explicitly asked Rákóczy to get involved in the war as Sweden’s (and France’s) ally. The negotiations started after this proposal came to an end a year later, on 16/26 April 1643, when the treaty signed at Alba-Iulia stipulated that Transylvania was to receive from her allies 150,000 thalers each year until the end of the war and 3,000 people that were to fight side by side with the troupes provided by Rákóczy.\(^\text{216}\)

This collaboration will be reinforced in 1645 by a new alliance treaty signed at Munkacz between Transylvania and France. The latter agreed to covering all the necessary costs for 3,000 soldiers (a task in which Sweden also played a part) and to obtaining the Sultan’s approval for Transylvania’s participation in the war. As France was not able to meet the second condition, Rákóczy was forced to sign an agreement with the Austrian emperor in 1646. By this arrangement, Ferdinand III obligated the Transylvanian prince to reduce his military force and to stop any aid towards the French and the Swedish.

The possibility of obtaining the Polish throne from the alliance with France and Sweden determined Gheorghe Rákóczy I to seek the help of the Moldavian ruler, Vasile Lupu. But the treaty they signed in 1648 will not be applied as Rákóczy died a month later (11 October 1648). Nevertheless, his successor did not have to wait a long time before he was offered a collaboration proposal from the part of Sweden (1652). As a response to the plan for a future division of Poland, Gheorghe Rákóczy II assured Carol Gustav that he will not support the Polish. Moreover, between 1654 and 1658 the Transylvanian prince managed to convince the Wallachian and Moldavian rulers to join the alliance.\(^\text{217}\) This commitment will serve as a basis for demanding Swedish military assistance during the action conducted by the extra-Carpathian sovereigns against Poland in August 1655.

If until now things seemed rather clear, the situation gets more complicated when the king of Poland offers Gheorghe Rákóczy II the crown of his country in exchange for banning the Swedish (October 1655). A series of negotiations, demands and delays in responding then follows between Transylvania and the two belligerent countries, as Rákóczy wanted to make the most of these complex political circumstances in which he played such an important part.\(^\text{218}\)


\(^{217}\) The respective rulers were Constantin Şerban in Wallachia and Gheorghe Ştefan in Moldavia. See Ion Hurdubeţiu, *Istoria Suediei* (Bucureşti: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985), 352.

\(^{218}\) Calafeteanu and Popişteanu, 77-78.
The decisive moment seems to have been the Swedish offer of a considerable part of Poland’s territory completed by Rákóczy’s acknowledgement as king. At this point (June 1657), the Transylvanian prince sent four different deputations to Poland asking king Ioan Cazimir to sign a peace treaty with Sweden. But greed and indecisiveness were dearly paid by Gheorghe Rákóczy II as he was defeated at Czerny Ostrow by the Polish-Tartar troops a month later (22 July 1657). The peace treaty signed with this occasion stipulated, amongst other things, the payment of a war indemnity of 1,220,000 thalers, an enormous sum at that time, and the obligation to leave Poland’s territory on a specified route. So, Transylvania’s involvement in the Swedish-Polish conflicts ended badly for the former and after Rákóczy II’s moment of glory the Transylvanian-Swedish relations weakened.

Transylvania (and the other two Romanian principalities) will once more become involved in continental matters, although with a brief and less evident participation, on the occasion of the Great Northern War (1700-1721). The unfolding of the conflict had important repercussions over the political solutions that Moldavia’s and Wallachia’s rulers chose. As an example, the plan of an anti-Ottoman campaign that was presented to Peter the Great by Constantin Brâncoveanu in 1702 was disregarded by the former due to the ongoing conflict with Sweden. In a similar manner and still because of the Swedish-Russian confrontation, the new Transylvanian prince, Francis II Rákóczy, did not obtain Swedish help against the Habsburgs, as King Charles XII sacrificed past alliances in favour of present needs. For him, the Austrian Empire’s benevolent neutrality towards the Northern War weighted more that supporting a Transylvanian action against the Habsburgs.

The Swedish refusal will determine Francis II Rákóczy to seek help elsewhere. By the alliance treaty signed with Peter the Great on 4 September 1707 he obtained promises for financial and military support in the case of a Swedish attack, for help in obtaining the Principality’s independency and for asylum, if needed. In return, Rákóczy obliged himself to try to bring peace between the two belligerents, to avoid making any foreign policy decisions without consulting the tsar and to refuse Poland’s throne, in case it was offered to him. But this treaty will not have any consequences.

The Great Northern War will also affect the Romanian Principalities directly, not only by narrowing down their political options. For instance, as it was situated near the Polish war zone, Moldavia’s territory was

---

219 Veniamin Ciobanu, Carol al XII-lea și românii (Iași: Domino, 1999), 45.
repeatedly pillaged by the Swedish troops that were quartered here and also suffered the effects of the fights against the Russians, especially after Poltava (1709).\textsuperscript{220} Moreover, Mihail Racoviţă’s and Nicolae Mavrocordat’s replacements as successive rulers of Moldavia and Dimitrie Cantemir’s enthroning were related to Charles XII’s intrigues which sought to involve the Ottoman Empire in a war against Russia.\textsuperscript{221} Such a succession of events was dreaded by the latter, especially if it took place during the conflict with Sweden. Nevertheless, according to his declarations towards Constantin Brâncoveanu, the Wallachia ruler, the tsar only desired to delay (and not completely discard) an eventual attempt to overthrow the Ottoman domination over the Principalities.

The defeat of Poltava had as an effect Charles XII’s retreat to Bender (Tighina), on the Ottoman Empire’s territory. This will cause large expenses from the part of the Wallachian treasury and a series of political disadvantages stemming from the fortress’ transformation into a location of European interest. Moreover, alongside the enormous sums that were spent on providing for the Swedish king and his entourage during their 5 years stay at Bender, their travel back to Sweden was also paid by Romanians. The 50,000 florins that were given to Charles XII right before he entered Transylvania did not come from the treasury of the Habsburgs’ Empire, but, ironically, from the fortune of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the former ruler of Wallachia, whose dethronement had something to do with the Swedish king’s plots against Russia’s sympathisers.\textsuperscript{222}

After the end of the Great Northern War, relations between Transylvania and Sweden lessened and the international context also favoured only indirect contacts between the two countries. Losing its status of a great power and becoming neutral in 1815 heavily impacted on Sweden’s desires for a central European ally. This tendency of weaker mutual relations can also be remarked in the case of the extra-Carpathian provinces, on the one hand, and the other Nordic countries, on the other hand. For example, the Danish-German dispute over Schleswig and Holstein will only have indirect repercussions for the Romanian principalities, by influencing the European powers’ decisions.\textsuperscript{223} And in what concerned the ad-hoc assemblies and the union of the Romanian Principalities (1859), Sweden and Denmark were only secondary decisional

\textsuperscript{220} L. Boicu, V. Cristian and Gh. Platon, eds. România în relaţiile internaţionale 1699-1939 (Iaşi: Junimea, 1980), 17.
\textsuperscript{221} Ciobanu, 80-91.
\textsuperscript{222} Ibid., 126.
\textsuperscript{223} Boicu, Cristian and Platon, 174-184.
factors and their benevolent neutrality towards these political acts did not really help Romanians.224

Nevertheless, the Swedish consulates in Bucharest, Galați, Brăila and Constanța and the Romanian corresponding ones in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmo ensured some connections between this Nordic country and the Principalities even before Wallachia and Moldavia united.225 These relations were further cultivated and Prince Basarab Brâncoveanu was sent in a special diplomatic mission to Stockholm after the Romanian War of Independence. King Oskar II granted him a solemn audience on 24 March/5 April 1879 and Brâncoveanu was able to inform the Swedish king about Romania’s newly obtained independency. A similar announcement was made to the king of Denmark, Christian IX, on 2/14 April 1879.226 A few decades later, on 15/25 November 1905, a notification from the opposite direction informed King Carol I of Romania about Norway’s peaceful separation from Sweden and about King Haakon VII’s enthronement.227

In what concerns diplomatic relations at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a convention for Pacific Settlement of International Disputes was signed at Hague on 17/29 July 1899 by a number of 26 countries, amongst which Romania, Denmark and the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway,228 and in 1910 two bilateral commercial and navigation conventions were signed between Romania and Sweden and Romania and Norway, respectively.229 Diplomatic relations at a level higher than the consular one were to be established only during or after the First World War: in 1916 with Sweden, in 1917 with Denmark and Norway and in 1921 with Finland.230

Cultural connections between Romanians and Northerners
Even in the oldest times, the inhabitants of the Nordic part of the continent and those living near the Black Sea had a special relationship. On their commercial routes to Byzantium, the Varangians passed through the area that is nowadays inhabited by Romanians and “took images and

224 Ibid., 158.
225 Hurdubețiu, 354.
226 Calafeteanu and Popișteanu, 138.
227 Ibid., 151.
229 Calafeteanu and Popișteanu, 154.
230 Matei and others, 302-325.
fragments of ballads from these parts and carried them to Iceland or transmitted them to our old chronicler Saxo Grammaticus. Still they, of course, were the ones that symbolically confused the name of Dacia with the one of Dania and launched it again in the Occident at medieval Sorbonne”.

Apparently, these early contacts determined the formation of at least one Scandinavian toponym, but specialists found more proof for the inverse influence.

In the 15th century, Romanians and Northerners will be connected through Nicolaus Olahus’ travels in Western Europe. On such a journey he was even able to observe and admire Scandinavians’ dexterity in sailing. A century later, Grigore Ureche’s Letopiseţul Ţării Moldovei (Moldavia’s chronicle) mentions (by the name of “svezi”) the Swedish mercenaries hired by Despot Vodâ for securing his throne in 1561. Moreover, the 16th century also records sword-bearer Milescu’s journey to Stockholm and the fact that with this occasion the Swedish library enriched its collection with a few Romanian books.

Although in the 17th century the Romanian principalities and the Nordic countries were mainly related from a political point of view, in the 18th century it was the cultural connections that predominated. Even King Charles XII’s stay at Bender had not only economical and political repercussions, but also literary ones. For example, Ion Neculce filled tens of pages of his chronicle with information about the Great Northern War, special attention being given to the description of the Poltava battle, to the Swedish king’s refuge in the Ottoman fortress, to the negotiations between Charles XII and the Sultan that aimed at the Turks’ involvement in the conflict between the Swedish and the Russians and to the foreigners’

---


232 Lozovan 1965, 537-538. For other examples of Romanian words that might have their origin in Northern Europe see also Eugen Lozovan, “Doina et saga. Parallèles épiques roumano-scandinaves,” In Actes du 4e Congrès des Romanistes Scandinaves dédiés à Holger Sten: Revue Roumaine, Numéro Spécial 1 (1967), Tirage à part, 212. These words seem to have been borrowed by the mediation of some Slavic terms, as follows: ‘cârd’ (flock) could have its origin in the word ‘hiro’, ‘viteaz’ (hero) would be derived from ‘Viking’ and the name ‘Iu(r)iga’ would have a Nordic correspondent in ‘Jørgen’. Moreover, Lozovan finds a series of similar traits of the Romanian ‘doina’ songs (sad ballads) and the Northern Sagas, both in their heroic content and their literary themes.

233 Hurdubeţiu, 352.

234 Ibid.

235 Soerensen, 57.
relations with the locals.\textsuperscript{236} Radu Popescu and Radu Greceanu, two other chroniclers of the period, also mention Charles XII’s presence at Bender, but do not provide so many details as Neculce.\textsuperscript{237} The Swedish troops’ passage through the Romanian area seems to have had even architectonic effects, but the tower they built in Bucharest, Colțea Tower, no longer exists.\textsuperscript{238}

At the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, a \textit{Vocabularium Valahicum} is written at Copenhagen and the Danish scholar Rasmus Rasck mentions Romanian amongst the Romance languages.\textsuperscript{239} In 1870 the first exchange relation between the library of the Romanian Academic Society and the Royal Science Society of Copenhagen is established, at the latter’s request.\textsuperscript{240} Moreover, during the last decades of the century, Kr. Nyrop visited Romania and wrote a book that encompassed his travelling impressions.\textsuperscript{241} Nyrop also translated some Romanian literary works into Danish (\textit{Miorița, Meșterul Manole}, riddles, dirges, ritual cries).\textsuperscript{242}

But the appreciation of literature was mutual. A number of Northern authors were well known in Transylvania and Hans Christian Andersen, Henrik Ibsen, Selma Lagerlöf or August Strindberg were just a few of the ones that were acknowledged even during their lifetime. Another Danish erudite, Kr. Sandfeld, wrote a Ph.D. thesis entitled \textit{Rumaenske studier} (\textit{Romanian studies}) and published it in 1900.\textsuperscript{243} Having Sextil Pușcariu, Theodor Capidan and Pericle Papahagi as friends, he was also able to write two other major works, \textit{Linguistique balcanique} (\textit{Balkan linguistics}) and \textit{Syntaxe Roumaine} (\textit{Romanian Syntax}). As for cultural relations with Sweden, the Swedish-Romanian Society founded in 1929 greatly contributed to their development and consolidation.\textsuperscript{244}

The information provided above offers valuable proof in favour of considering that Romanians and Northerners cultivated constant political and cultural relations. These were hindered by geographical distance and by different development routes, but still had a certain impact in the historical evolution of both the Romanian area and the Nordic countries.

\textsuperscript{236} Hurdubețiu, 353.
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., 353-354.
\textsuperscript{238} Ibid., p. 354. Colțea Tower is also mentioned by Soerensen, 57.
\textsuperscript{239} Soerensen, 57-58.
\textsuperscript{240} Matei and others, 226.
\textsuperscript{241} Soerensen, 58. Nyrop’s book is entitled \textit{Romanske mosaiker} (\textit{Romanic mosaics}).
\textsuperscript{242} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{243} Ibid. Other Nordic scholars that have studied the Romanian language are the Danish A. Rosenstand Hansen and Knud Togeby, the Swedish Alf Lombard, Dagmar Falk and Bengt Hasselrot or the Finnish V. Kiparsky.
\textsuperscript{244} Hurdubețiu, 355.
And the analysis of three 19th century Transylvanian periodicals strengthens this conclusion, as the following sections of this study will show.

**Primary sources: Three Romanian periodicals of the 19th century and the information they provide about the Nordic countries**

This study uses three largely circulated and appreciated periodicals of the 19th century in order to unravel the way in which Transylvanians perceived the Nordic countries. *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură (A paper for the mind, heart and literature), Familia (The Family) și Gazeta de Transilvania (The Transylvanian Gazette)* were selected both because they cover the above-mentioned period and because they provide valuable cultural and political information. The first two periodicals are relevant from a cultural point of view, while *Gazeta de Transilvania* presented in detail foreign and internal political events.

*Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* was issued weekly at Braşov between 1838 and 1865. In its first six months of circulation (1 January – 1 July 1838) it was named *Foaie literară (A literary paper).* Slight interruptions in its publication were recorded between 1849 and 1865, the latter year being the one that brought about the last two issues of the publication. As the title suggests, this periodical had as a purpose its readers’ cultural, spiritual and knowledge enhancement and it tried to achieve this goal by publishing proverbs, aphorisms, biographies, various statistics and literary works. The Nordic countries are mentioned on 9 such occasions during the periodical period of issuance: 3 statistics (one about the ages of the Swedish and Danish Kings, one about the Nordic countries’ German inhabitants and the last about the Danish King’s enthronement); 3 aphorisms (one pertaining to King Gustav III of Sweden and the other two to his compatriot, Axel Oxenstierna); one literary note regarding the publication of the *History of King Charles XII*; one historical account about a Romanian soldier in the army of Charles XII that was captured by the Russians after the battle of Poltava, and last but not least, a biographical note on Carl Linnaeus.

---


246 The referential information for these articles is: (1) year V, 1842, no. 9, page 72; (2) year XII, 1849, no. 5, pages 37-40; (3) year XII, 1849, no. 7, pages 53-55; (4) year VI, 1843, no. 33, page 264; (5) year XV, 1852, no. 1, page 4; (6) year XVI, 1853, no. 52, page 586; (7) year VIII, 1845, no. 4, page 32; (8) year IX, 1846, no. 10, pages 75-76; (9) year XVI, 1853, no. 18, pages 129-130, respectively.
The first series of *Familia* appeared between 1865 and 1906 with the full title *Familia: Foaie enciclopedică și beletristică cu ilustrațiuni* (*The Family: An encyclopaedic and belletristic paper with illustrations*) at Pesta (1865-1880) and Oradea (1880-1906). The periodical edited by Iosif Vulcan became noticeable by publishing Mihai Eminescu’s debut poem, “De-aș avea…” in 1866. Moreover, as the declared intention of *Familia* was the cultural enrichment of its readers by bringing to their attention a number of literary works pertaining to Romanian or foreign authors, the Nordic writers were not forgotten. As a result, the publication’s pages are filled with short stories, novellas, plays, critical studies or cultural statistics that were written by Northerners or that are related to the Nordic countries. Twenty-six such references exist: 16 short stories or novellas, 8 literary or historical studies and 2 statistics. Alongside these texts, *Familia* has also published some relevant documentary illustrations. Therefore, Transylvanians were able to see portraits of Fridtjof Nansen (1896, page 517), Henrik Ibsen (1897, page 217), Christian IX, King of Denmark (1897, page 325) or Oscar II, King of Sweden and Norway (1881, page 533; 1897, page 445, and 1898, page 73).

*Gazeta de Transilvania* circulated for a longer period than the other two primary sources used in this study. It was first issued at Brașov in 1838 having George Barțiu as editor and continued to appear until the first half of the 20th century, although its name and periodicity varied over time. Between 3 January and 1 December 1849 it was called *Gazeta transilvană* and after this date it bore the name *Gazeta Transilvaniei* until December 1869, pages 241-242; (2) 1881, page 533; (3) 1882, pages 175-179, 191-192, 203-204; (4) 1887, pages 217-219, 234-235, 248-249, 259, 271, 282-284, 295, 307-308, 356, 366-368, 379-380, 390-392, 403-405, 428-429, 439-441, 451-452, 462-465, 476-477, 487-489, 499-500, 511-513, 536-537, 548-549, 560-561, 571-572, 584-585, 596-597, 608-609, 620-621; (5) 1900, pages 44-45; (6) 1901, pages 488-489; (7) 1903, pages 222-223; (8) 1906, no. 25, page 295. The two relevant statistics were published in *Familia* in (1) 1882, page 606 and in (2) 1884, page 265.

---


248 The literary works of Northern authors can be found in the periodical’s following years: (1) 1866, no. 33-37; (2) 1872, no. 31-41; (3) 1875, pages 604-605; (4) 1886, pages 150-151; (5) 1890, pages 258-259; (6) 1897, no. 14, pages 159-160; (7) 1899, no. 26-29; (8) 1900, pages 97-99, 110-112, 121-123, 133-135, 145-147, 157-159, 170-171, 182-184; (9) 1902, page 117; (10) 1902, no. 26, pages 306-307, no. 27, pages 319-320; (11) 1902, no. 8, pages 90-91; (12) 1904, pages 609-610; (13) 1905, pages 318-319; (14) 1906, page 18; (15) 1906, page 187; (16) 1906, pages 174-175. The critical studies that provide data about the Nordic countries can be retrieved by using the following references: (1) 1869, pages 241-242; (2) 1881, page 533; (3) 1882, pages 175-179, 191-192, 203-204; (4) 1887, pages 217-219, 234-235, 248-249, 259, 271, 282-284, 295, 307-308, 356, 366-368, 379-380, 390-392, 403-405, 428-429, 439-441, 451-452, 462-465, 476-477, 487-489, 499-500, 511-513, 536-537, 548-549, 560-561, 571-572, 584-585, 596-597, 608-609, 620-621; (5) 1900, pages 44-45; (6) 1901, pages 488-489; (7) 1903, pages 222-223; (8) 1906, no. 25, page 295. The two relevant statistics were published in *Familia* in (1) 1882, page 606 and in (2) 1884, page 265.
At first the gazette appeared on a weekly basis, after a while it started appearing twice a week and since 1884 it was published daily. As it was the first Romanian political newspaper issued in Transylvania, Gazeta referred in its pages to both internal and external events and since it was published for a long period and with a high frequency the information regarding the Nordic countries is rather abundant. From the 711 relevant pieces of news, 699 concern the four Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland) and 12 refer to Iceland and/or Lapland. By eliminating the overlaps in counting the articles, Gazeta de Transilvania provides 588 pieces of news, from which 48 are statistics. A thorough analysis of these articles about the Nordic countries is provided in the following section.

How were the Nordic countries seen by Transylvanians in the 19th century? A quantitative and qualitative analysis

As the three periodicals used as primary sources circulated for an extended period of time and had a relatively large audience, it is safe to assume that the information provided by them was constitutive for Transylvanians’ image of the Nordic countries. In order to better approximate the way in which the Northern part of the continent was perceived by Transylvania’s Romanian inhabitants, the present study combines a quantitative analysis of the pieces of information provided by the three periodicals with a qualitative interpretation of this relevant data. Moreover, as the number of articles found in Gazeta de Transilvania is disproportionately larger than the one of references to the Nordic countries made in Foaie pentru minte, înimă şi literatură and Familia, the political – cultural dichotomy previously used in this study was tacitly combined with the quantitative analysis.

Quantitative analysis

Knowing how many articles about the Nordic countries were available to Transylvanians is very important, as it demonstrates the readers’ interest towards such news and it establishes the degree in which this European area was known by the Romanians from Transylvania. Besides, the number of articles on a certain topic is relevant for inferring the

---

250 Since the number of references is extremely large, the relevant data for retrieving the mentioned articles will not be provided here, but the information is available upon request.
type of information about the Nordic countries that was preferred by Transylvanians.

The quantitative analysis was conducted separately for each of the three periodicals and the news items provided about each of the four Nordic countries was counted by category (political, cultural or ‘various’). The number of statistics provided by the newspapers was also taken into account, as Transylvanians seem to have enjoyed such information in the 19th century. Even though Lapland and Iceland were not included amongst the four Nordic countries, the pieces of news about these areas were also counted, due to their potential comparative value.

In the case of Gazeta de Transilvania two other ways of grouping the articles were used, one by the year in which the articles appeared and the other by the column under which the news were published. Obviously, the fact that certain columns changed their names in time was taken into consideration. For instance, the category that was named ‘News’ (‘Știri’) included the following columns: ‘Mixed news’ (‘Știri mestecate’), ‘Chronicle’ (‘Cronică’), ‘Foreign chronicle’ (‘Cronică străină’), ‘External chronicle’ (‘Cronică externă’), ‘Everywhere’ (‘Peste tot’), ‘Outside chronicle’ (‘Cronica din afară’), ‘From the outside’ (‘Din afară’), ‘The political events’ chronicle’ (‘Cronica evenimentelor politice’), ‘News of the day’ (‘Știrile zilei’), ‘The day’s chronicle’ (‘Cronica zilei’), ‘The political chronicle’ (‘Cronica politică’), ‘The political review’ (‘Revista politică’), ‘From abroad’ (‘Din străinătate’), ‘News’ (‘Știri’), and ‘Minor news’ (‘Știri mărunte’). The ‘Feuilleton’ category included the literary works and articles that appeared in the ‘Transylvanian Gazette’s Feuilleton’ (‘Foiletonul Gazetei Transilvaniei’) and the ‘Various’ category encompassed the pieces of news that were published in the ‘Various’ (‘Diverse’) and ‘Many and every’ (‘Multe și de toate’) columns. The ‘Telegram’ category refers to the ‘Telegraphic news (Partial Service of the Transylvanian Gazette)’ (‘Știri telegrafice (Serv. Part. al «Gaz. Trans.»)’), ‘The Transylvanian Gazette’s Telegrams’ (‘Telegramele «Gaz. Trans.»’), ‘Latest news’ (‘Știri ultime’), and ‘The latest pieces of news’ (‘Ultime știri’). A final category that was used for analysing the information that Gazeta de Transilvania provided about the Nordic countries during the 19th century was ‘Stand-alone news’ and it included the relevant articles that did not appear under one of the periodical’s columns.

Alongside creating exhaustive and disjunctive categories, the validity of the analytical approach was also ensured by the rules used when including the articles into a category or another. For instance, the ‘political’ category encompassed information about the Nordic sovereigns’ ages, marriages, visits to other monarchs, deaths and murder attempts that had them as a target. Nevertheless, the ‘cultural’ and ‘various’ categories
included articles that referred to the same kings and queens but had a different content. The aphorisms published in *Foaie pentru minte, înimă și literatură* or in *Familia* and information about the expeditions conducted by Nordic explorers were counted under the ‘various’ category. Articles about the Nobel prizes and about literary works pertaining to Northern authors constituted a part of the ‘cultural’ category.

Some overlaps emerged as a result of the fact that a part of the pieces of news contained information about two or more of the Nordic countries, and these articles were counted repeatedly, for each Nordic country they mentioned. This happened mainly, but not exclusively, in the case of statistics, which were taken into consideration on a stand-alone basis, overlooking the article’s previous inclusion into a certain category by country or by column.

The tables presented below (tables 1-6) summarise the number of news provided by the three Romanian periodicals, in accordance with the counting rules and observations that were listed above.

a) *Foaie pentru minte, înimă și literatură*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Category</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in *Foaie pentru minte, înimă și literatură* by country and by news category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Category</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lapland</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in *Foaie pentru minte, înimă și literatură*

It is easily noticeable that in the pages of this periodical only 12 pieces of news about the Nordic countries were published, 3 of them being statistics. This number differs from what was previously noted when
presenting the primary sources due to the above-mentioned overlaps, as some articles refer to two or more of the Nordic countries.

b) Familia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in Familia by country and by news category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Category</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lapland</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in Familia

For Familia, there are 28 relevant articles, from which 2 are statistics. Two overlaps of the kind that was already mentioned occurred here also and therefore the real number of pieces of news concerning the Nordic countries for this periodical is 26.

c) Gazeta de Transilvania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in Gazeta de Transilvania by country and by news category
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Category</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lapland</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in *Gazeta de Transilvania*

Apparently *Gazeta de Transilvania* published 711 relevant articles about the Nordic countries between 1838 and 1919 (699 pieces of news about the four Nordic countries and 12 pieces of news about Lapland and Iceland), from which 48 are statistics. But overlaps are numerous for this periodical and therefore the total number of articles is actually 588.

According to the appearance year, these 588 articles are distributed as shown in the table presented below (table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1879</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Yearly distribution of news about the Nordic countries published in *Gazeta de Transilvania*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>News</th>
<th>Various</th>
<th>Stand-alone News</th>
<th>Feuilleton</th>
<th>Telegrams</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of the articles by column is presented below (table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone news</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feuilleton</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegrams</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Distribution of news about the Nordic countries published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* by column

Many of these pieces of news are thematically connected and therefore a rather large number of references to the same Nordic country appear in the same year or in a short period of time. Moreover, these related articles tend to be published in the same column. Examples of such repetitive political references include 16 pieces of news about Finland that concern the Russification policy led by the Tsarist Empire in this country and 63 articles about Denmark that inform Transylvanians about the Schleswig-Holstein Question. Fourteen articles cover the Kronstadt rebellion and 10 other refer to the Swedish general strike of 1909.

The dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway is also largely treated in *Gazeta de Transilvania*’s pages, as part of different columns. Thus, from the 30 articles that concern this issue, 20 are ‘stand-alone news’, 6 are ‘telegraphic news’ and 4 were included in the category that was simply called ‘news’.

The political actions of the Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson against the Magyar rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were
mentioned 11 times in the pages of the Transylvanian periodical, 8 times as ‘stand-alone news’ and 3 times as ‘news’. Information about Bjørnson’s health status was also published in 9 articles of Gazeta de Transilvania, and these were included amongst the cultural news about Norway.

As a result, without counting the overlaps, but taking into consideration the times when an article or literary work was published repeatedly\textsuperscript{251}, the quantitative analysis shows that a total of 623 pieces of news about the Nordic countries appeared in the three periodicals that served as primary sources for this study.\textsuperscript{252} This number is rather large, even when taking into consideration the fact that these articles appeared between 1838 and 1919. Therefore, in spite of what many would think, in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Transylvanians knew a lot about the events that took place in the Nordic countries and appreciated the literary works of Northern authors. But one cannot get an accurate image of the ways in which Transylvanians perceived the Nordic countries in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century only by counting on this simple remark. Hence this quantitative analysis is followed by a qualitative one.

\textit{Qualitative analysis}

From a qualitative point of view, the news about the Nordic countries is extremely diverse. In the first half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the relevant pieces of information are representative especially from a cultural perspective, as they are mainly translations of literary works pertaining to Northern authors. But in time the articles that refer to the North of Europe

\textsuperscript{251} There were 11 such instances: a quote from Oxenstierna was published twice in \textit{Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură} (1852, no. 1 and 1853, no. 52); Onkel Adam’s novella ‘The Golden Chain’ (‘Lantul de aur’) appeared twice in Familia (1866 and 1899); Hans Christian Andersen’s ‘The Story of a Mother’ (‘Istoria unei mame’) first appeared in Familia (1875) and was then published three times in Gazeta de Transilvania (1891, 1902 and 1905); another one of his stories, ‘The Naughty Boy’ (‘Băiatul răutăcios’), was published twice by Familia (1886 and 1906); ‘A habit that should be followed’ (‘Un obicei de imitat’), an article about the tests that Norwegian girls had to pass before being allowed to get married, was published three times in Gazeta de Transilvania (1883, 1885 and 1887); a story by Selma Lagerlöf was published twice, under different names, as ‘The Holly Night’ (‘Noaptea Sfântă’) in Familia (1904) and as ‘The Caesar’s vision’ (‘Vedenia Cezarului’) in Gazeta de Transilvania (1910); and, last but not least, two novellas written by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, ‘The Father’ (‘Tatăl’) and ‘Fidelity’ (‘Fidelitate’) were published twice each, the first in Familia (1906) and then in Gazeta de Transilvania (1907) and the second in Gazeta de Transilvania (1896 and 1907).

\textsuperscript{252} Unfortunately, only the number of articles about the Nordic countries that were published in the three Transylvanian periodicals is available. The exact percentage of these articles as compared with the rest of the periodicals’ content could not be calculated, but it should be considered smaller than 5%. Thank you Stefan Ewert for this methodological observation.
diversify and Transylvanians get information about the latest political
changes in the Nordic countries, about the scientific or geographic
discoveries made by Northerners or even about the development of certain
economic sectors. The latter type of news is mainly provided by the
statistics that Transylvanians seem to have appreciated so much.

The above statements refer mainly to *Gazeta de Transilvania*. This
periodical differs from *Foae pentru minte, inimă și literatură* and from *Familia*
by the fact that it appeared regularly, during a significantly longer period
of time and with a rate of issuance that grew progressively. Therefore there
was more and more space in its pages for approaching various themes and
for offering details that might have been disregarded by a periodical with a
lower rate of appearance.

News about the Nordic countries fits this description, as it did not
provide vital information to Transylvanians. Nevertheless, because the
available space allowed it, articles about the Nordic countries become more
and more frequent and consistent. Besides, the journalists found it ever
easier to be knowledgeable about any political event of the international
scene, even though not always directly. Thus, many articles published by
*Gazeta de Transilvania* were (translations and) reprints from other
newspapers, either Romanian or foreign, as the prestigious *The Times* or
*Berliner Zeitung*. These publications usually had reporters that travelled to
the scene and gave accurate information about the events that they referred
to. As they did not have the same financial resources, Transylvanian
journalists confined themselves to further transmitting the desired news
from these periodicals to their Romanian readers, although not uncritically,
but by adapting it to their public. Therefore these articles were usually
completed by *Gazeta de Transilvania*’s journalists with one or two
paragraphs in which they expressed their own opinion about the piece of
news they had just reported on and sketched the implications that this
particular information could have for their co-nationals. Nevertheless,
situations in which news is ‘borrowed’ without further commentaries also
exist, especially if that information did not have a strong impact upon the
Romanian area.

This progressive growth of references to the Nordic countries was
due to the increase of issuance rates, of the number of political news
published by *Gazeta de Transilvania*, and of their more thorough
consideration. But this was not a phenomenon that applied only to the
Northern part of Europe, but also to other geographical areas. Therefore,
Transylvanians were also well informed about some Asian states
(especially India and China), the African continent, North America (mostly
the United States of America, as European emigration statistics are
relatively frequent), and even Mexico or Brazil. From this point of view, the Transylvanian periodical played an important part in providing valuable news about the political evolutions of these areas, about scientific discoveries made in faraway lands, about literary works of foreign authors, about the habits, customs and traditions of various peoples. One could easily say then that this newspaper served its readers not only as a means of spending spare time, but also by educating them through the provision of knowledge about other peoples’ culture and civilisation. Moreover, it tacitly promoted the idea of diversity, its acceptance and valorisation.

As for the periodicals’ readers, it must be noted that the number of literate people was small in the 19th century. Thus, even though in Transylvania the situation was not as bad as in Wallachia or Moldavia (due to the Austrian enlightened absolutism and to the measures taken by the Hungarian rulers), large deficiencies still existed. Nevertheless, many illiterate Romanians had an indirect access to the information provided by the periodicals: the ones that could read did so aloud to groups of relatives, friends and acquaintances.

The readers’ origin is also relevant for a well conducted analysis. Therefore it is important to mention that most of the periodicals’ subscribers lived in urban areas, where the rate of educated persons was higher than in the rural ones. Moreover, Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură and Familia had an even smaller circulation, mainly amongst the urban elites, as they were strictly oriented on cultural topics.

Nevertheless, even though not all Transylvanians could read and from the ones that could do so not all had access to newspapers, one might still conclude that the relevant news reached a fairly large number of people. This happened primarily through the information diffusion process described above. Furthermore, according to the laws of social psychology, it is safe to assume that images of certain peoples, such as the Nordic ones, were even more widespread, through legends and stories that probably contained only a small portion of the truth and that circulated amongst Romanians from father to son. This statement is valid especially in Wallachia’s case, where Charles XII’s passage left durable impressions on the collective mentality, but can also be considered as well-founded for Transylvania if we refer to the two Rákóczi princes that were involved in the continent’s problems during the 17th century. Moreover, the total lack or the scarcity of information is one of the main factors involved in the propagation and perpetuation of ethnic stereotypes.

253 See Ciobanu, 127.
The terminology used when referring to the Nordic countries also generates interesting observations as the names by which the Northern kingdoms are designated vary over time. Sweden appears as *Sfezia*, *Svedia* or *Sveţia* and Denmark is sometimes denominated *Danimarca* or *Danimarka*, but it is most often called *Dania*. Even more intriguing is the fact that the names for Norway or Finland are used with much more consistency and this is also true for the capitals of the four Nordic countries. The reasons that such toponymical variations exist or do not occur are probably connected to the Romanian language’s evolution during the 19th century and to the ways in which the Nordic countries were designated in foreign periodicals. Probably the names of Norway, Finland and all the four Northern capitals were more uniformly spelled in Occidental languages and the words used by Romanian journalist echo this peculiarity.

Still from a terminological point of view, it is important to mention that the word ‘Scandinavia’ was used in a specific manner by the three Romanian periodicals. Apparently, for 19th century Transylvanians this term had a narrower meaning than was is usually ascribed to it nowadays, as it designated only Sweden and Norway and not all of the Nordic countries. Probably this option was due to a higher importance granted to its geographical meaning, as opposed to its cultural or civilisation-related implications.

Another general qualitative observation that stemmed from reading the relevant articles printed by *Foaie pentru minte, inimă şi literatură*, *Familia* and *Gazeta de Transilvania* is the fact that the information about the Nordic countries is customary rather short and placed in the second part or even at the end of the foreign news column. This is a perfectly explainable option of the Romanian journalists if one takes into consideration the frequency and the significance of direct relations between Transylvanians and the Northern part of Europe in the 19th century. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that in spite of their brevity and positioning, the articles about the Nordic countries cover the essence and accurately and promptly inform Transylvanians about any political changes or cultural developments that occurred in this area. The royal marriages, divorces, deaths or life threatening experiences, the Nordic sovereigns’ visits to Romania or other European states, the geographical and scientific discoveries that took place in the North, the deaths of renowned Northerners and other territorial or political changes in the Nordic countries are noted and sometimes commented on.

Although this is the general tendency, in the pages of *Gazeta de Transilvania* major political events from the Nordic countries receive more coverage space, are sometimes printed on the first page of the periodical
and change their status from a part of the foreign news column to ‘stand-alone news’. This happened for instance in the case of major changes in the Schleswig-Holstein Question, at the moment that Norway proclaimed its independency from Sweden in 1905, during the legislative changes operated by the Tsarist Empire in Finland in its attempt to Russianise the country or when Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson made harsh declarations against the Magyarisation policies adopted in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, new details on these topics appeared in every issue of the periodical, until a solution to the problem was found. Most of the times such events also caused significant increases in the number of articles about the Nordic countries published in that particular year.254

Such a ‘journalistic’ inclination is extremely visible in the case of information provided about Finland. This is scarce as compared with the number of articles about the other Nordic countries, especially when referring to political news.255 Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură does not provide any information about Finland, Familia offers only one relevant piece of news and Gazeta de Transilvania 49 articles, a small number compared with the correspondent data for the other three Nordic countries: 186 articles for Norway, 228 for Sweden and 236 for Denmark. Moreover, a third (16) of these 49 pieces of news about Finland covers the Tsarist Empire’s Russification policy and these 16 articles represent almost half of the 34 political articles regarding this country. Clearly, an inclination towards offering details on a certain topic exists, especially if this topic has some relevance to Romanians as it happens in this particular case: not only Finland, but also the extra-Carpathian provinces suffered from some of the harsh measures adopted by the Russian Empire during its expansion towards the West.

As was noted in the quantitative part of the analysis, not every issue of Gazeta de Transilvania contains information about the Nordic countries. Sometimes, a whole year passes without such news. Publishing articles about the Northern part of the continent is strongly related to changes in the internal structure of these countries and/or to their international actions. It becomes obvious then why news about Finland and Norway is less numerous than that about Sweden and Denmark, as the first two

254 See above, the Quantitative analysis section.
255 See above, the Quantitative analysis section. Unfortunately, I have no knowledge about a similar analysis made for 19th century Hungarian periodicals from Transylvania. It is possible that they provide more information about Finland, either from a political point of view or from a cultural one, due to the similarities between the two peoples. Thank you Bogdan Murgescu for this observation.
countries were not independent during the 19th century. Moreover, Transylvania’s own internal and external evolutions also greatly influence the number and consistency of the pieces of news about the Nordic countries published in Gazeta de Transilvania. Changes in the province’s status sometimes totally eclipse news about other areas, including Northern Europe. The 1848 revolution or the diets’ convocation during the 1860s are the most relevant examples, but not the only ones. As these events unfolded only a few other pieces of information managed to get coverage in the periodical. Moreover, due to the fact that no major modifications took place in the Nordic countries in this period, information about them is scarce. This phenomenon is perfectly normal and explainable, as a newspaper’s role is to inform and the topics it chooses are the ones which have the most relevance to its readers.

An evolution of the news about the Nordic countries can also be remarked when one considers the additional explanations provided to the readers alongside the main content of the articles. In the first half of the 19th century such supplementary details about the Nordic countries are common, but they tend to gradually disappear in time. Due to these references one can infer the depth of the Transylvanians’ knowledge about the Nordic countries, both in what concerns their internal affairs and their alliances and international interests. In the second half of the century, the articles published by the periodicals almost never contain such explanatory notes and mentioning Northern cultural personalities no longer requires details about their home countries: the mere record of their nationality is sufficient.

Still from a cultural point of view, an evolution in the case of translations from Northern authors is also apparent. If at first Transylvanians opted for translating these texts from internationally circulated languages (especially French), in time explicit specifications refer to the fact that the literary works were translated directly from Swedish or Danish. Unfortunately, most of the times such details are not available and therefore the percentage of translations from the original version of the texts cannot be calculated.

Increases in the frequency of references to the Nordic countries and to some Northern personalities also bring about some stereotypical phrases used in articles with connected topics. These expressions were used as explanatory appositions or in order to avoid repetitions, but they also

256 Finland was a province of the Swedish Empire until 1809 when it is conquered and administered by the Russian Empire as an autonomous Great Duchy until 1917. Norway was a Danish province until 1814 when it was ceded to Sweden to which it belonged until 1905.
testify to the fact that the readers already possessed some information about the discussed subject. The most representative stereotypical formulas used by the Transylvanian periodicals are ‘the great/renowned (Nordic/polar) explorer’, an expression that was used to designate, among others, Fridtjof Nansen, Sven Hedin and Nils Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, and ‘a (small and) tenacious people’, with reference to the Finnish and their fight against Russification.

Another general observation is that Transylvanian periodicals mainly covered the contemporary events related to the Nordic countries. Thus, although some historical references exist,257 they are rare and have a purely literary and/or contextual value.258 The attention given by the newspapers to reporting on the current state of affairs stemmed from the need to inform their readers about the latest political news or scientific and geographical discoveries.

Sometimes, 19th century Transylvanians knew more than what was retained by posterity. Thus, although most of the Northern personalities mentioned by the three periodicals were scientists, explorers and writers renowned worldwide,259 some of them did not gain such post-mortem appreciation. Such examples are ‘the renowned explorer Nordens-Kijöld’, the Danish writers Vilhelm Bergsøe and G. Wied or the Finnish author Pietari Päivärinta.

A last but very important aspect that needs to be discussed as part of this study is Transylvanians’ image of the Nordic countries. The impression given by the articles published by the three periodicals is that they did not consider them atypical or placed at a distant border. On the contrary, every time they are mentioned, the Nordic countries appear as an important part of Europe, both from a cultural point of view and from a geographical one. Therefore, although the phrase ‘Nordic countries’ is frequently used, they do not seem marginal, unfamiliar or distant. The information provided by the Romanian travellers to this area further sustains this affirmation, as their reports of visits to Sweden or Denmark do not qualitatively differ from the impressions they note when passing

---

257 See, for instance, the historical sketch about the Thirty Years’ War that appeared in 1882 in Familia, pages 175-179, 191-192, and 203-204.
258 One of the best such examples is the story which describes how Petru Crasan, a Romanian volunteer in Charles XII’s army, was captured by the Russian army. The text published in Foia pentru minte, inimă și literatură, no. IX, pages 75-76 does not fail to mention the courage displayed by the Romanian soldier when faced with Tsar Peter the Great.
through France or England. Another argument for considering that Transylvanians saw the Nordic countries as a part of Europe is the content of the relatively large number of statistics that were published by the three periodicals (3 by *Foaie pentru minte, inimă şi literatură*, 2 by *Familia* and 48 by *Gazeta de Transilvania*). These statistics include Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland amongst the other European countries, without any differentiations.

In conclusion, both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis of the articles used as primary sources show that Transylvania’s Romanian inhabitants were well informed about the events that took place in the Northern part of the continent and also knew a lot about cultural personalities originating in this area. Moreover, they perceived the Nordic countries in a positive light, especially when it came to literary works. These were published in relatively large numbers during the 19th century. From a political point of view, the Nordic countries were considered European and therefore close to the Romanian area. Geography, culture and civilisation converged to sustain this impression.

**Concluding remarks: Transylvania and the Nordic countries in the 19th century**

This study’s objective was to discover 19th century Transylvanians’ image of the Nordic countries. In order to do so, presenting the history of relations between these two areas was an indispensable step. This approach led to the conclusion that in spite of what one would think Transylvania’s political and cultural connections to the Nordic countries were rather well developed, at least from the 17th century onwards.

The next section of the study presented the primary sources used in order to ascertain how Romanians inhabiting the intra-Carpathian area perceived the Northern part of the continent. Thus, relevant articles published by three largely circulated Transylvanian periodicals of the 19th century were carefully scrutinised. *Foaie pentru minte, inimă şi literatură* and *Familia* were chosen in order to provide cultural information about the Nordic countries, whereas *Gazeta de Transilvania* offered the necessary political data.

The pieces of news that referred to the North of Europe were selected and then quantitatively and qualitatively analysed. As *Gazeta de

---

260 See ‘A letter from Sweden’ (‘*O scrisoare din Suedia*’), an article sent by G. Moianu to the director of *Gazeta de Transilvania* and published in its pages in 1893, no. 186, and the essay ‘From the life of a Danish village’ (‘*Din viaţa unui sat danez*’) written by Dumitru Brezulescu and published by *Familia* in 1903, pages 222-223.
Transilvania provided over 94% of the articles of interest, the three periodicals were examined separately. News was categorised by country (Sweden, Finland, Denmark or Norway) and by the type of information it contained (political, cultural or various). Clear-cut rules were set in order to consistently include the articles in the given categories and to avoid any ambiguous situations.

News about Lapland and Iceland was also taken into consideration, although they were not included amongst the Nordic countries. The information provided by this assessment had only a comparative value and served as a complement of the main findings, as did the number of statistics published by the three Transylvanian periodicals. The latter were also counted separately, as they proved to be rather frequent.

The results obtained for Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură were not spectacular as this periodical only published 12 pieces of news about the Nordic countries during its 27 years of issuance (1838-1865). These articles were distributed as follows: 8 pieces of news about Sweden, 3 about Denmark and 1 about Norway. Among these 12 articles, 2 had political content, 1 was culture-related, 9 were included in the various category and 3 were statistics. Familia printed a slightly larger number of news about Northern Europe, partly because it appeared for a longer period of time (1865-1906). The total of 28 relevant articles, amongst which 2 were statistics, covers all of the four Nordic countries, as 11 are about Denmark, 10 about Sweden, 6 about Norway and 1 about Finland. As for their content, 4 pieces of news were political, 23 cultural and 1 was counted under the various category. Due to its longevity (1838-1919) and to its higher frequency of issuing (it became a daily periodical after 1884), Gazeta de Transilvania provided 588 articles of interest. Amongst these, 236 pieces of news refer to Denmark, 228 to Sweden, 186 to Norway and 49 to Finland. By content, 335 articles cover political events, 125 are cultural ones and 239 pertain to the various category. Unlike the two afore-mentioned periodicals, Gazeta de Transilvania also found place in its pages for information about Lapland (7 articles) and Iceland (5 articles). Moreover, the number of statistics published by this newspaper is also higher than in the other two periodicals: 48. The yearly distribution of the relevant pieces of news shows that their number varies between 0 and 41, in relation to the events that took place in the Nordic countries. The articles’ repartition by column clearly shows the periodical’s aim of providing political information: 303 news, 68 stand-alone news and 65 telegrams, on the one hand, and only 85 various articles and 67 literary works published in the feuilleton, on the other hand.
The total of 623 articles published by the three Romanian periodicals between 1838 and 1919 was further analysed qualitatively, an undertaking that produced interesting results. For instance, it showed that translations represent the largest part of the cultural data about the Nordic countries that appeared in the Transylvanian periodicals. Works of internationally recognised authors such as Selma Lagerlöf, Georg Brandes, Hans Christian Andersen, Henrik Ibsen and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson were published in Romanian, after being translated from French or from their original language. As for political news, renowned European publications like The Times or Berliner Zeitung served as sources for most articles, even though sometimes commentaries pertaining to the Romanian journalists are also added.

The numerical increase in pieces of information about the Nordic countries which took place towards the end of the 19th century is a phenomenon that can be described for other areas as well. Therefore, Transylvanians had at their disposal picturesque details about all of the continents, in what concerns political changes, customs, traditions or habits of other peoples.

With regard to the terminology used when referring to Northern Europe it must be noted that it varied over time, at least in the case of Sweden and Denmark. The former was successively designated by ‘Sfezia’, ‘Svedia’ and ‘Sveţia’ and the latter was called ‘Danimarca’, ‘Danimarka’ and ‘Dania’. Moreover, throughout the 19th century ‘Scandinavia’ referred only to the dynastic union between Sweden and Norway.

The frequency of explanatory notes on the Nordic countries also changes over time and from their numerical decrease one can infer that Transylvanians knew more and more about this part of the continent towards the end of the century. This observation could be connected to what was already noted regarding the number of articles about the Nordic countries taken in consideration on a temporary scale. Therefore, it can be asserted that Transylvanians were rather well informed about what happened in the Nordic states, even though such articles tended to be short and published in the second half of the external news column.

Important political measures such as the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905 or the Russification of Finland were covered in detail and one could consider that this approach reflected the readers’ interest towards these topics. Nevertheless, events that took place in Transylvania sometimes cast a shadow over foreign news, especially as newspapers are usually focused on the present.

Actually this represents another characteristic of the articles published by the three Romanian periodicals. Habitually, the news they
report on is recent and the amount of historical information about the Nordic countries is negligible. Another consequence of this tendency is the fact that the fame of a number of the Northern ‘personalities’ (mainly writers and explorers) mentioned in some articles published by Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură, Familia or Gazeta de Transilvania has not survived posterity.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses converge to the conclusion that 19th century Transylvanians had a lot of information about the Nordic countries’ internal affairs and about their involvement in the continent’s problems. The Northern monarchs’ marriages, divorces or deaths, the issues raised sometimes by the succession to the throne, the speeches held by various representatives in front of their legislative assemblies, the laws that were promulgated in Sweden, Denmark, Norway or Finland, the Nordic countries’ participation to international congresses or conferences, and their reaction to various international conflicts are just a few of the topics that were covered by the Transylvanian press during the studied period. Bilateral relations between Transylvania or Romania, on the one hand, and the Nordic countries, on the other hand, were also brought to the public’s attention and their unfolding was watched with a lot of interest by the periodicals’ readers. Furthermore, from a cultural point of view, the translations of literary works authored by Northerners enriched Transylvanians’ knowledge about the Nordic countries and the Nordic writers’ stands against different forms of national oppression was praised by Romanian journalists.

In order to complete the image that Romanian inhabitants of Transylvania had of the Nordic countries it is necessary to note that they did not perceive this area as a remote and inaccessible land. On the contrary, for them, these four countries were a part of Europe and their arguments had various sources: geography, politics, culture, travel writing.

In conclusion, in the 19th century, Transylvanians’ image of the Nordic countries is well shaped and has mainly positive connotations. Moreover, the amount of information they had at their disposal was rather large and capable of preserving their representations of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland. In consequence, a careful scrutiny of historical sources proves that in spite of their different political and cultural backgrounds and disregarding the geographical distance that separates them, Transylvania and the Nordic countries were still able to know and appreciate one another in the 19th century.
List of tables

Table 1: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in *Foăie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* by country and by news category ...... 99
Table 2: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in *Foăie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* .............................................. 99
Table 3: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in *Familia* by country and by news category ................................................................. 100
Table 4: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in *Familia* ........................................................................................................ 100
Table 5: Distribution of articles about the Nordic countries published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* by country and by news category ................................................. 100
Table 6: Number of articles about Lapland or Iceland and number of statistics published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* ........................................................................ 101
Table 7: Yearly distribution of news about the Nordic countries published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* ........................................................................................................ 102
Table 8: Distribution of news about the Nordic countries published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* by column ........................................................................................................ 102
References

A. Primary sources
Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură. Brașov: 1838-1865.

B. Books and articles
KIȘINEV OR LINKUVA?
RUMORS AND THREATS AGAINST JEWS IN LITHUANIA IN 1903

Klaus Richter

Technische Universität Berlin, Centre for Research on Anti-Semitism, E-mail: klaus.richter@tu-berlin.de

Abstract:
Over Easter 1903, a large-scale anti-Jewish riot in Kișinev, capital of the Russian governorate of Bessarabia, left dozens of Jews dead and hundreds injured, thus leading to a massive wave of emigration. A product of social discontent and anti-Semitic agitation, the riots of Kișinev became notoriously famous as the onset of a wave of pogroms of hitherto unprecedented brutality, which only subsided after the end of the Russian Revolution of 1905/06. This article analyzes the incidents by emphasizing cultural transfers between Kișinev and Lithuania, using the histoire croisée approach in order to provide for the different ethnic, social and political backgrounds and motivations of the actors. It also compares the disturbances in the rural north of Lithuania and in the Bessarabian industrial city of Kișinev in order to contextualize anti-Jewish violence in Lithuania on the larger scale of the Russian pogroms. When Lithuanian Jews were sometimes threatened to be killed “as in Kișinev” and at other times to be treated “as in Linkuva”, the significance of analyzing cultural transfer while keeping the regional context in mind becomes apparent.

Rezumat:
În perioada Paștelui anului 1903, o revoltă antievreiască la scară largă izbucnită la Chișinău, capitala guberniei rusești Basarabia, lăsa în urma sa zeci de evrei morți și sute de răniți, ceea ce a condus la un val masiv de emigrare. Rezultat al nemulțumirilor sociale și al agitațiilor antisemitice, revoltă de la Chișinău a devenit foarte cunoscută ca marcând debutul unui val de pogromuri, de o brutalitate fără precedent până în acel moment, care s-a diminuat abia după încheierea Revoluției Ruse din 1905-1906. Articolul de față abordează incidentele prin studierea transferurilor culturale dintre Chișinău și Lituanie, utilizând metodele histoire croisée în scopul de a oferi explicații pentru diferențele ce apar în ceea ce privește mediile etnice, sociale și politice și motivațiile actorilor. Acesta compară, de asemenea, tulburările din partea rurală de nord a Lituaniei și din orașul industrial basarabean Chișinău, în scopul de a contextualiza violența anti-evreiască din Lituanie la scară mai largă a pogromurilor rusești. Atunci când evreii lituanieni au fost, uneori, amenințați că vor fi uciși „ca la Chișinău” și în alte momente că vor tratați „ca în Linkuva”, semnificația analizei transferurilor culturale, păstrând în același timp în minte contextul regional, devine evidentă.
Keywords: rumors, anti-Semitism, pogroms, mass-media, Linkuva, Kişinev

I. Introduction

Lithuania, which was part of the Russian Empire in 1903, was a region that was relatively free of anti-Jewish violence during the first (1881-82) and second (1903-06) pogrom waves that struck mainly the area that today is Ukraine. However, in 1900, a series of anti-Jewish disturbances broke out in the north of Kovno governorate, which forms roughly two thirds of what today is Lithuania. One centre of the disturbances was the volost of Linkuva. Three years later, in 1903, a pogrom of hitherto unknown dimensions broke out in Kişinev (today the capital of Moldova), creating an atmosphere of anxiety among Jews in the whole Russian Empire. Besides analyzing rumors and threats linked to these two cases of anti-Jewish violence, this short study aims to compare the disturbances in the rural north of Lithuania and in the Bessarabian industrial city of Kişinev in order to contextualize anti-Jewish violence in Lithuania on the larger scale of the Russian pogroms.

The functioning of rumors in history has attracted considerable research interest over the last years. While for a long time rumors were treated merely as a linguistic phenomenon, scholars more recently emphasized rather the consequences of rumors than their linguistic characteristics. To quote media scientist Terry Ann Knopf: “The point is not simply that we are all so susceptible to rumor – that we are willing to listen to, formulate and circulate unverified reports – but that we are frequently willing to act on the basis of rumor.” It is necessary to take all levels of rumors into account and thus to interpret them both as speech acts and as objects of conceptual history. This approach ensures that the actor is taken as much into account as are the place and time of utterance. Another level that needs to be borne in mind is that the utterance of a rumor is not an act of an individual person. Rather, a rumor is coined by its dynamics of


spreading, proliferating and changing. The definition of rumors in this study will thus be that of “collective actions [...]”, which consist of cognitive and communicative elements and come into being, when people in undefined and problematic situations try to achieve a meaningful interpretation of this situation by pooling their intellectual capabilities”\textsuperscript{264}.

Linguistically speaking, rumors are coined by their frequent use of metonymy. Metonyms are highly suitable for the conveyance of polysemy, or ambiguities. This will be illustrated by the use of two toponyms as threats against Jews in Lithuania in the year 1903: Linkuva and Kišinev. Both toponyms metonymically signified incidents of anti-Jewish violence. Linkuva did not signify the town of Linkuva, but rather the rural area surrounding it – the Linkuva volost (\textit{Linkovskaja volost'}). Anti-Jewish violence had been perpetrated there three years earlier, albeit on a considerably lower scale. To threaten Jews, Russian officials or Lithuanian peasants did not need to say: “The Jews be subjected to a pogrom”, but rather, speaking metonymically, that “it will be as in Kišinev / Linkuva”.

\textbf{II. Anti-Jewish disturbances in Linkuva in summer 1900}

Starting on June 4th 1900, a wave of violence against Jews shattered the northern districts of Kovno governorate (\textit{Šavli and Ponevež}).\textsuperscript{265} The disturbances, which seem to have been triggered by a ritual murder allegation that later turned out to having been made up by a girl to explain her absence from work, started in the shtetl of Vaškai (by that time Konstantinovo), but soon the volost of Linkuva became the centre of the violence. Most of the disturbances took place on market days and Christian holidays, a trait typical for anti-Jewish riots in the Russian Empire in general.\textsuperscript{266} It was also on a Sunday, 18 June 1900, that peasants destroyed and looted Jewish property in the village of Girbutkiai, located in the volost of Linkuva. Police measures proved to be ineffective as shows the case of a lower policeman, the \textit{desjackij}\textsuperscript{267} Jonas Spalgenas. Ordered into the volost in order to prevent anti-Jewish riots, Spalgenas himself took off his police badge and actively participated in the riots.\textsuperscript{268}

\textsuperscript{264}Altenhöner, 6.
\textsuperscript{265}For details, see the study of: Vilma Ņaltauskaitė, “Smurtas prień ņydus ņiaurės Lietuvoje 1900 metais. Įvykiai ir interpretacijos”, in Kai ksenofobija virsta prievarta. Lietuvių ir žydų santykių dinamika XIX a. – XX a. pirmojoje puseje, eds. Vladas Sirutavičius, Darius Staliūnas (Vilnius, 2005), 79-98.
\textsuperscript{266}For a detailed description of the pogroms of 1881 see: John Klier, Russians, Jews and the Pogroms of 1881-1882 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 26-43.
\textsuperscript{267}A policeman elected by peasant households.
\textsuperscript{268}Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas = LVIA, f. 446, ap. 7, b. 460, l. 4-5.
On 30 June, there was another case of anti-Jewish violence in Linkuva volost. In the village of Pamūnis, a crowd of ten to 20 peasants had armed themselves with sticks and, in the late evening, attacked a Jew, beating him and injuring him severely. Another Jew named Guber, together with his mother, rushed to help the injured person, but they were also heavily beaten. Guber died a couple of days later as a result of his injuries. Following the fight, the peasants smashed all the windows of a Jewish house and of the prayer house.269

Although the anti-Jewish disturbances in the Linkuva volost and in northern Lithuania bore a distinctly rural character and were not part of the pogrom waves that shattered the Russian Empire in 1881-82 and 1903-06, they were in many ways similar to the large-scale pogroms in the southwestern part of the Empire. Rumors played a significant role. Peasants in all northern Lithuania said that the empress had issued an order to drive all Jews out of Russa. Moreover, rumors said that there would be an award of one rouble for each killed Jew and four roubles for each killed rabbi.270 Rumors about Jews ridiculing the Catholic faith were spread and updated regularly. In Linkuva, peasants claimed to have seen a Jewish child, which had tied a Christian crucifix to a thread and, swinging it around, excruciated it.271 The police had difficulties in stopping rumors of impending pogroms on the basis of a purported official command to beat Jews. When on 6 July a peasant in Užventis (Šavli district) called upon the Christians of the town to kill Jews “the way they slaughter Christian children”, he was immediately arrested, and a unit of 150 Cossacks was sent to Linkuva volost to maintain order, as a Christian holiday and a market day were coming up.272 Whereas only a few days earlier peasants in Vaškai had actively (but unsuccessfully) resisted soldiers who wanted to stop them from committing acts of violence against Jews273, the presence of Cossacks succeeded in stopping the violence in Linkuva volost.

That the disturbances in volost were neither geographically nor chronologically isolated exemplifies the case of Lithuanian-language leaflets which were found in the volost one year later in summer 1901. The leaflets, which were found attached to telegraph poles in the villages of Steigviliai, Gataučiai, Puodžiūnai, Diržiai and Pikčiunai, all of which were situated along the road leading northwards from Linkuva, most likely were of revolutionary content. However, according to a Lithuanian newspaper,

269 Ibid., l. 9
270 Ūkininkas 10 (1900), S. 145.
271 Ūkininkas 4 (1901), S. 27.
272 LVIA, f. 378, pol., ap. 208 (1900), b. 24, l. 11.
273 Ibid., l. 10.
with a large number of illiterates among the rural population, interpretations of the leaflets were manifold: “One of the youngsters laughed, another one made fun of it, a third one was scared and left […]. The older ones condemned the leaflets […]. Many read them, but few understood them […]. There was uproar among the women of Skaruliai and Diržiai […]. ‘My God!… Let us hope it is not the Day of Judgment’ – some pious men said.”

According to the newspaper, many Lithuanians of the volost thought that the Jews had put up the leaflets in order to discredit the Lithuanians, thus taking revenge for the riots of summer 1900: “The work of Jews’ – a few dozen of men uttered, and there were some among them who, upon reading, understood that the Jews would have to be beaten.” A peasant from Skaruliai claimed to have seen a man in black clothes putting up the leaflets. The newspaper added that the authorities had encouraged the peasants in their belief. A district policeman (policejskij urjadnik) of Linkuva had allegedly ordered men to guard the leaflets so that they would not be torn down. When peasants asked him why he did so, he answered: “Don’t you boys want to beat the Jews again this year?”

III. Kišinev and pogrom rumors in Lithuania in 1903

On 19 April 1903, anti-Jewish riots broke out in Kišinev, capital of the Russian governorate of Bessarabia, in the course of which Jewish men, women and children alike were chased through the streets and beaten. Dozens of Jews were killed. Rumors had developed that the government was responsible for the riots. As news of the pogrom spread throughout the Empire, panic arose among the Jews. Looking in retrospective, this fear was well-founded, as the Kišinev pogrom marked the beginning of what is often referred to as the second Russian pogrom wave, which had its high point during the Revolution of 1905 and came to an end only in 1906, when Tsarist authority was re-established throughout the Empire.

It was the high degree of violence against people which distinguished the Kišinev pogrom from the pogroms of the first wave. In 1881-82, violence had been directed mainly against symbolically-charged Jewish property, and cases of pogromščiki shot by policemen or soldiers were much more frequent than the number of death victims among the

274 Varpas 9 (1901), S. 102.
275 Ibid.
276 Ibid.
This was different in Kiñeinev, where the riots took on the shape of a massacre, thus coining the concept of the “pogrom” much more than any earlier ones. According to Shlomo Lambroza, the pogrom was “caused by three converging factors: instigation by a local anti-Semitic newspaper, Bessarabec; irresponsibility, dereliction and mismanagement by local officials (especially by the governor and the chief of police); deep-seated anti-Semitic feelings among the non-Jewish population of Kishinev.”

However, the occasion used by the anti-Semitic newspaper Bessarabec to fuel the pogrom atmosphere was a traditional one. The death of a young boy shortly before Passover led to a ritual-murder allegation. On Easter Sunday, which at the same time was the last day of Passover, the pogrom broke out, with at first Jewish homes and shops being target by the rioters. After Jewish self-defense started protecting property by force, the violence turned lethal, and after two days, 47 Jews were dead, 424 injured and 700 houses burnt. Cases of rape, torture and mutilation were reported.

Owing to the events of 1900 and the unusually violent course of events in Kiñeinev, the authorities in Lithuania were in a state of alarm. At the beginning of May, a leaflet, signed by the “Social Democratic Committee of Kovno” appeared in Lithuania, which blamed the government for the outbreak of a pogrom of hitherto unseen brutality in Kiñeinev. While this allegation has been proven to be false, the government can at least be blamed for letting such rumors spread. The administration itself had launched several different versions of the pogrom, trivialized it and put the blame on the Jews. The governor of Kovno, Emmanuil Aleksandrovič Vataci, was concerned about the high degree of sympathies the Lithuanian Jews exhibited towards the victims of Kiñeinev in

---

278 Klier, 41 ff.
279 Lambroza, 196.
280 Ibid., 200.
281 Dmitrii Elyashevich has shown that the censors were particularly eager to get hold of leaflets which assumed an active involvement of the government in the pogroms. Dmitrii Elyashevich, “A Note on the Jewish Press and Censorship during the First Russian Revolution”, in The Revolution of 1905 and Russia’s Jews, eds. Stefani Hoffmann, Ezra Mendelsohn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 49-54, here 51.
282 LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 52, l. 11. This claim has been refuted. The role of the police, however, was ambiguous. Some policemen tried to protect Jews, others stood by and watched, others sided with the pogromists. It is doubtful, whether the police would have been able to stop the pogrom at all, as 350 policemen faced a mob of 1.500 to 2.000 people and, moreover, had been ordered by the governor of Bessarabia to mainly protect the factories and warehouses. Additionally, the police force lacked clear orders from the chief of the police on how to cope with the pogromists. Lambroza, 201 and 205.
form of a period of mourning. Particularly the fact that it was unclear, how long this period would last, aroused Vataci’s suspicions.\textsuperscript{284} The Lithuanian Jews collected considerable sums of money to help their suffering brethren, organized mourning prayers and displayed increasing hostility towards the Russian government, which they blamed for the outbreak of lethal violence in Bessarabia. Particularly the government’s downplaying of the events as “simple street unrest linked with manifestations of religious intolerance” served to shape a “current mood among Jews that is not unlike particular moods of oppositional coloring”\textsuperscript{285}, Vataci reported to the governor general in Vil’na, Petr Svyatopolk-Mirskij, on 6 May 1903.\textsuperscript{286}

Soon Vataci himself witnessed that the mood among Lithuanians in the Kovno governorate was getting ever tenser. On 10 May, an incident occurred on the pontoon bridge which linked the old town of Kaunas with the town of Aleksotas across the river Nemunas. The bridge keeper had told Jews, who were taking a stroll across the bridge, not to lean against the railing of the bridge. An argument sprang up, which “turned into a fight”\textsuperscript{287}. Sailors rushed to the aid of the bridge keeper and the Jews, the number of whom had increased to around 500 people, began, according to the police report, to throw stones at the Christians. Ultimately, the rural sergeant (\textit{pristav}) managed to disperse the crown without anyone injured. Vataci ordered the set-up of a police post at the bridge.

As in 1900, the governor put special emphasis on the observation of rumors – this time, however, mainly of rumors that developed among Jews. According to investigations, there was a rumor among the Jews of Kaunas that pogroms would take place in Lithuania in the month of May. Vataci thus ordered the police of the Kovno governorate to prevent any tensions or outbreaks of violence between Jews and Christians.\textsuperscript{288} In this context, the \textit{pristav} of Vilnius reported of a high display of determination among Jews to strike back in the case of anti-Jewish violence – even beyond their own shtetls. On 25 May, the \textit{pristav} of Vilnius had encountered a crowd of more than 500 Jews who claimed that they intended to go to close-by Vilejka (today in Belarus) in order to help their brethren, as there had been rumors

\textsuperscript{284} LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 52, l. 1; l. 9.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., l. 2.
\textsuperscript{286} Vataci and Svyatopolk-Mirskii were close friends. Even during Svyatopolk-Mirskii’s term in office as minister of interior affairs, Vataci, who at that time was leading the ministry’s department of general affairs, remained his closest confidant. V. A. Gurko, \textit{Features and Figures of the Past} (Palo Alto, 1939), 326.
\textsuperscript{287} LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 52, l. 8.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., l. 1.
of impending anti-Jewish riots. The pristav arrested the ringleaders and dispersed the crowd with the aid of mounted policemen.\textsuperscript{289}

Rumors about impending anti-Jewish riots once again emerged mainly in the north of Kovno governorate. Vataci attributed such rumors among Jews to the “mistrustful element”\textsuperscript{290} that was inherent in the reactions of the Jews towards any news from and about Kišinev. After rumors of impending anti-Jewish riots on the market days on 3 and 4 May emerged among Jews in Žagarė, the police chief (ispravnik) of Šavli district was ordered with his policemen into the shtetl to investigate the degree of truth in the rumors and to suppress any unrest. The ispravnik reported that he had not noticed any indication of tensions between the two groups: “There is a peaceful mood among Christians towards the Jews. We may therefore assume that the Jews of Žagarė, alert because of the general fear, have conceived these threats on the part of the Christians themselves.”\textsuperscript{291}

On the 3 May, the ispravnik of Rossieny district noticed a chalk inscription in Lithuanian on a Jewish house in the shtetl of Kaltinėnai, which said: “After a month, there will not be a single Jew here anymore, just as they have been slaughtered by the Orthodox.”\textsuperscript{292} In this case, the ispravnik again reported that he had not been able to detect any hostilities among the Christian population and no signs of anti-Jewish propaganda in the environs.

Sources indicate that there were more rumors about impending anti-Jewish riots. In Švėkšna (Rossieny district), a “pogrom atmosphere” had emerged, which could only be ended by the whole police force of the volost’ and the help of a military unit.\textsuperscript{293} In Šėta (Vil’komir district), rumors were spread “that on 29 June, a pogrom will break out”\textsuperscript{294}. Only the rabbi, who wrote a plea to the governor, managed to prevent the outbreak of riots at the last moment.

The rumors in Šėta and the plea to governor Vataci coincide exactly with a small-scale outbreak of violence in the district town of Šiauliai (district Šavli), and it is highly probable that Lithuanian peasants and Jews alike had observed the incident in Šiauliai closely. On the evening of the 22 June, three drunken Lithuanians started a fight in the shop of a Jewish cobbler. In the course of the fight, the two Jewish apprentices injured one of the attackers with a knife. The Lithuanians ran into the streets, screaming

\textsuperscript{289} Ibid., l. 3.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid., l. 7.
\textsuperscript{291} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{292} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{293} Berl Kagan, \textit{Yidishe Shtet, Shtetlekh un Dorfishe Yishuvim in Lite} (New York, 1990), S. 616.
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid., S. 603 f.
“The Jews are slaughtering the Christians!”295, thereby alluding to the myth of ritual murder, which was commonplace in Lithuania.296 According to the ispravnik, a “large crowd of drunken Christians rushed to the site of the scene”, screaming: “We must kill the Jews!” The apprentices on their part called Jewish inhabitants for help. “The agitation of the Christian crowd against the Jews was mounting and was on the verge of breaking out into a fight”297, the ispravnik reported. Soon, his assistant arrived, isolated the ringleaders and managed to disperse the crowd. This, however, could not prevent rumors from spreading. The Christian population “was in a worrying state”298. The ispravnik thus informed the governor in order to announce the potential demand for military troops. The three Lithuanians remained exempt from punishment; the Jewish apprentices, however, were arrested as a result of the knife injury.

Rumors about the incident spread in the surrounding areas and were quickly updated and sensationalized. Vataci reported to Svjatopolk-Mirskij that peasants in the villages surrounding the district town were saying that the Jews of Ņiauliai had killed Christians, and revenge would be taken in return on the approaching Sunday, 29 June. On 27 June, a Jewish deputation called on the governor, asking him to protect the Jewish community of Ņiauliai of “serious anti-Jewish unrest”. Vataci came to the conclusion that “under these circumstances, a large crowd of peasants visiting the church mass on 29 June could trigger open unrest”. He thus ordered a group of one hundred Cossacks into Ņiauliai for Sunday morning. Moreover, he ordered a prohibition for the sale of alcohol for two days, in order to “prevent a flooding of the town with drunkards […], as it happens so often on church holidays”. Additionally, he got into contact with the bishop of Žemaitija, Mečislovas Paliulionis, asking him to encourage the priests to prevent the Christians from any violent acts against Jews and to warn them that “in the case of any signs of such violence, these will be met with military force”.299 It seems that the strong military presence managed to prevent riots against Jews. The rumors, however, did not cease immediately. In the surrounding areas, the Lithuanian, who had received only minor injuries, was considered to be dead. Ultimately, the ispravnik arrested peasants who spread such rumors. Both Jews were released from custody after they agreed to pay

295 LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 32, l. 54.
297 LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 32, l. 54.
298 Ibid., l. 55.
299 Ibid., l. 61.
compensation for the inflicted injury. Vataci kept the Cossacks in Šiauliai until 14 July, a market-fair day, and then withdrew them.\(^\text{300}\)

Although the measures of the local police officials and of the governor – a strong military presence and arrests in the case of the spreading of rumors – were basically the same as they had been in summer 1900, the whole situation differed significantly. On the one hand, the shock of Kišinev led to a wave of solidarity among Lithuanian Jews, who were increasingly inclined to counter anti-Jewish riots by force – even beyond the borders of their own shtetl. On the other hand, Lithuanian Jews in 1903 were particularly sensitive towards anti-Jewish rumors and reported them immediately to the authorities. The officials seem to have taken such reports seriously. In cases when they assessed rumors to be unfounded or at least “harmless”, riots did in fact not occur. In Šiauliai, the quick and determined intervention of governor Vataci helped prevent riots. Moreover, in 1903 there were no cases of peasants’ disobedience towards policemen or soldiers as was the case in 1900, when peasants resisted soldiers and lower police officials sided with the angry crowd.

IV. Kišinev or Linkuva? Threats, rumors and their meanings

Rumors underwent considerable dynamics under the impression of the Kišinev pogrom. This becomes evident in the case of an auction that took place in Baravykiai, a village close to the district town Ukmergė (Vil’komir district). The sale by auction of landed property, which was executed on 2 May 1903 by the pristav, was attended by approximately 20 Jews from Ukmergė. The pristav believed he had noticed a tacit agreement among the Jews and declared this to be illegal. This led to an argument, in the course of which the pristav allegedly said: “You are making a fuss as you did in Kišinev.” According to the police report, the outraged Jews answered: “So you want to beat us the way they beat our brethren in Kišinev!” Rumors about this incident spread to Ukmergė, where the pristav now was supposed to have said: “You need to be treated the same way as the Jews in Kišinev.”\(^\text{301}\)

On 8 June, in the shtetl Troškūnai (Vil’komir district), approximately 80 kilometers from Linkuva, two peasants spread rumors according to which Jews were to be killed on 13 June, the day of the parish festival. In this case, no reference to Kišinev was made, but to the riots of 1900 in Northern Lithuania. A peasant said: “It will be as it was in Linkuva.” Anonymous letters with threats against Jews turned up, and on

\(^{300}\) Ibid.

\(^{301}\) LVIA, f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 52, l. 7.
11 June, a peasant threatened a Jewish saleswoman, from whom he had borrowed money: “Why return the money to you, it would be all the same, on 13 June you will all be slaughtered.” The threat of a repetition of the anti-Jewish disturbances of 1900 seemed to have worried the Jewish community to no small extent, and they reported these incidents to a policejskij urjadnik, who in turn reported – although he himself had also received a letter announcing riots against Jews – that he had not noticed “any rumors or agitation” among the population and commended the priest who had called on the Lithuanian village elders to prevent the peasants from inflicting violence upon the Jews.302

However, the Russian administration took rumors and threats very seriously, and stopping them from proliferating was considered to be the most effective measure to prevent an outbreak of anti-Jewish riots. The language and concepts used by the Russian administration shows that in general it was inclined to prevent pogroms such as those in Kišinev from happening. The riots against Jews in Linkuva volost in summer 1900 were referred to as “anti-Jewish disturbances” (antievrejskie besporjadki). In orders, police officials were told to prevent “violence” (nasilie); by preventing rumors from spreading, officials tried to mitigate “agitation” (vozbuždenie) among the peasantry. In 1903, despite the absence of large-scale riots in Lithuania, the experiences of Kišinev introduced the term pogrom into correspondences between officials in Lithuania, and thus marked the phenomenon that was to be prevented at all costs. Highly counterproductive, on the other hand, were the mild verdicts for the pogrom perpetrators in Kišinev, which served as an encouragement and as a “license to kill”303 for pogrom perpetrators during the Revolution of 1905/06. Verdicts on pogrom perpetrators were closely observed and reported on by Lithuanian newspapers.304

Differences between the pogrom in Kišinev and the disturbances in Linkuva volost are vast and numerous. Firstly, in 1903, Kišinev was a large city of around 100,000 inhabitants, nearly half of which were Jewish. Moreover, the Bessarabian capital had become an industrial centre within merely two decades, a development that had contributed to a massive transformation and population growth, and, as a result, to the development

302 Ibid., I. 8.
304 For the case of the Białystok pogrom (1906) see: Viltis No. 66, 12 March 1908, p. 4; for the case of the Simferopol pogrom (1905) see: Viltis No. 131, 22 August 1908, p. 4.
of an urban proletariat and considerable social problems. Linkuva volost, on the other hand, was a rural area, with an administrative centre, the shtetl Linkuva, that had merely 2,000 inhabitants at the turn of the century (more than 60% of which were Jews) and a couple of small villages surrounding it. In this sense, Linkuva volost may serve as a miniature representation of Lithuania. The only urban centers in Lithuania, Kaunas and Vilnius, were trade cities without any major industries and did not witness any large-scale pogroms before World War I. Anti-Jewish violence in Lithuania thus much more resembled the riots in the villages of the South East of the Russian Empire, that broke out in 1881-82 in wave forms around the pogrom-ridden urban centers, with violence mainly directed against shops and taverns. Due to its proximity to the seaport of Riga, northern Lithuania, where Linkuva was located, was an economically comparatively advanced region, including the negative effects of the development of a large group of agricultural workers and poor, landless peasants, but the lack of newspapers and of political organizations made large-scale anti-Semitic agitation and the spreading of anti-Semitic rumors through mass media such as the Kišinev newspaper Bessarabec, virtually impossible.

Taking into account “that rumors construct a communicative space of those things possible, in which wishes, fears and expectations unfold,” the phrase that “it will be as it was in Linkuva”, expressing no rational wishes but aiming only at the unfolding of fear on the part of the Jews, constituted a threat. The reason why mentioning the Linkuva disturbances, despite their much smaller scale of violence when compared to the Kišinev pogrom, which seems to have been a very effective threat, is rooted in the different reactions of the Jews towards violence when comparing 1900 to 1903. The tragedy of Kišinev, according to Albert S. Lindemann, represented “the height of paradox” as “a pogrom […] marking a rise in Jewish combativeness.”

307 Klier, 25.
308 The print of Lithuanian-language newspapers in Latin letters was prohibited until 1904.
309 Florian Altenhöner emphasizes the significance of mass media in creating and spreading rumors: “Mass media stimulate rumors […]. Mass media motivate rumors: to a large part, rumors refer to conditions and phenomena which the recipient knows exclusively through mass media.” Altenhöner, 8.
310 Ibid., 316.
311 Lindemann, 291.
resorted to physical force to defend their houses and lives. This served to escalate the situation; however, on the other hand, it clearly signified the determination of the Jews to actively defend themselves.  

In Linkuva volost in summer 1900, the Jews had been taken by surprise by the riots and had shown very little signs of self-defense.  

For the Lithuanian Jews, because of its sheer brutality and its geographical distance, the Kišinev pogrom on the one hand posed a requisite to actively defend themselves, and on the other, must have seemed considerably more abstract than the rural disturbances around Linkuva only three years earlier – a place with comparable characteristics as Kišinev simply did not exist in Lithuania.

---

312 Lambroza, 209.

References:

A. Archives:
Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas:
- f. 446, ap. 7, b. 460.
- f. 378, pol., ap. 208 (1900), b. 24
- f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 32
- f. 378, Političeskij otdel, ap. 1903, b. 52

B. Newspapers:
- Ūkininkas: 10 (1900), 4 (1901).
- Varpas 9 (1901)
- Viltis: 13, 66 (12 March 1908).

C. Books and articles:


GERMAN POLICY AND THE DIPLOMATIC AGENDA OF ROMANIAN NEUTRALITY (1914-1916). THE PROSPECTS FOR AN ALLIANCE WITH SWEDEN

Claudiu-Lucian Topor

“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iasi, Romania, claudiulucian@yahoo.com

Acknowledgements
This paper has been presented at the Second International Conference on Nordic and Baltic Studies in Romania: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: Confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, Târgoviste, May 20-22, 2011. This work was supported by the Human Resources Development Operational Programme within the following project “Development of the capacity for innovation and increasing the impact of post-doctoral research programs”. “Al. I. Cuza” University of Iași, POSDRU/89/1.5/S/49944.

Abstract:
In the summer of 1915, concerned about Italy’s entry into the war in alliance with the Entente powers yet encouraged by the victories of its armies on the Eastern Front, the German diplomacy attempted to encourage Sweden and Romania to abandon their neutrality in order to give a decisive blow to Russia. In several reports dispatched from Berlin, Alexandru Beldiman, the envoy to Germany who was also Romania’s representative in the Scandinavian countries, raised the possibility of Sweden’s entry into the war on the German side. After he had identified Russia as the common historical enemy of the two countries, the Romanian diplomat suggested forging an alliance under the leadership of Germany. A strong alliance was thought to ensure Sweden’s ascendancy in Finland and the Baltic states, and Romania’s supremacy in the East at the Black Sea. Although this plan was rejected by the liberal government, Beldiman’s initiative in a period of neutrality remains an alternative in the Romanian political circles to Entente supremacy.

Rezumat:
În vara anului 1915, îngrijorată de intrarea Italiei în război în alianţă cu puterile Antantei, dar încurajată de victoriile armatelor de pe Frontul de Est, diplomaţia germană încercă să determine Suedia şi România să renunţe la neutralitate pentru a da o lovitură decisivă Rusiei. În mai multe rapoarte trimise de la Berlin,
Alexandru Beldiman, ministrul care reprezenta România în Germania și pe lângă statele scandinave, invocă posibilitatea intrării Suediei în război de partea Imperiului German. După ce identifică Rusia ca dușman istoric comun al celor două țări, diplomatul român sugerează posibilitatea încheierii unei alianțe sub conducerea Germaniei, o ligă puternică ce urma să asigure preponderența Suediei în Finlanda și în provinciile baltice și supremația României la Marea Neagră. În final, acest plan a fost respins de către guvernul liberal, dar inițiativa ministrului român la Berlin rămâne o alternativă la supremația Antantei în cercurile politice românești din perioada neutralității.

**Keywords:** neutrality, alliance, diplomacy, Romania, Sweden, World War I

**Romanian and Swedish Approaches to Neutrality**

From the beginning of the Great War, Romania and Sweden adopted policies of neutrality. The decisions of the two countries were, however, rooted in different histories. For the governments of Sweden, the policy of permanent neutrality had become a traditional approach to foreign affairs, a necessity born from strategic considerations as well as the pacifist feeling within a significant part of public opinion. During the Great War, Swedish diplomacy had barely managed to impose respect for its neutrality on the belligerent powers. The Allied naval blockade and Germany's submarine warfare had caused considerable economic losses, even though the government of Hjalmar Hammarskjöld consistently acted to protect the commercial interests of neutral states. For Romania, however, armed neutrality was only provisional. Located at the crossroads of interest of Austria-Hungary and Russia and near the area of the outbreak of conflict in the Balkan Peninsula, Romania formally rejected the idea of permanent neutrality. The fulfillment of national unity required going on a war footing, either with Germany against Russia, or, conversely, with Russia against Austria-Hungary. Since 1914, aware of the high stakes of the game, the Ioan I.C. Bratianu government had been negotiating the intervention in the war alongside the Entente powers. This was to happen in two years’ time.

By the outbreak of war in 1914, there were important similarities and differences between the two countries which make the employ of

---

314 In 1914 the centennial of the signing of the Kiel Treaty (1814) was celebrated. This agreed to dynastic union with Norway and started an uninterrupted period of peace.


316 Constantin Kirițescu, ”Preludiile diplomatice ale războiului de întregire. Tratativele cu Antanta“, *Viața Românească*, XXXII, no. 4 (1940).
comparisons necessary. Sweden and Romania were both bordering the Central Powers and already well-integrated with the German economy. Both nations had influential ruling groups which, owing to tradition or education, leaned towards Germany. Severe internal crises confronted the governments of both countries. In Romania it was the Peasants’ Revolt of March 1907 and its aftermath. In Sweden there was a battle over the franchise, between 1905 and 1908, as well as a crisis over defence policy in 1912-1914. In foreign affairs too, frontier problems had remained unsettled. Governments and ruling groups in both states were intensely suspicious of Russia’s aims and ambitions. Fulfillment of national interests required going on a war footing, with Germany against Russia, or, conversely, with Russia against Austria-Hungary. To a large extent these suspicions influenced Romanian and Swedish policies towards other states. For a long time and in many ways, Germany had offered these countries the best conceivable security against Russia. 

On the other hand, in general, Sweden’s policy of strict neutrality proved favorable for Germany. Although there was no treaty of alliance between Berlin and Stockholm, even before 1917, Sweden was regarded by many as Germany’s neutral ally. In contrast, Romania, which had signed the extension of its commitments towards the Central Powers in 1913, refused to participate in the war and displayed a neutral policy favorable to the Entente. Sweden, through its telegraph network, had no hesitation in arranging the transmission of the German Government’s secret telegrams abroad. Conversely, Romania banned the transit of German arms to Turkey which was, nevertheless, allowed for the Allies’ to Serbia. Even though public opinion was sympathetic towards Germany in both countries, in Romania, the majority of the population did not view entering the war on the side of Central Powers positively. In pursuing a policy of neutrality, however, both states possessed certain strategic assets, which apparently increased their bargaining power. Due to their positions in Europe, Sweden controlled the only land route between Britain and Russia, while Romania the one between Russia and Serbia. In fact, Sweden’s neutrality proved beneficial to Germany. Although there was no treaty of alliance between Berlin and Stockholm, even before 1917, Sweden was regarded by many as Germany’s neutral ally. In contrast, Romania, which had signed the extension of its commitments towards the Central Powers in 1913, refused to participate in the war and displayed a neutral policy favorable to the Entente. Sweden, through its telegraph network, had no hesitation in arranging the transmission of the German Government’s secret telegrams abroad. Conversely, Romania banned the transit of German arms to Turkey which was, nevertheless, allowed for the Allies’ to Serbia. Even though public opinion was sympathetic towards Germany in both countries, in Romania, the majority of the population did not view entering the war on the side of Central Powers positively. In pursuing a policy of neutrality, however, both states possessed certain strategic assets, which apparently increased their bargaining power. Due to their positions in Europe, Sweden controlled the only land route between Britain and Russia, while Romania the one between Russia and Serbia. In fact, Sweden’s neutrality proved beneficial to Germany.

319 Dr. Ion Hurdubenţiu, Istoria Suediei (Bucureşti: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985), 263.
permanent neutrality clearly favored Germany, while for the Central Powers, Romania’s provisional neutrality was an obstacle to military cooperation with Turkey and Bulgaria, their Balkan allies. The Governments of both countries found profitable commercial outlets and political advantages to gain from their neutrality. Despite the Allied blockade, Sweden supplied large quantities of iron ore, timber and food\(^{321}\), while Romania exported grain and vegetables\(^{322}\).

**German diplomacy towards the neutral states**

Meanwhile, Germany’s policy towards the neutral states took the form of acts of aggression which generated adverse consequences as the war progressed. The policy towards neutrals was an integral part of the strategy of the military command, to which it was subordinated. The aggression against Belgium was the signal of a determined policy undertaken by Berlin towards any state with peaceful ambitions. Neutrality, as recognized by international commitments, was no longer a guarantee for the sovereignty or territorial integrity of a state. The interests of the belligerents required the negotiation of this legal status in terms of foreign policy. The international recognition of neutrality became the result of political compromise which laid bare the shallowness of the commitments made at the Hague Conference of 1907. The hard battle for the neutrals meant that Germany was defeated by her own weaknesses. At the beginning of the war, it lost the support of Italy and Romania, because of the rigidity of her commitments to Austria-Hungary. Since 1917, the United States had attacked Germany as a result of unrestricted submarine warfare. Gains were not limited, but ultimately proved insufficient. Turkish cooperation meant control over navigation in the Straits. Bulgaria, a belligerent, also helped Austria-Hungary to defeat Serbia and keep Romania alert. But this was not enough to win anything else but the war in the East.

**Germany and Sweden send out feelers to Romania**

Despite an ineffective strategy, there were times in the first years of the war when Germany seemed capable to achieve improved and friendlier relations with neutral states. In the summer of 1915, the Berlin diplomacy, disappointed by Italy entering the war on the side of the Entente powers,


attempted to take advantage of Russian defeats on the Eastern front in order to conclude a separate peace. Gottlieb von Jagow and Arthur Zimmermann, in consent with Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg and Marshal Erich von Falkenhayn, Chief of Army General Staff, conceived the strategy meant to give the coup de grâce for Russia: the drawing of Sweden and Romania into the war alongside Germany. At first sight, this was a bold, even utopian project. Nevertheless, it involved the complicity of various intermediaries and many characters from the aristocracy: Ludvig Douglas, Marshal of the palace at King Gustav V’s court, Prince Max von Baden, the German banker Max Warburg, Wedel, the diplomat and former ambassador to Stockholm. Besides them, a plethora of intellectuals and officers, the Swedish “activists”, included professors Rudolf Kjellen, Gustav Steffen, Gösta Mittag-Leffler and left-wing publishers such as Adrian Molin, Otto Garters and Yngve Larsson. They all needed to persuade the Stockholm Government that Sweden would have more to gain if she offered Germany military cooperation. But while Knut Wallenberg, the Foreign Affairs Minister, responded cautiously to the German diplomatic offensive, Arvin Taube, the ambassador in Berlin, hastened to suggest that the German alliance with Sweden was almost a certainty. However, the Swedish ambassador did not act outside government policy, whose mandate was to secretly probe Romania's attitude. On 25 June 1915, Taube handed the Romanian envoy Alexandru Beldiman an official communication, which underlined the Swedish government’s concern about the expansion and length of the war. But the core of the message consisted of the recognition that it was becoming very difficult to maintain strict neutrality. The Stockholm authorities wished to hear the Romanian government’s point of view, before taking any step that might have consequences for each of the neutral states.

323 Hurdubențiu, 264-266.
324 Until World War I, Romania did not have diplomatic representation in Stockholm. Diplomatic relations existed until February 1898 by ministers of both countries accredited to Vienna, and later by ministers in Berlin. After Romania entered into the war, it closed its diplomatic legation in Berlin. The activity of consular offices in Sweden and Norway requires the setting up of a diplomatic mission in Stockholm. Romania's first diplomatic representative in the Swedish capital was Grigore Bliciurescu. The Legation was opened after 1 November 1916. For a historical overview see: Reprezentanțele diplomatice ale României, vol. II, 1911-1939 (București: Editura Politică, 1971), 87-119.
325 Sweden’s communique, June 25th 1915, 42. Biblioteca Academiei Romane, sectia Manuscrise, Arhiva Alexandru Beldiman, I Acte 1a (The Romanian Academy Library, Manuscripts, Alexandru Beldiman Archive, I Acts 1a, hereafter BAR., mss.).
Beldiman’s correspondence with Bucharest

Alexander Beldiman, law graduate, with a Ph.D. degree obtained in Berlin at 1877 and a skillful pro-German diplomat, immediately wrote to Bucharest. He consciously submitted detailed reports both to King Ferdinand and Prime Minister Bratianu, whom he considered responsible for the pro-Entente direction of Romanian foreign policy. He dispatched a first report to the Romanian government on 13/26 June, by German courier. Addressed to King Ferdinand, it presented a number of important observations about the Swedish Ambassador Arvid Taube’s communication. The overall presentation seems slightly exaggerated, but it also contained many truths. The report argued that Sweden was preparing a radical change in its foreign policy because of the danger of Russian expansionism. In this respect, Beldiman quoted alleged conversations with leading politicians from both Stockholm and Berlin. According to the report, concerned about Russian policy, the Swedish “patriots” had begun a vigorous campaign for raising public awareness. Germany generously saluted the military cooperation of Sweden. Great efforts were being undertaken towards signing a political treaty. Beldiman’s report went beyond being a simple information note. The Romanian envoy’s political reasoning revealed its subtext at the end of its exposure: “If it were possible, in the course of events, taking into account the common grounds on which both Romania and Sweden stayed in relation to Russia, reaching an agreement on common policy and actions with the Stockholm government, a formidable league under German leadership would result, from the North Cape to the Persian Gulf, which could solve the Oriental issue for a long time, completely and decisively eliminating the ever-nefarious Russian influence.”

A second report was dated 15/28 June 1915. It provided the first objective analysis of Sweden’s difficulties in maintaining its policy of neutrality. The Swedish trade outside the Baltic Sea was undermined by all types of obstacles. The media had long deplored the damage resulting from

---

327 Arhivele Diplomatice ale Ministerului Afacerilor Externe al României (The Diplomatic Archives of the Romanian Foreign Ministry, hereafter AMAE), București, fund 77, Dosare Personale (Personal Files), Letter B, no. 24.
329 Secret report to H.M. the King Ferdinand. A copy was also sent to Prime Minister Bratianu. BAR mss., Alexandru Beldiman Archive, I Acts 3, Berlin June 13/26 1915.
measures taken by the British Navy. The people revolted against acts of espionage by Russia, some of which were evidenced. Nevertheless, the dangerous Russian threat remained the main topic of discussion among politicians. Defeated on the Eastern Front and without Sweden attending the peace settlement, the Russian policy aimed, now more than ever, at the only free seaport available, crossing over the Scandinavian lands. Sweden would then remain isolated in the way of Russia’s expansion, because Germany would have no interest in hindering it. Then, of course, in the case of victory by the Russian Empire, its vicinity would be a permanent threat to Sweden. The future of the Scandinavian kingdom required the abandonment of neutrality. The political parties were troubled by the issue, but King Gustav V and the government waited, showing prudence. Finally, the minister’s thoughts led once again to the benefits of the new Romanian-Swedish alliance: “If, under German auspices, a Swedish-Romanian alliance results, based on the obvious common interests they have in relation to Russia, it would be an act of decisive significance in the current European situation and could make a powerful contribution to ending the present war” 

Berlin’s promises did not coincide with the attitude of the Bucharest government, which remained reserved. In a ciphered dispatch dated 25 June / 9 July 1915, the skillful Bratianu requested information about Sweden’s relations with Denmark and Norway. To answer, Minister Beldiman was obliged to admit that a defensive alliance had been signed between the three Scandinavian kingdoms at the beginning of the war, to strengthen their position of neutrality. To overcome the bluntness which resulted from this commitment, Beldiman insisted on the principle of freedom of action in the foreign policy of the signatory states. If, during the war, one of the three powers was urged to adopt an offensive attitude, then the other two were obliged to observe benevolent neutrality. In essence, Beldiman’s understanding of the commitments to neutrality of the Scandinavian countries remained contradictory. After agreeing that the stipulations of the commitments resulting from the meeting of the Scandinavian monarchs in Malmö (December 1914) remained secret and were not to be communicated to any foreign government, he claimed the signatories’ freedom of choice. However, to reinforce the impression of an independent foreign policy, the Romanian diplomat underlined the

330 Secret report to H.M. the King Ferdinand. A copy was also sent to Prime Minister Bratianu. BAR mss., Alexandru Beldiman Archive, I Acts 3, Berlin June 15/28 1915.
potential threats which made the interests of the Scandinavian kingdoms converge, more than the neutrality they maintained.

The commercial and shipping interests of Norway were closely related to England. Public opinion sympathized with the old liberal institutions of England, closer to the spirit of the Norwegian people. German militarism and imperialism were firmly rejected. But, just as in Sweden, Norwegian politicians were aware of the danger of Russian expansion towards the North Sea. Russia's access to the nearest sea could only be obtained by sacrificing a part of Norwegian territory. Narvik and Lyngenfjord ports were threatened. Controlling the former required the annexation of northern Sweden, one of the richest regions in iron ore. However, the direct distance between Lyngenfjord port from northern Norway and the Russian border is no more than 40 kilometers. For a long time Russia had coveted access to this free port. It wished to ensure access in an agreement with Norway. However, all negotiations had failed. Russia's presence in the region threatened the integrity of the Scandinavian kingdoms. It was therefore impossible to imagine that Norway would adopt a hostile attitude towards Sweden. Fighting for its own interests against Russia, the Swedish kingdom also fought for those of the Norwegians, as well as for the Turks and the Germans, who, while defending the Straits against Russian invasion, were successfully promoting the real interests of Romania331. Admitting that Sweden would not be prevented by its Scandinavian neighbors from giving up its neutrality, all that remained for Minister Beldiman to do was to clarify the official position of the Swedish government. Having little evidence that the Scandinavians would depart from political expectation, he hesitated to give a verdict. He happened to find the solution while he was reading the German press. In correspondence from Stockholm published in the German newspaper "Vossische Zeitung", he read the statements made by Prime Minister Hammarskjöld in front of the delegates at a peace conference held in Sweden332. The message seemed sharp and simple. Sweden would act to maintain neutrality but the government should carefully consider all the situations in which peace became problematic. In addition to the circumstances of a foreign invasion, there were cases of other, similar, extreme threats. It would be dangerous to irresponsibly push Sweden's entry into the war. This would be just as dangerous as it would be to

---


138
understand that Sweden wanted peace so much that it could be treated arbitrarily without any danger\textsuperscript{333}.

Neutrality, therefore, but not at any price! This was certainly a conclusion that satisfied Beldiman’s ego, except that, unlike the Swedish Ambassador Arvid Taube, Beldiman did not receive any confirmation from Bucharest. The Swedish proposal did not even comply with the general understanding of international courtesy. Aware that he would not find support in the government position, he tried to put pressure on the King. This procedure was verified during the reign of Charles I. Formally, Beldiman hoped to find an understanding from the newly crowned King Ferdinand. The first attempt dated from 29 June /12 July 1915, when he presented the sovereign with the secret memorandum written by the German State Secretary, Zimmermann, about Germany’s policy towards the Scandinavian countries. The document revealed the true political strategy behind the reorganization of relations with the Scandinavian countries. Germany offered Sweden a free hand in deciding the future of Finland. Finns would regain their historical rights and full autonomy. Only the new state’s relations with Sweden remained to be settled. A new idea was put forward. A federal organization would include Sweden, Finland and the Baltic provinces. The Russians would draw up the details but it would be managed independently. Furthermore, the German Government was willing voluntarily to concede a border adjustment for Denmark. The Danish population in Schleswig was to be awarded to the neighboring kingdom of Sweden. Zimmerman’s memorandum also foresaw the possibility of Romania entering the war, in alliance with Sweden. Compared to the political developments in the East, Romania’s duty, deriving from the position it occupied at the Black Sea, was to assume the same decisive role which Sweden possessed in Northern Europe\textsuperscript{334}.

A second chance came into view in the shape of the secret report of 17/30 July 1915. Written in German, the document was intended as a warning on Romanian-German friendship. It stressed the idea that the deplorable impression made in Germany by the prevention of transit of its munitions through Romania to Turkey could easily be removed if a favorable response to Sweden’s intentions came from Bucharest. To be more explicit in its intentions, Minister Beldiman also outlined a strategic

\textsuperscript{333} The report of Minister Alexandru Beldiman to His Majesty the King about the statements made by Hjalmar de Hammarskjöld, Prime Minister of Sweden, on the problem of maintaining neutrality. B.A.R. mss., Alexandru Beldiman, Archives, I Acts 8a-b. Berlin, July 19th 1915.

plan. Negotiations for a Romanian-Swedish secret alliance must remain a closely guarded secret. But since they could not materialize without discussion with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the King was consulted and given the opportunity to meet secretly with Brătianu in Sinaia. Because a visit to Bucharest seemed intrusive, he sought to avoid it. To ensure communication beyond any doubt, Barbu Stirbey, who had a relationship of trust with Beldiman, was prepared to play an intermediary role.\footnote{Geheimer Immediatbericht an Seine Majestät den König. B.A.R. mss., Alexandru Beldiman Archive, I Acts 4. Berlin, 17/30 Juli 1915.}

**Romania declines the Swedish proposal**

But all these efforts were vain. Beldiman's arguments would have convinced anyone who would have listened to them. But who would listen to them in Bucharest? The Liberal government did not reject the idea of discussions with neutral states. Instead of Sweden, Italy emerged as a discussion partner. Romania was secretly negotiating a proposed alliance, which would lead Italy to join the war simultaneously. But Brătianu was wrong. In the end, Italy committed to the Entente, before Romania managed to clarify its frontiers in the diplomatic negotiations. While Beldiman informed Bucharest of Sweden's intentions, Brătianu concentrated on negotiations with Russia. Poklevsky-Koziell wrote to Sazonov that Romania would call a military convention before entering the war. The die had already been cast. Romania showed too little interest in signing an alliance with Sweden. There was a total lack of political will. The subject itself gradually fell from the agenda. In the following year (1916), it appeared in the spotlight only sporadically. But the press still showed interest in the subject. The conservative newspaper *Iaşul* published an editorial, on 16 February 1916, under the signature of Nerva Teohari, suggestively entitled "A Romanian-Swedish alliance?" The analysis started from a phrase in a speech of Sazonov to the Russian Duma: "Because of its history Russia is not interested in the Scandinavian shores, but in a completely different direction, in order to seek an outlet to the free seas." What lay behind the expression used by the Russian Foreign Minister? Perhaps Sweden was preparing its armaments or mobilizing its forces near

\footnote{Eliza Campus, "L'activité diplomatique de la Roumanie entre les années 1914 et 1918", *Revue Roumaine d' Histoire*, tome VII, no. 6 (1968): 1112.}

the Russian border? Or perhaps the article recently published in Svensk Løesen magazine concerned the common interests of Romania and Sweden? We will never know precisely. We only have the wishful conclusions of the columnist: "The distant voice of Sweden comes on time. What we ourselves could not commit to at present, we will certainly succeed in doing with the soldiers of King Gustav". The 8 March 1916 edition of the same newspaper pointed out that Sweden had sent a diplomatic representative to Bucharest. Baron Joachim Beek-Fries arrived in Bucharest with Commander Oscar Ströemm, to present their credentials to the sovereign. Beldiman also discreetly signaled the event from Berlin. Surprisingly, he added nothing extra. He seemed disappointed, since, as he wrote to his good friend N.D., another convinced Germanophile, that he had quietly been excluded from the negotiations as a guarantee that the alliance would not be concluded.

With Romania's entry into the war and the death of Ambassador Arvid Taube, the cause seemed lost forever. The correspondence of Minister Beldiman reflected the latest developments. He fled to Copenhagen after the closure of Legation in Berlin. But the Romanian government received information from another source: the Stockholm reports by Grigore Bilciurescu. From conversations with well-known members of the entourage from the Court, the Romanian minister discovered that conservative politicians were sympathetic to the cause of Germany. Most Swedish people shared the same thoughts, because up to 1870 Francophile feelings had almost completely cooled. Kinship of race and language and the prestige of the German dynasty lay behind this conversion. Since the outbreak of the war, German propaganda in Sweden, economic ties with Germany, British intervention in foreign trade, but also the successes of the German armies, had altered the sympathies of public. The feeling of Scandinavian solidarity suffered most. From the separation of Norway from Sweden, public opinion in the Scandinavian countries moved in opposite directions. Each of the three Nordic kingdoms adopted a policy of neutrality. However, general sympathy for Germany could not

339 lașul, no. 228, March 8th 1916.
342 Hurdubențiu, 269.
lead Sweden to take part in the war. Even the idea of the historical threat from Russia, which had infiltrated popular consciousness for decades, no longer represented a fundamental argument. Sweden would enjoy the benefits of neutrality up to the end of war, because this policy provided its citizens with life in peace and prosperity\textsuperscript{344}.

**Conclusions**

As we look back at the conduct of all the decisive events in the war, we cannot be certain how things would have developed had this project succeeded. Would Sweden have managed, in alliance with Romania, to unbalance the situation on the front? Difficult as may be to assume this, we must not forget that it was American intervention in 1917 which tipped the scales of the war. The question which remains is: What are the causes of the failure? Let us assume that everything depended on German influence. But even Germany did not have sufficient power to conclude such an arrangement. In Romania, the death of King Charles I was a turning point in the direction of foreign policy. From now on, government documents in Bucharest reflected Germany’s war only in a negative way. In Sweden, German propaganda placed excessive emphasis on the historical image of the Russian invader. But it had little effect. Public opinion did not abandon its pacifist inclinations.

There were family links between the ruling houses in Romania and Sweden. Elisabeth of Wied (Carmen Sylva) was the niece of Sophie Wilhelmina Pauline Henriette, who was married to Oscar II, the King of Sweden. Cordial relations were increasingly strengthened after international recognition of Romanian independence.\textsuperscript{345}. Why did dynastic relations not lead to a treaty of alliance? In the past, dynastic relationships represented only a historical argument. They encouraged, but did not guarantee, the conclusion of the alliance. The authority of the monarchs did not significantly change the political will of the governments. Finally, ministerial responsibility prevailed.

Alliances are more difficult to negotiate in times of war. Mainstream politicians refused to endorse diplomatic efforts. The project only ignited the interest of the opposition. The indecision of the Swedish government was matched by the lack of interest of the Romanian government. Pacifism in Sweden and nationalism in Romania were major obstacles. Of all the players, only Alexander Beldiman regretted the abandonment of the

\textsuperscript{344} AMAE, Folder 71/1914, Stockholm, vol. 59.

\textsuperscript{345} George Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi în spațiul românesc. Secolele XVII-XX* (Cluj Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2007) 189-238.
project. The Minister of Romania in Berlin did not forget Bratianu’s behavior during neutrality, nor the attitude of King Ferdinand. In the context of Romania being defeated and of German military occupation, the charges piled up, one after another. "Romania deceived and sacrificed" this was the headline of an article published in the foreign press and reproduced in the *Gazette of Bucharest*. Prime Minister Bratianu was "decapitated". The abdication of King Ferdinand was also anticipated positively.

References:

A. Archives
Arhivele Diplomatice ale Ministerului Afacerilor Externe al României [The Diplomatic Archives of the Romanian Foreign Ministry], Bucureşti:
- fund 77, Dosare Personale (Personal Files), Letter B, no. 24
- Folder 71/1914, Stockholm, vol. 59
- Folder 71/1914, E2, Second part, vol. 27 (1915-1918)

Arhivele Naţionale ale României [The Romanian National Archives], Bucureşti:
- fund Casa Regală [Royal House], folder 19/1915, 1-4.

Biblioteca Academiei Romane, sectia Manuscrisce, Arhiva Alexandru Beldiman [The Romanian Academy Library, Manuscripts, Alexandru Beldiman Archive]:

B. Published documents:

C. Newspapers:
*Iașul*, no. 210 , February 16th 1916.; No. 228, March 8th 1916

D. Books and articles:
Campus, Eliza. ”L'activité diplomatique de la Roumanie entre les années 1914 et 1918”, Revue Roumaine d' Histoire, tome VII, no. 6 (1968): 1099-1029.

THE NANSEN COMMISSION AND THE ROMANIAN PRISONERS OF WAR’S REPATRIATION FROM THE RUSSIAN TERRITORIES

Ioana Ecaterina Cazacu
“Al. I. Cuza” University of Iassy, Faculty of History, E-mail: ioanacazacu@yahoo.com

Acknowledgments
This paper has been presented at the Second International Conference on Nordic and Baltic Studies in Romania: Black Sea and Baltic Sea Regions: confluences, influences
and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, Târgoviste, May 20-22, 2011. This research for this paper was achieved with the support of the POSDRU/88/1.5/S/47646 project.

Abstract:
The end of the Great War was the beginning of a long string of problems requiring immediate solutions, one of the most important of which being the repatriation of former prisoners of war. Given the fact that there were a large number of prisoners as a result of the huge amount of troops engaged in the conflict, we can approximate a number of 6,637,000 prisoners at the end of the war. This situation did not remain without consequences in the international debate. At the Paris Peace Conference, the General Secretariat had organized a Special Committee on all matters relating to prisoners. The lead of the Commission was entrusted to Fridtjof Nansen, explorer, scientist and public figure of the period. However, there were a number of difficulties generated by the absence of Russia from the Peace Conference. This country did not obey any decisions of the Commission, having neither rights, nor duties. To solve the problems, the High Commissioner made use of the prestige given by the League of Nations in order to facilitate the carrying out of his duty, but in reality the effort to repatriate the prisoners was supported by humanitarian agencies and private organizations, for example the International Red Cross. Overall the Mission led by Dr. Nansen managed to repatriate 427,885 prisoners, 19,188 of whom were Romanians.

Rezumat:
Sfârşitul Marelui Război a fost începutul unui şir lung de probleme care necesitau soluţii imediate, dintre care unul dintre cele mai importante a fost repatrierea foştilor prizonieri de război. Având în vedere faptul că a existat un număr mare de prizonieri, ca urmare a magnitudinii trupelor angajate în conflict, putem aproxima un număr de 6.637.000 de prizonieri la sfârşitul războiului. Această situaţie nu a rămas fără consecinţe în cadrul dezbaterii internaţionale şi la Conferinţa de Pace de la Paris, Secretariatul General a organizat un comitet special cu privire la toate aspectele legate de prizonieri. Conducerea Comisiei i-a fost încredinţată lui Fridtjof Nansen, explorator, om de ştiinţă şi figură publică a perioadei. Cu toate acestea, au existat o serie de dificultăţi generate de absenţa Rusiei de la Conferinţa de Pace. Această ţară nu se supunea nici uneia din decizii Comisiei, neavând nici drepturi, nici obligaţii. Pentru a rezolva problemele, Înaltul Comisar a făcut uz de prestigiul dat de către Liga Naţiunilor pentru a facilita realizarea scopului său, dar, în realitate, efortul de a repatria prizonierii a fost susţinut de către agenţiile umanitare şi de organizaţiile private, de exemplu de Crucea Roşie Internaţională. În general, misiunea condusă de dr. Nansen a reuşit să repatrieze 427.885 de prizonieri, dintre care 19.188 au fost români.

Keywords: POWs, Russia, The International Red Cross, The International Relief Credit Commission, Nansen Commission.
The First World War have remained in the collective consciousness as a crucial moment that marked the transition from an age of innocence, “la belle époque,” to an age of increasing awareness of the true drama represented by an armed conflict of such scale and barbarity. The overall enthusiasm at the beginning of the war eventually turned into general disappointment. The end the conflagration did only represent the beginning of a long series of problems in need of an immediate solution. Thus, at the international level, urgent solutions were required for thousands of refugees, for the famine haunting many countries, for the populations displaced due to border changes. The problem of war prisoners who were in poor condition in various camps lacking the possibility of returning home stood on top of these.

It should be noted here that the Great War was marked by a novelty as it was for the first time when captivity was carried out to such large a scale as a direct consequence of the size and number of troops engaged in the conflict. Consequently, at the end of the war an estimated number of 6,637 million soldiers were thought to have been taken prisoners. This generalisation of captivity did not remain without consequences in the international debates, the details of the war prisoners’ repatriation were set in the treaty signed with Germany at Versailles, under section “war prisoners and graves,” Articles 214-226. Furthermore, at the Peace Conference in Paris, the Special Commission for all matters relating to the prisoners was organised under the General Secretariat with a view to observing the provisions of the Hague Convention with concern to the repatriation of all prisoners at the end of the war. Nonetheless, difficulties have resulted from the absence of Russia at the Peace Conference. It would not comply with the provisions set forth in Paris, having neither rights nor duties. In addition, the Russian territories hosted the largest number of prisoners belonging to the Central Powers and the country was experiencing extremely difficult times due to the civil war and famine.

The news coming from the Russian territories were worrisome to the international authorities. The status of the prisoners on the Russian territory as reported by the International Red Cross was desperate as

prisoners did not benefit from financial support from anywhere, and the living conditions were disastrous. The prisoners were housed in wooden barracks, the healthy together with the ill, without food or medicine. The camp at Nova-Mikolaievsk was given as an example, where only 70 prisoners survived out of 1,100. Under these circumstances, it was decided that a specialised committee be organised to deal with the repatriation of former prisoners. The leadership of this commission was entrusted to Fridtjof Nansen, an explorer, a scientist and a relevant public figure at the time, whose fame came from the fascination exercised by his North Pole expeditions, advertised in widely circulated newspapers.

It is important to note from the beginning that this article does not follow the many-faceted work of the Nansen Commission, but we are particularly concerned with the relationships between this organisation and Romanians, as individuals who benefited from aid provided by the Commission, and between the Commission and the Romanian State. Moreover, it is also relevant that prisoners of Romanian ethnic origin on the Russian territory were former soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire army, from the Romanian provinces formerly belonging to the empire, who, once Romania entered the war, preferred captivity rather than fighting against their kin.

It was estimated that in Russia there would have been, in the beginning, some 1.25 million prisoners belonging to the Central Powers, of which more than half have died in the chaos caused by the civil war, and some others were repatriated after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. There were also some 330,000 German civilians who lived in the Russian territories and had been deported to Siberia at the outbreak of the First World War. Upon Fridtjof Nansen’s taking over the mission, there seemed to be a further half a million prisoners on the vast Russian territory, who were facing the risk, at any moment, to die from hunger, cold, disease, or hard labour they were subjected to. On the other hand, in Germany there were about a million Russian prisoners, who were not allowed to return to their country from the beginning as the Allies wanted to train troops to fight against the

---

Bolsheviks. The original plan was abandoned and the Russian prisoners were allowed to return to the country.\textsuperscript{351}

The general auspices the Commission were to operate under were as unfavourable as possible. To the Westerners’ reluctance to recognize the Bolshevik regime, the Allied blockade and their intervention on Russian territory were added. Nevertheless, the Norwegian explorer, forming his own organisation based in Berlin, \textit{Nansen Help}, brought the two sides to the negotiating table and despite the difficulties posed by transportation and the Soviet authorities’ continuing suspicions succeeded in reaching a compromise. Moreover, to assess the situation as close to reality, Nansen visited Russia, where he met Alexander Eyduk, who was responsible for sending foreigners to the western border, and Nansen’s organisation was to take them from there. The meeting proved beneficial and a considerable number of prisoners were repatriated via the Baltic Sea.

The High Commissioner used the prestige imposed by the League of Nations to facilitate carrying out its purpose, but, in reality, the true effort to return the prisoners was made by humanitarian agencies and private organisations. Among such organisation, the International Red Cross played an outstanding role, owing to whose effort camps for refugees and prisoners was organized, food was procured and part of the transportation costs for repatriation were financed.\textsuperscript{352} In fact, the International Red Cross had been involved in solving the prisoners’ issue ever since 1919, had already established contacts and sent people to Russia.

Consequently, in May 1920, in a telegram addressed to the Minister of War, the International Red Cross announced that it had agreed to provide repatriation from Russia via Estonia and Finland, of all prisoners of war, irrespective of nationality. Moreover, the German Government had consented to take the necessary steps to organize concentration and transport points from the Russian border to the Austrian border. In contrast, the Red Cross promised the German government to refund all amounts spent for the prisoners’ support in the country. The Romanian Government was notified that it was necessary, for the repatriation of Romanian subjects, to make a deposit of 500,000 German marks in the account of the International Red Cross in Berlin, money needed for the prisoners’ transport from the Russian border to the Romanian border.\textsuperscript{353}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., 88.
\item Arhiva Diplomatica a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe [The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diplomatic Archive], \textit{Problema 71/1914 E.2. Prizonieri 11b}, vol. 242, dos. 290, Telegram of the
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Furthermore, the Romanian authorities were informed that between 10 May and 15 June 1920, the International Red Cross Committee delegates in Narva recorded the arrival of a number of 15,746 prisoners – i.e. 7,853 Russians, 2,731 Germans, 43 Estonians, 3,730 Austrians, 1,608 Hungarians, 17 Italians, 124 Romanians, 27 Croats, 12 Bosnians, 289 Czechs, 5 Serbs, 85 Poles, 52 Ukrainians, 562 Swiss, and 998 of various other nationalities. The same information also reminded of the request made since May for fund clearance and that a reply was expected to be able to assist the Romanian prisoners as well.\textsuperscript{354}

To carry out the mission assigned, the High Commissioner would need significant financial resources. From the very beginning, the total costs of the repatriation of the prisoners were estimated at 670,000 pounds sterling. The money was to be received by the International Relief Credit Commission from a group of creditor countries. The most important creditor was Great Britain, which pledged to deliver a £227,000 fund, followed by Italy and France with £85,000, the Netherlands with £55,000, Switzerland with £48,000, and Sweden, Norway and Denmark with £35,000 each. These contributions were construed as a loan to countries benefiting from Dr Nansen’s repatriation project, as follows: Austria and Hungary were to receive £200,000 each, while Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia £70,000 each.\textsuperscript{355}

Despite this international agreement, the Nansen Commission and its chair considered themselves forced to address the Romanian government a memo, on 11 June 1920, asking to expedite the procedures relating to the withdrawal of the amount required to repatriate Romanian prisoners from the Russian territory.\textsuperscript{356} In fact, according to the information received by Antoine Bibesco, the Romanian chargé d'affaires in London, in Russia there would have been about 14,000 Romanian prisoners, for whose repatriation costs an estimated 70,000 pounds sterling at the most were needed, money that could be accessed by the Romanian government through an application to the International Relief Credit Commission. Nonetheless, it should be noted that at that time Romania was the only country among those included in Dr Nansen’s project that had not applied for assistance.

\textsuperscript{354} Ibid., Memo addressed to the Romanian Minister in Geneva by the International Red Cross, 26.

\textsuperscript{355} The League of Nations Archive, Refugees Mixed Archival Group, Fonds Nansen 1920-1924, Box R 1707, doc. 7587, (hereinafter quoted as ALN-Nansen).

for the withdrawal of the money. As there was no reply to the application made early in June, Nansen was forced to send another telegram to the President of the Council with a request to submit the formal application before the Credits Committee by 22 June 1920. The Nansen Commission were to submit a preliminary report by that date with a view to mentioning Romania as well among the states that had met their obligations. The answer came from the Romanian authorities until 5 July 1920.

The dialogue between Romania and the institution headed by the High Commissioner continued to be weak. Thus, although the Romanian party had agreed to send a petition to the International Relief Credit Commission with a view to clearing the money, this never happened, so that, on 23 August and 8 September two further notifications were sent to the Romanian government for the clearance of funds provided. The Nansen Commission representatives threatened even to stall the repatriation of Romanian prisoners, but the situation was both complex and complicated, as more than 4,000 Romanian prisoners had already been repatriated at the expense of the Commission via the Baltic Sea route. At the time, the tension between the two sides had considerably increased. Consequently, Philip Baker expressed his dissatisfaction, in two telegrams of 14 September 1920, with the manner the Romanian government had been managing the situation and described its lack of interest as “monstrous”. Moreover, he believed that the time of negotiations and talks was over and that it was time to take action.

Despite the pressure from the International Relief Credit Commission and the Nansen Commission, in October the situation was not settled yet, but everyone was aware of the fact that the Romanian prisoners were unstoppable in their desire to leave the Russian territory, as, aiming at being repatriated, they could choose a different identity than the Romanian one at any time. The only way the Commission members felt they could persuade the Romanian authorities to submit the petition for the clearance of funds was to threaten them with the situation being reported to the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Had that kind of pressure been ineffective, the money representing the costs of Romanian prisoners’ repatriation were to be raised from donations and contributions from the

---

357 Ibid., Telegram of Antoine Bibesco to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 17 June 1920, 14.
358 Ibid., Telegram from Antoine Bibesco, Romania’s chargé d’affaires in London, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 23 June 1920, 11.
359 ALN-Nansen, Box R 1707, Memo of Antoine Bibesco, Romania’s chargé d’affaires in London, to Eric Drummond, of 5 July 1920.
360 Ibid., Philip Baker’s telegram to Nicolae Titulescu, September 1920.
361 Ibid., Philip Baker’s telegram to Nicolae Titulescu, 14 September 1920.
other countries. However, F. Nansen continued to pressure the Romanian government in order to recover the amounts spent for the repatriation of Romanian prisoners. Accordingly, the Norwegian explorer harshly criticised the Romanian authorities’ lack of response. At that time, such authorities had not started the procedures to clear the funds yet, and Nansen considered that Romania manifested a deep disregard at the fate of its subjects. He further threatened to present this situation, which he qualified as delicate and embarrassing, to the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Furthermore, the lack of any reply from the Romanian authorities prompted the High Commissioner to threaten with the exclusion of the Romanian prisoners from the repatriation programme and the demanding of financial compensation for the over 4,500 Romanian prisoners repatriated until 15 September 1920. Nansen’s threats were implemented and Eric Drummond, in a letter to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, gave an overview of the negotiations between the Romanians and Nansen Commission. Drummond’s reaction was immediate and, in a letter to the President of the Council of Ministers, he demanded immediate settlement of the dispute with the organisation with respect to the prisoners’ repatriation.

Following the international pressure, the Romanian Minister of Finance, accompanied by Nicolae Titulescu, conducted discussions with the General Secretary of the League of Nations and promised that Romania would make all necessary arrangements to access the funds. Moreover, the two officials expressed their intention to initiate the due formalities in order to solve the situation as fast as possible and argued that the delay occurred because of some misunderstandings. However, the Romanian side had not submitted the petition by 17 November, and Nansen expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that, in spite of so much pressure, the Romanian government failed to respond: “I think this means that you do not want your prisoners to be repatriated from Russia” and, consequently, Romania was obliged to explain its conduct before the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Such explanations meant that the Romanian government were to give reasons for their failure to observe the initial promises. Although threatening that the Romanian prisoners’ repatriation was no longer part of the plans conducted by the organisation, he would

362 ALN-Nansen, Box C 1112(8), Philip Baker’s telegram to J. H. Gorvin, 16 October 1920.
363 Ibid., F. Nansen’s telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 19 October 1920.
364 ALN-Nansen, Box R 1707, Philip Baker’s letter to Nicolae Titulescu, October 1920.
365 Ibid., F. Nansen’s letter to Eric Drummond, 19 October 1920.
366 Ibid., Eric Drummond’s letter to the President of the Ministers’ Council, October 1920.
367 ALN-Nansen, Box. C 1112(8), Philip Baker’s telegram to Garvin, 2 November 1920.
still indicate that the arrival of a large number of Romanians was expected and that Romania was bound to see to their fate.\textsuperscript{368}

The delayed response of the Romanian authorities was understandable if we were to consider the post-war critical situation in the country as well as the lack of a better organisation and functioning of the state institutions. The issue seems to have been eventually solved by the end of 1920, as the report, submitted to the Council of the League of Nations on 26 February 1921, made no reference as to the dispute mentioned above.\textsuperscript{369}

The repatriation of prisoners from the Russian territory was carried out via three routes: the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, and from Vladivostok. We further present the results achieved by the Nansen Commission during the first year of operations, as shown in the report submitted to the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Thus, by that time, 280,000 prisoners, of which 10,500 Romanians, had been repatriated via the Baltic Sea. The representatives of the Nansen Commission were satisfied with the result, should the transport difficulties due to the winter be taken into account. Moreover, the Narva and Bjorko harbours being blocked by ice, rail transport was mostly resorted to. In addition, in order to facilitate the repatriation proceedings, a point of concentration was set up at Baltischport since November, which, together with Riga, operated regularly and satisfactorily until the end of the project.\textsuperscript{370}

Considering the achievements, Nansen appreciated the usefulness of railroad to the repatriation of prisoners, although this solution had a series of drawbacks such as the disruption within a number of regions in the Baltic or the difficulty of obtaining permits for trains to cross through the Polish Corridor. Therefore, on 17 January 1921, representatives of the German, Soviet, Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian government held a meeting in Riga, which ended with signing an agreement. Railway transportation from Russia to other countries was expected to be conducted more easily. Moreover, the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Polish governments had already approved of the trains carrying prisoners to transit these countries.\textsuperscript{371}

Another route used to bring prisoners from the Russian territory was via the Black Sea. According to the report, due to the disorganisation and chaos reigning in the Russian provinces, it was extremely difficult to

\textsuperscript{368} A.M.A.E., \textit{Problema 71/1914 E.2. Prizonieri 11b}, F. Nansen’s telegram to the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 46.
\textsuperscript{369} Ibid., Nansen Commission’s Report on the 1920 activity, presented in Geneva on 26 February 1921, 64.
\textsuperscript{370} Ibid., 64-65.
\textsuperscript{371} Ibid., 65.
estimate the number of prisoners. For this reason, in December 1920, Dr Nansen sent a special mission to the International Red Cross to examine the situation. Before the mission left, an agreement had been reached with the Soviets, whereby prisoners concentrated in the Turkistan area were to be transported to Moscow by rail, wherefrom the Commission was to take over and see to their repatriation via the Baltic Sea route. The plan worked and some 5,000 prisoners followed this path, although 2,000 remained stranded in Turkistan.

The Red Cross mission extended its activities in the Don, Kuban, Terek, and Ciscaucasia areas, but, due to the total disruption of rail transport, it was impossible to conduct repatriation procedures in the above-mentioned regions similarly to those in Turkistan. In addition, attention was drawn on the fact that a large number of prisoners, especially Austrian and Hungarian nationals, enlisted various revolutionary armies, which made it even more difficult to estimate the exact number of prisoners. However, it was estimated that around 15,000 prisoners were be repatriated from this area. Moreover, the mission aimed at gathering the prisoners and sending them to Novorossiysk. It was further stated that some 2,000 prisoners were to board at Novorossiysk harbour in March 1921.

According to Dr Nansen’s information, an estimated 15,000 prisoners were to be evacuated via Vladivostok. The American Repatriation Committee made available over one million dollars for the High Commissioner to achieve this objective. In addition, five ships were already contracted by the U.S. Committee, four of them having carried prisoners from Vladivostok to Trieste since the end of 1920, and the fifth was due to leave on 15 March 1921. Thus, the SS Scharnhorst set ashore 2,200 people on 5 October 1920, the Mainan 2,000 people on 26 October 1920, the Steigerwald 1,176 people on 15 November, and the Frankfurt 1,661 people on 25 November, whereas the Pierre-Benoît was due to leave with 1,800 people on 15 March. At the end of 1920, there were still 7,500

---

372 Ibid., 66.
373 Ibid.
374 Ibid., 66-67.
375 The American Committee represented various humanitarian organisations in the USA, the most important of which were the American Red Cross, the Commission for Hungarian population’s assistance, the Commission for Austrian war prisoners’ assistance, the Federal Council, the National Catholic War Council, etc. (Ibid., 67.)
376 Ibid.
377 The SSs Steigerwald and Frankfurt also transported 2,750 Russians from Germany to Vladivostok at the expense of the German state, Ibid., 68.
people, of which 1,200 were Romanians\(^{378}\), in Vladivostok. The latest news coming from Vladivostok, on 19 January 1921, showed that, after the departure of said vessels and of a number of vessels contracted by various countries, independently from the League of Nations, there remained 3,600 prisoners in various camps in the Vladivostok area, and an additional number of around 3,000 prisoners spread throughout Siberia. Overall, approximately 6,000 people were to be repatriated from this region, and the costs incurred by transport were estimated at least 150,000 pounds sterling\(^{379}\).

Although Nansen received assurances, when the mission agreed to repatriate prisoners of war, that the financial problems were solved, things turned out to be much more complicated and creditor countries started to impose conditions. Thus, Britain deposited half the amount promised, i.e. £113,000, and conditioned the payment of the balance on the reimbursement of the amounts due by the other countries. In order to clear the amounts, the French government also set two conditions\(^{380}\) that were promptly met by the Commission; hence, the cash promised by the French, i.e. £15,000, as well as the amount of £100,000 in products, were expected to be cleared. The Netherlands also conditioned the disbursement of the second amount of money on the clearance of the money promised by the other countries. In October 1920, Italy sent a letter to the International Committee for Assistance Credits, announcing that it was impossible to transfer the £85,000 promised, since it had already committed to support financially the prisoners’ repatriation from the Italian territory. Nansen found himself trapped in an awkward position, as Italy’s clearance of the amounts was a prerequisite for the transfer of the money promised by England and The Netherlands. Later on, the two countries agreed to clear funds if the International Committee for Assistance and Credit could secure the amount of 85,000 pounds sterling. Under the circumstances, Dr Nansen called on the governments of Canada, Spain, Japan, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. Unfortunately, Japan, Canada, and Spain gave a negative answer to the request so that collecting the amount of 85,000 pounds sterling became impossible. The financial situation became thus extremely difficult: on the

\(^{378}\) Of which 968 Romanians were embarked on the SS Kayku-Maru ever since 25 November 1920, to reach Trieste. The ship was chartered by the German Red Cross from the Japanese authorities and the costs incurred were covered by the Romanian state, in the Iaşi County Direction of National Archives, Victor Cădere Fund, File 19, 35.


\(^{380}\) Both requirements, i.e. the evacuation of all the French prisoners from Russia and settling the dispute between the Russian authorities and the Austrian ones, were met. (Ibid., 71).
one hand, half of the funds promised in the beginning had not yet been cleared and, on the other hand, the repatriation of prisoners remained a matter that could not be postponed.  

These are broadly the coordinates of the activities conducted by the Nansen Commission by the end of 1920. Given the critical situation in Russia, the Commission carried on with the same determination to solve the prisoners’ issue in the shortest time possible. Thus, the last transport to leave Vladivostok for Trieste under the patronage of the League of Nations was the steamer *Peiho* at the end of March. The ship had 1,333 passengers on board, of which 103 Romanian prisoners. The Red Cross delegate boarded the ship as well. However, despite the efforts of the Commission, the situation in this region was far from being resolved. The leader of the consular corps in Vladivostok described the critical status of a number of refugees in a memo sent in November 1921. Due to the critical circumstances in the Russian territories, e.g. famine, civil war, etc., these refugees had been compelled to leave their homes and lead a miserable existence; 478 of them were Romanians (i.e. 191 men and 287 women and children), and there was no one to see to their fate.

The joint action of the League of Nations High Commission and of the International Red Cross to repatriate war prisoners’ from Russia officially went into liquidation on 31 December 1921. Consequently, these bodies were to see to the repatriation of prisoners until 15 March 1922 at the latest. After this deadline, the interested countries were to see themselves to the fate of the prisoners who remained on Russian territory.

The Nansen Commission presented their final report in Geneva on 1 September 1922. On this occasion, the High Commissioner expressed his joy to have completed such a difficult task, even if, as we have mentioned, at the beginning of 1921 there were still a considerable number of prisoners to be repatriated via the Black Sea route. Therefore, in the autumn of 1921, several ships transported prisoners to the port of Trieste. Some 12,000 prisoners and a number of civilians could be carried via this route. During the winter 1921-1922, a significant number of prisoners were repatriated via the Baltic Sea route, which determined the High Commissioner to extend the operation of this route until the summer of

---

381 Ibid, 71-73.
382 Ibid, F. Nansen’s telegram sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 13 March 1921, 89.
383 Ibid., Report of the consular corps in Vladivostok, 17 October 1921, 134-137.
384 Ibid., Letter sent by Lucien Cramer, The International Red Cross Committee, to the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 5 January 1922, 99-100.
385 Ibid., Nansen Commission final report presented in Geneva on 1 September 1920, 110.
1922, in order to enable the prisoners who could not travel during winter to leave the Russian territory. Notwithstanding, the activity recorded a considerable decline since spring, which led to the closure of activity in the summer of 1922.\footnote{Ibid., 110-111.}

Below, we present some data on the total number of war prisoners repatriated by the High Commission of the League of Nations with the assistance of the International Red Cross between May 1920 and July 1922.


C. **Prisoners repatriated from Vladivostok:** Austrians – 814, Bulgarians – 1, Czechoslovaks – 1,178, Germans – 57, Hungarians – 2,596, Latvians – 13, Lithuanians – 10, Poles – 874, Romanians – 649, Turks – 19, Yugoslavs – 637; a total of 6,851.\footnote{Ibid., 113.}

We can add to the data above a considerable number of Russian prisoners repatriated from German camps.\footnote{From Constantinople, there were 2,406 Russians repatriated via the Baltic Sea and by rail some 241,703 (Ibid., 113.).} Thus, Dr Nansen’s mission recorded a total number of 427,886 prisoners repatriated, of which 19,188 were Romanians.\footnote{Ibid., 118.}

Although the Nansen Commission were concerned throughout their mission with raising the funds necessary to the proper functioning of the prisoners’ repatriation programme, we find that, owing to the good management of finances, at the end of the mission there was a surplus of money. Moreover, the money spent for the operations was considerably less than the amount initially expected. Thus, although the initial estimate for the costs of the prisoners’ repatriation was of approximately 670,000

\footnotesize{\bibliography{references}}
pounds sterling, the total amount spent was only 436,990 pounds sterling, of which the costs for the prisoners’ support were £121,962, costs of transport were £309,365, and administrative expenses were 32,662.

Table 1: Amounts received from each country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cash</th>
<th>In kind</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>8.750</td>
<td>25.792</td>
<td>34.542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>65.000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>113.500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>113.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>44.591</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44.591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>17.500</td>
<td>17.515</td>
<td>34.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>17.213</td>
<td>17.515</td>
<td>34.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>45.641</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45.641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>312.196</td>
<td>56.787</td>
<td>368.984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2: Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Money (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>112.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Red Cross</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilean Delegation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish Red Cross</td>
<td>2.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116.054</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3: Repatriation costs for each country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Money (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>44.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungar</td>
<td>94.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>27.581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czecho-Slovakia</td>
<td>92.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serb Croat Slovene Kingdom</td>
<td>36.065</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that over 5,000 Romanian prisoners and volunteers were repatriated owing to the efforts of the Romanian Military Mission in Siberia led by Victor Cădere, besides the prisoners repatriated by the organisation headed by Fridjof Nansen.

At the end of the mission, the High Commissioner expressed his joy at having been able to complete the mission he had been entrusted with. Moreover, much of the success was owed to his personality, as his diplomatic skills succeeded in winning the confidence of the Bolshevik authorities, facilitating thus the repatriation process. Imposing a manner of action that was to become a model followed in the interwar and post-war periods, the Norwegian explorer, in the two years, helped over 420,000 people, representing over 20 countries, to return to their countries of origin.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>52.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>347.935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References:

A. Archives:
Arhiva Diplomatica a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe [The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diplomatic Archive]:
Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale Iași [Iași County Direction of National Archives]:

B. Books and articles:

C. Internet:
PRE-WORLD WAR II ROMANIA FROM LATVIAN PERSPECTIVE: AN ENVOY'S VIEWS

Ēriks Jēkabsons

University of Latvia, E-mail: eriksj@lu.lv

Abstract:
The paper approaches the working environment and observations of Latvian envoy Ludvigs Ēķis in Romania from the autumn of 1939 when the Latvian Legation was opened in Bucharest until the summer of 1940 when the State of Latvia was liquidated. The main focus is on the Latvian-Romanian relations in this period of time, the Romanian foreign and economical policy and the reaction of Romanian statesmen and society to the events and processes of the first stage of World War: the policy of Soviet Union, Germany and Hungary, the Soviet-Finnish War and other conflicts in region and in Europe. The article is based on the materials stored in the State Archives of Latvia and particularly on Ludvigs Ēķis’ reports. In a time when war was raging in Europe, Romania, too, was subject to considerable international pressure. Some similarities can be detected between the developments in this region and in the Baltic States.

Rezumat:
Lucrarea abordează mediul de lucru și observațiile ministrului leton în România Ludvigs Ėķis începând din toamna anului 1939, când Legația letonă a fost deschisă la București, până în vara anului 1940, când statul leton a fost lichidat. Lucrarea se va concentra în principal asupra relațiilor letono-române în această perioadă de timp, asupra politicii externe și a celei economice, a reacției oamenilor de stat și a societății românești față de evenimente și procese desfășurate în prima etapă a primului război mondial: politicile Uniunii Sovietice, Germaniei și Ungariei, Războiul sovieto-finnlandez și alte conflicte regionale și europene. Articolul se bazează pe materiale păstrate în arhivele de stat din Letonia și în special pe rapoartele lui Ludvigs Ėķis. Într-un moment în care războiul făcea ravagii în Europa, România a fost, de asemenea, supusă unor presiuni internaționale considerabile. Unele similitudini pot fi detectate între evoluțiile din această regiune și cele din Statele Baltice.

Keywords: Latvia, Romania, World War II, international relations, Ludvigs Ėķis
**Introduction**

The present article aims at briefly outlining the main aspects of the relations between Latvia and Romania at the turn of the 20th century until the Second World War. It will focus particularly on the working environment and observations of Latvian envoy Ludvigs Ēķis in Romania from the autumn of 1939 when the Latvian Legation was opened in Bucharest until the summer of 1940 when the State of Latvia was liquidated. The article is based on the materials stored in the State Archives of Latvia and particularly on Ludvigs Ēķis’ reports. In a time when war was raging in Europe, Romania, too, was subject to considerable international pressure. Some similarities can be detected between the developments in this region and in the Baltic States. For this reason they attracted the attention of the Latvian envoy.

**The Establishment of Contacts and Relations before 1939**

The contacts between Latvia and Romania were established in early January 1919 when Latvia’s diplomatic representative in Warsaw Atis Ķeniņš was instructed to contact the Romanian diplomatic mission to arrange the transit of Latvian refugees through their country from the south of Russia. He met the representative of Romania in Poland Alexandru Florescu who promised him to inform the Romanian government of the request of the Latvian side and remarked on the complexity of the problem (the issue was eventually resolved through the military attaché of Poland to Romania). In September 1920 Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania Take Ionescu received the diplomatic representative of Latvia to Italy Miķelis Valters and informed him that the Envoy of Romania in Helsinki would soon be accredited with the Government of Latvia. „In lengthy discussion the Minister demonstrated

---

393 Ludvigs Ēķis (1892–1943), a Latvian politician and diplomat. He studied in Riga Polytechnic Institute, in 1914 was mobilised into the Russian Army and captured by Germans in Eastern Prussia. He remained in captivity until 1918. In 1919 he joined the Latvian Army and was promoted to an officer’s rank for valour. As of 1920 he worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 1931 to 1934 he headed the Western Department, in February-May 1934 served as Envoy to Lithuania, from May 1934 he was Minister of Finance. In 1938 he was appointed Envoy to Poland and Hungary with residency in Warsaw and in October 1939 he was appointed Envoy to Romania and Hungary (from April 1940 also to Turkey) with residency in Bucharest. He did not return to Latvia after its occupation in the summer of 1940, instead moving to the USA where he served as a councillor in the Legation in Washington.

394 Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs [State Historical Archives of Latvia; further: Latvia], 2575. f., 15. apr., 11. l., 69.lp.; 3601. f., 1. apr., 469. l., 59., 265. lp.
vivid interest in Latvia and the agrarian reform there and wished „bright future to the free Latvia”, the official governmental newspaper wrote. 395

On 26 February 1921 Romania recognised Latvia de jure396 and in the beginning of 1922 diplomatic relations between the two countries were established. The diplomatic missions of the two countries had set up official bilateral contacts already earlier. For example, the Latvian Envoy Kārlis Zariņš reported from Helsinki that on 15 April 1921 he had received the visit of the Romanian envoy Dimitrie Plesnita who had voiced his country’s desire to establish an alliance not only with Poland, but also with the Baltic States and recommended the opening of a Latvian Legation in Bucharest. In response to Zariņš’ inquiry the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs evaluated the idea of the alliance as a serious one, but noted that Latvia’s relations with Romania were still basically limited to mutual exchange of information (in late April the Latvian Envoy in Warsaw had even inquired the Romanian Envoy Florescu about this proposal, but the latter knew nothing about it). In his second meeting with the Latvian Envoy in Helsinki in order to support his earlier arguments Plesnita referred to his long-standing friendship with Romania’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Ionescu (being aware of his position) and continued to persuade the Latvian side of the need to form a joint alliance against Russia397.

After the establishing of Latvian - Romanian diplomatic relations, Latvia’s diplomatic representatives to Romania resided first in Warsaw (January 1922 - September 1934) and then in Prague (November 1935 - May 1939). In the autumn of 1939 the diplomatic corps residing in Warsaw together with the Polish government moved to the eastern part of Poland and on 17 September crossed the border into Romania398. Initially Romania likewise had a non-residing Envoy to Latvia who resided in Warsaw from 1924. The opening of a Romanian Legation in Riga was discussed in diplomatic circles already in early 1928: during his visit to Bucharest in June 1928 Latvian Envoy to Romania Antons Balodis who resided in Warsaw, directly inquired about the candidacy for the residing envoy399. It

396 The telegram of the Envoy of the Kingdom of Romania in Denmark and Sweden on the recognition of Latvia see: LVVA, 2570. f., 3. apr., 1148. l., 60. lp.
was in May 1929 that Romania sent a residing diplomatic representative to Riga: initially a charge d’affaires, then an envoy. Moreover, Latvia’s capital became the site, where Romanians tried to gather information about the Soviet Union. The following Romanian diplomats worked in Riga as Envoys: Mihail Sturdza (until 1935), Constantin Vallimarescu (1935 - 1937), Vasile Stoica (1937- 1939) and Grigore Niculescu-Buzesti (1939-1940). The two countries also had relatively broad consular contacts. As of 1923 Latvia had an Honorary Consul in Bucharest (Mr. Theodor Orghidan) who was later promoted to General Consul and in 1928 was joined by Honorary Vice-consul in Bucharest (Mr. Jules Sfetea). As of 1925 Latvia had Honorary Consul in Galati (Mr. Panait Avghenio) and as of 1926 Honorary Vice-consul in Constanta (Mr. Constantin Constantinescu) and in 1921 - 1922 Honorary Consular Agent in Kishinev (Jānis Vīksne). Romania had Honorary Consul in Riga as of 1925 (Mr. Jānis Zēbergs, in 1927 replaced by Alexandre Percy von Zimmermann).

All through the inter-war period the diplomatic circles cherished a – mostly theoretical – idea about an alliance stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Romania and Latvia were both assigned a concrete place in this scheme with Poland serving as a conjunctive link. In 1930s the bilateral economic contacts also developed rather actively.

In 1930s the radical nationalist organisations of both countries – such as the Latvian “Thundercross” (Pērkoņkrusts) and Romanian “Iron Guard” – also maintained rather active contacts. As late as 1938 head of “Thundercross” Gustavs Celmiņš, who was banned from Latvia, visited Romania and met Cornelius Codreanu who was his personal friend. The Latvian political police paid increased attention to this meeting. In a confiscated letter to Latvia Celmiņš described this meeting and the fact of his deportation from Romania that had taken place “not without the help from police” as he put it. A few citizens of one respective country lived

400 From 1933 M. Sturdza’s son Elie Vlad Sturdza studied law and state administration in Herder’s German Institute in Riga; for more details see: LVVA, 4772. f., 2.apr., 273.l., 1.-3.lp.
403 LVVA, 3235.f., 1/22.apr., 709.l., 188.lp.
permanently or visited the other respective country (for example, Romanian Vasily Andrianov who was born in Bessarabia served in the Latvian Army in 1919 as lieutenant, later worked as a driver in Riga and was a member of centre oriented political party “the Democratic Centre” 404, in December 1931 citizen of Romania Kocz Beni was detained on the Latvia - USSR border as he tried to cross it to the Soviet side405. Latvian Lutheran pastor Aleksandrs Simons worked in Bessarabia until his death in 1938 etc.). The two sides also tried to resolve the issue of two estates confiscated from Romanian citizens in Latvia as part of the agrarian reform406, etc. On the eve of the Second World War contacts between the students and sportsmen of the two countries also started to develop407.

The First Months of the Latvian Legation in Bucharest: October - November 1939

L. Ēķis received letters of accreditation already on 7 October 1939 and was about to leave for Budapest. On the same day he sent a cable to Riga reporting that he had heard on radio the text of Latvia - USSR Mutual Assistance Treaty, which had been signed in Moscow on 5 October, and required instructions on how to reply to the numerous questions he was asked in this regard. He also expressed “his deepest condolences” to the President and Ministers, remarking that he shared with them “heartache” about the developments. On 10 October the President of Latvia officially appointed Ēķis as Envoy to Romania. On 18 October he presented his letters of credence to the King of Romania in Cotroceni palace. In his report Ēķis gave a detailed account of the accreditation ceremony (the King had spoken in a free, “improvising” manner, instead of reading out a speech from paper, the official ceremony was followed by about a 10 minutes long informal discussion, during which the King had inquired Ēķis about his adventures in Poland and about “the concerns that our country [Latvia] was feeling”. The Envoy observed that the King’s “gestures were vital, but his eyes showed exhaustion” and the King’s Aide-de-Camp had also told him that His Majesty used to work until 3 A.M.)408.

405 Latvijas Kareivis – 1931. – 19.dec.  
407 See: N. Ņtūls “No Varšavas līdz Melnai jūrai” [From Warsaw to the Black Sea], Universitas, 1938. 1. dec.; Rīgā ierodas Rumānijas „Studentu Sporta” basketbolisti un volejbolisti [Basketball and Volleyball Players from Romania’s “Students’ Sports” Come to Riga], Universitas, 1939. 1. Febr.; Briedis P. Bukaresta un tās studenti [Bucharest and Its Students], Universitas, 1939. 5.okt.  
Already on 9 October Ēķis had insisted that Romania “should definitely be given the top priority” among the countries of the respective region. However on 20 October the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially declared that the Envoy should reside in Budapest (Ēķis was also officially Envoy to Hungary and as of March 1940 – also to Turkey). As the Latvian authorities were hesitating in choosing the best place of residence, on 26 October 1939 L. Ēķis wrote from Budapest asking for the Legation to be moved to Bucharest. He wrote: “The capital of this country [Hungary] indeed provides greater personal comfort and quieter life; however the only criterion that matters is that I should be where I could be of most use for our government and department. And in this regard I have only one reply – it is in Bucharest.” As the main argument he mentioned the availability of information sources in Bucharest and the fact that there “much was going on while here [in Budapest] everything was quiet and peaceful.” The economic considerations (life was cheaper in Romania) as well as the principle of reciprocity (Romania had a Legation in Riga, but Hungary – in Helsinki) also spoke in favour of Bucharest. Also in Bucharest in case of need the Envoy could use the diplomatic curriers of the Scandinavian countries and – as he put it – “in case of any perturbations in the Balkans, it would more or less concern all the countries of the region. As a result the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave in and on 6 November officially named Bucharest as the place of residence of the Envoy of Latvia (in the capital of Romania the Envoy of Latvia lived in a hotel for almost a half of a year, but for the remaining term in office rented an apartment, which also functioned as the official Legation).” On 12 December Ēķis took over consular matters from Honorary General Consul in Bucharest Th. Orghidan. The latter kept his title. (However on April 1940 L. Ēķis wrote that while during the democratic period Mr. Orghidan had indeed played an important role and had stood close to the leadership of the National Farmers’ Party, after the exclusion of this party from the political life he had been completely pushed aside from topical processes and had no influence whatsoever, but still liked to boast. Yet the Envoy admitted that due to his past merits and reputation Orghidan was “fully acceptable” as a consular representative.)

In his first extensive report, which was dispatched to Riga with a Swedish currier on 9 November, Envoy Ēķis wrote that “the uncertain future” had worked Romanians into a clearly perceptible nervous state (he

---

409 LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 375. l., 243. lp.; Latvijas Ārlietu ministrijas arhīvs (Archives of Foreign Affairs’ Ministry of Latvia; further: LĀMA), Londonas arhīvs, 490. kaste, 3. lp.
attributed the fact that in Budapest difficulties had been much less pronounced to the difference in the Hungarian and Romanian mentalities. Yet, according to him, the grass-root people paid much less heed to the difficulties. He observed the general hope that “Russians would act as gentlemen and not impose heavy concessions”. The first impression that Ėķis received about Romania was “somewhat Polish”. For this reason he predicted that in case “war was imposed on Romania” the outcome could be similar to that in Poland. In his observation the ruling circles “tried to shift and shuffle and live at peace with the large neighbours” as attested by the visit of Romania’s top officials to the USSR’s Legation on 7 November on the anniversary of the October coup d’état. Ėķis remarked that “Romania co-operated closest with Turkey and Yugoslavia and tried to leave an impression to Germany and Russia that the received English-French guarantee did not mean much”. The Envoy related rumours that the King was considering appointing a younger and more energetic head of government at the time when “unreliable and strong” ethnic minorities were destabilising situation in the country and the ethnic Romanian community was not unanimous about the “brutal methods of force” applied by the Minister for Public Order. Ėķis came to the conclusion that the Romanian society was on the whole interested in the Baltic problems, yet the information at its disposal was mostly wrong and scarce, even compared to Hungary. He also remarked on his efforts to fight the misbelief that Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania were Soviet protectorates and Finland was about to become one. Ėķis insisted that such misconception had largely grown out of the British “propaganda”.

For this reason in his half an hour long meeting with Prime Minister Constantin Argetoianu on 16 November Envoy Ėķis tried to present an optimistic picture of the developments in the Baltic and to “refute the very negative impression” that the Romanian statesman may have received about “the role of the Russians and the domination of the Russian armed forces” in Latvia from what he had read or heard. The Prime Minister in turn said that the Latvian government had done right to yield to the Soviet demands. In his opinion resistance to an incomparably stronger adversary could bring much worse result as shown by the Polish example (moreover he believed that even in case of a “complete victory” by the Allies it would be impossible to restore Poland in its earlier borders). The Prime Minister voiced his belief that the nation’s right to self-determination, the issue of ethnic minorities, etc. could not be settled by force, not permanently at least. On the other hand Mr. Argetoianu pointed out the “danger posed by

the Russian imperialism”: if it grew, demands postulated to the Baltic States could grow, too. He recommended being “flexible” and saving energy for the final phase of the war when it would be of decisive importance. The Prime Minister expressed belief that Finland, too, would have to give in. Describing the situation in Romania he said that “for the time being everything was quiet, the Russians treated Romania in a correct manner without postulating any demands to it, probably out of fear of military complications”. The Prime Minister predicted a quiet winter and a turn towards peace or exacerbation of warfare in spring that could engage the Balkan countries, too. Romania, however, “would do its utmost to avoid it”, he said.

In the same report Ēķis gave an account of his discussion with an Envoy of a neutral state, who had worked in Bucharest for seven years already. The latter had told him that Romania’s difficulties were mostly due to “the bad organisation of economy”, an excessive number of mediators and profiteers and large corruption in state apparatus. Efforts were exerted to fight it, yet generally with poor results. Nevertheless, the country was rich and social life “continued in a rather normal way”, but there was a sharp contrast between the obvious wealth in the cities and deep poverty among peasants who were discontent with the fact that “profiteers from Bucharest and other centres were pocketing huge profit at the poor peasants’ expense” (as the Latvian Envoy found out himself during his trip through a Carpathian district in the South of Romania)\(^412\).

On 28 November L. Ēķis gave a rather detailed account of the change of government in Romania, describing the replacement of the Germanophile Argetoianu by Francophile Tatarescu who was known as “the king’s absolute confidant”. In the Envoy’s opinion under the new Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister Gafencu “felt more on the crest of a wave” than under the previous governments, which had not given him complete freedom of action. The Envoy also noted the first signs of difficulties both in Romania and even more clearly – in Hungary\(^413\).

In December the Latvian Envoy was received in an audience by new Prime Minister G. Tatarescu who left on him the impression of “a very energetic man”. During the meeting the Prime Minister explained to the Envoy the situation in Southeast Europe (including the problems of the German and Hungarian ethnic minorities in Romania in the past and present) and asked questions about the situation in Latvia and in the North of Europe in general. He remarked that “he found it difficult to work as

---

\(^{412}\) LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 2540. l., 14.–15. lp. (L. Ēķis’ report of 17\(^{th}\) November 1939)

\(^{413}\) LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 2540. l., 13. lp.
Romania’s Prime Minister because for centuries the nation had lived loosely and had developed dislike for discipline unlike us, in the North. In his opinion the Romanian peasant preferred poverty to modernization of his production and was a great individualist: he hated both co-operation and orders from above. In this regard hard struggles against laziness and ignorance still had to be won.” Speaking about foreign policy the Prime Minister said that Romania did not want to be part of “the international game” and would protect “its neutrality and borders to the last. Yet outside Romania and among its closest neighbours were forces that Romanians could not influence.” However, if Romania was endangered, the Romanians would fight without a thought for the outcome. In the Prime Minister’s opinion everything depended on what kind of forces would reap the final victory – “the brutal ones or the ones with high moral standards” – if the latter won, all grievances would hopefully be repaired. Tatarescu admitted that in any case the peoples of Europe would face “dark days”. Speaking about Russia, he said that he wanted to improve Romania’s relations with it, yet he was not sure the Russians wanted the same. The Prime Minister voiced hope that developments in Finland would make the Russians think twice before embarking on a “new adventure”. Tatarescu was informed about the treaties between the Baltic States and the USSR and, same as his predecessor, said that he regarded them as fully justified, adding that “many things may take a turn for the better at the final settlement”. He also expressed his country’s interest in importing linseed, flax and, possibly, other products from Latvia, if the transportation could be arranged. The Prime Minister pledged to Latvia “the friendship of Romania’s government and its support on all issues” and said that “Romania felt for Latvia the deepest feelings of affinity and in many aspects regarded it as a paragon, in spite of the fact that our country was still rather young in the international community414”.

The Situation in Late 1939 - the First Half of 1940

Foreign policy

The Soviet attack on Finland in late November left a depressive impact on Romania although in geographic terms it was rather far from Northern Europe. Envoy Ėķis wrote on 4 December: “Here, too, the ruling circles cultivate optimism and display great bravado and readiness to fight if demands are postulated that would harm Romania’s neutrality and sovereignty. A vague hope had persisted that the Russians would not dare to use force because their army is weak, with low morals and poor fighting

capacity, its military equipment is unfit and incomplete and logistics is in a disastrous condition etc. Now, when the Russians with unsurpassed brutality have openly waged war against the Finns, here too, spirits have dropped and belief is increasingly taking root that when the Russians “are done” with the Finns, this region will be the next [...] If it comes to a war with the Russians, this link of the chain [i.e. Romania] would definitely turn out to be weaker than the Polish one and thus no better outcome can be expected.”

On 9 December the Latvian Envoy offered an insight into the rumours that were aplenty in the Romanian public (the USSR had presented an ultimatum, the “Russians” had already arrived in Bessarabia and Constanta, etc.) and reported that Romanians hurried to build frontier fortifications, Prime Minister Tatarescu hoped to reorganize the Army by the spring and expected “help from Turks, Greeks and the English” etc. He also added that a few days ago fear had spread in the public and many people “had even started to pack suitcases”. Ēķis was pessimistic: “Romania is in the following situation: if it cedes something to the Russians, it must cede something to the Hungarians and Bulgarians, too. Yet it is impossible to make everybody happy and thus Romanians do not know what to do. Fighting would be the correct choice, but it requires something more than a good will in the ruling circles. Bessarabia is in dire poverty. The people – peasants, the unemployed – in fact expect the Red Army as a liberator and a carrier of humane living conditions. It is no good.” The Envoy also noted that the rumours about the imminent German-Soviet conflict were becoming more and more intense and “the supply of German-made weapons to Finland and Romania for use against the Russians was observed with irony” in his country of residence.

On 15 January 1940 the Latvian Envoy reported that a high-ranking official from the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had told him: “if the Finns held out for 3 more months or so, nobody could do us any harm”. Ēķis wrote that in Romania “all eyes and hopes were on Finland” and the course of war there “had given a boost to courage and confidence”. According to him the sense of security in Romania grew after the Red Army Units withdrew northwards from Galicia, where they had been concentrated at the border after “the easy Polish campaign”. The relations with Bulgaria had also improved and Bulgarian King Boris had told an

\[415\] LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 2540. l., 4. lp.
\[416\] LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 2. lp.
Envoy of a neutral country that, being aware of the consequences, he did not want Dobrogea with the Soviet help.\textsuperscript{417}

Envoy Ēķis attributed special weight to the German factor. On 4 December he wrote a detailed account of his discussion with Ambassador of Germany Wilhelm Fabricius, whose confidence and arrogance – according to Ēķis – had been “sky-high”. With exaggerated optimism Fabricius had spoken about Germany’s and Führer’s prospects in the war. Speaking about Romania, he had said that Germany produced so much fuel that the amount due from it according to treaties did not exceed Romania’s peace-time export amount. Fabricius had said that the thoughtlessly accepted British-French guarantees would “rebound” heavily on Romania; he had repeatedly recommended the King “not to miss the chance to establish friendship” with Germany because the entire Balkan region depended on it. He also had said that Romania “had a very bad government and its administrative system was thoroughly corrupt. Many eyes had begun to open to this fact but it might be too late.” Ēķis developed an overall impression that an intense “peaceful German penetration into the Balkans” was taking place “with all kinds of means”, but the Romanian King “had not yet lost command of the situation and for the time being did not yield much to the influence of foreign advisors.”\textsuperscript{418}

The German Ambassador’s optimism, however, soon faded. When he paid Ēķis a return visit on 23 December, the latter observed that Fabricius’ “bravado and arrogance had considerably deflated and he no longer kept back the great difficulties that Germany was facing nor his own warm feelings for Finland.” On 30 December Ēķis wrote that since cold weather had set in it had become difficult to transport goods along the Danube and railway and “Germany’s supplies would grow scarcer, in spite of its treaties with Romania.” In his report of 15 January 1940 Ēķis again focused on various obstacles in the commercial contacts between Romania and Germany and noted that Romania’s ruling circles were becoming increasingly confident about the imminent British and French victory because in Germany conditions had become “desperately hard”\textsuperscript{419}.

His subsequent reports from late January onwards focused on foreign policy issues. The Latvian Envoy described the role of the factor of other countries “in Romania’s chaotic oil industry” where Germany’s growing influence was becoming more and more obvious. (He wrote that the Romanians in their efforts to remain neutral were facing a complicated

\textsuperscript{417} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 9. lp. (L. Ēķis’ report of 15\textsuperscript{th} January 1940).

\textsuperscript{418} LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 2540. l., 5.–6. lp.

\textsuperscript{419} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 6., 10., 11. lp.
situation. It was becoming increasingly difficult, however the King as a member of the Hohenzollern dynasty tried to preserve his country’s neutrality, “aspiring to balance and reign as well as it was possible under rather chaotic conditions and with corrupt staff”. Ėķis also believed that there was no reason at all to ascribe to the King affinity for the Nazi regime. ) The Latvian Envoy also described the competition between the German Legation on one hand and the British and French Embassies on the other (all these Legations had recruited additional staff) and observed that the public opinion was more on the latter’s side. Writing about the complications regarding the consolidation of the Balkan states, Envoy Ėķis linked them with the controversies existing between Hungarians and Romanians. He also noted Romania’s readiness for war (“Sometimes courage here is very great, but we, neutral observers, must admit that here any open large-scale conflict would quickly end with a disaster. This is not Finland, either in topographic terms, or in terms of the nation’s mentality. The peasants’ and workers’ stock is very good though and under a good government this country could be able to resist a great force”, he wrote).

Among the issues covered in the Latvian Envoy’s reports were also the course of the Conference of the Balkan Entente states in early February and the improvement of Romania’s economic and political relations with Bulgaria and Italy after it. Ėķis gave an account of his discussion with the German Ambassador, in the course of which the latter had informed him about his audience with Minister of Foreign Affairs Gafencu at 1 a.m. before the above-mentioned conference. During the audience the German Ambassador had demanded that Romania met the obligations under its economic treaties (the German Ambassador said he had been “embarrassed to disturb a high-ranking official in the middle of the night and to talk to an interlocutor wearing pyjamas”. He had told the Minister that “as long as Romanians supplied Germany with petrol, wheat, corn, timber, pulp and some required types of mineral ore, everything would be OK, as soon as the supplies stop “hier wird es keine 18 Tage dauern”). The Latvian Envoy also wrote about the banning of Hermann Rauschning’s book „Hitler m’a dit” on demand of the German Legation because the author had spoken scornfully about Romanian soldiers, as if wrongly ascribing this attitude to Hitler. Rumours related to international events circulating in Bucharest also found a place in the Envoy’s reports (“in terms of political rumours Bucharest probably is one of the most prolific “factories” of rumours in Europe. The things we get to hear here!” he wrote).

On 6 March the Latvian Envoy noted that the Germans were winning the propaganda war in Bucharest thanks to the composition and size of their Legation’s staff and the weakness of their “opponents”. (He
wrote that there indeed “was an active gentleman or two” in the French Legation, but Envoy Adrien Thierry played no role whatsoever because he “behaved too haughtily and arrogantly and it did not impress Romanians. The Romanian diplomats were saying that it was almost like France did not have any representative here at all. British Ambassador Reginald Hoare on his turn left an impression “as if he was always partially asleep” and seemed to dislike “the plot-filled public life in Bucharest”; Romanians believed that this Legation also was too weak to neutralize what the Germans were doing and to counter their activities\textsuperscript{420}.

The report of 15 March 1940 focused on the end of the war between the USSR and Finland on 12 March. Envoy Ēķis wrote: “For Romanians who share with us and Finns the same eastern neighbour, Finnish war was of great benefit because it has at least clarified two issues, which had been uncertain before: a) Russians are ready to wage war if they fail to achieve their goals with diplomatic tools and b) war with Russians is not that very dangerous, if resistance is well organized, soldiers are dutiful and the government is smart enough. Desire was secretly cherished here for Finns to inspire awe in Russians and to engage them as long as possible so that bad thoughts about Bessarabia and about Romanian and Bulgarian ports in the Black Sea do not come into the Russian heads. Guesswork is in full swing regarding what the Russians will do after the pitiful (especially for Finns) end of the Finnish affair. A part of prominent foreigners residing in Bucharest believe that the Russians will not keep us waiting long and after the land dries up a little a larger havoc will began here than the one that has just finished in the north […]. The fact is that the Romanians and Turks are well prepared to withstand anything, with military force, if necessary. I have heard good things about the Turks while opinion about the Romanians is divided […] Putting all my observations and what I have heard together, I may predict with relative confidence that peace will be preserved in this region for some time to come because the Romanians and the other Balkan nations are trying hard to meet the economic needs of Germans and those of the Allies as well.”\textsuperscript{421}

In his report of 27 March 1940 the Latvian Envoy revealed how he was gathering information. He wrote that “it was difficult to get anything out of the officials of the Foreign Affairs Ministry who, besides, were poorly informed themselves.” In general he was critical also of the composition of the diplomatic corps admitting though that there were “a

\textsuperscript{420} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 28., 35., 44.–46., 54., 56., 58.–60., 87.–89. lp.; 13. apr., 1842. l., b. p. (the 2\textsuperscript{nd} report of 29\textsuperscript{th} January; the first and second reports of 31\textsuperscript{st} January, 9\textsuperscript{th}, 13\textsuperscript{th} and 24\textsuperscript{th} February and reports of 6\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} march and 4\textsuperscript{th} April).

\textsuperscript{421} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 62. lp.
bright man or two” among its members. The press, according to him, was completely at the mercy of censorship and it would be futile to look for important information there. At this time Ėķis was looking forward to the homecoming from Ankara of the former Envoy to Turkey Vasile Stoica (who had also served as Romania’s Envoy to Latvia and whom he had met earlier), although the latter was said to be very disappointed about being recalled from Turkey (due to a love-affair with a typist who “had outrivaled the extravagant Mrs. Stoica”). The Latvian Envoy also asked for instructions as to which country to move to in case “it got too hot here” (i.e. the war broke out in Romania). In a different report written the same day Ėķis noted that “gentlemen from the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were very unwilling to talk about the German matters” (at that time a journalist from “Reuters” agency who had reported on “categorical” economic demands from the part of Germany had been expelled from Romania and relevant negotiations with the representatives of Germany were taking place in Bucharest).

Romanians were following “with feverish attention” the “sensational” talks between Hitler and Mussolini in late March and other developments because it was clear that the fate of Balkans, too, was at stake. According to Envoy Ėķis, at that time Germany was yielding an increasing pressure and “Romanians had to wriggle and make unexpected moves to feed this “crocodile”, which was looking for an opportune moment to swallow the feeder”. What Bucharest feared most was agreement among Germany, Italy and the USSR. The Latvian Envoy also gave a detailed account of Romania’s policy vis-à-vis Italy at that time, the amnesty of radical organisation Garda de Fier (The Iron Guard) as a result of pressure from Germany and the related transformations in Romania’s domestic policy. Ėķis came to the conclusion that “in spite of official bravado, Romania would be ready to accept compromises and yield to pressure, no matter where it came from.”

As the situation grew increasingly strained, on 13 April 1940 Envoy Ėķis wrote about the nervous state and acute uncertainty in the politico-diplomatic circles in his country of residence after Germany had postulated categorical demands to Romania although outwardly the bilateral relations did not manifest strain. As concerns the position of the USSR, Romania’s Minister of Foreign Affairs had personally described it to Ėķis as “threatening”. The Envoy observed active but chaotic military preparations and noted that spring farm work had not even started yet. He also related

---

422 LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 70., 71. lp.
423 LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 66.–68. lp.
rumours about strict demands from the UK for Romania to stop meeting demands of Germany etc. (on 24 April Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vilhelms Munters forwarded this part of the Envoy’s report to the President of Latvia) and about upcoming general mobilization etc. Ėķis likewise reported on an incident involving boats belonging to Greece and transporting German cargos along the Danube: after explosions on these boats British sailors were detected among their crews, German Legation had filed a protest and postulated demands in this regard. A Latvian businessman was said to be advised by the USSR’s Legation “to get out of Romania as soon as possible” without giving a reason. The Romanians were “rather optimistic” about the situation in the Baltic States at that time, considering these countries “as more or less protected from the direct misery of war”, however the Latvian Envoy had been inquired about the expected moves from the part of the Russians.424

In his report of 22 April Envoy Ėķis again underlined the nervous state, uncertainty of tomorrow and the preparations for defence in Bucharest. Charge d’affaires of the USSR in “a friendly discussion” had told him that “the Soviet Union did not need plots of land and it would not launch war for the sake of Bessarabia. Molotov in his speech had told Romanians loud and clear that he did not recognize the occupation of Bessarabia and thus the Romanians had to find a different possibility and way to resolve this matter. Russians were still waiting in vain for Romanians to come forward with proposals in this regard. But if something happened in this region, the Soviet Union would not remain a passive observer.” The Soviet official had spoken scornfully about the military preparedness of Romania: “What are they going to defend themselves with? Are they going to put living meat against steel and iron, like the Poles did? Apart from masses of haggard peasants in the famous Carol’s line Romanians have nothing else to counter well-armed forces with.” He also predicted “British provocations”, after which “things would get loose here as well”. At the same time the Soviet diplomat was lavish with praise of the Baltic States, which by reaching an agreement with the USSR “had safeguarded their positions and avoided the threat of war. He had said that he and his government often mentioned us [the Baltic States] as a paragon for the others (most likely for Romanians, too)”.425 Five days later – on 27 April – the Latvian Envoy reported on the ongoing German - Romanian economic talks, the continued influx of “tourists” from Germany and the other Western countries into Romania and rumours about the

424 LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 74.–76., 83. lp.
concentration of the German troops in Slovakia and elsewhere. However, according to Ēķis it was impossible to obtain any information from the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs because week-long Easter holidays had begun and air temperature had almost reached 30 degrees Celsius.\footnote{LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 90. lp.}

In his report of 14 May, under the influence of the events of the war in Europe, the Latvian Envoy was emotional. He wrote: “In this region the repercussions of the dramatic developments in Western Europe take the shape of grim contemplation, silent concern and consternation. One gets an occasional glimpse of joy and relief about the fact that this region (the south of Europe) was not the next one to be “grabbed by the throat” after Scandinavia [...] Yet there is general awareness here that sooner or later this region will face the same trial.” Envoy Ēķis also talked to many Romanian politicians and members of the diplomatic corps and drew conclusions. “A very high-ranking” official of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had remarked that the course of events in Europe and in its south-eastern part in particular was very serious and “one should be prepared for the worst,” yet one thing was clear: “Romania would fight even against superior force and on two fronts” (Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Munters had added a comment to this sentence: “Who believes it?!”). The same Romanian diplomat believed that Romania may loose the war and have to endure occupation, but the country already had experience in this regard and the ruling circles did not doubt much what the outcome of the war in Europe would be like. They thought that, although Germany had gained some very impressive victories and would gain more, it did not mean that the Allies were loosing the war. They relied that all things that are in human power to rectify, eventually would be put right. The ruling circles of Romania admitted that “nothing good was coming out” of the collective defence of the Balkan Entente, but were committed to do their utmost for their country to safeguard “absolute neutrality and to avoid engagement in warfare” although it seemed hardly possible. The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was confident that the moment was not right for Germany to launch war in the south as well.

The Latvian Envoy reported that in the light of what had happened in the course of the last few days (attack on Belgium and the Netherlands) the general mood in Romania was very nervous and Romania’s relations with the USSR had not improved from “the rather strained state” caused by Molotov’s speech on 29 March; Romanian Envoy was “cold-shouldered” in Moscow yet relations with Hungary had grown somewhat less strained. Ēķis remarked that “the mixture of rumours and truly alarming news
contributed to the nervous state” in Romania, the pressure of German propaganda was obvious and “for money many broke Romanian intellectuals were simply making the policies as dictated by Germans and brainwashing the youth and the most naïve part of the Romanian public”. He wrote: “The vanguards of the fifth column had already conquered very strong positions here and if war breaks out here, these internal forces, which are in the German service, will play a very important if not the decisive role.” He also commented on the struggle against the so-called German-speaking “tourists” and noted that the German language remained broadly used on the streets and in cafés and “everywhere where people got around” in Bucharest. Envoy Ēķis also described the parade of 10 May, remarking that it was less grand than usual, yet he had observed that some units looked well-armed and equipped. At the same time he admitted in province having seen completely ragged soldiers and sergeants of the gendarmerie corps wearing peasants’ leather footwear and gaiters. “But it is business as usual, as my colleagues who have worked here for some time say,” he added. In the same report Ēķis also mentioned that he was still expecting promised information from the Romanian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Transportation about the transit possibilities for Latvian cargos, yet voiced concern that “all this exploration may turn out to be in vain, if active warfare in the Mediterranean Sea and in the air began that was being anxiously expected here in the not very distant future.”

Envoy Ēķis attributed special attention to the issue of Polish military and civil refugees because at that time this issue was topical also for the Latvian government. He reported on the crossing of the Polish - Romanian border on 17 September, on the farewell of Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Josef Beck, on his contacts with Polish diplomats residing in Bucharest, on the mood of the Polish statesmen who were interned in Romania (including stories spread by Romanians’ about J. Beck’s addiction to alcohol and his sumptuous life-style), on the Poles’ attempts to flee from Romania etc.

Domestic situation in Romania

As late as 4 December 1939 the Latvian Envoy described the domestic situation in Romania as overshadowed by uncertainty about the future of the country’s economy (the new government had not yet decided on its economic policy either), which so far was still functioning rather well

---

428 More details about the published documents from the Latvian State Archives (LVVA) pertaining to this issue see: Jēkabsons 2010, 99–103.
that allowed the Envoy to assume that Latvia could trade with Romania if the transportation of goods could be arranged.\textsuperscript{429} On 9 December Ėķis reported on the alarming fires in the Romanian districts of oil fields and the peculiar competition between Germany and the other Western powers in the respective districts. In the same report he also predicted changes in Romania’s domestic policy: the King was behaving in a dictatorial manner as he appointed members of government without the approval of his former friend Prime Minister Tatarescu.\textsuperscript{430}

In late 1939 Ėķis described the situation in Romania as being “quite Polish-like”. He wrote: “Nobody knows exactly what tomorrow will bring and continues living in a devil-may-care manner, so to say”. In his report of early 1940 the Envoy noted that the National Revival Front was not having much success with the building of “national unity” because “the masses were indifferent”: the rural population did not care for what was going on outside the limits of their respective village, the urban proletariat was immersed in struggle against the rising cost of living, but merchants, aristocracy and even intellectuals had “plunged into profiteering”. Yet he observed that in spite of that shops were still full of goods and he interpreted it as a sign of Romania’s wealth. Ėķis reported having heard very unflattering things about the army, but mainly from foreigners, who, in his opinion “were not quite impartial”.\textsuperscript{431}

Starting from January 1940 Ėķis wrote reports rather regularly, compared to his first months in Bucharest. In these reports he covered various issues, such as the fortification of Romania’s borders by the authorities, mobilisation of reservists (on 6 March Ėķis observed that often the mobilised reservists returned back to the civil life soon after mobilisation thanks to a bribe of “a couple thousand lei”\textsuperscript{432}), commandeering of cars, rising prices, the governmental measures to stimulate production, the activities of the National Revival Front and its role in domestic politics (it was “aping after the Fascists and National Socialists with their uniforms salutes, etc.”, the Latvian Envoy wrote and voiced the opinion that in Romania “the building of the structure of the political organisation had started from the roof without concern for the foundations”), the possible change of Prime Ministers, the activities of leader of the National Farmers’ Party Iuliu Maniu (after this Party was cast into the shade Ėķis lost a valuable source of information: the Party’s Secretary General and former Minister of Finance Virgil Madgearu

\textsuperscript{429} LVVA, 2575. f., 7. apr., 2540. l., 6. lp. (L. Ėķis’ report of 23\textsuperscript{rd} December)
\textsuperscript{430} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 2., 3. lp.
\textsuperscript{431} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 6. lp. (reports of 30\textsuperscript{th} December and 15\textsuperscript{th} January)
\textsuperscript{432} LVVA, 2574. f., 4. apr., 7664. l., 58. lp.
was exiled to a monastery in the back country), changes for the better in February and March thanks to “the settling down of the foreign affairs”, transformations in the domestic policy in late March, the King’s and Heir’s to the Throne manner of reigning and behaviour, export embargo on grain and the planned further economic restrictions. As late as 14 May 1940 the Latvian Envoy wrote that nothing had changed in Romania’s economic life, prices continued to rise, but no shortage of either foreign or Romania-made goods was observed.433

The Closure of the Latvian Legation in Romania

On 17 June 1940 the Baltic States were occupied by the USSR. The occupant annihilated their independence by force and deceit, deliberately trying to avoid armed resistance: in the first phase of occupation it promised to respect the independence of the Baltic States under the condition that during the war they would remain allied with the Soviet Union or submit to its protection (the pretence ended only in the second half of July 1940 when it became obvious that annexation was being prepared but resistance was no longer possible). In the first phase of the occupation the Baltic diplomats abroad – L. Ēķis among them – continued to cooperate with the new governments of their respective formally still independent states (initially the entire staff of the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained in place).

On 4 July Envoy Ēķis wrote a detailed account of the public security regulations (including the penalties for their violation) that were issued by the Bucharest commandant’s office and clearly implied preparations for war. On 5 July he reported on the composition of the new government, its position on the key issues and the course of evacuation from the territories ceded to the Soviet Union. He also described the passionate debates in the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Commission on the ceding of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina and wrote that some politicians had called for military resistance against the USSR. The Latvian Envoy ended this report with the following words: “Strong efforts are exerted to put down the rumours, but there is an endless amount of rumours in the air, which fact points to the somewhat nervous state of the population. The political orientation of Romania is now making a sharp turn towards the “Axis states” hoping thus to salvage what there still remains to be salvaged. We may expect all

kinds of surprises and changes.”  

On 23 July the Latvian Envoy was received by Romania’s Minister of Foreign Affairs M. Manoilescu. In the discussion with him Envoy Ēķis rejected information spread by the Soviet side as “fantastic lie” and asked for any “possible support” that would allow him to “demonstrate the truth”. This tragic step, which could yield no result at that moment, marked the end of the first phase of Latvia-Romania relations. Romania was forced officially to recognise the pro-Soviet government formed in Riga. However the Romanian Foreign Affairs Ministry continued to co-operate with Ēķis: it advised him to resign from Envoy’s post on his own initiative thus allowing the Romanian officials to take over the Legation’s archives and promised him diplomatic immunity. At the same time Envoy Ēķis admitted that the USSR Legation was putting pressure on Romanians in this regard. On 10 August he officially resigned from the post of Latvia’s Envoy. On 16 August Romania’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that it could not take over the Legation’s archives and had to hand them over to the Soviet Legation. On 18 August Ēķis in the capacity of a private person handed the Legation’s archives over to another private person – the Legation’s secretary V. Āboltiņš. A part of the archives was burned and another part with the help of diplomats of friendly countries was sent to Budapest where L. Ēķis, too, resided for some time.

**Conclusions**

The general conclusion to be drawn from the above-said is that the final phase of Latvia - Romania relations, i.e. 1939 - 1940 was an extremely difficult period both for Latvia and Romania. This conclusion clearly follows from the reports of Envoy Ēķis on his activities, observations and talks with Romanian statesmen and diplomats.

The activities of Envoy Ēķis can hardly be described as very crucial from diplomatic perspective. First, the level of bilateral co-operation achieved in the previous years could not be recognised as adequate for countries that in a large extent shared similar geopolitical situation. Second, in the respective period the war, which had already broken out, increasingly burdened the bilateral contacts. However, the Latvian Envoy’s reports reveal striking similarities in the destinies of the two countries and nations in the tragic time. These reports also confirm the view dominating

---

435 Anghel, 94. lpp.
in Romanian historiography on the respective processes and events and probably add new aspects to it (through the expressions of Romanian statesmen, through Ėķis’ “bystander’s view” and through his discussions with the diplomats of other countries, such as Germany and the USSR.).

References:

A. Archives:
Latvijas Ārlietu ministrijas arhīvs [Archives of Foreign Affairs’ Ministry of Latvia]
- folder: Londonas arhīvs, 490
Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs [State Historical Archives of Latvia]:
- folders: 1148, 2540, 2570, 2574, 2575, 3235, 3601, 5601, 7664

B. Newspapers:
- Latvijas Kareivis, 1931
- Universitas, 1939
- Valdības Vēstnesis, 1920

C. Books and articles:
YEARS FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN FINLAND AND ROMANIA: EXHIBITION OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The National Museum of Romanian History, June 30, 2010
State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bogdan Mazuru’s Address
on the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the
Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Finland
and Romania

Madame Ambassador, Your Excellencies, Dear Guests,

It is an honour and a special pleasure to address, on the occasion of this anniversary moment of Romania’s diplomatic relations with the Republic of Finland, the best regards and peace and prosperity wishes to the Finnish and Romanian people.

The celebration of 90 years of Romanian-Finnish diplomatic relations gives me the pleasant opportunity to remember the remarkable events that brought the Romanian and Finnish people closer throughout the years.

The début of the diplomatic relations between Romania and Finland is marked by the initiative of the Finnish citizen Edvard Evensen, a merchant from Helsingfors (the old name of the capital Helsinki), who, on 14 June 1890, wrote a letter to the plenipotentiary minister of Romania in Sankt Petersburg, Emil Ghika, proposing the creation of a consular representation of Romania in that city and undertaking the responsibility of managing it. Obviously, the consulate would have been subordinated to the Romanian legation in the capital of the Russian Empire, as Finland was then a Russian guberniya.

On 11 October 1890, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexandru N. Lahovary, informed St. Petersburg of the favourable endorsement of the Romanian authorities and Mr. Evensen was appointed vice-consul of the Kingdom of Romania and was accepted by the Tzar of Russia, Alexander III (17 June 1891).

It was the first diplomatic representation of Romania in Finland, which on 6 December 1917 proclaimed its independence. The next one was the Legation of Romania, which was established in the years immediately following the First World War.

The Legation of Finland in Bucharest was established in the summer of 1920 and it was led by Väinö Tanner, first in capacity of
chargé d’affairs, then envoy extraordinaire and plenipotentiary minister, as of 26 June 1921, when he submitted the credentials in this official capacity.

Thus we notice that the end of the First World War was to bring fundamental events to the political life of the two states: the unification of Bessarabia, Bucovina and Transylvania with the Kingdom of Romania and the creation of Great Romania (1 December 1918), respectively the proclamation of Finland’s independence, recognized by the Soviet Union on 31 December 1917. The young independent state of Finland was proclaimed Republic on 17 July 1919. **Romania was one of the first countries that, in the spring of 1920, recognized the independent and sovereign Finnish state.**

As a matter of fact, this year we also celebrated the 90th anniversary of the recognition of Finland’s independence by Romania. To mark this moment, on 8 April 2010, at Târgovişte, a remarkable exhibition of historic documents was organized and the book “*O conceptie românească asupra nordului, sec. XIX-XX*” (en. *A Romanian View of the North, 19th and 20th Century*) having Silviu Miloiu, Oana Lăculiceanu and Elena Dragomir as authors was launched, all this under the patronage of Madame Irmeli Mustonen, Ambassador Extraordinaire and Plenipotentiary of Finland in Bucharest and with the enthusiastic support of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies and National Museal Complex *Curtea Domnească* of Târgovişte. The event has enjoyed a great deal of attention from the diplomatic body accredited in Romania, from the academic and university medium and also from the local authorities. Such events are meant to reunite the cultural and historic values of our countries and to create perspectives to enrich and diversify the cultural cooperation between Romania and Finland.

**Honourable Audience,**

The Romanian-Finnish bilateral relations have been developing at a fast pace. Under political aspect, the relations are excellent, the dialogue at high presidential, parliamentary and governmental level, but also at technical level being carried out according to a busy schedule. On 9 June 2008, Madame President Tarja Halonen visited Romania at the invitation of Traian Băsescu, the President of Romania. The two heads-of-state decided to intensify the dialogue between our countries on the topic of the new EU neighbours, the South-Eastern European space and Black Sea area, as well as on topics of mutual interest on the European agenda.

We may say that between Romania and Finland there is an affinity and a desire to become closer that contributed, throughout the years, to the
intensification and diversification of the diplomatic, economic and cultural relations.

The economic relations follow an upward trend but the trade has not yet reached the level that we would like. There is a real interest for the intensification and diversification of the contacts between economic operators, professional associations, chambers of commerce, as well as for organization of specialized economic missions in the two countries. It depends on us to efficiently use the commercial potential existing between Romania and Finland, to increase the number of Finnish investments in our country and to encourage the business people in Romania to be more dynamic and to enter the Finnish market. Romania is interested in benefiting from the Finnish expertise in the field of research and intensifying the cooperation in the fields of innovation and technology of the future.

On 31 December 2009 the total volume of Romanian-Finnish trade exchanges has reached the amount of 206 million Euros. Romania and Finland have the potential for strengthening the economic cooperation. It gives me pleasure to underline the presence of Finnish investors on the Romanian market, amongst which the most important is Nokia. The signing on 26 March 2007 in Bucharest, of a Memorandum of Understanding between Cluj County Council and Nokia Company regarding the establishment of an industrial park, respectively the building of a mobile telephone production unit in Jucu Commune led to the achievement of the most important Finnish investment in Romania. We can also singularize other Finnish companies that are investing in Romania, such as Rautaruukki (Ruukki) manufacturer of integrated metal systems, which established its headquarters in Giurgiu, UPM-Kymmene Corporation, OMX Group, Automaster OY, the Finnish Group Consolis manufacturer of prefabs, etc. We appreciate the presence of the Finnish investors on the Romanian market and, at the same time, we encourage Finnish economic operators to also use the free trade areas on the banks of Danube and in Constanta harbour, in order to facilitate the transport of goods.

**Madame Ambassador, Your Excellencies, Dear Guests,**

In conclusion, I wish to remind you that Romania found in Finland a reliable friend and partner that supported us in our path towards the European Union and shared the Romanian people’s aspirations to accede to the great family of the united Europe. The decision to begin negotiations with Romania was adopted by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999 and that of completing the process was adopted also during the Finnish
Presidency of the European Council, in the second half of 2006. Thus, the process of accession of Romania to the EU was carried out “from Helsinki to Helsinki”.

Thank you very much
Happy Anniversary Finland! Happy Anniversary Romania!
Speech by H.E. Ambassador of Finland
Ms. Irmeli Mustonen
on the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the
Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Finland
and Romania

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you today to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Romania and Finland. It is particularly pleasant to see that so many friends of Finland have followed the invitation in spite of the starting holiday season.

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the National History Museum for organizing and hosting this event at this beautiful and historic venue. I would also like to extend my special thanks to the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, whose representatives have done a great job putting together the exhibition of documents that surround us, presenting many of the milestones of Romanian-Finnish relations, and thus making history more palpable.

The development of the Romanian–Finnish relations is very well illustrated by these documents. They introduce different areas and levels of contacts between Romanians and Finns. Their source is not only the archives of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of both countries, but also many other archives, in which the main authors of this Exhibition, Mr. Silviu Miloiu and Ms. Elena Dragomir, have been conducting some remarkable research activity over the years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although few occasional contacts between Finns and Romanians had existed even in earlier centuries, establishing official bilateral relations between the two countries became possible only after the end of the First World War, bringing about some major geopolitical changes in Europe.

Finland declared its independence on 6 December 1917, and very soon our Government presented official requests for the recognition of its independence to other countries. The Kingdom of Romania, whose
territory had been significantly enlarged as a result of the war, was among the first to be approached. The Finnish request was confirmed by the Government of Romania on April 8, 1920. The establishment of diplomatic relations followed about three months later, when the first Finnish diplomat to Romania, Mr. Väinö Tanner, was officially accredited as chargé d’affaires in Bucharest on 28 June 1920 – the occasion we are commemorating here today. Through its appointment Romania became one of the first countries hosting a Finnish Embassy.

After a very intensive start 90 years ago, when both nations were striving to consolidate their newly acquired favorable status on the international scene, the bilateral relations between Romania and Finland have seen periods of varying activity, most often related to the international context of the moment. Besides the official political and diplomatic relations, contacts between our nations have been developing early on also, for instance, in the cultural and economic fields, the overall trend in our relations being definitely an ascending one.

The most recent upswing was brought about by the accession of Romania to the European Union three and a half years ago – and I like to recall, after a process that was opened by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999, during the Finnish Presidency of the EU, and finalized during our EU Presidency in 2006. - During the last few years we have also been witnessing a steady increase of Finnish investments in Romania, for example in the fields of information technology and forestry. Whatever area of activity you take into consideration, we see a similar pattern, that is, relations between Romania and Finland, between Romanians and Finns, are becoming closer and more and more active.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the troubled times when the first steps were taken to establish official relations between Romania and Finland, not only both our countries, but also Europe as a whole, have undeniably come a long way, undergoing dramatic changes to the better. Close to a century ago our two nations were seeking each other’s support mostly in order to tackle some common external threats. Today we stand side by side, united in a large European family, together with many other partner countries, all sharing the same fundamental values and working together for a peaceful and prosperous European future.

I hope that this Exhibition today will find your appreciation – and, for its part, will contribute to the further strengthening of the ties between our two countries, following the lines that were laid down nine decades ago.
Speech by President of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies

Dr. Silviu Miloiu

on the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Finland and Romania

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I use this opportunity to thank you on behalf of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies for your participation at the opening of this exhibition destined to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Romanian-Finnish diplomatic relations. I would also like to express our gratitude to those who have been involved with us in the event organization. Set up in 2008, our association has as a fundamental goal the promotion of research activities and knowledge in the field of Baltic and Nordic Studies and the offering of incentives for initiatives meant to develop the cooperation between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea regions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The opening of this exhibition – which speaks for itself of some of the most important stages and events that have marked the history of the Romanian-Finnish relations – offers us the occasion of a brief review of the ties between the two nations.

As mid-sized nations, for the most part of their history, their contacts with people outside their neighbourhood have been meager. Eventually, a series of domestic and international developments have contributed to the deepening thereof. Thus, the consular relations between the two states have been established on 17 November 1890 in the Russification era taken place both in the Grand Duchy of Finland and in Bessarabia; the Vice-Consulate was upgraded to Consulate on 26 January 1898 and to General Consulate on 20 May 1926. During the interwar period, Finland has also opened an honorary Consulate in Bucharest.
During World War I, one of the personalities that will play an outstanding role in Finnish history, General Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim, struggled on the Romanian front starting with December 1916. Initially at command of the Russian 12th Cavalry Division, Mannerheim’s assignment was to defend a frontline situated 40 km north of Focșani reporting to the commander of the 2nd Romanian Army, General Alexandru Averescu.

Eventually, Mannerheim became in charge of the Vrancea Group consisting of four mixed Russian and Romanian cavalry divisions, two infantry divisions and an infantry brigade. In the battles of December 1916 and January 1917, Mannerheim contributed to the stabilization of the mountain front crossed by rivers Şuşiţa and Putna. One year later, on 6 December 1917, Finland was proclaimed an independent state, and after another year, Mannerheim became the regent of Finland. The Finnish Government requested the official recognition of its independence from Romania, recognition which was delayed due to the circumstances in which the two countries found themselves at the end of the Great War.

Ultimately, the Finnish endeavours to gain the recognition of its independence arose from the Liberal circles that perceived Soviet Russia and Germany as the two major threats for their country’s independence. They envisaged, as proven by the Finnish plans of May and August 1919, the creation of a “diagonal league” to encompass all countries from Finland in the North to Poland and Romania in the South, with the Baltic states, Ukraine, White Russia and Czechoslovakia included. The repeated requests of the Finnish Foreign Minister, Rudolf Holsti, received a favourable answer when his Romanian counterpart, Take Ionescu, the founder of the Little Entente, accepted the idea of getting Finland into a Central European block of states. On 5 April 1920 a telegram of the Romanian Foreign Ministry complied with the Finnish requests of recognizing their independence. The first Finnish diplomat assigned to Bucharest was Väinö Tanner (June 1920), while the first Romanian diplomat accredited to Helsinki was Dimitrie Plesnilă (February 1921).

Starting from Romania, Finland opened its ties and contacts with the states of South-Eastern Europe following Väinö Tanner’s visits in the area. Plans for concluding a political alliance and a trade treaty have become an important element on the two states’ agenda.

The removal from power of the two artisans of the Romanian-Finnish bonds, Holsti and Ionescu, the difficult post-war economic situation and the changes occurring in the Finnish foreign policy resulted into a weakening of the ties between the two countries.

For instance, the economic relations between the two nations have never reached a significant level of goods exchange. In 1920 they only
reached 62,000 Finnish marks (about 21,713 Euros) and at its peak, in 1934, they have barely exceeded 1 million Euros.

The accreditation of Raoul Bossy as plenipotentiary Minister to Helsinki, on February 1, 1934, has contributed to progresses in the cultural field between the two states. The organization of the two art exhibitions in Helsinki and Bucharest and the publication of two works by Finnish authors with regard to Romania (bearing the signatures of Väinö Tanner and V.J. Mansikka) or by Romanian authors about Finland (the most important one signed by Raoul V. Bossy himself) marked the start of a new stage in the two nations’ knowledge of each other. In fact, the Finnish Legation in Bucharest will reopen on 1 June 1939.

Both Romania (its Eastern province of Bessarabia) and Finland were included in the Soviet-German division of spheres of influence in Central Europe – herein understood as the area situated in-between the two Great Powers – of 23 August 1939. The Romanian Foreign Ministry, the General Staff, the Academy and the public opinion carefully witnessed the events prefacing and marking the Winter War, their feelings being divided between the sincere sympathy for the Finnish cause and the relief that the Finnish resistance postponed the predictable outcome of the Soviet pretensions on Romania.

Eventually, willing to reconstitute their territorial and national integrity and influenced by very painful recent traumas, both countries joined in the German aggression against Soviet Union. Even if their domestic policies differed in that period, the recognition by their leadership of the similarities in their international situation and the desire to safeguard their common interests will bring about close relations between the two states. The exchange of political views, a meeting in Berlin between their foreign ministers in the autumn of 1941, the transfer of military and security information, the development of their cultural and commercial ties marked a new climax in the relations between the two nations.

The cultural relations have also reached the peak of their development. As such, a Romanian lectureship was set up in Helsinki, associations for friendship at the highest level were created, a significant number of conferences, concerts, movie screenings, theatrical performances, radio conferences, translations, books publishing, journalists visits occurred. In 1942 the first translation of Kalevala, made by Barbu Brezianu and prefaced by Ion Marin Sadoveanu, appeared in Bucharest. Romanian personalities such as the writer Liviu Rebreanu, the pianist and conductor Sergiu Celibidache, the pianists Silvia Şerbescu and Dinu Lipatti, the dancer Iris Barbura, the violinist Virgil Pop delighted the Finnish audience with their concerts and conferences.
The same can be said about Finnish visitors of Romania such as the famous conductor Georg Schneevoight, friend of composer Jean Sibelius, Ragmar Numelin or Professor V.J. Mansikka. The premiere of the play *Veste Bună* (Good News) of Mircea Ștefănescu at the Finnish National Theatre on September 10, 1943, with the daughter of Sibelius, Ruth Snellman, and Urho Somersalmi and Unto Salminen featuring the main characters, marked one of the climaxes of the Romanian spiritual presences in Finland.

The deepening of the mutual knowledge and cultural exchanges is also traceable in the significant number of decorations awarded to Finnish and Romanian personalities who played an important role in the process.

The two countries’ withdrawal from war happened approximately in the same period (the months of August and September) and the United Nations’ armistice with Finland was modelled by the text of the truce with Romania. However, after the end of the Second World War, Romania entered into the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence and became a ‘popular democracy’, while Finland kept its democratic edifice, but was forced to make compromises in the field of its foreign policy.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

I hope that the exhibition which we can see today will offer you the satisfaction of exploring more closely the history of the relations between the two states and of discovering the interest the two nations have shown to each other in the past two centuries.

Thank you very much for your attention!
Revista Română pentru Studii Baltice și Nordice – The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies is a biannual peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing the results of research in all fields which are intertwined with the aims of The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies such as:

- History of Baltic and Nordic Europe;
- Baltic and Nordic Europe in International Relations;
- Baltic and Nordic Cultures and Civilizations;
- Economics of Baltic and Nordic Europe;
- Relations between Romania and the Baltic and Nordic Europe;
- Relations and links between the Black and Baltic sea;

The journal has been established with the aim of fostering research and dialogue among scholars working in Romania and abroad in fields of research related to the interests of ARSBN. In the interest of pluralism, RRSBN accepts contributions in English or any other major European languages. In order to promote the knowledge of the Baltic and Nordic languages and cultures in South-Eastern Europe, additional issues of the journal may be published on the internet with articles in any of the Baltic or Nordic languages or in Romanian, case in which a different ISSN and numbering system will be used. The general submission guidelines apply in this case two, except for the English language abstracts which must consist of some 300 to 400 words.

We are eager and honored to open our pages to all both senior and young scholars engaged in studies regarding the Baltic and Nordic Europe and Romania’s relations with these regions, along with any reviews on other published books and articles calling attention. Our journal will also host reviews of any scholarly events focusing on any of the themes of the Association.

Submission Guidelines:

- Articles should be submitted as email attachments in Microsoft Word format to the Editorial secretary (Ioan Bodnar) at editorial@arsbn.ro.
- Contributions must be original and should not be under consideration by any other publication at the time of their submission. A cover letter in this sense should accompany the manuscript.
- The maximum length for consideration of an article is 6,000 – 12,000 words (including footnotes), and 700 – 1,000 words for a review.
- Please submit double-spaced papers in 11-point Book Antiqua font with 2 cm margins. Footnotes should be in 9-point.
- All research articles must include a 100-200 word English language abstract (and in Romanian or one of the Nordic and Baltic languages when applicable) and at least five English language key words.
- Submissions should include complete bibliographic references (including page numbers) in footnotes.
- Final bibliography should be inserted at the end of the article.
- For general rules of grammar, form, and style, authors should refer to The Chicago Manual of Style (The University of Chicago Press).
- All manuscripts will be subject to anonymous peer review, and will be evaluated on the basis of their creativity, quality of scholarship, and contribution to advancing the understanding of the regions concerned.

Further reading at: http://www.arsbn.ro/submission-guidelines.htm