

INFORMATION ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ANNEXATION OF BUCOVINA, THAT APPEARED IN AN ITALIAN PERIODICAL

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The international circumstances in which the Austrian Monarchy annexed the Northwestern part of Moldavia, later on called “Bucovina”, as well as the different aspects, mostly technical, of the execution of this annexation, have been, for a long time, the favourite subject of many scholars and specialists in the field of international relations as well as of amateurs of good or less good will. Though, in time, a vast bibliography on the matter has been gathered¹, still, we cannot say that all the sources of information have been studied – an objective that cannot actually be undertaken as such. This is also proven by the present attempt to bring into discussion and to the attention of the specialists new information that has not been taken into consideration so far, in the perspective to go into deeper research. The more that, it is well-known that the annexation of “Bucovina” was one of the most obvious effects of the crisis in the European political system, in the second half of the XVIIIth century.

The information I wish to underline was written in an Italian periodical – *Gazzetta di Napoli*² – and put at the disposal of the Italian public opinion, and not only, by the numerous correspondents from the “middle of the action”, where they

¹ For a general view, see in the bibliography, the well-known contributions of Erich Bek, *Bibliographie zur Landeskunde der Bukowina. Literatur bis zum Jahre 1965*, München, 1966, and *Bibliographie zur Kultur und Landeskunde der Bukowina. Literatur aus dem Jahren 1967–1965*, Dortmund, 1985; from the recent approaches, see also Veniamin Ciobanu, *La granița a trei imperii*, Editura Junimea, Iași, 1985, p. 11 and the next; Paul Cernovodeanu, *The Taking Away of Bukovina (1775) and the Assassination of Grigore II Ghica of Moldavia as Highlighted in English Diplomatic Reports of the Time*, in “Revue Roumaine d’Histoire”, 3–4, 1994, p. 275 and the next and footnote 1, for bibliographical information; Mihai-Ștefan Ceașu, *Bucovina Habsburgică. De la anexare la Congresul de la Viena*, Fundația Academică “A.D. Xenopol”, Iași, 1998, p. 49 and the next, as well as p. 60, footnote 29, for bibliographical information.

² I have consulted only 33 issues from 1775, that I found in *Archivio di Stato di Napoli*, fond *Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, busta 6770; in each issue it is mentioned that the gazette appeared “*In Napoli Presso Vincenzo Flauto. Impressore di Sua Maestà (Dio Guardi) con Privilegio*”; the texts have been reproduced, in the original orthography and punctuation.

could watch the events taking place live or indirectly, thus having a high degree of authenticity and consequently proper to be used as sources, even if auxiliary, in the scientific research. Two groups can be formed according to the content, one about the geographical position, population, economic power or the actual operations that influenced the annexation of the future “Bucovina”, and one about the international circumstances of the annexation as regarded the relations between the powers involved directly or indirectly in the Austrian aggression.

The series of news belonging to the first category opens with some news sent from Lwów, on the 15th of November 1774. On that date, the correspondent noticed, “*non v'è più dubbio su le conquiste degli Austriaci in Moldavia*”.³ As the correspondent had found out, the “Conquest” had been preceded by another action, meaning that “*le Piazze, che debbono restare alla Corte di Vienna sono già state riconosciute da tre Ufficiali dello Stato Maggiore, uno dei quali è il Maggior Wich*”.⁴ The certitude of the occupation was suggested by the fact that “*il Governo (Austrian – n.Ven.C.) vi ha già posta una sufficiente guernigione con un bataglione di Campagna, ed un Regimento d'Usseri*”.⁵ Later on, from Vienna, on the 31st of December 1774, it was announced that the military forces that had been sent by the Austrians to occupy northeastern Moldavia included four battalions, probably infantry, and four regiments of hussars.⁶ The details on this matter could be read in the letters from Vienna, 21st of January 1775, and Warsaw, on the 28th of January, same year. From the former, the readers learned that the Austrian troops “*erigono dei Forti nei nuovi acquisti fatti nella Moldavia, onde assicurarsi le sue novelle conquiste*”.⁷ The correspondent in Warsaw had learned, even more, that “*i trenta mila uomini di truppe Austriache sotto gli ordini del Generale Elrichshaufen, il quale ha occupato una parte della Moldavia, si è ora accampato in quella provincia e vi si è trincerato*”.⁸

³ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num.2, De' 10 Gennaio 1775, in *loc. cit.*, *fond. cit.*

⁴ *Loc. cit.*; in reality, Major Friedrich von Mieg who had arrived in the northwest of Moldavia in September 1774, as a chief of one of the two “teams” sent by emperor Josef II to look over the territory and to fill in a questionnaire written by the emperor himself; the other team was led by Colonel Karl, baron von Enzberg, commander of Regiment 2 of Romanian Infantry in Transylvania (for details, Veniamin Ciobanu, *op. cit.*, p. 25-26; Mihai Ștefan Ceașu, *op. cit.*, p. 52-55); the mission of “Wick”, alias Mieg, was mentioned in issue number 1, on the 3rd of January 1775, which included a letter, “Dalla Wistola”, from the 30th of November 1774 (cf. *loc. cit.*)

⁵ *Loc. cit.*, no.2, from the 10th of January 1775.

⁶ *Loc. cit.*, no. 3, from the 20th of January 1775; mail, dated “Leiden”, 22nd of December 1774, mentioned eight battalions of infantry and four regiments of hussars (cf. *loc. cit.*, no. 4, from the 22nd of January 1775).

⁷ *Loc. cit.*, no. 7, from the 14th of February 1775.

⁸ Probably General Elrichshausen, “Chief of the Military Forces of Galitia. who, on the 6th of January 1775, had suggested that “the new imperial acquisition be called *Moldauischen Generalat*”, proposal that was rejected by the War Council in Vienna, as not opportune (cf. Mihai-Ștefan Ceașu, *op. cit.*, p. 63).

⁹ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Straordinario*, Num. 10 De' 10. Marzo 1775.

The territory occupied by the Austrians, during the first stage of the annexations operations, that is by the end of 1774 and the beginning of the following year, according to the correspondents of *Napoli Gazette*, had 150 square miles, the land being “*montuoso, e pieno di boschi*”,¹⁰ or, according to another correspondent, in Poland, “*la maggior parte coperta di Foresti*”.¹¹ In “*il Distretto, di cui le Truppe Austriache hanno preso solennemente possesso nella Moldavia*”, that “*è situato tra la Transilvania, e la Polonia*”, but, according to the news from Poland, on the 30th of December 1774, 120 villages were “*poco popolati*”.¹² Still, the correspondent was sure that “*ma vi si va ricevendo un gran numero di Moldavi, che vi si portano ad abitare, per sottrarsi alla vendetta degli Ottomani irritati contro di essi, perchè han preso il partito Russo durante l'ultima guerra*”,¹³ that is the war between the Russians and the Turkish that had just ended with the peace from Küciük-Kainargi. It was actually one of the objectives in the demographical and economical policies of the Austrian Monarchy, as long as “*non si manca di dare ogni sorta di soccorso a questi nuovi abitanti, con' quali si cercherà di formare una buona Colonia di Agricoltori*”.¹⁴ On the other hand, the correspondent from Vienna, on the 21st of January 1775, offered some more information on this matter. Namely that the occupied territory, although it included 120 villages, “*ora è quasi tutto deserto per la guerra ora terminata*”.¹⁵ But he was sure that the desolate state of the territory was only temporary, as it was to be “*ben presto ripopolato, ritornando in copia li fuggiri abitanti, ben contenti di essere sotto il dominio Austriaco*”.¹⁶

The actions of the Austrians took place at the same time with continuous movements of the Russian troops, settled in the Romanian Principates, especially in Moldavia and the South of Poland, fact that attracted the attention of the correspondents from *Naples Gazette*.¹⁷ Some of them tried to make out the purpose or purposes of those movements, as transmitted from Podolia, on the 7th of January 1775, “*il passaggio di tante Truppe cagiona una gran carestia, e le Provincie dalla soldatesca occupate, sebbene sieno fertilissime, potranno a grande stento provvederla di viveri*”.¹⁸ It was suggested that the Russian army, settled in the

¹⁰ *Loc.cit.*, Foglio Ordinario, Num. 1, De' 3. Gennajo 1775.

¹¹ *Loc.cit.*; see also *loc.cit.*, no. 2, from the 10th of January 1775.

¹² *Loc.cit.*, no. 7, from the 14th of February 1775.

¹³ *Loc.cit.*

¹⁴ *Loc.cit.*

¹⁵ *Loc.cit.*

¹⁶ *Loc.cit.*

¹⁷ Cf., *loc.cit.*, no. 1, from the 3rd of January 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 2, from the 10th of January 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 4, from the 24th of January 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 6, from the 7th of February 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 7, from the 14th of February 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 8, from the 21st of February 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 11, from the 17th of March 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 16, from the 18th of April 1775.

¹⁸ *Loc.cit.*, no. 11, from the 14th of March 1775.

South of Poland, had the mission to watch over the actions of the Austrians, as well as of the Turkish,¹⁹ determined by the Austrian aggressive actions in Moldavia. The correspondent from Poland offered some details regarding this matter on the 2nd of February 1775. At that date he wrote “*pare che gli affari della Moldavia restino tuttavia nella medesima situazione*”, and added: “*una lettera di Berszachi (Brest? – n.Ven.C.) nell’ Ukraina, quattro millia lunghi dalle Frontiere di quel principato, avvisa che i reggimenti Russi, i quali erano in marcia per varie strade, affm di far ritorno dagli stati della Porta (Moldavia and Valachia – n. Ven.C.) ne’ loro paesi, avevano improvvidamente fatto alto coll’idea di ripassare nuovamente il Niester. Il motivo di questo inaspettato contrordine ancor non si sa; e gli ufficiali stessi si meravigliano di non essere stati seguiti dal Maresciallo Conte di Romanzow, il quale si era veramente posto in cammino, non poco dopo è ritornato addietro. V’ha chi vuole, che i medesimi Turchi abbiano pregati i Russi a non allontanarsi dal loro quartieri*”.²⁰

Thus, the commander of the Russian forces of occupation, settled in Moldavia, was the Field Marshal Peter Alexeevici Rumiantev, the one who finally decided the fate of the Northwest Moldavia. The role he played under those circumstances was analysed and judged by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette as well. His double play was noticed by the correspondent from Hungary, who, on the 30th of November 1774 informed “*il Pachá di Silistria, informato dell’entrata delle Truppe Austriache nel Distretto di Bokujuz in Moldavia (Bucovina?; Botoşani? – n.Ven.C.) fece dimandare al Comandante Russo in Valachia (P.A. Rumiantev – n.Ven.C.) il motivo, per cui gli Austriaci avevano occupato il detto Territorio. Questo protestando di non essere informato, mandò il Corriere del detto Pacha al Comandante Generale dell’Imperadrice Regina in Transilvania, e quest’ ultimo lo mandò ancor più lontano, cioè al Generale Comandante nel Regno di Gallicia; in maniera che non si è potuto sapere fin’ora quale risposta ne abbia ripostato*”.²¹ But another correspondent had found out some other details that proved that the Russian Field marshal had been the

¹⁹ *Loc.cit.*, no. 12, from the 21st of March 1775.

²⁰ *Loc.cit.*

²¹ *Loc.cit.*, no. 3, from the 17th of January 1775; according to a report sent on the 3rd of November 1774, by the ambassador of Great Britain at the Ottoman Porte, John Murray, the Porte demanded the Secretary of the Russian Diplomatic Mission in Istanbul to inform “*why Mr. Romanzow permitted them (the Austrians – n.Ven.C.) to enter (Moldavia – n.Ven.C.); he answered, that they were in a Part of Moldavia where the Russian troops had never been*” (cf. Paul Cernovodeanu, *op.cit.*, p. 278); not true, but also nonchalantly stated by P.A. Rumiantev himself, who, as is known, declared that “*la Russie n’avait jamais été en possession des parties de la Moldavie et de la Valachie qu’ils (the Austrians – n.Ven.C.) réclament*”; but the Turkish did not find it difficult to prove the opposite, bringing the most powerful argument, *i.e.*, “*des mandements d’impositions sur ces districts*” (cf. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*. Supplement I, Volume III, 1709–1812. Documents from the Archive of the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Paris, gathered by A.I. Odobescu, Bucureşti, 1889, p. 29) (here. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I₃).

one to have helped the Austrian aggression, details explained in a correspondence dated “Leiden, 22 Dicembre” 1774. Because, “*il Maresciallo Conte di Romanzow ha ricevuto recentemente da Sua Maestà l’Imperadore (Joseph II – n.Ven.C.) un contrasiegno (sic!) ben luminoso della stima di esso Monarca; il quale gli ha regalata una tabachiera d’oro guernita di brillanti con una somma di 5.m. zecchini*”.²² But the above mentioned letter contains a piece of information that had never been mentioned before in another sources, namely that P.A.Rumiantev received, at that time, from the Emperor “*ed una lettera scritta di proprio suo pugno con cui, congratulandosi seco della pace conchiusa in un modo sì glorioso per la Russia (from Küciük-Kainargi – n.Ven.C.), gli dimostra insiemen la sua riconoscenza per l’esatta disciplina, in che il detto Maresciallo ha tenute, durante il corso della guerra (Russian-Turkish, 1768–1774 – n.Ven.C.), le sue truppe sulle frontiere degli Stati Austriaci, come altresì pel (sic!) grazioso accoglimento, ch’egli ha fatto, e per le attenzioni, che ha usate verso i Volontari, a lui raccomandati dalla Corte di Vienna*”.²³

The readers of the Naples Gazette could notice that Rumiantev’s deed, far from being condemned, it was “*in compenso de’ servigi segnalati ricevute dal Felt Maresciallo Conte di Romanzow l’ha dichiarato Generalissimo delle sue Armate*”.²⁴ He would also make a merit of other things, especially of the way he succeeded in stopping the Austrians from taking over the Hotin Castle and the *raia* as that intention overpassed the limits of the Austrian annexations that Russia was willing to accept.²⁵

The matter regarding the rule of Hotin was actually the “hottest” question in the political crisis, started by the Austrian aggressive actions over Moldavia, as related to the Austrian-Turkish relations, but also to the Austrian-Russian ones. The correspondents of the Naples Gazette saw it in the same light and for this reason they followed as closely as they could the evolution of this conflict, which was actually in the public attention. As the correspondent from Warsaw transmitted, on the 11th of January 1775, “*è voce pubblica, che l’Internunzio della Corte di Vienna a*

²² *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 4, De’24 Gennajo 1775.

²³ *Loc.cit.*; the information was confirmed as well by the correspondent in Vienna who informed, on the 31st of December 1774, that apart from the cigarette box and the 5,000 zekins, Joseph II also sent “*ed una Lettera scritta di sua propria mano, nella quale gli ratifica la sua riconoscenza per la esatta disciplina, fatta osservare alle sue truppe sulle frontiere degli Stati Austriaci, come pure della gentile accoglienza e delle attenzioni usati cogli Officiali (sic!) volontari che nostra Corte gli aveva raccomandati*” (cf. *loc.cit.*)

²⁴ *Loc.cit.* (correspondența datată, Altona, 21 decembrie 1774).

²⁵ As the Venetian correspondent at the Porte, Paolo Renier, knew “*il Maresciallo Romanzow con una porzione delle sue Truppe non si pose molto distante dall’ confini della Moldavia per mostrare alla Corte di Vienna che la Imperatrice Czarina non lasciava quella Provincia alla discrezione Cesarea* (cf. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, Volume IX, Part 2. 1751–1796, București, 1899. p. 101) (here, Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, IX₂); for details on the Russian policy regarding this matter, see also Veniamin Ciobanu, *op. cit.*, p. 30 and the next.

Costantinopoli (Johann Amadeus Franz, baron von Thugut – n.Ven.C.) *fu incaricato di negoziar con la Porta la cessione di Coczim alla Casa d’Austria*”.²⁶ But the correspondent had also found out the hidden motivations of this action, informing the readers of the Gazette that, for Austria, “*il possesso di tal Piazza sarebbe necessario per coprire da quella parte gli acquisti, ch’essa ha fatto nella Polonia, e nella Moldavia*”.²⁷ With the purpose of forcing the Turkish, of course, “*intanto un Corpo di Truppa Austriaca è tuttora accompagnata in vicinato di detta Piazza*”.²⁸ Stil, the Austrians could not get closer to the Castle, as there was a Russian garrison, belonging to the army led by the Field Marshal Rumiantsev. And the Russians, “*ben lunghi dall’evacuarla, vi fanno venire tre nuovi battaglioni, che sono già in marcia per portarvisi, e vi passeranno tutto l’Inverno, se pure da qui a Primavera non succede qualchi altro avvenimento, che ve li trattenga per più lungo tempo*”.²⁹ The correspondent informed at the same time that “*sostiensì tuttora, che sià colà succeduta un’azione non indifferente tra i Turchi, e gli Austriaci, nella quale siano restati sul campo di battaglia 1500 uomini*”.³⁰

Although his knowledge on the matter was rather vague, “*quello, che v’ha di più sicuro, si è, che la comunicazione di Cronstadt è tuttora aperta con la Valachia, e che una gran parte di quella Provincia si trova unita alla Transilvania*”.³¹ The strategical value of Hotin castle, value that was mentioned on the 15th of January 1775, “*dalla Vistola*”. As the correspondent wrote, “*le belle Saline di Boscowil (Bochnia – n.Ven.C.) vengon coprete dagli Austriaci, e queste qualora sieno ben regolate, non sono niente inferiori a quelle di Wieliska. Per*

²⁶ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 9, De’28 Febbrajo 1775; diplomatic attempts of Thugut, aiming to determine the Porte to give up Hotin in favour of Austria, were also mentioned in a correspondence dated “*Leida, 19 Gennajo*” 1775 and in another, from Venice, from the 4th of February 1775 (cf. *loc.cit.* nr. 8, and from the 21st of February 1775).

²⁷ *Loc.cit.*

²⁸ *Loc.cit.*

²⁹ *Loc.cit.*; according to a report from François Emmanuel Guignard, Count of Saint-Priest, the French ambassador at the Porte, “*le Comte Romanzow fonde ses délais d’évacuation de la Moldavie sur ce que l’extradition de Kilburn n’a pas encore été faite*”; but, “*il n’était cependant autorisé par le traité (de Küciük-Kainargi – n.Ven.C.) à retenir en attendant que Bender et Chokzim*” (cf. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, Supplement I, Volume I, 1518–1780. Documents gathered from different papers and from the National Library in Paris by Gr. G. Tocilescu & from the Archive of the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Paris by A.I. Odobescu, București, 1886, p. 917) (here, Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I₁); it is true that according to the Russian-Turkish Peace Treaty, from Küciük-Kainargi, Russia promised to give back to the Porte the Castles of Hotin and Bender, “*à cette condition toutefois, que le château de Kiburn avec le district qui lui appartient et le désert situé entre le Dniepr et le Bug aient déjà été remis en plein, perpétuelle et incontestable souveraineté à l’Empire de Russie*” (cf. Dimitrie A. Sturdza and C. Colescu-Vartic, *Acte și documente relative la istoria renascerii României*, Volume I, 1391–1841, București, 1900, p. 135).

³⁰ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 9, De’ 28 Febbrajo 1775.

³¹ *Loc.cit.*

assicurar dunque un si vantaggioso prodotto, essendo esse vicine a Coczim, non può che desiderarsi dagli Austriaci l'acquisto di tal Piazza".³²

In other words, there was one more reason for the Austrians to maintain this "war of the nerves" with the Russians from the Hotin castle. Related to this very matter, in the letter dated "Leida, 19 Gennajo" 1775, there was written that "*il disegno della Corte di Vienna di unire la fortezza di Choczim al distretto ch'essa ha smembrato dalla Moldavia, sembra tanto più reale, quanto che tutti gli avvisi, che abbiamo dalla Polonia, ne contenuano a parlare*".³³ "L'Armata Russa" "*ha passato il Niester, essendo però restati tre Reggimenti su la dritta del detto Fiume, per la guernigione di Choczim*".³⁴ This garrison, as the correspondent from Warsaw knew, was to stay in Hotin, "*almeno fino a tanto, che sia deciso della sorte di quella piazza*",³⁵ of course, by the Russians and the Turks. On the 2nd of February 1775, the correspondent from Poland sent the information he had received from Podolia, that said that "*è certo, che gli Austriaci si vanno sempre più stendendo nella Moldavia; che le Truppe loro se ne stanno niente più di una lega Alemana lontane da Choczim, e si vanno spandendo da Czernau sul Pruth, luongo il fiume Seret fino a quello di Bistritz*".³⁶ As regarded the surface thus occupied, "*si pretende che il paese circondato dal cordone di dette truppe contenga circa 300. vilaggi fra' quali evvi (sic!) qualche città considerabile, ed assai popolate*".³⁷ And of course, with the purpose to consolidate its positions, thus occupied, "*a misura ch'esse vi si vanno stendendo, e guadagnando terreno, vi si vengono fortificando, e trincerarmo, e dicesi, ch'esse formeranno in brieve un considerabile campo vicino a Jaroslaw nella Russia Rossa*".³⁸

³² *Loc.cit.*, no. 8, from the 21st of February 1775.

³³ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Straordonario*, Num. 8, De' 24 Febbrajo 1775; in Vienna, according to a letter from the 21st of January 1775, "si crede, che tra li Paesi occupati nel Principato sudetto (Moldova – n. Ven.C.), comprendra anche Coccino. *piazza pretesa anche dalla nostra Corte* (cf. *Gazetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 7 De' 14 Febbrajo 1775).

³⁴ *Loc.cit.*, no. 11, from the 14th of March 1775 (correspondence, dated "Dalla Podolia 7 Gennajo 1775).

³⁵ Letter from the 28th of January 1775, in *loc.cit.*, no. 10, from the 10th of March 1775.

³⁶ *Loc.cit.*, no. 12, from the 21st of March 1775.

³⁷ *Loc.cit.*; de Saint-Priest said in a report from the 2nd of March 1775, that the invasion of the Austrians "a été graduelle et on ne sait ou elle s'arrêtera. Elle consiste quant à présent au cinquième de la province dans son meilleur territoire où se trouvent plus de 300 villages" (cf. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I, p. 924).

³⁸ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 12, De' 21 Marzo 1775; "dalla Polonia", the same information was given on the 4th of February 1775 (cf. *loc. cit.*, no. 11, from the 17th of March 1775, and on the 15th of February, the letter "della Vistola" presented the news again, mentioning that "*il Paese da essi occupao contiene 300 Villaggi, oltre ad alcune Città considerabili e molto popolate*" (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 12, from the 21st of March 1775); in his turn, the correspondent from Vienna announced, on the 26th of January 1775, that "*la nostra Corte vuole costantemente sostenere de' Territorj. dei quali si è impadronata, ch'eranno sotto il dominio Turco, e perciò ha spedito in quelle parti il Felt Maresciallo di Elzinhausen (Ellichshausen – n.Ven.C.) a visitare tutti questi posti*

In conclusion, “*gli Austriaci ed i Russi sono a fronte l’uno dell’altro nella Moldavia*”, the correspondent from Warsaw informed the readers on the of the *Gazzete*, on the 16th of February 1775, adding that “*nè sinora hanno li primi preso ancora possesso di Coczino*”.³⁹ The author of the letter dated “*dalla Polonia 10 Marzo*” 1775,⁴⁰ who was less willing to believe all the rumours that were coming from the area of the Dnestr and Moldavia, still, remembered the information about “*i Russi abian evacuata la Moldavia, e la Valachia, eccettuata la Piazza di Coczym, ed alcuni piccoli distaccamenti di Truppe leggieri che hanno i loro quartieri dell’altra parte del Niester*”.⁴¹ Not only had they evacuated the castle yet, but the rumours also said that, on the contrary, “*i Russi si rinforzano sempre più in Coczim, avendo accresciuta la guernigione de 8. Battaglioni*”, while “*il Paese all’interno (northwest of Moldavia – n.Ven.C.) è pieno d’Austriaci, i quali hanno piantate le loro Aquile in poca distanza de detta Fortezza, ed anche postovi di Fronte (Hotin castle – n.Ven.C.) un Pichetto comandato da un Ufficiale*”.⁴²

The tensionate relation between the Austrians and the Russians, due to the matter of ruling Hotin, was also mentioned by the correspondent from Warsaw, who, on the 16th of March 1775, wrote that although the Russian troops “*vi sosno richiamati dalle Frontiere*”, still, “*non si staccano punto dalle Rive del Niester, ove vi si accantonano in modo di potersi riunire in pochi giorni dall’una e dall’altra parte*”, their garrison from Hotin, formed of eight batallions,⁴³ was to react whenever it was necessary, in order to stop the Austrians to get closer to the castle. In their turn, the Austrians expressed the same intention, not to give up, that is why, “*fanno lo stesso*”.⁴⁴

The perseverance shown by the Russians in their will to stop the Austrians to take over the Hotin castle, was due not only to the strategic importance it had. It was also motivated by the perspective of the eastern politics of Russia, in general, and of the Romanian matter in particular.⁴⁵ As a consequence, Hotin castle was the

e ne riferisca il tutto alle Loro Maestà Imperiali, e Reali” and he expressed his belief that “*la situazione, in cui si trova la Porta Ottomana, sarà sì che il possesso dei sudetti Territorj non ci verrà conteso, e che la Casa d’Austria verrà reintegrata di quanto se le è promesso in ordine*” (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 8, dated 21 February 1775).

³⁹ *Loc.cit.*, nr. 12, din 21 martie 1775.

⁴⁰ “*Non si può far gran caso delle nuove che vengono dal Nester, e dalla Moldavia, perchè variano da un ordinario all’altro e si distruggono successivamente*” – he observed (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 17, dated 25 April 1775).

⁴¹ *Loc.cit.*

⁴² *Loc.cit.*

⁴³ *Loc.cit.*, no. 16, dated 18 April 1775.

⁴⁴ *Loc.cit.*

⁴⁵ This is the explanation given by the ambassador of France at the Porte, de Saint-Priest, in a report sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, on the 3rd of November 1774, why Russia insisted on the ambassadors meeting – Russian and Turkish – having the mission to take to Istanbul and Petersburg respectively, the the ratification means of the Peace Treaty from Küciük-Kainargi.

place where the two extraordinary ambassadors – Nicolai Vasilievici Repnin, from the Russian part and respectively Abdul Kerim efendi, from Turkey – were to meet before going on on their trips, one to Istanbul, the other one to Petersburg, having the mission, as we have already mentioned, to exchange the ratification means for the Peace Treaty of Küciük-Kainargi, fact that was already known by the readers of Naples Gazette.⁴⁶ In its turn, the Porte ignored the importance given to Hotin by the Russian diplomats, because, as the same Saint-Priest had mentioned, keeping Hotin under their rule by all means was even under those circumstances, the main goal,⁴⁷ especially due to the strategical value it had, value that had been proven several times before, starting with 1713, when the Hotin castle and region were directly administered by the Turks. That is why the Austrian diplomats failed to include the territory Bucovina and the castle, in spite of all the efforts.⁴⁸

The refusal expressed by the Russians to the Austrian will to take over the Hotin castle and region, was nevertheless “rewarded” by the allowance shown to the Austrians to consolidate their power in the northwest of Moldavia. This double dealing of Russia was underlined by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette, who also showed the ways of putting this duplicity into practice. The readers of the Gazette learned on the 14th of January 1775 that “*i Russi hanno venduti i magazzini, che avevano nella*

Initially, “*le Ministère ottoman avait eu l'intention que l'échange des ambassadeurs se fit à Oczakow, mais il ne refusera pas cette facilité de plus qui n'est pas sans malice, l'intention de la Russie pouvant bien être par là de traiter la Moldavie en Etat distinct et séparé de la domination Turque réduite au Danube*”; especially as, he reminded that, in fact, “*la suzeraineté des deux Provinces est bien légèrement réservée à la Porte, et que la Russie a droit de s'en meller tant qu'elle voudra*” (cf. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I₁, p. 908); this confirms the interpretation imposed by the Russian diplomats of point 10, article XVI of the Treaty from Küciük-Kainargi, that said that “*la Porte consent aussi, que selon que les circonstances des ces deux principautés (Moldavia și Wallachia – n.Ven.C.) pourront l'exiger, les ministres de la cour imperial de Russie résidant auprès d'elle puissent parler en leur faveur, et promet de les écouter avec les égards qui conviennent à des puissances amis et respectées*” (cf. Dimitrie A. Sturdza and C. Colescu-Vartic, *op.cit.*, p. 132).

⁴⁶ Cf., *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 7, De' 14 Febbrajo 1775; *loc.cit.*, nr. 8, din 21 februarie 1775; *loc.cit.*, no. 28, from the 14th of July 1775.

⁴⁷ “*Le vrai de la négociation sur la Moldavie – the French diplomat reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, on the 9th of April 1775, – est que la Porte voudrait conserver dans son intégrité tout le territoire de Chokzim. Elle ne se soucie aucunement du reste et se soumet à ce qu'on prenne ailleurs ce qu'on y voudra. Loin de redemander les usurpations faites depuis cette guerre, elle les légitime en les reconnaissant*” (cf. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I₁, p. 929).

⁴⁸ “*Tant de complaisances – Saint-Priest also wrote in his report from the 9th of April 1775 – n'ont pu résoudre la Cour de Vienne à se désister de la partie du territoire de Choczim usurpée*” (cf. *ibidem*); still, it had to be given up, von Thugut had to apologise to his superiors, in his report from the 12th of May 1775, where he announced the Convention signed for the giving up of Bucovina, “*ich habe diesem zufolge, auch alles menschenmögliche versucht, um die Abtretung der gedachten Strecke, in der Convention wirklich auszubedingen; allein es ist mit diesem Endzwecke, ganz an keine Weise auszulangen gewesen*” (cf. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki, *Documente pivoitare la istoria românilor*, Volume VII, 1750–1818, București, 1876, p. 163) (here, Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, VII).

Valachia, e nella Moldavia, agli Austriaci, che trovansi attualmente i numero di 30.000 uomini nell'ultimo di questi Principati. Essi hanno compresa nel loro cordone la foresta di Bukowina, e li miniere di sale, come altresì Sadogura, dove i Russi avevano introdotta una zecca. Tutti li stromenti, che servivano alla fabbricazione delle specie, sono stati trasportati a Lemberg. Gli Austriaci hanno tratti dalla nuova fonderia, stabilita a Zamosc 10. nuovi cannoni di getto, che han mandati all'armata in Pocuzia" (s.Ven.C)⁴⁹ The fact that "i Russi non solo hanno venduto agli Austriaci li loro Magazzini di Moldavia e di Vallachia" was confirmed by another correspondent from Poland, on the 31st of January 1775, with the mention that "ma essendo Sudogura nella Moldavia, dove li Moscoviti avevano una zecca, e battevano moneta, compresa nel Cordone formato in quelle parti dagli Austriaci, furono perciò quei utensili portati a Leopoli. In fine gli Austriaci hanno trasportato de Zamosch nella Pocuzia, dov'è la maggior parte della loro Armata, varj cannoni di bronzo de tutto nuovi"⁵⁰ The fact that "i Russi hanno venduti loro Magazzini di Vallachia, e di Moldavia agli Austriaci" could be read as well in another letter, dated Warsaw, the 20th of January 1775, where it could also be read that the Austrians "si sono nel secondo di quei due principati accresciuti fino a 30. mila uomini, e hanno compreso nel loro Cordone anche il Bosco di Boscovina con quelle Saline altrettanto utili, quanto quelle di Wielicza, quando sieno ben tenute"⁵¹

Initially, the Court from Vienna tried to lessen the importance of their aggressive actions against Moldavia, putting forward the idea that, in reality, it was only a small problem of settling the frontiers with the Ottoman Empire, in other words, a strictly bilateral matter.⁵² The Austrians finally realized that they could no longer hide after such a pretext, for this reason they hurried to present to the European Courts their variant to justify the annexation of the north-western Moldavia.⁵³ The same attempt was made to the Royal Court of Sweden, about which talked about the correspondent of the Gazette from Stockholm, on the 20th of January 1775. He had found out that "l'Incaricato d'affari della Corte di

⁴⁹ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 9, De' 28 Febbrajo 1775; the correspondent had also found out that "si sta pensando all' erezione d'una Università a Lemberg sudetto (cf. *loc.cit.*).

⁵⁰ *Loc.cit.*, no. 10, from the 7th of March 1775; treating the same matters, see the letter dated Warsaw, the 3rd of January 1775: "recamo i ragguagli della Moldavia, che le truppe Russe continuano ad uscire di quella Provincia", but after them were coming the Austrians (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 7, on the 14th of February 1775).

⁵¹ *Loc.cit.*, no. 9, from the 28th of February 1775; the correspondent from Dublin reported on the 31st of January 1775, "finalmente gli Austriaci marciano da tutte le parti nella Vallachia" (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 12, from the 21st of March 1775).

⁵² Cf., among other sources of information, in this context, see also Neculai Iorga, *Acte și fragmente cu privire la istoria românilor adunate din depozitele de manuscrise ale Apusului*, Volume II, București, 1896, p. 85, 86, 89, 92.

⁵³ The ones offered to Russia, in *ibidem*, p. 88–89; the ones offered to France in Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Supliment I₁, p. 913.

Vienna (Jozef Reindl, Legation secretary, charge d'affaires of the emperor, at the Swedish government – n.Ven.C.) *ha recentamente consegnata al Re una Memoria, con cui si dichiara, che, siccome le Potenze d'Europa in sentire, che la Corte di Vienna ha fatto occupare dalle sue truppe alcuni Distretti della Moldavia e della Valachia, e non sapendone il motivo, potrebero concepire qualche sospetto; affine di assicurarle a questo riguardo, le L.L.M.M.I.I. e R.R. avevano risoluto di notificare alle Potenze d'Europa, ch'esse hanno preso possesso di quei Distretti in virtu d'un Trattato conchiuso con la Porta Ottomana*".⁵⁴ The treaty alluded to in the imperial note as the so-called "Treaty of subsidies", signed by Austria and the Porte, on the 6th of July 1771, which was not ratified by the Austrians, because they took part in the first division of Poland, in 1772. The correspondents of Naples Gazette knew about this act as well.⁵⁵ The correspondent from Augustow, in Poland, reported on the 10th of January 1775 the news that "*da' classici riscontri veniamo prevenuti, che il pretesto Trattato delli 6. Giugno (sic!) 1771 (in fact, the 6th of July 1771 – n.Ven.C.) il quale è stato pubblicato in diverse stampe non ha sinora avuto il suo effetto, supponendosi esservene altro sul tappeto*".⁵⁶ Actually, this thing was going to happen, but a few months later, when the Convention was signed to give up Bucovina, on the 7th of May 1775, but the approval from the great vizier of the Porte, Izzet Mehmed Pasha, regarding giving up Bucovina in favour of Austria, was dated the 8th of May.⁵⁷

The Austrian forces together with the administrative authorities entered the northwest of Moldavia against the background of a deteriorated political situation in Northeastern Europe. This phenomenon was determined by the discontent expressed by Russia, and in a way by Prussia as well, due to the fact that the Austrian invasion could disturb the balance of forces in the area, hardly at equilibrium after the first division of Poland. The correspondents of the Naples Gazette could not ignore this aspect of the political and military situation, which was more than complex, that had appeared in northeastern Europe after the annexation of the northwestern Moldavia. In this context, their attention was withheld by what happened outside the borders of the new Austrian province, where there were hints of a new military conflict, as the correspondents believed. Thus, in a letter sent "Dal Danubio", on the 14th of December 1774, it was mentioned that "*tutti aspettano di sentire fra breve delle nuove importanti, mentre sono sul tappeto in perezchie Corti delle cose importantissime. Non si sta senza timore per la tranquillita generale della Germania*".⁵⁸ The same fear was also suggested by the correspondent from Hamburg

⁵⁴ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Straordinario*, Num. 10, De' 10. Marzo 1775.

⁵⁵ Cf., *loc.cit.*, no. 4, from the 24th of January 1775.

⁵⁶ *Loc. cit.*, no. 6, from the 7th of February 1775.

⁵⁷ Cf. Valeriu Velima, *Relațiile româno-otomane (1711–1821). Documente turcești*, București, 1984, p. 467–470 (Romanian translation of the Turkish text).

⁵⁸ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Folio Ordinario*, Num. 6, De' 7 Febbrajo 1775; the possibility was certainly suggested of the outbreak of an Austrian-Prussian war, because of the diverging interests in

who, on the 1st of January 1775, reported that “*tutte le lettere d’Alemagna parlano d’un’armata di 70. in 80. mila uomini, che si va radunando nell’Ungheria, e che dev’essere in campagna nella prossima Primavera, essendo, dicesi, già stato delineato per tal fine un accampamento vicino a Prest. Si pretende ancora che radunata ch’ella sarà, vi si trasferirà l’Imperadore in persona. A proporzione, che si vanno allestendo le truppe, vi si vanno ancora formando de’grossi magazzini in molte provincie di quel Regno*”.⁵⁹ The correspondent from Warsaw offered more details on the 28th of January 1775. Namely that “*i preparativi pel (sic!) campo di 80. mila uomini, di cui sono già state, tirate le linee presso Buda nell’Ungheria sono diretti dal Generale Esterhazy. Dicesi ancora, che li Austriaci formeranno un altro considerevole campo ne’contorni di Jaroslaw nella Russia Rossa, ciò dimostrando almeno i preparativi che vi si fanno, e la gran quantità di viveri e di foraggi, che vi si radunano*”.⁶⁰ According to the Russian and Prussian diplomats, the concentration of

Poland; two pieces of evidence stand in this respect, dated Lublin Jan. 31, 1775 “*abbiamo altresì alcuni migliaia di Prussiani, i quali, sotto pretesto di comprar cavalli occupano le Città dove non v’è guarnigione Russa*” (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 12, dated 21 March 1775) and no. 6, 1774 “*i distaccamenti Prussiani entrati in Polonia per far compra di Cavalli, tutti le volte che si son voluti avanzare nella Poczua, e a Sniatyn, hanno incontrate delle opposizioni per parte degli Austriaci*” (cf. *loc.cit.*, no. 1, dated 3 Jan. 1775).

⁵⁹ *Loc.cit.*, no. 6, dated 7 Feb. 1775; “*le recente Lettere di varie parti continuano a conferire – the correspondent from Augustow, on the 10th of January 1775 – che sembra inevitabile una nuova guerra, ma no ne individuano li motivi. Tutti li sospetti son fondati sulli grandi armamenti, che prosiegono a fare alcune potenze*” (cf. *loc. cit.*); with the same meaning, the correspondent from Vienna reported, on the 12th of January 1775: “*il sospetto di una guerra prossima si va sempre più facendo serio. Si parla di uomini di truppe, e di ulteriori disposizioni militari. Il Corpo di armata, chhe si formerà a Pest nella Ungheria alla Primavera sarà di 70. mila Soldati*” (cf. *loc.cit.*); see also *loc.cit.*, no. 9, from the 28th of February 1775.

⁶⁰ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Straordinario*, Num. 10, De’ 10 Marzo 1775; on the 7th of January 1775, the correspondent in Vienna sent the news, according to which, “*sempre più si crede prossima una nuova guerra, rinforzandosi il Re di Prussia nella Slesia, Prussia, e Polonia. La nostra Corte fa formare grandi magazzini di provvigioni nella Ungheria, Transilvania, Schiavonia e Polonia, non sapendosi se la Corte di Peterburgo in caso di guerra darà a Sua Maesta Prussa le truppe Ausiliarie dovutegli per i suoi Trattati*”(since 1764 – n.Ven.C.) (cf. *Gazetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 5, De’ 31 Gennajo 1775); an indirect confirmation of the facts reported by the correspondents of *Gazetta di Napoli* was also given by the Venetian bail in a report addressed to the doge, on the 11th of February 1774 (M.V.) that is actually on the 11th of February 1775, highlighted the connexion between the events in Poland and the ones in Moldavia, fact that could start another military conflict; namely “*gli interessi adunque di quei Principi, che figurano principalmente in questi affari, essendo fra di loro diversi, non si fondano le universali osservazioni sopra ciò solamente che va succedendo nella Polonia, ma con gelosia per li continuati movimenti di marchie che fanno gli Austriaci in quelle parti, nella quali, sino ad ora non comparisce in fatto, che le occupazioni consistono specialmente nella Moldavia*” (cf. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, IX₂, p. 97); another bail, Alvise Contarini, reported to the doge, in Vienna as well, on the 18th of March 1775 that “*egli è fuori di dubbio che l’attuale prospetto delle cose, che riguardano direttamente la Casa d’Austria, il Re di Prussia, e la Russia, e la Porta ottomana, non formi uno stato di violenza, e quello cioè che non è possibile che si mantenga senza che vi nascano degli importanti cambiamenti. La base*

Austrian military forces mentioned by the correspondents of Naples Gazette only aimed to intimidate the Porte, in order to make it give up the northwestern Moldavia.⁶¹ As Viktor Friedrich, count von Solms-Sonnenwalde, ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Prussia related, the Russian Chancellor, count Panin, believed that under those circumstances, in Petersburg, on the 29th of May, “*le jeu le plus sûr pour la Russie est d’animer sous main la Porte à ne pas se laisser intimider par les menaces ou les démonstrations guerrières Autrichiennes et de l’encourager par l’assurance que la Russie ne se mêlera de ses différends avec la Cour de Vienne et ne prendra certainement pas parti pour celle-ci contre la Porte*”.⁶² But, as is known, Russia did not hesitate to take advantage of the diplomatic pressure coming from Austria on the Porte, so as to determine the latter to ratify, as soon as possible and without any changes whatsoever, the Treaty of Küciük-Kainargi.

But, this objective of Russia had been noticed and made public by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette, who also showed the good will of the Porte to fulfil these demands,⁶³ proven, among other things, by the approval of the Russian points of view regarding some very delicate matters for the Turks, as the one about the political future situation of Crimea. This fact was also noticed by the correspondent from Prague. In a letter sent on the 4th of December 1774, he wrote “*ad onta dell’altrui invidia, la Porta continua sin ora ad eseguir con buona fede il Trattato (from Küciük-Kainargi – n.Ven.C.), compiendone esattamente le condizioni. Non solo essa si è fatta premura di regolar gli affari in Crimea a norma della convenzione (article III, in the Treaty from Küciük-Kainargi – n.Ven.C.), ma ha altresì ordinato al Pachà d’Oczakow di consegnare ai nostri (to the Russians – n.Ven.C.) la Fortezza di Kinburn*” (s.Ven.)⁶⁴ This good intention, as well as some others “*bastano per distruggere i falsi rumori, che l’invidiosi cercano di spargere,*

di un tal ragionamento si pianta in primo luogo sopra l’esame della divisione della Polonia” – where there were serious discontents, due to the differences between the parts demanded by each part – and “*un’ altro serio argomento se presenta per confirmare gli accennati ragionevoli principii, ed è quello delle occupazione fatta da questa Corte nella Moldavia ed in piccolissima parte anche nella Vallachia*” (cf. *ibidem*, p. 98–99).

⁶¹ Cf., Neculai Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 113, 114.

⁶² *Ibidem*, p. 114.

⁶³ The references are numerous, in almost all the issues of the Gazette, starting with no 1, from the 3rd of January 1775; looking for the explanation of that order, the French ambassador, de Saint-Priest wrote in a report addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, on the 14th of November 1774, that “*la dite invasion (of northwestern Moldavia – n.Ven.C.) fait ici (in Istanbul – n.Ven.C.) le mauvais effet de rendre les Turcs plus faciles sur l’exécution du traité (from Küciük-Kainargi – n. Ven.C.) et je ne serais pas étonné qu’ils cherchassent à se faire protéger par les Russes contre la Cour de Vienne*” (cf. Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, Suppliment I, p. 909); as a consequence, in another report from the 17th of November 1774, he expressed his fear “*qu’il en résulte de la part de la Porte plus de confiance aux Cours de Pétersbourg et de Berlin aussi que défiance de celle de Vienne*” (cf. *ibidem*, p. 910).

⁶⁴ *Gazzetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario*, Num. 2. De’ 10 Gennajo 1775.

come se la Porta fosse lontana dall' eseguire i suoi impegni", conchizînd că "non v'ha cosa più mal fondata, e inesequibile, quand'anche si supponesse che la Porta avesse tal desiderio" (s.Ven.C.),⁶⁵ that is not to fulfil the promises expressed in the peace treaty of Küciük-Kainargi. The idea was reformulated by another correspondent, the one in Trieste, who informed the readers, in a letter from the 19th of December 1774, that, among other litigious matters in the Russian-Turkish relations and after the Peace Treaty of Küciük-Kainargi, "*l'affare dei Tartari non è meno imbarazzo. Quel popolo domanda alla Porta, giacchè si vuole, che sia indipendente, che i Russi evacuino la Crimea, e gli restituiscano le tre Fortezze di Jeni-Kale, Kertsch, e Kilburn; ma vi è apparenza, che questo affare sarà terminato dai Russi, i quali fanno i più gran preparativi per non tenere imbarazzata la Porta, e mettere alla ragione i Tartari*".⁶⁶ Even more, in a letter from Vienna, dated the 8th of June 1775, there was the warning that a peace that had just been signed, would not last for long, in the opinion of some political circles. But, among the reasons that could have determined the break was also the Crimean crisis. Because, "*Sahib Guerai nominato Kan di Crimea dalla Russia nel principio della guerra si portò all'improvviso a Costantinopoli coll'avviso di una rivoluzione generale in tutta quella Penisola, da cui fuggi doppo di avere sofferte le più fieri rimproveri da quei Mista (sic!), perche cesse alla Russia le Piazze di Kertsch, Jenikale, e Kilburn. Deulet Ghirai fu eletto in di lui vece da que'popoli per loro Kan, e questo spedi al Gran Signore una solenne ambasciata, per notificargli un tanto avvenimento*".⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Loc.cit.*

⁶⁶ *Loc.cit.*, no. 4, from the 24th of January 1775.

⁶⁷ *Loc.cit.*, no. 27, from the 4th of July 1775; see also the letter dated "Dal Danubio, 24 Maggio 1775", in *loc. cit.*; letter dated Vienna, on the 14th of June 1775, in *loc.cit.*, no. 28, from the 11th of July 1775. It is about the beginning of the Crimeean crisis, as a consequence of the fact that Russia did not respect fullz article III of the Treaty from Küciük-Kainargi, according to which "*tous les peuples Tartares, ceux de Crimée, de Bugiac, de Kuban... seront reconnus sans aucune exemption par les deux Empires pour nations libres et entièrement indépendant de toute puissance étrangère*" (cf. Dimitrie A. Sturdza and C. Colescu-Vartic, *op.cit.*, p. 127). Russia had already created a pro-Russian party in Crimea, led by Şahib Ghirai, who was later on replaced at the will of the Tatars, by Devlet Ghirai, partisan of the Porte; discontent, Russia supported another competitor, Şahin Ghirai; thus there started a civil war in Crimea, which was close to turning into a Russian-Turkish war, because both Russia and Turkey wanted to control the sovereign, actually to control Crimeea, a strategic and of capital importance region for the domination of the Black Sea; talking about these events, on the occasion of a meeting with the Interpreter of the Diplomatic Mission of Sweden in Istanbul, Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, about which there was reported at Stockholm, on the 17th of June 1775, at the time, the Great *drogueman* of the Porte, Constantin Moruzi, said "*que les tartares (sic!) avoient d'autant moins raison de se lever contre les stipulations de la Paix (de la Küciük-Kainargi – n. Ven.C.), qu'ils avoient été les premiers à demander aux Russes leur indépendance et à porter des facilités sur la cession des trois places (Kinburn, Kerci and Yenikale – n. Ven.C.) qu'ils recalent aujourd'hui; Que ni eux, ni la Porte Ottomane ne paraissent avoir pour le moment aucun moyen d'apporter du changement dans les affaires présentes; et que sur le moindre*

In parallel with the solving of the litigious problems in the Russian-Turkish relations, at least in the diplomatic field, there was another major problem that dominated the political situation in northeastern Europe, *i.e.*, the one caused by the invasion by the Austrians of northwestern Moldavia, an evolution that was as closely watched by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette. On the 28th of April 1775, there was reported from Istanbul that it was most likely “*il negoziato concernente il distretto della Moldavia, di cui hanno le truppe Austriache presso possesso, sia sul punto di terminarsi con soddisfazione di ambedue Potenze*”.⁶⁸ A few days later, on the 3rd of May 1775, probably the same correspondent came back with further details: “*si crede terminata la differenza tra la Porta e la Corte di Vienna, circa il possesso, che questa ha fatto prendere d’una parte della Moldavia. Il Gran signore (sic!) ha risoluto di cedere tal Distretto, tanto più conveniente alla Casa d’Austria, quanto che apre una breve e facile comunicazione fra la Transilvania, e le Province smembrate della Polonia*”.⁶⁹

Thus ended another chapter in the political evolution of Eastern and Central Europe, whose importance is underlined by the attention with which it was watched by the European public opinion. The character of *usurpation* of that territory by the Austrians was underlined several times by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette. With the same purpose, the bail of Venice at the Porte reported on the 17th of May 1775 “*alli dieci del corente mese di Maggio venne al suo fine la negoziazione fra la Corte di Vienna, et la Porta Ottomana sopra le usurpazioni praticate dalle Cesaree Milizie nella Moldavia, uzurpazioni che doveva portarire una guerra aperta se il Maometano Impero non si fosse al sommo indebolito, e se la massima odierno del Gabineto Austriaco non fosse quella di appropriarsi l’altrui, ma senza porsi alli dubbii cimenti dell’Armi*”.⁷⁰ But the Austrian invasion, as is well known, served immediate perspective and interests, first of all belonging to Prussia and Russia, but to other European powers as well, France for

mouvement les Russes pouvaient d’abord faire avancer un Corps de 25 à 30.000 hommes qui brideroit aussitôt la nation Tartare” (cf. Veniamin Ciobanu, *Noi informații documentare privind evoluția problemei orientale (the end of the XVIIIth century)*, in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie “A.D.Xenopol”, Vol. XXXIX–XL, 2002–2003, Iași, 672–673); as a consequence, as the correspondent from Altona noticed on the 24th of November 1774, “*Devlet Gueray Governatore Turco nella Crimea aveva abbandonere tutti le sue conquiste e si era ritirato ad Oczakow per ordine della Porta* (cf. *Gazetta di Napoli, Foglio Ordinario, Num. 1, De’ 3 Gennajo 1775*).

⁶⁸ *Loc.cit.*, no. 28, from the 11th of July 1775; from Istanbul as well, it was reported that on the 24th of April 1775, “per quanto concerne alla negoziazione tra la Porta, et la Corte di Vienna, riguardo a certi distretti della Moldavia, stati occupati dagli Austriaci, si riguarda ora come affare quasi terminato, attesa la lunga conferenza di 7. ore tenutarsi a 12. tra il Dragomano della Porta (Constantin Moruzi – n.Ven.C.), e l’Internunzio della Corte di Vienna (von Thugut – n.Ven.C.) (cf., *loc.cit.*, no. 27, dated 7 July 1775).

⁶⁹ *Loc.cit.*, no. 28, from the 14th of July 1775.

⁷⁰ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, IX₂, p. 100–101.

example. The degree of *direct* implication, even though only diplomatical of Russia, in the annexation of northwestern Moldavia, is proven by many other facts, some of them explained by the correspondents of the Naples Gazette; as von Kaunitz declared: “<L’Autriche a différé de répondre aux représentations du divan de Yassy sur l’invasion autrichienne, et que sa réponse sera ensuite qu’ayant retiré ses troupes (from Moldavia – n.Ven.C.), elle n’est plus en mesure d’entrer dans cette affaire”.⁷¹ As regards the objectives of the French diplomats in northeastern Europe, they were clearly expressed by de Saint-Priest. The French diplomat announced the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the 17th of May 1775, that the problem regarding Bucovina was over, and he added: “je voudrais fort que cet événement pût influencer sur la pacification de la Pologne et que le Roi de Prusse, qui a refusé sa médiation à la Cour de Vienne pour ses limites, afin de n’être pas dans le cas de demander respectivement celle de L.L.M.M.I.I. revint à l’accomplissement de cet article du traité de partage (of Poland – n.Ven.C.), à présent que l’affaire des Turcs finie ne peut plus donner d’embarras aux Autrichiens”.⁷² In her turn, Turkey, although forced to give in, due to the completely unfavourable international political situation, but for which she was mostly responsible, did not comply with the territorial loss and especially with the new and seriously bad international reputation, fact that was proven by the interest shown by the leading circles in Bucovina, in the decades that followed its annexation by the Austrians.⁷³

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, Supliment I₁, p. 929.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 933; he came back to the idea that, in another report, with another date, addressed to the king, informing that “l’accommodement entre la Porte et Vienne sur les limites de la Moldavie vient d’être conclu”, he pretended that “il est bien avantageux que le Roi de Prusse n’ait plus ce prétexte pour ce débattre sur ses usurpations en Pologne” (cf. *ibidem*).

⁷³ Cf., Veniamin Ciobanu, *Informații mai puțin cunoscute privind istoria Bucovinei*, in vol. “O Bukovinie. Razem czy oddzielnie”, Pila-Warszawa 2000, p. 67–74.