

THE IMPACT OF THE UKRAINIAN COSSACKS' CAMPAIGNS INTO THE MOLDAVIAN PRINCIPALITY ON THE SITUATION OF CHERNIVTSI AND KHOTYN REGIONS (THROUGHOUT THE 80S AND 90S OF THE 16TH CENTURY)*

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Abstract. *In the late 16th century, relations between Turkey and Poland in Central and Eastern Europe significantly deteriorated. During the 1580s and 1590s, Ukrainian Cossacks¹ conducted several successful campaigns in Moldavia. These campaigns immediately affected conditions in northern Moldavian territories, leading to deteriorating*

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¹ The denomination “**Ukrainian Cossacks**” is preferred in scholarship to emphasise the ethnic and territorial roots of the Cossack host in the Ukrainian lands of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. The narrower term “Zaporozhian Cossacks” refers only to those based at the Sich beyond the Dnieper rapids (*za porohamy*). At the same time “Polish Cossacks” would be misleading, since the Cossacks were not ethnically Polish, even if they formally served the Polish Crown in the *Registered Cossack* units. Their identity was shaped in the Ruthenian/Ukrainian milieu, and by the seventeenth century, they were perceived as defenders of the Orthodox faith and of Ukrainian society. See: Serhii Plokhyy, *The Cossack Myth: History and Nationhood in the Age of Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Frank Sysyn, *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1985); Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

conditions in the regions, which became a battleground between Poland and the Ottoman Empire. Polish kings aimed to maintain Moldavia within their sphere of influence by supporting I. Movilă and other candidates for the Moldavian throne, as well as by exploiting anti-Ottoman sentiments in the region. The territories of the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions² were in the whirl of this struggle, since they bordered Poland and Moldavia and were often transit or war zones during the conflicts. Consequently, the Poles, Ukrainian Cossacks, and other mercenaries, on the one hand, and the Turkish-Tatar hordes, respectively, from time to time did significant damage, destruction, looting, and devastation to these lands. Simultaneously, in the late sixteenth century, the Khotyn fortress began to regain its strategic role as an outpost on the Polish-Moldavian border. This research found evidence for the Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns into Moldavia as push and pull factors of the deterioration in the situation of the northern Moldavian lands, which at that time turned into a field of struggle between the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as both countries sought to maintain their power over Moldavia, and accordingly, over the lands of the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions.

Keywords: Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns, Moldavia, Poland, Ottoman Empire, Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions (ținuturi).

Rezumat. Impactul campaniilor cazacilor ucraineni în Moldova asupra situației ținuturilor Cernăuți și Hotin în anii '80-'90 ai secolului al XVI-lea. La sfârșitul secolului al XVI-lea, relațiile dintre Turcia și Polonia s-au deteriorat semnificativ din cauza chestiunilor litigioase avute în Europa Centrală și de Est. În cursul anilor 1580-1590, cazacii ucraineni au desfășurat mai multe campanii de succes în Moldova, care au avut un impact imediat asupra situației din nordul teritoriilor moldovenești, ducând la deteriorarea condițiilor din ținutul Hotin, care a devenit un câmp de luptă între Polonia și Imperiul Otoman. Regii polonezi au urmărit să mențină Moldova în sfera lor de influență prin susținerea lui Ieremia Movilă și a altor candidați la tronul Moldovei, precum și prin exploatarea sentimentelor antiotomane din regiune. Teritoriile ținuturilor Cernăuți și Hotin se aflau în vârtejul acestei lupte, deoarece deveniseră adesea zona de tranzit sau de război în timpul conflictelor. În consecință, polonezii, cazacii ucraineni și alți mercenari, pe de o parte, și hoardele turco-tătare, pe de altă parte, au provocat din când în când pagube semnificative, distrugerii, jafuri și devastări pe aceste teritorii. În același timp, la sfârșitul secolului al XVI-lea, cetatea Hotin a început să își recapete rolul strategic de avanpost la frontiera polono-moldavă. Cercetarea noastră aduce o serie de date noi privitoare la campaniile cazacilor ucraineni în ținuturile Cernăuți și Hotin, transformate într-un câmp de luptă între Imperiul Otoman și Uniunea Polono-Lituaniană.

² Regions (= ținuturi – pl.; ținut – sg.) are the administrative divisions of the Principality of Moldavia (1359-1859).

INTRODUCTION

It should be noted that in the 80s and 90s of the sixteenth century, Moldavia and other Danube principalities (Wallachia and Transylvania) became an arena of fierce, bloody anti-Ottoman wars, in which, on the one hand, they sought to free themselves from Ottoman rule. On the other hand, they facilitated the expansion of the great Christian European powers, such as the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, into Central and Eastern Europe. However, the so-called "big" policy did not consider the interests of these states; thus, to pursue their own interests, the rulers of these countries turned to other, more militarily powerful political communities in the region, particularly the Ukrainian Cossacks. The constant anti-Turkish struggle in the Danube principalities in the last third of the sixteenth century significantly influenced the evolution of the Ukrainian Cossacks' national consciousness, their political outlook, and, accordingly, had an impact on the rise of the Ukrainian Cossacks' claims to be recognised as a respected social stratum in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth.

In addition, in the second half of the sixteenth century, the Ukrainian Cossacks first emerged as an independent actor in international military and political relations, as evidenced by numerous attempts to place their own candidates on the Moldavian throne and, more generally, by their readiness to assume such a role. "The era of Cossack struggles in Moldavia", as the Romanian historian N. Iorga called this period in Moldavian history,³ demonstrated to the whole of Europe that the Ukrainian Cossacks, for the first time in their history, were able to conduct large-scale military operations for several decades, having a significant internal resource and potential. "The military actions during these years far exceeded in scale all previous exploits of the Cossacks", wrote S. Lep'yavko.⁴ In the late 70s and 90s of 16th century, the Ukrainian Cossacks carried out several successful campaigns in Moldavian lands. They served as mercenaries in the armies of neighbouring states that were actively fighting the Ottoman Empire. In the north of the Moldavian state were the lands („ținuturi") of the Chernivtsi and Khotyn (now the territory of the modern Chernivtsi region,

³ Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria armatei românești* [History of the Romanian army], Bucharest, Military Printing House, 1970, p. 286.

⁴ Serhiy Lep'yavko, *Kozats'ki vijny kintsia XVI st. v Ukraini* [The Cossack Wars of the Late 16th Century in Ukraine]. Chernihiv, Siverianska dumka, 1996, p. 130.

Ukraine). Their situation was significantly affected by the actions of the Ukrainian Cossacks, as they provoked opposition from both Poles and Turkish-Tatar troops, who, from time to time, appeared in the northern Moldavian regions, causing significant damage to the population of the area.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The last decade of the 16th century has seen a tremendous growth of interest in the history of empires and the rise of literature on the relations between empires and nations. In recent years, researchers' awareness of national ideology and identity has been renewed. There has been increased recognition that more attention needs to be paid to the Cossack heritage, which profoundly influenced and moulded the making of the modern Ukrainian nation, its spirit of bravery and longing for freedom.

The research aims to examine the problem of the Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns into the Moldavian principality and their participation in the anti-Ottoman wars of neighbouring states in the 1580s and 1590s, in the context of the history of the Chernivtsi and Khotyn Regions.

Research methodology. The qualitative methodological development of the study is based on the principles of practical historical approaches – historical embeddedness, objectivity, comprehensiveness, integrity, and systematicity – as well as on methods of analysis and synthesis, comparative historical and chronological approaches. The current study adopts a case study approach.

Scientific novelty. This research opens a relatively new field of inquiry, as it stems from a comprehensive analysis of the Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns in the Moldavian principality during the late sixteenth century and their direct impact on the military and political situation in the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions. It highlights for the first time the outcomes of these campaigns and their consequences for the population of the northern Moldavian lands.

PRESENTATION OF BASIC MATERIAL AND DISCUSSION

In the early 1580s, the younger son of Petru Rareș, Iancu Sasul (1579-1582), served as Voivode of Moldavia, but in August 1582, Petru Șchiopul (Peter VI the Lame) (1582-1591) regained power in Moldavia with the help of Turkish troops. Instead, Iancu, fleeing to Hungary, was captured by M. Yazlovetsky in Pokuttia and

sent to Lviv, where, on the king's order, he was executed in September 1582.⁵ Notably, the Voivode of Moldavia must have reached Pokuttia, transiting through the northern Moldavian regions.

Despite Iancu Sasul's hostility towards Poland during his reign, there was a lull on the Polish-Moldavian border. This occurred due to the involvement of the Ukrainian Cossacks in the war with Moscow. However, by 1582, the Cossacks' attention had once again shifted to Moldavia, which greatly troubled the Polish king. In 1583, together with Manuel (Rom. Manuilă), who pretended to be the son of the former Prince John III the Terrible, he allied himself with the Ukrainian Cossacks and set off for Moldavia. However, Jerzy Strus (Starosta of Bratslav) blocked their way to the capital city of Iași. He made sure that the Ukrainian Cossacks changed their direction and, turning south, attacked Bendery and Tatar villages near Perekop. The sultan protested and demanded a ransom, but, with the Moldavian Voivod's support, the Poles managed to return the cannons to the Turks that the Ukrainian Cossacks had stolen, promising to punish them.⁶ In particular, the Polish King Stephen Báthory (1576-1586), pursuing a policy of supporting Ottoman rule in the region, executed Samuel Zborowski, whose Ukrainian Cossack units attacked Moldavia in 1583.⁷

However, the Ukrainian Cossacks' attempts to seize power in Moldavia persisted. On 23 November 1587, a Ukrainian Cossack leader claiming to be the famous Ivan Pidkova entered the Moldavian principality. Soon enough, the Ukrainian Cossacks were defeated and forced to retreat. At first, they retreated to the Carpathians, and later, through the Cheremosh River valley, moved to the Podniprovia.⁸

It is worth noting that during the 1583 and 1587 Ukrainian Cossack campaigns against the Moldavian principality, the northern Moldavian regions suffered no destruction. In 1587, the Moldavian lands were visited by Gyulafi

⁵ Zdzisław Spieralski, *Awantury mołdawskie* [Moldavian brawls], Warszawa, Wiedza Powszechna, 1967, p.139.

⁶ Marek Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość polska w XVI wieku* [Polish wars and military in the 16th century], vol. 3, Oświęcim, Infortedititions, 2013, p. 106–107.

⁷ Kazimierz Dopierała, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski z Turcją za Stefana Batorego* [Poland's diplomatic relations with Turkey under Stefan Batory], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986, p. 159.

⁸ Grigore Ureche, *Letopisetul Țării Moldovei (...) dela Dragoș-vodă pînă la Aron-vodă* [The Chronicle of Moldavia (...) from Dragoș-voivode to Aron-voivode], in G. Ureche, M. Costin, I. Neculce, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei: Cronici* [The Chronicle of Moldavia: Chronicles]. Chisinau, Hyperion, 1990, p. 115.

Lestár, the secretary of the Prince of Transylvania, who, passing through Chernivtsi to Galicia, noted some records about the population and economy of the region. From Chernivtsi, “which is the last city of the Moldavian Empire, inhabited by Rusins”, the Moldavian voivode collected the thirtieth. This general tax had to be paid equally on goods exported or imported from/into the country, so the prince's revenues “amount to over one hundred thousand florins” each year. “When we went there, on Pentecost Sunday, they drove more than 30,000 head of cattle to the market alone; those 30,000 head of cattle amounted to 80,000 florins⁹”. Thus, the Chernivtsi region and the city of Chernivtsi developed in favourable conditions due to transit trade.¹⁰

Noteworthy, in the late sixteenth century, the geopolitical situation in the region changed, as in the summer of 1589, there was a devastating Turkish-Tatar attack on Galicia and Podolia, which was caused by the deterioration of military and political relations between the Ottoman Porte and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as a result of constant attacks by the Ukrainian Cossacks on Ottoman possessions. Arriving on the territory of the Chernivtsi region, the Ottoman troops burned the neighbouring town of Sniatyn, where fairs were held, and various goods were seized.¹¹ The city of Chernivtsi must have also been looted and partially burned.

Prior research suggests that there is evidence in the letter of the prince of Moldavia Aaron the Tyrant (Romanian: Aron Tiranul) (1591-1592 and 1592-1595) dated by 11 June 1594, in which the heirs of the former vornic (bailiff) Yurashko informed the landlord about the loss of documents for the purchase of the village of Malyi Kuchuriv by Yurashko “after the capture of Sniatyn and Chernivtsi by the Turks”, and also for the first time the letter mentions the Chernivtsi customs officer Ilya, who sold hayfields and a pond in the village of Malyi Kuchuriv (Chernivtsi region) to vornic Yurashko.¹² Thus, the absence of economic charters on city self-government in the Chernivtsi region until the

⁹ *Gyulafi Lestár fóljegyzése 1565-1605* [Gyulafi Lestár's notes from 1565–1605], in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica. Scriptores*, XXXI, Budapest, 1881, p. 20.

¹⁰ Oleksandr Masan, *Chernivtsi v druhij polovyni XIV-XVIII st. (do 1775 r.)* [Chernivtsi in the second half of the XIV-XVII centuries (until 1775)], in *Chernivtsi: Istoriia i suchasnist'* [Chernivtsi: History and modernity]. Za zah. red. V. M. Botushans'koho. Chernivtsi, Zelena Bukovyna, 2009, p. 35.

¹¹ Kazimierz Turowski (ed.), *Kronika polska Marcina Bielskiego* [Marcin Bielsky's Polish Chronicle]. Vol. 3. Sanok, Pollak Karol, 1856, p. 1628–1629.

¹² Teodor Balan, *Documente Bucovinene* [Bukovinian Documents], vol. 7. Iași, Taida Publishing House, 2005, p. 74.

1590s indirectly testified to the devastation of the city in the summer of 1589¹³.

The starosta of the city of Chernivtsi at that time was Sidorie. Information about the latter can be found in the charter of Petru Șchiopul (Peter VI the lame) of 26 February 1591. It referred to the collection of subsidies by the Moldavian Prince to the state treasury. For this, Petru Șchiopul granted Sidorie the village of Revne in the Chernivtsi region. These subsidies were levied to pay additional tribute to the Turks to prevent their new attacks on Moldavia.¹⁴ It can be concluded that this document must refer to the consequences of a new Turkish raid in August 1591 on northern Moldavia and Pokuttia.¹⁵

Another document is associated with the name of the Chernivtsi starosta Sidorie. This is a charter dated 8 February 1595, which is the oldest surviving document written in Chernivtsi. Although it did not deal with municipal affairs, it ends with the words "recorded in the city of Chernivtsi".¹⁶

The aforesaid testifies to the fact that, despite the relatively peaceful relations between Polish kings and Ottoman sultans, the Ukrainian Cossacks' exploits in the 80s of the 16th century almost led to the outbreak of the Polish-Turkish war. The Moldavian Prince Petru Șchiopul could not bear the constant increase of the Ottoman Porta's financial demands, which also burdened the North Moldavian population. In 1591, he fled the country, taking all his property and money with him. His successor, Aaron the Tyrant (1591-1592, 1592-1595), significantly increased taxes, which caused an uprising against him. In 1592, the Ukrainian Cossacks took advantage of the opportunity to invade Moldavia again, together with Prince Peter, who briefly seized the Moldavian throne and went down in history as Peter VI (Peter the Cossack) (August-October 1592). He was nicknamed "Cossack" because of his good relations with the Zaporizhzhia Cossacks, who provided him with significant political and military support. However, he was quickly removed from power by the Turks, and the Poles explained the Ukrainian Cossacks' action as a provocation by the Habsburgs.¹⁷

It should be noted that there's little information about Peter's background.

¹³ O. Masan, *Chernivtsi v druhij polovyni XIV-XVIII st.*, p. 35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁵ O. Masan, *Chernivtsi v druhij polovyni XIV-XVIII st.* p. 36.

¹⁶ Lev Cherepnyn (ed.), *Moldavia v epohu feodalizmu* [Moldavia in the era of feudalism]. vol. 2. Kyshynev, Știința Publishing House, 1978, p. 368–369.

¹⁷ Dariusz Milewski, *From Świerczowski to Wallachian Expedition of Jan Zamoyski: Rise of the Cossack Factor in Polish-Ottoman Relations (1574–1600)*, in Cristea O., Pilat L., *From Pax Mongolica to Pax Ottomanica. War, Religion and Trade in the Northwestern Black Sea Region (14th–16th Centuries)*, Vol. 58, Brill, 2020, p. 225.

Apparently, he was the son of the former Moldavian Voivode Aleksander IV Lăpuşneanu (1552-1561, 1564-1568). This is evidenced by a letter from the Ottoman sultan to the Polish king, in which he claimed that Peter was pretending to be the son of the Moldavian Voivode Aleksander IV, who had passed away long ago. He also reported that Peter, along with the Ukrainian Cossacks, was assisted by some Polish nobles, including the Bar and Kamianets starostas.¹⁸ The names of the Ukrainian Cossack atamans involved in this campaign remain unknown to this day. It should be stressed that K. Kosynskyi led Cossacks in the first revolts, as well as some detachments of registered Ukrainian Cossacks, who accompanied Peter.¹⁹ Thus, Peter the Cossack's campaign in Moldavia was an integral part of the Ukrainian Cossack campaigns of the late 1570s and 1580s, and the result of his speech was the removal of Aaron from the throne, who the Turks first recalled to the capital Porta, but later returned to power.

Interestingly, in July 1592, before Peter the Cossack's campaign, the Moldavians proclaimed Alexandru Cornea the Evil as Prince of Moldavia, but he ceded the throne to his uncle, Aaron, and moved to Wallachia, where he became Prince. However, in September 1593, the Turks overthrew Alexander, replacing him with Michael the Brave (Rom. „Viteazul”) (1593-1600), the son of the former Wallachian Prince Pătraşcu cel Bun (Pătraşcu the Good).²⁰

The failure of Peter Cossack's expedition did not completely stop devastating lands on the Polish-Moldavian border. Both Poles and Moldavians continued to loot neighbouring lands, leading to the land's population discontent and resentment. A mixed commission headed by the Kamianets starosta Jan Potocki and the great Moldavian vornic Tomasz, as well as border pârcălabs (the oldest and most important officials of the Romanian principalities), tried to assess and compensate for the damage on both sides. Grand Chancellor of the Crown Jan Zamoyski, anticipating a large representation of both Moldavians and Turks, arrived in the Khotyn region himself, aiming to attract a significant Polish contingent to strengthen royal power. The commission met in December 1593 near Khotyn.²¹ In its agenda, there were a plethora of issues, among which the

¹⁸ Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria Romanilor*, vol. 3, Part 1, Bucuresci, Stabilimentulu graficu Socecu Teclu, 1880, p. 164.

¹⁹ Liubomyr Vynar, *Kozats'ka Ukraina: vybrani pratsi* [Cossacks Ukraine: selected works]. Kyiv; Lviv; New York, 2003, p. 205–206.

²⁰ Z. Spieralski, *Awantury mołdawskie*. p. 143.

²¹ Dariusz Milewski, *Polsko-mołdawskie stosunki polityczno-wojskowe w latach 1538–1595* [Polish-Moldavian political-military relations from 1538 to 1595], Oświęcim, Napoleon V, 2022, p. 156.

most pressing was the threat of the destruction of the estates of the Polish gentry. To mutually benefit, the Poles and Moldavians agreed to compensate each other for the wrongs done and to restrain their people from attacking their neighbours.²² Regrettably, in early February 1594, the Grand Chancellor of the Crown received a new complaint indicating that the Poles did not feel secure and still faced Moldavian adversity.²³ The evidence presented above tends to support the idea that the situation on the Polish-Moldavian border remained insecure, rough and tough.

Several studies suggest that the venue of this commission in Khotyn is of particular interest. The fortress in Khotyn was a peculiar attribute of political and military superiority. In the late sixteenth century, it became a strategically important stronghold, for which the Poles never stopped fighting. It became the subject of interstate discussions and was also recorded in international agreements. It was given a special place in numerous Polish-Turkish conflicts in the years that followed.

In the late spring of 1594, the Tatars' devastating and wrenching traces were found in the northern Moldavian lands. There were about 25,000 of them under the leadership of Ğazı II Giray, the Khan of the Crimean Khanate. On 2 July 1594, they approached Pokuttia and rushed through it, burning Sniatyn, Kolomyia, Obertyn, and other neighbouring towns. On 7 July, the Horde reached Halych, aiming not to fight the Poles but only to raid the lands of Moldavia and Poland, and to march into Hungary to wage out the Turkish-Austrian war that began in 1593. The Crimean Khan, on the orders of Abaza Siyavuş Pasha I, sent his troops to Transylvania to join the Turkish army. Passing through Moldavian and Polish territories, they took no prisoners.²⁴ Thus, after passing through the northern regions of Moldavia, the Tatars again looted Pokuttia.

In turn, the Turks, aiming to plunder Polish lands, appeared in Podillia in the early summer of 1594. However, encountering Cossacks, they hastily returned to Moldavian lands. The Ukrainian Cossacks, led by the centurion Severyn Nalyvaiko, chased them deep into Moldavia, as a result of which a large number of Turks were killed and about 4,000 horses were captured. In November 1594, an

²² Ilie Corfus, *Documente privitoare la istoria României culese din arhivele polone: Secolul al XVI-lea* [Documents on the History of Romania Found in Polish Archives. The 16th Century], Bucureşti, Academy Publishing House, 1979, p. 372–373.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 376–377.

²⁴ Leszek Podhorodecki, *Stanisław Żółkiewski*, Warszawa, Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1988, p. 76.

anti-Turkish uprising broke out in Moldavia and Wallachia. Under pressure from the rebels and the troops of the Wallachian voivode Michael the Brave, the Turks abandoned the Moldavian and Wallachian fortresses.²⁵

The Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns in Moldavia continued. The Ukrainian Cossacks seized the opportunity and once more invaded Moldavia in late 1594. The 12,000-strong Ukrainian Cossackhood consisted of Kish Ottoman Hryhorii Loboda's Zaporozhian Host, Jan Oryszowski's registrars, and S. Nalyvaiko's Cossack detachment. Having defeated the hastily assembled troops of the Voivode Aaron, they captured and burned Iași and Suceava, and also attacked Bilhorod, Kilia, and Tyahynya.²⁶ Such data are prone to attest to the Ukrainian Cossacks' forcing the Moldavian Voivode to renounce Turkish citizenship and to take the oath of allegiance to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612).

In 1595, along with the traditional contenders from the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Transylvanian Prince Sigismund Báthory, a vassal of Austria, began to intervene in the struggle for the Moldavian throne. During a victorious battle against the Turks, Emperor Rudolf II promised to surrender Moldavia to them. In early May, exploiting the complex international circumstances in the region, Sigismund Báthory organised a boyar rebellion and, with the help of Hungarian mercenaries, overthrew Aaron the Tyrant from the Moldavian throne. For a few months, the new ruler of Moldavia was the Hetman of the Moldavian troops, Stefan VIII Răzvan, who went down in history as Stefan VIII.²⁷ Recognising himself as a vassal of Transylvania, he pledged to imprison Hungarian soldiers in the largest Moldavian fortresses. Sigismund Báthory appointed his commandants to Moldavian fortresses, and in Khotyn Fortress, he consequently deployed 200 Hungarian soldiers.²⁸

²⁵ Volodymyr Holobuts'kyj, *Zaporoz'ke kozatstvo* [Zaporizhzhya Cossacks], Kyiv, Vyshcha shkola, 1994, p. 179–180.

²⁶ Dariusz Milewski, *Ochrona południowo-wschodniego pogranicza Korony w pierwszym okresie rządów Zygmunta III (1587–1598)* [Protection of the southeastern borderlands of the Crown in the first period of the reign of Sigismund III (1587-1598)], in *Rzeczypospolitej Wazów*. Białystok, 2022, p. 125; Smolij Valeriy. (ed.), *Istoriia ukrains'koho kozatstva: Narysy. v 2-kh tt.* [History of the Ukrainian Cossacks: Essays in 2 vol.], vol. 1, Kyiv, Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia, 2006, p. 336.

²⁷ Demir Dragnev (ed), *Ocherki vneshnepoliticheskoy istorii Moldavskogo knyazhestva (poslednyaya chetvert XIV – nachalo XIX v.)* [Essays on the foreign policy history of the Moldavian principality (last quarter of the 14th century – beginning of the 19th century)], Kishinev, Știința Publishing House, 1987, p. 177–178.

²⁸ Reinhold Hejdensztejn, *Wyprawy Jana Zamojskiego Hetmana Wielkiego Koronnego do*

The cancellation of vassalage and the attack on Turkish fortresses on the Danube forced the Ottoman Empire to take decisive action, up to transforming Moldavia into a Turkish pashalik. Eventually, these crucial steps raised significant concerns in Poland, as the Moldavian fortress of Khotyn was only “a stone’s throw” from Polish Rzvanets and could fall into Turkish hands.²⁹ Mikołaj Jazłowiecki proposed to King Sigismund III Vasa (1587-1632) to take possession of Khotyn. On 26 May 1595, the king wrote to Hetman Jan Zamoyski that, regardless of waging the war with the Porte or not, “it is better to seize and keep this place”, as the fortress in Khotyn played a vital strategic part in the region.³⁰ The literature review shows that the Poles were quite concerned about the possible deployment of Ottoman troops on the Polish-Moldavian border.

The Poles sought to pull Moldavia out of the anti-Ottoman coalition, to bring it into their own sphere of influence, and to appoint their protege as Voivode. The initiator and leader of the new policy was the Chancellor and Crown Hetman Jan Zamoyski, who had recently sided with Turkey and was its supporter. The king authorised Zamoyski to send the Ukrainian Cossacks against the Turks and to raise funds to recruit troops. In July 1595, J. Zamoyski deployed near Terebovlia with his six thousand soldiers.³¹ The Ukrainian Cossacks set off for Moldavia, captured Bendery and Akkerman, and settled there. In light of reports that it happened only owing to the Moldavians’ assistance, many of whom fought as part of the Ukrainian Cossack troops. Meanwhile, on 15 August, a Ukrainian Cossack sent on a reconnaissance mission arrived at Zamoyski’s camp and reported that the Tatars had crossed the Dniro. Therefore, the hetman moved his army to Kamianets to be closer to any further actions, in case the Tatars tried to enter the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to stand in their way.³²

Despite the looming Tatar threat, Jan Zamoyski capitalised on the Sultan's army being preoccupied with conflicts on the Danube against the Wallachians. Zamoyski mustered a sizable Polish army and advanced towards Moldavia in late August 1595.

Multan, w roku 1595 [The expedition of Jan Zamoyski, Crown Hetman of the Grand Crown, to Moldavia, in the year 1595], in Rogalski L. *Dzieje księstw nad-dunajskich, to jest Multan i Wotoszczyzny* [History of the Danube principalities, that is Moldavia and Wallachia], vol.1, Warszawa, S. Orgelbrand, 1861, p. 481.

²⁹ Z. Spieralski, *Awantury mołdawskie*. p. 145.

³⁰ R. Hejdensztejn, *Wyprawy Jana Zamojskiego*, p. 482.

³¹ Z. Spieralski, *Awantury mołdawskie*, p. 145.

³² Dariusz Milewski, *A Campaign of the Great Hetman Jan Zamoyski in Moldavia (1595). Part I. Politico-diplomatic and military preliminaries*, in „Codrul Cosminului”, vol. XVIII, Issue 2, 2012, p. 281.

On 27 August, he crossed the Dniester River and continued his campaign. The crossing must have occurred near the village of Kolodribka (currently the settlement with the same name in the Ternopil region), as the river was very shallow at that time, and because it was this ford that Jan Zamoyski used in 1600.³³

Together, the present findings confirm that the Khotyn fortress was eventually captured with minimal resistance, since the garrison consisted of Hungarian mercenaries who quickly surrendered and returned to Transylvania.³⁴ In the battle near the village of Areni, Moldavian troops were defeated, and Voivode Stefan VIII Răzvan himself was killed during the fight.³⁵ All in all, Moldavia remained without any defence, army or ruler.

Ieremia Movilă was officially proclaimed the new Voivode on 1 September in Iași. According to R. Heidenstein, a few days later, the Crown Hetman Jan Zamoyski arrived in the Moldavian capital and launched Polish-Transylvanian negotiations, though without success. In contrast, the Poles rejected any Transylvanian proposals regarding Moldavia.³⁶

In response, the Tatar hordes moved on Moldavia in October 1595, but the Polish army stopped their invasion near Tsutsora. On 21 October, a Polish-Turkish agreement was signed, according to which the Turkish side recognised Ieremia Movilă as the Moldavian Voivode and vassal of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, subject to the payment of an annual tribute to the Ottoman Empire, and the Turkish-Tatar troops left the Moldavian lands.³⁷ Thus, Ieremia Movilă (1595-1600), a representative of the great nobility of Moldavia who had

³³ Miron Costin, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei dela Aaron-vodă încoace* [Chronicle of the Land of Moldavia from Aaron-voivode], in G. Ureche, M. Costin, I. Neculce, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei: Cronici* [Chronicle of Moldavia: Chronicles], Chișinău, Hyperion Publishing House, 1990, p. 142; Oleksandr Masan, *Bukovyna iak ob'iekt mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn z davnykh chasiv do 1774 r.* [Bukovina as an object of international relations from ancient times to 1774], in *Bukovyna v konteksti ievropejs'kykh mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn (z davnykh chasiv do seredyny XX st.)* [Bukovina in the context of European international relations (from ancient times to the middle of the twentieth century)], Chernivtsi, Ruta, 2005, p. 87.

³⁴ R. Hejdensztej, *Wyprawy Jana Zamojskiego*, p. 483.

³⁵ Vasile Stati, *Ystoria Moldovy* [History of Moldova], Kyshynev, Tipografia Centrală, 2002, p. 146.

³⁶ R. Hejdensztej, *Wyprawy Jana Zamojskiego*, p. 485–486.

³⁷ Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw] – further AGAD). Archiwum Zamoyskich. sign. 146. pp. 10–11; Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich w Krakowie [The Prince Czartoryski Library in Krakow] – further Bibl. Czart., Teki Naruszewicza, ms. 96. pp. 69–70.

emigrated to Poland for some time, was placed on the Moldavian throne with Polish support.³⁸

By way of conclusion, these conditions were confirmed in general terms in a subsequent agreement concluded in November 1597. In particular, it stated that "peace and amity be established between [us] as it used to be, and as he has asked anew for my imperial 'ahdname, his petition and request from our abundant high royal mercies and from our most honoured exalted imperial excellence has received the glorious acceptance according to the previous conditions I have given anew this imperial 'ahdname, and I have ordered that: from the side of my glorious majesty and from the side of my great viziers, illustrious mirmirans, noble emirs, and victorious soldiers no damage or harm should touch the land, country, fortresses, and towns of the king as mentioned above and all the places being under his possession."³⁹

In August 1598, the 'ahdname, sent by Mehmed III to King Sigismund III, which practically assumed that Moldavia remained under a dual Polish-Turkish protectorate. In the 1598 agreement, the sultan granted Ioan Movilă the right to hereditary possession of Moldavia.⁴⁰

In late autumn 1595, Polish troops captured Khotyn, Suceava, and almost the entire territory of Moldavia. However, the Polish forces had to return home because of the then-escalating peasant and Cossack revolt in the Ukrainian lands incorporated into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Ukrainian Cossacks directed their efforts toward the revolt led by Severyn Nalyvaiko. The uprising was suppressed by the Poles in 1596.⁴¹ V. Smolii's comprehensive review concluded that the Ukrainian Cossack revolts of 1591-1596 sparked the struggle for the defence of the rights and freedoms of the Zaporozhian Army, playing a crucial role in the formation of the Ukrainian Cossacks as a class of the Ukrainian society.⁴²

³⁸ Oleksandr Hvan'ini, *Khronika Yevropejs'koi Sarmatii. 2-he vyd.* [Chronicle of European Sarmatia. 2nd ed.], Kyiv, Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiiia, 2009, p. 762.

³⁹ AGAD, Libri Legationum, sign. 26, pp. 15a-18a; see also: Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th-18th century). An annotated edition of 'Ahdnames and other documents*, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2000, p. 303-312.

⁴⁰ AGAD, Archiwum Koronne Warszawskie, Dział turecki, karton 71,teczka 280, pp. 232-233; see also: Kołodziejczyk D., *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, p. 313-323.

⁴¹ M. Plewczyński, *Wojny i wojskowość*, p. 267-294.

⁴² Valeriy Smoliiy, Valeriy Stepankov, *Stanovlennia kozats'koho politychnoho separatyzmu* [The Formation of Cossack Political Separatism], in *Naukovi pratsi Kam'ianets'-Podil's'koho derzhavnogo universytetu: Istorychni nauky* [Scientific works of Kamianets'-Podilskiy State University: Historical Sciences], vol. 14, Kam'ianets'-

Jan Zamoyski, leaving part of his army in Iași, moved to Podillia via Khotyn. He left the Polish guard and artillery to protect Khotyn Fortress.⁴³ However, the Ukrainian Cossacks were not involved in the Moldavian expedition of 1595, as they did not support the Polish army.

It is worth noting that the northern Moldavian lands were not directly involved in the hostilities mentioned above. The residents of Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions experienced a period of relative tranquillity for a couple of years. Statistically speaking, in the late 16th century, there were about 8903 households in the northern lands of Moldavia (the total households of Chernivtsi, Khotyn, and Suceava regions). With an average family coefficient of 5.5 and the addition of 10% unaccounted-for yards (boyars, burghers, serfs, and some peasants from church and monastery estates), the total population could have been 30-32 thousand people, and its density was approximately four people per 1 sq km.⁴⁴

Since then, a record has been preserved that attests to the active work of local governments in Chernivtsi. In a Charter dated 8 February 1599, which addressed the property relations of the residents of Lenkivtsi (now a village of the same name in the Chernivtsi region), the Chernivtsi City Council's activities were first mentioned. It consisted of the Mayor Onciul (sholtuz, mayor) and 12 pângari (councillors).⁴⁵

However, the period of peaceful times and tranquillity in the northern regions of Moldavia was short-lived. In autumn 1599, the situation in the area deteriorated significantly due to the rise to power of the Polish protegee in Transylvania, Andrew Báthory (Andrzej Batory). In October, the Wallachian Prince Michael the Brave defeated Báthory and seized power in the principality. In official documents, he called himself "the Prince of the Ardal and Wallachian lands". Seeking to maintain military initiative, Michael tried to capture Moldavia

Podil's'kyj, Oiium, 2005, p. 179.

⁴³ Oleksandr Dobrzhans'kyj, Yurii Makar, Oleksandr Masan, *Khotynschyna: istorychnyj narys* [Khotyn region: a historical essay], Chernivtsi, Molodyi bukovynets, 2002, p. 90.

⁴⁴ Vasyl Botushans'kyj. (ed.), *Bukovyna: istorychnyj narys* [Bukovina: a historical sketch.]. Chernivtsi, Zelena Bukovyna, 1998, p. 36; Chuchko Mykhailo, «Y v'ziat Boha na pomosch'»: sotsial'no-relihijnyj chynnyk v zhytti pravoslavnoho naseleattia pivnichnykh volostej Moldavs'koho voievodstva ta avstrijs'koi Bukovyny (epokha pizn'oho seredn'ovichchia ta novoho chasu) [And they took God to help: socio-religious factor in the life of the Orthodox population of the northern regions of the Moldavian Voivodeship and Austrian Bukovina (late medieval and modern times)], Chernivtsi, Knyhy – XXI, 2008, p. 41.

⁴⁵ L. Cherepnyn (ed.), *Moldavyia v epohu...* p. 128.

and thus unite the Danube principalities in one state. This struggle for power in Moldavia harmed the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions.

In December 1599, the Polish King Sigismund III Vasa, addressing the nobility from the Polish-Moldavian border, noted that Moldavia had always been under the supremacy and protection of the Crown, and warned Michael the Brave himself that his attack on the Moldavian state would be considered a declaration of war against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁴⁶ The government of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth also warned I. Movilă about Michael the Brave's aggressive plans. The king himself ordered him to fortify the fortresses in Suceava and Khotyn.⁴⁷

Simultaneously, the Cossacks persisted in their customary strategy of altering their military and political circumstances to enhance their international standing. The prolonged armed conflict against Turkey in Moldavia and Wallachia during the late sixteenth century led to the gradual decline of the "large army" (Rom. "Oastea cea mare"), a significant component of their military forces.⁴⁸ The military mercenaryism experienced by the Cossacks while serving foreign rulers, notably Michael the Brave, manifested itself when, fighting alongside the Wallachians, they openly clashed with the Poles.⁴⁹

After weighing all the pros and cons, in early May 1600, Michael marched into Moldavia. As a result of rapid military operations, his troops captured almost the entire country within a month. Suceava surrendered after a two-week siege. And on 16 May, I. Movilă himself was defeated. He, along with his loyal boyars and Polish troops, fled to the Khotyn fortress and fortified themselves there. Michael followed them to Khotyn, looted and burned the city, and ordered his troops to lay siege to the fortress. During the siege of the Khotyn stronghold, part of his army, having marched through the Chernivtsi region, attacked Pokuttia, destroying many noble estates. Among the forces of the Wallachian Prince, there were evidently Cossacks who actively participated in Michael the Brave's anti-Ottoman campaign.⁵⁰

The latter intended to besiege Khotyn Castle, recognising it as the final

⁴⁶ D. Dragnev (ed), *Ocherki vneshnepoliticheskoy istorii...* p. 182–183.

⁴⁷ O. Masan, *Bukovyna iak ob'iekt...* p. 88.

⁴⁸ Nicolae Stoicescu, "Bolshoe voisko" Valakhii i Moldavii v XIV–XVI vekakh ["Large army" in Wallachia and Moldavia in the XIV - XVI centuries], in *Stranitsy istorii rumynskoi armii* [Pages of the history of the Romanian army], Bucharest, 1975, pp. 59–60.

⁴⁹ Nicolae Stoicescu, *Curteni și slujitori. Contribuții la istoria armatei române* [Courtiers and servants. Contributions to the history of the Romanian army], București, Editura militară, 1968, p. 190-191.

⁵⁰ O. Masan, *Bukovyna iak ob'iekt...* p. 89.

bastion of I. Movilă's authority. Upon its capture, Moldavia would fall entirely under the control of the Wallachian ruler. However, having well-fortified the castle and attracted German mercenaries who were well-known cannoneers and infantrymen, I. Movilă successfully repelled enemy attacks during the summer, awaiting help from the Poles. Meanwhile, Jan Zamoyski was gathering an army for another campaign in Moldavia. He successfully garnered the support of numerous magnates and their troops, as well as the Zaporizhzhya Cossacks, to join his cause.⁵¹

Taking advantage of Michael's involvement in suppressing the uprising of the Transylvanian nobility, with the sanction and support of the Turkish sultan, in autumn 1600, J. Zamoyski launched a new campaign in Moldavia. The 30,000-strong Polish-Ukrainian Cossack army arrived by the Khotyn road (the so-called road along the left bank of the Dniester River).⁵² On 4 September, after forcing the river near Kolodribka, they moved towards Chernivtsi, trying to get behind the Wallachian army. Upon learning about this manoeuvre of the Poles, the troops of Michael the Brave quickly retreated to Suceava, lifting the siege of Khotyn Fortress.⁵³ Khotyn and its fortress were liberated without resistance.

Assisted by Ottoman troops, J. Zamoyski effortlessly reclaimed Moldavian territories from the Wallachian-Hungarian forces, reinstating the authority of I. Movilă (1600-1606) in Moldavia, and also attacked Wallachia. In December 1600, he returned to Podolia, leaving Polish outposts in Moldavian fortresses in Khotyn.⁵⁴

Consequently, Poland re-established its influence over the Moldavian state, with adverse effects on the northern Moldavian regions bordering Polish territory. This region became the scene of a fierce confrontation between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Porte in the years that followed.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that the military and political landscape of the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions, incorporated into Moldavia, was marked by continuous interference from Ukrainian Cossacks, Polish and Ukrainian magnates, and Ottomans in internal Moldavian affairs, particularly in the contest for the Voivode position. This title became a commodity acquired through either military prowess or financial means. During this era, Ukrainian Cossacks played a significant role in the Moldavian power struggle. Consequently, the situation in the northern Moldavian regions of the Moldavian

⁵¹ M. Costin, *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei...*, p. 142.

⁵² O. Dobrzans'kyj, Yu. Makar, O. Masan, *Khotynschyna...* p. 90.

⁵³ M. Costin, *Letopisetul Țării Moldovei...*, p. 142.

⁵⁴ O. Masan, *Bukovyna iak ob'iekt...* p. 90.

state was complex and tense, characterised by frequent attacks and plundering, resulting in substantial demographic and economic hardships for the populace.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the most significant findings of this study is that, in the late sixteenth century, Polish-Turkish relations soured due to the growing Polish influence over the Moldavian state and the persistent raids by Ukrainian Cossacks on Turkish holdings in Moldavia. Polish monarchs sought to maintain Moldavia within their sphere of influence and occasionally dispatched troops to ravage and loot territories adjacent to Poland, namely the Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions. By 1595, Moldavia was officially under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire, yet its rulers maintained close familial and political ties with Poland. The military and political climate in the northern Moldavian territories was marked by continual intervention by Polish and Ukrainian magnates and Ukrainian Cossacks in Moldavia's internal affairs, particularly in the contest for the throne. Securing the title of Voivode often required a display of military might, political manoeuvring, or substantial financial dealings. The period then saw the Khotyn stronghold rise in significance, as it continued to retain its strategic importance, and its possession was key to domination in Moldavia. The Chernivtsi and Khotyn regions bordering Poland were in a state of tension, experiencing frequent raids by Polish magnates and Turkish-Tatar forces, resulting in significant devastation and hardship. These events highlight the nature of Ukrainian Cossacks' campaigns in Moldavia and the impact they produced there in the late sixteenth century. They also underscore the political and strategic significance of Khotyn Fortress, which was the target and *raison d'être* of both the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire, as well as the Moldavian state.

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