

MIGRATION ON THE LAST FRONTIER: MIGRATION MOVEMENTS IN LATE 18TH-CENTURY KHOTYN

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Abstract: Although the intense migration movements observed in Khotyn in the late 18th Century have been indirectly addressed in the regional history and migration studies literature, a systematic and comprehensive analysis focusing specifically on this phenomenon has yet to be conducted. During the period under examination, Khotyn experienced bidirectional migration. On the one hand, significant emigration occurred due to military and political instability caused by the Ottoman-Russian wars, leading to a notable decline – and, in some cases, complete disappearance – of the settled Muslim population. On the other hand, the pressures faced by Jewish, Ukrainian, and Polish communities in the regions that came under Russian and Habsburg control during the partitioning of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth prompted their migration toward Khotyn. These external migration movements introduced new demographic elements to the city, playing a key role in shaping Khotyn's cosmopolitan character. This paper comprehensively examines migration movements and population changes in Khotyn during the late 18th Century, and their effects on the city's socio-demographic structure.

Keywords: Khotyn, migration, Podolia, Ottoman Empire, Russia, wars, Jews.

Rezumat: *Migrația la ultima frontieră: Mișcările migratorii în Hotin la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea.* Deși mișcările migratorii intense observate în Hotin la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea au fost abordate indirect în literatura de specialitate privind istoria regională și studiile despre migrație, încă nu a fost realizată o analiză sistematică și cuprinzătoare axată specific pe acest fenomen. În perioada analizată, Hotinul a cunoscut un proces de migrație bidirectional. Pe de o parte, au avut loc emigrări semnificative cauzate de instabilitatea militară și politică generată de războaiele ruso-otomane, ceea ce a dus la un declin notabil – și, în unele cazuri, la dispariția completă – a populației musulmane stabilite. Pe de altă parte, presiunile

cu care s-au confruntat comunitățile evreiești, ucrainene și poloneze în regiunile aflate sub controlul rus și habsburgic, în urma împărțirii Commonwealth-ului polono-lituanian, au determinat migrarea acestora către Hotin. Aceste mișcări migratorii externe au introdus noi elemente demografice în oraș, jucând un rol esențial în conturarea caracterului cosmopolit al Hotinului. În cadrul acestei lucrări, sunt examinate în mod cuprinsătoare migrația și schimbările demografice din Hotin, la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea, precum și efectele acestora asupra structurii socio-demografice a orașului.

INTRODUCTION

In the late 18th Century, demographic changes in Khotyn resembled a kind of “blood transfusion” process, indicating a structural reconstruction driven by a dual-directional demographic mobility. During this period, the city experienced a gradual decline in its existing population due to ongoing emigration, while simultaneously integrating new reaya (subjects) through external migration. This opposing demographic flow reshaped Khotyn’s demographic composition both quantitatively and qualitatively, laying the foundations for the socio-demographic structure that would evolve over the following two centuries. In this context, the city’s migration dynamics revolved around two main focal points. The first was the military-political instability and destruction caused by the Ottoman-Russian wars in the second half of the 18th Century, which led to a gradual exodus of the urban population. This situation resulted in a significant decline in the presence of the settled Muslim population—so much so that, in demographic terms, it virtually disappeared. The second focal point emerged during the final quarter of the 18th Century, in the context of the three-part partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth among Russia, Prussia, and Austria. This political restructuring, particularly in regions under Russian and Austrian rule (such as Podolia and Galicia), triggered new waves of migration toward Khotyn, driven by increasing administrative, political, and religious pressures on local populations. These migration waves, involving primarily Jewish, Ukrainian, and Polish communities, laid the groundwork for the settlement of diverse demographic groups in Khotyn and played a decisive role in shaping the city’s cosmopolitan character in modern times.

THE MIGRATIONS FROM KHOTYN, 1768-1788

In the final quarter of the 18th Century, the geopolitical transformations occurring along the northern frontier of the Ottoman Empire brought about

significant changes in the demographic structure of Khotyn, one of the most strategically important centres in this border zone. Following the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699), which resulted in the loss of Kamianets-Podilskyi, Khotyn's military and administrative position on the Ottoman northern frontier was considerably strengthened. In this context, the city was directly subordinated to the central administration in 1713 and was granted the status of an independent *sanjak* (province). Within this new administrative framework, the *timar* system was reestablished across the *sanjak*'s territory in accordance with the classical Ottoman land regime. Simultaneously, a Muslim population – including Turks, Lipka Tatars, Lazes, and Albanians – was settled in both the urban centre and the surrounding rural areas.¹ Data obtained from Ottoman *tahrir defters* (tax registers) indicate that this Muslim population was particularly concentrated in rural settlements such as Ocnița, Tabani, and Dankivtsi.²

However, starting from the second half of the 18th Century, the wars that took place in the region within the context of Ottoman-Russian rivalry led to Khotyn being directly targeted and suffering significant physical destruction. During the Russian siege in 1769, as part of the defensive measures taken by the Ottoman military authorities, the city and its suburbs were systematically set on fire, destroying approximately 85-90% of the urban fabric.³ Similarly, the 1788 siege also caused severe damage to Khotyn's physical infrastructure.⁴ These destructions should be regarded as a primary factor in triggering the mass migration

¹ Ahmet Yurdagül, *Bartınlı İbrahim Hamdi Efendi'nin Atlas'ında Rumeli* [Rumelia in the Atlas of İbrahim Hamdi Efendi of Bartın], (Master's Thesis, Institute of Social Sciences, Ege University)], İzmir, 2019, p. 311-312; BOA. A.DVNS.MHM.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Sicillatı Mühimme Defterleri / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Mühimme Registers of the Imperial Council (Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn)], 127/420; BOA. AE.SMHD.I [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Ali Emiri Mahmud I / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Ali Emiri Mahmud I], 8/574; *Ibid.*, 119/8604; BOA, TS.MA.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Defterleri / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Registers of the Topkapı Palace Museum Archive], 335/22; BOA. C.A.S. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Askeriye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Military Affairs], 839/35815.

² BOA. TT.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Tapu Tahrir Defteri / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Tapu Tahrir Registers], 888, p. 14, 16, 89.

³ Mustafa Kesbî, *İbretnümâ-ı Devlet (Tahlil ve tenkitli metin)* [İbretnümâ-ı Devlet (Analysis and Critical Edition)], in A. Öğreten (Ed.), Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2002, p. 116.

⁴ Cengiz Fedakar, *Khotyn Fortress During the Ottoman-Austrian and Russian Wars 1787-1792*, in Maciej Trąbski (Ed.), *Twierdze Osiemnastowiecznej Europy*, Vol. IV,

processes of the Muslim population living in the region.

One of the factors that led to the migration of the Muslim population from Khotyn was the emergence of epidemiological problems, which occurred in parallel with the physical destruction the city suffered during the wars. The city's inability to recover quickly after successive heavy sieges within a few years left it struggling with various epidemics in the second half of the 18th Century. The beginning of this process was marked by the plague outbreak of 1770–1772, which spread throughout Russian lands via a plague bacterium transmitted through Moldavia to the Russian armies.⁵ However, Khotyn experienced two major plague outbreaks, particularly in 1778 and 1797.⁶ During these outbreaks, a large portion of the city's population – including the Governors of Khotyn – was affected by the plague. Moreover, in the last quarter of the Century, the growing poverty in the city, along with malnutrition, extreme cold, sudden weather changes, and the deterioration of health and hygiene conditions—such as inadequate sewage and waste management—contributed not only to the spread of the plague but also to the emergence of other diseases. As a result, health issues such as smallpox, haemorrhoids, scurvy, and rheumatism were commonly observed among the city's population during this period.⁷

MIGRATION PROCESSES IN THE SHADOW OF WAR

The first mass migration from Khotyn identified in the late 18th Century occurred in 1769, following the outbreak of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768–1774. The Russian siege of Khotyn in January 1769 caused significant anxiety among the city's inhabitants and triggered mass migration. As previously mentioned, in an effort to prevent the city from falling into Russian hands, the Ottoman administration attempted to evacuate the suburban areas of Khotyn by setting them on fire overnight.⁸

Czestochowa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2022, pp. 137-167.

⁵ Alexander Melikishvili, *Genesis of the Anti-Plague System: The Tsarist Period*, "Critical Reviews in Microbiology", Vol. 32, 2006, Issue 1, pp. 19-31; Oksana Mykhed, "A Plague on Your Borders": *Disease Control and Administrative Reforms in Late Eighteenth-Century Ukraine*, in Zenon E. Kohut, Volodymyr Sklokin, Frank E. Sysyn (Eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Ukraine: New Perspectives on Social, Cultural, and Intellectual History*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023, pp. 144-172.

⁶ Kateryna Pasichnyk, *Knowledge of Epidemic Danger in the Middle Dniestr Region in the Late 18th Century*, "Geschichte und Region / Storia E Regione", Vol. 31, 2022, No. 2, p. 155-162.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Ahmet Yurdagül, *Bartınlı İbrahim...*, p. 311-312.

This strategic move also played a decisive role in accelerating the migration process, as a significant portion of the city's population resided in these suburbs, making immediate evacuation necessary.

On the other hand, since the physical capacity of Khotyn Fortress was insufficient to accommodate the entire population living in the suburbs and the fortress itself was under siege, the people could not take refuge there. This made the mass migration of the city's inhabitants to safer areas inevitable. However, it appears that this migration took place under irregular, hasty, and extremely harsh conditions. Indeed, Abdi Pasha's statements, the then-governor of Brăila, clearly reveal the humanitarian crisis caused by the situation. Abdi Pasha reported that the destitute women and children arriving from Khotyn deeply affected the people of Brăila, and that the population, gripped by fear and anxiety at the sight, tried to flee the city by crossing the Danube River in boats.⁹ This account demonstrates that the migration in question had significant social and psychological effects not only on the people of Khotyn but also on other Ottoman cities located along the migration route.

Another significant migration from Khotyn took place during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1787–1792. This wave of migration began when Ottoman forces evacuated the city after the Russian army captured Khotyn on September 31, 1788. In this context, the migration occurred in a more organised manner and under specific conditions than in 1768. This was due to a surrender agreement negotiated with Russian officials, based on Osman Pasha's demands as governor of Khotyn, which outlined detailed provisions for the city's evacuation. Articles 2, 5, 7, and 8 of the agreement contain provisions directly related to the migration:¹⁰

Article 2: From the moment of the city's surrender, the inhabitants will be allowed to remain in the fortress and make preparations for a period of eight days. During this time, they will be permitted to take their belongings and obtain essential provisions, such as wheat and oats, for the journey. Additionally, the Russians will provide carts to facilitate the transportation of elderly and ill individuals.

Article 5: The migrating people will be allowed to take their horses with them; moreover, during the ten-day period in which the Russian army will not approach the city, they will be able to graze these horses along the banks of the

⁹ BOA, TS.MA.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Defterleri / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Registers of the Topkapı Palace Museum Archive], 518/68.

¹⁰ A. N. Petrov, *Vtoraya turetskaya voyna v tsarstvovanie imperatritys Ekateriny II. 1787–1791 gg. Tom I (1787–1789)* [The Second Turkish War during the Reign of Empress Catherine II. 1787–1791 Vol. I (1787–1789)], Sankt-Peterburg, 1880, p. 177–178.

Dniester River. In addition, a large market will be established in the city to provide the necessary supplies for the migration and to allow for the sale of goods that cannot be transported.

Article 7: While the Ottoman troops are evacuating the city, the local population shall leave the fortress through the Bender, Kiliia, and Istanbul gates.

Article 8: To ensure the safety of the population accompanying the Ottoman troops, seven hostages shall be delivered to the Russian army. These hostages will be released once the migration convoy reaches Hantepesi (Stăniileşti, Vaslui).

Under these conditions, it is observed that after reaching Hantepesi, the migrants headed toward two different cities: Brăila and Izmail. However, it is understood that despite the adverse circumstances, the migration did not proceed smoothly. Indeed, Abbas Agha, the *Nüzul Emin* of Khotyn who was part of the group heading to Brăila, stated that he and his family experienced severe difficulties during the migration, which led them to first go to Bender and then to Istanbul.¹¹ On the other hand, these migration movements did not involve only the Muslim population; some Jews residing in Khotyn were also affected by the process. Indeed, during the wave of migration in 1788, some Jews living in the city first moved to Moldavia and then to Isaccea.¹² It has also been determined that some Ashkenazi Jews who migrated from Galicia to Khotyn in 1768 later moved, in the following years, to centres in Bulgaria with established Jewish communities, such as Stara Zagora, Kazanlak, Plovdiv, and Sofia.¹³

ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENT OF MIGRATIONS FROM KHOTYN

One of the main issues the Ottoman Empire faced throughout the 18th Century was internal migration.¹⁴ In this context, a multi-dimensional and

¹¹ BOA. HAT [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Hatt-ı Hümeyun / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Imperial Edicts (Hatt-ı Hümeyun)], 185/8645.

¹² BOA. CADL. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Adliye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Justice Affairs], 63/3759.

¹³ Ecaterina Negruți, *Rolul evreilor în formarea târgurilor din Moldova în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* [The Role of the Jews in the Formation of Market Towns in Moldavia in the First Half of the 19th Century], "Studia et Acta Historiae Iudeorum Romaniae", Editura Hasefer, 1996, No. 1, pp. 139-153.

¹⁴ Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda XVIII. Yüzyılda Göç Sorunu* [The Migration Problem in the 18th Century Ottoman Empire], "Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi" [Journal of Historical Research], Vol. 14, 1981, No. 25, pp. 171-210; İbrahim Güler, *18. Yüzyılda*

coordinated relocation and settlement organisation was established by the central authority to evacuate Muslim and Jewish groups from Khotyn to safer regions within the empire. Particularly during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1787–1792, the Ottoman Empire engaged in a two-front military struggle against Russia in both Southwestern Ukraine and the Caucasus. This situation seriously endangered the safety of the *reaya* (subjects) residing in strategic border towns, especially Khotyn, Ochakiv, Bender, Kiliia, Akkerman (Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi), Izmail, and Anapa.¹⁵ In response to this situation, the Ottoman central authority took various administrative and financial measures to coordinate potential evacuations from the affected regions systematically.

Particularly during the 1790s, when migration movements centred around Khotyn gained momentum, the Treaty of Jassy (1792), which ended the war, marked a significant turning point. In the same year, Selim III (1761–1808) issued a firman instructing the administrative units of the Black Sea port towns and the sanjaks of Sol Kol (Via Egnatia) in Ottoman Rumelia to make the necessary preparations for the migrant groups that would arrive from the northern frontier in the aftermath of the treaty.¹⁶

During the migrants' relocation, *harc-ı râh* (per diem) payments were provided to cover their basic subsistence and transportation expenses, determined by the number of individuals and their social status. Ottoman archival documents indicate that these *harc-ı râh* expenses were financed through the *zecriye* tax levied on alcoholic beverages. For instance, in 1793, it was recorded that, out of a total allocation of 1,700 kuruş (piaster) designated for migrants arriving from northern towns, 244 kuruş was allocated explicitly to migrants from Khotyn.¹⁷ The logistical aspect of the migration was carried out under the supervision and coordination of the Istanbul Customs Administration. Transportation of the migrants was ensured by assigning designated sea vessels, and freight payments were made for the shipment of belongings, provisions, and movable goods.¹⁸

Osmanlı Devleti’nde Nüfus Hareketleri Olarak İç Göçler [Internal Migrations as Population Movements in the Ottoman Empire in the 18th Century], “Tarih Dergisi” [Journal of History], 2000, No. 36, pp. 155-212.

¹⁵ BOA. C.AS. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Askeriye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Military Affairs], 570/23968.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 42/2073.

¹⁷ BOA. C.BLD. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Belediye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Municipality Affairs], 85/4238; BOA. C.ML. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Maliye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Finance Affairs], 24/1141.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 85/4238.

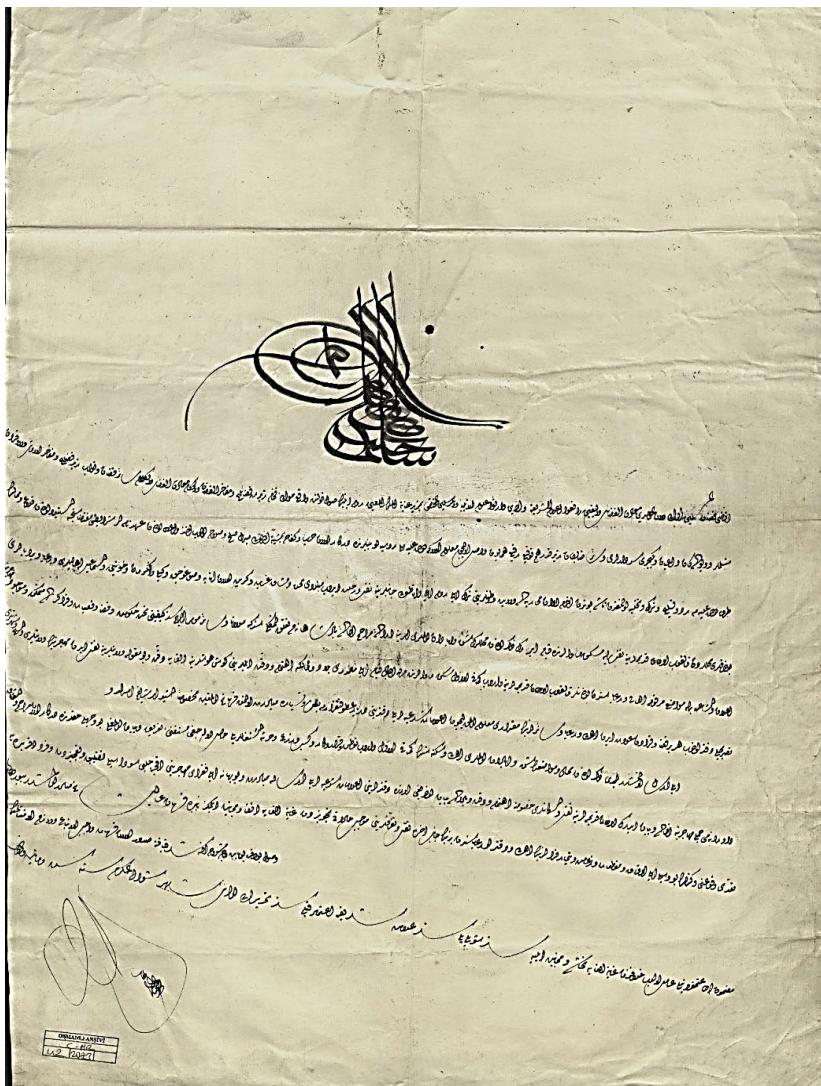


Figure 1. The 1792 firman of Selim III¹⁹

In the context of migration routes, two main port lines stand out: migrants directed toward Istanbul and Anatolia via the Black Sea used the port of Akkerman (Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi), while those heading toward the Ottoman Rumelia preferred transit points along the Danube River such as Kiliya, Izmail, Kartal (Orlivka), Isaccea, and Brăila. Among settlement destinations, major centres such as Istanbul, Bender, Babadag, Filibe (Plovdiv), and Rusçuk (Ruse) were among the

¹⁹ BOA. C.HR. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Hariciye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Foreign Affairs], 42/2073.

primary choices; however, the aforementioned Danube towns also became significant settlement areas for a considerable number of migrants from Khotyn.²⁰ Some individual cases also reflect the socio-political implications of these migration movements. For instance, Alemdar Mustafa Pasha, who was born in Khotyn and later rose to the position of Grand Vizier in the Ottoman Empire, and Şerife Hatun, a “Khotyn migrant” who resided in her mansion in Istanbul during the 1850s, stand out as examples that illustrate both the social and personal dimensions of these migrations²¹.

THE MIGRATIONS FROM HABSBURG GALICIA, 1768-1785

The migrations from Galicia to the Sanjak of Khotyn and Moldavia in 1768 and 1785 were carried out by Ashkenazi Jews, who are frequently referred to in the literature as “Galitzianers” due to their ethnic and geographic origins. Historically, Khotyn stood out as one of the cities in Moldavia with the highest concentration of Jewish population (Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews). Following its establishment as a sanjak center under Ottoman administration in the early 18th Century, certain Jewish groups and individuals—such as Jacob Joseph Frank (1726-1791), the leader of the *Frankist* movement—who had faced various political and religious pressures in the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, migrated to Khotyn and other Ottoman cities in order to benefit from the relatively tolerant living conditions offered by the Ottoman *millet* system.²² Ottoman *tahrir defters* (tax registers) indicate that the Jewish population

²⁰ BOA. HAT [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Hatt-ı Hümâyûn / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Imperial Edicts (Hatt-ı Hümâyûn)], 185/8645; *Ibid.*, 1350/52721.

²¹ Kemal Beydilli, *Alemdar Mustafa Paşa*, in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of Islam by the Turkish Religious Foundation], İstanbul, 1989, Vol. 2, p. 364-365; BOA. A.MKT.UM [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Sadaret Mektubî Kalemi Umum Vilayat Evrakı / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, General Provincial Documents of the Grand Vizierate Correspondence Office], 190/25.

²² Mosheh Zilberman-Silon, Yaakov Berger-Tamir, Ne'a' Roiṭman (Eds.), *Kehilat Lipkani: sefer zikaron* [The Lipkani Community: Memorial Book], Tel-Aviv, 1963, pp. 33-37; Shlomo Shitnovitzer, Yaakov Deviri (Eds.), *Sefer Kehilat Hotin (Besarabia)* [The Community of Khotyn (Bessarabia)], Tel-Aviv, 1974, pp. 118-120; Stanford J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*, New York, New York University Press, 1991, p. 124; Paweł Maciejko, *The Mixed Multitude: Jacob Frank and the Frankist Movement, 1755-1816*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015, p. 88.

was present not only in the city centre of Khotyn but also in the surrounding villages and towns affiliated with the sanjak, such as Ataki, Nedoboivtsi, Klishkivtsi, Koshulyany, and Dovzhok.²³

The first migration we will examine is the movement of approximately 100,000 households from Galicia to Khotyn and its surroundings in 1768. This migration was not limited to Khotyn alone but also involved the Principality of Moldavia in various ways. In this context, it can be considered a relocation process with specific dynamics that require separate analysis.

According to Ottoman archival documents, this migration occurred in the autumn of 1768, during the early months of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768–1774. Although the exact cause of the migration remains unclear, Ottoman sources indicate that this Jewish community left Galicia with a population comprising approximately 100,000 households, allegedly due to certain “offences” committed in Poland. They settled in the Moldavian lands near Khotyn and began residing there. However, the local authorities in Moldavia became aware of the settlement, and in response, the Voivode of Moldavia, Gregory Callimachi (1735–1769), dispatched his chamberlain Kostakis. Citing the unauthorised entry of the Jews into Moldavian land, Kostakis imposed a form of *ayak bastı parası* (city toll) ranging between 15 and 25 gold coins per household—a significantly high amount. It later became evident that Kostakis absconded to Istanbul with the collected gold.²⁴ This arbitrary and financially exploitative act against the Jewish migrants remained unaddressed for many years. It was not until 1788 that the matter was brought to the attention of the Ottoman central administration by a Jewish individual named Kostin of Plovdiv, who appears to have been one of the migrants.²⁵

Another wave of migration in May 1785 was more minor in scale than the previous movement, involving approximately 9,000 people. In the 1780s, various migration movements occurred from the Habsburg to Ottoman lands. However, not all of these movements were welcomed by the Ottoman administration. For instance, one year before the aforementioned wave of migration, in 1784, the Ottomans denied permission for a planned Lipovan migration from Bukovina to Moldavia.²⁶ This example demonstrates that the Ottoman Empire adopted a selective approach in its

²³ BOA. TT.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Tapu Tahrir Defteri / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Tapu Tahrir Registers], 888, p. 94, 112, 114, 117, 123.

²⁴ BOA. HAT [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Hatt-ı Hümâyûn / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Imperial Edicts (Hatt-ı Hümâyûn)], 185/8638.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Johann Polek, *Die Lippowaner in der Bukowina*, Czernowitz, H. Pardini, 1899, p. 62.

migration policies, shaped by the regional political context, and allowed the entry of certain communities into the empire only during specific periods.

The main driving force behind the migration of Galician Jews to Khotyn was the Habsburg Monarchy's administrative and political reforms in Galicia. Following the First Partition of Poland in 1772, Galicia was incorporated into Habsburg rule. In this region, particularly under the comprehensive reform programs implemented across the empire by Empress Maria Theresa (1717–1780) and Joseph II (1741–1790), a series of measures profoundly affected the social and institutional structure of the Jewish community. These reforms, shaped by Enlightenment thought, included the expulsion of impoverished Jews deemed "economically unproductive," the imposition of German surnames, legal restrictions on the age of marriage, and the abolition of the traditional *kahal* (communal organisation) system through the decree issued on May 27, 1785.²⁷ Gradually implemented between 1773 and 1790, these policies specifically aimed to reduce the Jewish population in Galicia and directly triggered the emigration of large numbers of Jews, primarily to Khotyn, as well as to other parts of Moldavia and Ottoman lands.

Ottoman archival documents provide significant data regarding the specific settlements in Galicia from which these Jewish migrants originated, as well as the structure of their social classes. The migrants departed from various towns and cities across Galicia, among them Dobrianychi, Bibrka, Pidhaitsi, Ivano-Frankove, Ustie, Ozeriany, Zalishchyky, Sniatyn, and Khodoriv. Particularly noteworthy is the town of Bolekhiv, which is distinguished among the places of origin for having sent a relatively larger number of migrants.²⁸ On the other hand, the fact that Jewish migrants were recorded in the documents with the term *Övüçü*, meaning "one who prays," suggests that they were likely Orthodox-leaning, that is, religiously conservative in nature.²⁹ Indeed, considering that the migration in question took place in June 1785 – shortly after the promulgation of a statute by the Habsburg administration in May of the same year, which caused significant unrest among

²⁷ Stanisław Grodziski, *The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, 1772-1790*, in Antony Polonsky, Yiśra'el Barṭal (Eds.), *Focusing on Galicia: Jews, Poles and Ukrainians 1772-1918*, Oxford, Portland, Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1999, pp. 61-72; Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, pp. 72-74; Suzan Wynne, *The Galitzianers: The Jews of Galicia, 1772-1918*, Kensington, Wheatmark, 2013, pp. 21-66.

²⁸ BOA. HAT [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Hatt-ı Hümâyûn / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Imperial Edicts (Hatt-ı Hümâyûn)], 1357/53242.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Jewish communities – it can be argued that the Jews who emigrated from the region at that time were Orthodox individuals who refused to comply with these regulations and were therefore exiled by the Habsburg authorities.

This migration movement, as in the example from 1768, also encountered administrative and bureaucratic obstacles. However, these issues primarily stemmed from procedural issues related to the admission of migrants into Ottoman lands. The fact that a group from the Habsburg lands collectively headed toward the Ottoman borders with the intention of seeking asylum constituted an unusual and politically sensitive situation. As such, the local authority – namely, the governor of Khotyn – was required to consult the central administration. Indeed, the Governor of Khotyn, Ismail Pasha, reported the situation to the capital; subsequently, Abdul Hamid I (1725–1789) delegated the authority to decide to the Governor of Khotyn and the Voivode of Moldavia, granting permission for the necessary procedures to be carried out. Accordingly, the Jewish migrants were allowed to settle in Khotyn and in the lands of Moldavia.³⁰

THE MIGRATIONS FROM RUSSIAN PODOLIA, 1792-1799

There is no doubt that the Ottoman-Russian War of 1787–1792 profoundly affected not only the direct areas of conflict but also the demographic structure of neighbouring settlements. During the early stages of the war, there were significant waves of migration both within Ottoman lands and from neighbouring regions outside the empire's borders. In this context, Khotyn and its surrounding areas, as a key settlement at the heart of the conflict, also experienced significant demographic fluctuations.³¹ The impact of the war was not limited to the large-scale waves of migration toward Khotyn and the south; it also had significant social and demographic consequences for the local population living in Podolia, located on the northern bank of the Dniester River.

At the outbreak of the war, people living in frontline regions – particularly

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1358/53375.

³¹ D. I. Khaidarly, *Migratsionnye protsessy v severnoy chasti Pruto-dnistrovskogo mezhduresh'y v XVIII veke* [Migration Processes in the Northern Part of the Prut-Dniester Interfluve in the 18th Century], "Nauchnye vedomosti Belgorodskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriya: Istoriya. Politologiya. Ekonomika. Informatika" [Scientific Bulletin of Belgorod State University. Series: History. Political Science. Economics. Informatics.], Vyp. 32, 2014, No. 21, pp. 53-57; Andrew Robarts, *Migration and Disease in the Black Sea Region. Ottoman-Russian Relations in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2017, pp. 14-15, 36.

in areas such as Galicia and Podolia – began migrating to Moldavia and surrounding regions out of concern for the destruction, loss of life, and threats to property the war would bring. The instinct to protect themselves from the devastating effects of the conflict drove them to seek refuge in the geographically closest and relatively safer areas, namely within the borders of the Sanjak of Khotyn.³² The wave of migration, particularly from settlements in Podolia near the Dniester River and the Khotyn Fortress, reached its peak during the period when Russian armies were conducting intense military deployments in the region to besiege Khotyn.³³ During this period, many people from Podolia crossed to the southern bank of the river and took refuge in villages east of present-day Khotyn.³⁴ Thus, the war was not merely a military conflict, but also laid the groundwork for a significant socio-political transformation marked by population movements.

On the other hand, the Targowica Confederation, established by groups opposing the May 3rd Constitution of 1791, paved the way for Russian intervention; Russian troops entered Polish territory in 1792.³⁵ This development further deepened the existing instability in Podolia and triggered a second southward wave of migration that year. Thus, both the direct impact of the Ottoman-Russian War and the internal developments in Poland rendered the population movements originating from Podolia a continuous phenomenon.

THE DYNAMICS OF MIGRATION

The migration movements from the Podolia region toward Khotyn and its surroundings in the 18th Century were shaped mainly by the participation of the peasant population. When examining the socioeconomic structure of the migrating groups during this period, it is evident that they predominantly consisted of rural elements, that is, the peasant class. In Ottoman archival documents, these elements were generally referred to as "Urus." The terms "Urus" or "Rus" were used in the administrative and diplomatic terminology of the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate to denote Slavic peoples of East Slavic origin, particularly those from the historical Eastern Slavdom centred in Kyiv. Therefore, the term "Urus" found in

³² BOA. C.HR. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Hariciye / Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, Cevdet Foreign Affairs], 43/2135; 156/7788.

³³ Petrov, *Vtoraya turetskaya...*, p. 172.

³⁴ BOA. C.HR., 156/7788.

³⁵ H. M. Scott, *France and the Polish Throne, 1763-1764*, "The Slavonic and East European Review", Vol. 53, 1975, No. 132, pp. 370-388.

these records mostly referred to Ukrainians in the modern sense.³⁶

The image shows the first page of a historical Ottoman manuscript, specifically a register of migrants from Podolia and deserted soldiers from 1792. The page is filled with dense handwritten text in Ottoman Turkish, organized into several horizontal sections. The text is written in a cursive script and appears to be a register or a list of names and details. The paper is aged and shows some discoloration and wear. At the bottom right, there is a small rectangular box containing the text 'OSMANLI ARSIVI'.

Figure 2. The First Page of the 1792 Register of Migrants from Podolia and Deserted Soldiers³⁷

³⁶ For detailed information on the terminology, anthroponymy, and toponymy related to the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate in the context of Eastern European geography, see: Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania. International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th-18th Century), A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by an Annotated Edition of Relevant Documents*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2011.

³⁷ BOA. C.HR. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Cevdet Hariciye / Prime Ministry Ottoman

The analysis of the anthroponomic data recorded in the relevant registers reveals patterns that largely correspond to the Ukrainian onomastic system, both in given names and surnames. In particular, regional variants of specific Christian names found in the registers offer noteworthy examples. For instance, the Latin-origin name *Antonius* appears as “Anton,” *Daniel* as “Danilo,” *Joseph* as “Yosip,” and *Simon* as “Semen,” indicating that these individuals were named within the East Slavic onomastic tradition. Such name variants align with Ukrainian naming practices and provide significant clues about the ethnolinguistic origins of the individuals. A systematic examination of the surnames listed in the registers further reinforces the indication that these data pertain to Ukrainian individuals. A high degree of similarity has been observed between the surnames recorded in the registers and those identified in genealogical and onomastic studies concerning Ukraine and Ukrainians in the scholarly literature.³⁸ This strongly suggests that the migrant population was primarily composed of Ukrainians.

Given the multiethnic structure of Podolia, it is understood that the registers also include individuals from other ethno-religious groups besides Ukrainians. For example, surnames such as “Bernovič” (Bernowicz) indicate the presence of Polish peasants. In addition, the presence of personal names of Hebrew origin, such as “Kolin” and “David,” suggests that a limited number of individuals from the Ashkenazi Jewish community were among the migrant population.

The migrating population was not limited to villagers; it also included soldiers from the 18th-century Russian Imperial Army who had deserted for various reasons. According to information obtained from Ottoman archival records, these deserters included individuals who had fled from military units such as the 28th Polotsk Infantry Regiment and the Uman 1st Cossack Regiment of the Kuban Cossack Host, as well as soldiers who had deserted from the cities of Yarmolyntsi and Chemerivtsi in the Podolia Governorate, which was established in 1795.³⁹ To facilitate the traceability of this migration movement, the villages and towns where the migrant peasants and soldiers settled, along with the dates on which they were identified, are systematically presented in the table below based on findings from the Ottoman archives:

Archives, Cevdet Foreign Affairs], 156/7788.

³⁸ Elie Borschak, *Les noms de famille ukrainiens*, “Revue internationale d'onomastique”, 1952, No. 14, pp. 203-209; F. Bogan, *Dictionary of Ukrainian Surnames in Canada; Onomastica Series*, No. 47., Winnipeg, Vancouver, 1974, pp. 2-202.

³⁹ BOA. C.HR., 43/2135; *Ibid.*, 156/7788.

Table 1.
1797 & 1799

Num. <i>Cevdet Hariciye 43/2135</i>	Num. <i>Cevdet Hariciye 156/7788</i>	Place Names	Popul. 1797	Popul. 1799
	#1-18	<i>karye-i</i> Hristov (Dnistrivka)		49
#4	#2	<i>karye-i</i> Babin (Babyn)	9	12
#11	#3-19	<i>karye-i</i> Komarova (Komariy)	6	29
#7	#4-7	<i>karye-i</i> Perkoviçe (Perkivtsi)	3	47
#8		<i>karye-i</i> Folros (Forosna)	2	
	#5	<i>karye-i</i> Koploçin (Kobolchyn)		16
	#6	<i>karye-i</i> Vilçines (Vovchynets')		9
	#8-12	<i>karye-i</i> Moşnis (Moshanets')	6	41
	#9-15-25	<i>karye-i</i> Kaplovka (Kaplivka)		66
#9	#10-30	<i>karye-i</i> Yenoviçe (Ivanivtsi)	1	58
#10		<i>karye-i</i> Paşkovicse (Pashkivtsi)	7	
#1	#11-14	Hotin Varoşu (Khotyn)	5	14/9 ⁴⁰
#2	#13-16-31	<i>karye-i</i> Bozoviçe (Buzovytsya)	5	98
	#17	<i>karye-i</i> Roşoşan (Rososhany)		37
#3	#20	<i>karye-i</i> Traban (Tabani)	2	7
	#21	<i>karye-i</i> Sekran (Sokyryany)		38
	#22	<i>karye-i</i> Vitranka (Vitryanka)		47
#14	#23	<i>karye-i</i> Lenkoviçe (Lenkivtsi)	6	34
#5	#24	<i>karye-i</i> Selişte (Selyshche)	13	29
#6		<i>karye-i</i> Malineşti (Malynivka)	4	
	#26	<i>karye-i</i> Lomaçin (Lomachyntsi)		42
#15	#27	<i>karye-i</i> Şubutinçe (Shebutyntsi)	5	41
	#28-35	<i>karye-i</i> Mihaylovka (Mykhalkove)		31
#17	#29	<i>karye-i</i> Anadolu (Anadoly)	3	22
#18		<i>karye-i</i> Vartikovis (Vartykivtsi)	3	
	#32	<i>karye-i</i> Hermankoviçe (Grimăncăuţi)		4
#12	#33	<i>karye-i</i> Vaskoviçe (Vashkivtsi)	22	12
#13-16		<i>karye-i</i> Burcan (Burdyuh)	11	
	#34	<i>karye-i</i> Molodova (Bratanivka)		5
		TOTALS:	113	797

⁴⁰ Deserter soldiers.

BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES AND PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN THE REPATRIATION OF MIGRANTS

After the war ended in 1792, the Treaty of Jassy, signed by the Ottoman Empire and Russia, included specific provisions for exchanges and repatriations. Notably, Article 8 of the treaty stipulated: "All Christians... shall be released unconditionally and without any payment or compensation." This clause required the release or return of Christian individuals who were either held in captivity or had fled to Ottoman lands.⁴¹ However, implementing this provision became increasingly complicated following the treaty due to political changes. In fact, in January 1793, as part of the Third Partition of Poland, the voivodeships of Bracław and Podole—which comprised a significant portion of the Podolia—came under the sovereignty of the Russian Empire.⁴² This development led to a significant shift in the legal status of Podolian migrants who had previously sought refuge in Ottoman lands; they were now considered subjects of the Russian Empire. As a result, the fate of these refugees who had settled in Ottoman land became a matter of diplomatic negotiation between the two empires.

In the last quarter of the 18th Century, when Ottoman-Russian relations were shaped by concerns over border security and social mobility, the issue of returning fugitives became one of the specific matters addressed within the framework of institutional diplomacy between the two states. These repatriation processes were primarily conducted through limited diplomatic representation, correspondence, and protocol between the Russian military-administrative authorities centred in Kamianets-Podilskyi and the Ottoman provincial bureaucracy based in Khotyn.

The process of extraditing fugitive peasants and soldiers who had taken refuge in Ottoman lands to Russia first began in 1797 with the establishment of a specially designated military governorship in Kamianets-Podilskyi, which held both administrative and military authority.⁴³ This situation corresponds to a period during which Russia was consolidating its control in the region and moving

⁴¹ Serhat Kuzucu, *1787-1792 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı* [The Ottoman-Russian War of 1787–1792] (PhD Dissertation, Institute of Social Sciences, Fırat University), Elazığ, 2012, p. 208.

⁴² Sergey M. Solov'yov, *Istoriya padeniya Pol'shi* [The history of the fall of Poland], Moskva, Tip. Gracheva i komp., 1863, p. 299-300; R. Nisbet Bain, "The Second Partition of Poland (1793)", *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 22, Apr., 1891, p. 331-340.

⁴³ O. V. Romantsov, *Viiskovi hubernatory v Pravoberezhnii Ukraini naprykintsi XVIII – u pershii tretyni XIX st.* [Military governors in Right-Bank Ukraine at the end of the 18th

toward a more institutionalised form of dominance. In this context, Russia's decision to raise the issue of fugitives at that particular time was a highly strategic choice. In the summer of 1797, a Russian delegation – formed under the initiative of Kamianets-Podilskyi Military Governor Alexander A. Bekleshov (1743–1808) and led by an interpreter – arrived in Khotyn. They brought with them a notebook written in Polish, through which they requested the extradition of the individuals listed therein from the Ottoman authorities. The Ottoman side first ensured the translation of the notebook into Turkish and transmitted it to the Sublime Porte via the courier El-Hac Hasan Agha. Subsequently, to identify the individuals named in the notebook, a search was conducted in Khotyn and the surrounding villages. The individuals identified were then brought to the centre of Khotyn. According to this initial register dated July 1797, a total of 113 individuals – both adults and children – were identified as dispersed throughout Khotyn and its surroundings. These individuals were gathered and, within the same year, transported by boats from Ataki, located on the Ottoman side, across the Dniester River to the town of Zhvanets, where Russian officials were present. There, they were handed over to the Russian Empire.⁴⁴

The second significant repatriation process took place in early 1799. During this period, a new wave of migration from Podolia toward Ottoman lands was observed, driven by administrative pressure, military obligations, or socioeconomic motivations. This new movement differed from the previous one in both demographic scale and geographical spread. Notably, it was determined that migrant peasants, to avoid capture, had dispersed into inland villages such as Tabani and Grimăncăuți in the rural areas of the Sanjak of Khotyn. According to a Polish-language register presented to the Governor of Khotyn by a new Russian delegation from Kamianets-Podilskyi in February 1799, a total of 797 individuals—adults and children—were identified. One of the most striking elements in this register is the inclusion of nine deserter soldiers.⁴⁵ The presence of deserters was regarded as particularly important, as emphasised in the period's administrative and diplomatic correspondence. Indeed, in his letter of appointment dated July 28, 1798, addressed to Hüsameddin Pasha, the Governor of Khotyn, Ivan V. Gudovich (1741–1820), who

– and in the first third of the 19th century], “Naukovi pratsi Chornomorskoho derzhavnoho universytetu imeni Petra Mohyly kompleksu “Kyeivo-Mohylanska akademiiia”] [Scholarly Works of the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University of the “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy” Complex], Vol. 94, 2009, Vyp. 81, pp. 10-14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ BOA. C.HR., 156/7788.

had been appointed Military Governor of Kamianets-Podilskyi, referred to the friendly relations between the two countries and requested special attention be paid to border security and the issue of deserters.⁴⁶

Additionally, in light of the possibility of deserters infiltrating Moldavian lands, the Sublime Porte sent letters to Alexander Callimachi (1737–1821), Voivode of Moldavia, and to Hasan Pasha, Governor of Bender, informing them of the situation and ordering increased border security measures. The repatriation process was carried out in parallel with the procedure followed in 1797; the individuals gathered in Khotyn were transferred via the Dniester River to Zhvanets, where they were handed over to the Russian authorities.⁴⁷

In this context, an examination of two separate waves of migration dating to the late 18th Century reveals that the areas within the boundaries of the Sanjak of Khotyn, where migrants of Podolian origin were settled, offer significant insights into the region's demographic evolution. Although a portion of these migrants were subsequently returned to Russia, archival records and scholarly literature indicate that not all migrant groups were returned; some settled permanently in the region.⁴⁸ A demographic analysis of villages east of Khotyn on the right bank of the Dniester River reveals that Ukrainian Orthodox communities predominantly inhabited these settlements.⁴⁹ In light of this data, it can be scientifically asserted that the ethno-religious composition of the aforementioned

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 186/9279.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 156/7756; 156/7757; 110/5464.

⁴⁸ Vladimir M. Kabuzan, *Narodonaselenie Bessarabskoy oblasti i levoberezhnykh rayonov Pridnestrov'ya (konets XVIII – pervaya polovina XIX v.)* [The Population of the Bessarabian Region and the Left-Bank Districts of Transnistria (Late 18th – First Half of the 19th Century)], Kishinev, Shtiintsa, 1974, p. 13-14; Ion Gumenâi, *Raporturile dintre populația autohtonă a Basarabiei și minoritățile confesionale în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* [The relations between the indigenous population of Bessarabia and the religious minorities in the first half of the 19th century], in George Enache (Ed.), *La frontierele civilizațiilor. Basarabia în context geopolitic, economic, cultural și religios* [At the Frontiers of Civilizations: Bessarabia in a Geopolitical, Economic, Cultural, and Religious Context], Galați, Partener and Galați University Press, 2011, pp. 47-59; Ion Gumenâi, *Rapports entre la population autochtone de la Bessarabie et les minorités confessionnelles dans la première moitié du XIXe siècle*, "Danubius", XXX, Galați, 2012, pp. 51-62; Ion Gumenâi, *Evoluția demografică a minorităților confesionale din Basarabia. Statistici din al doilea sfert al secolului XIX* [The Demographic Evolution of Religious Minorities in Bessarabia. Statistics from the Second Quarter of the 19th Century], "Archiva Moldaviae", 2013, Issue V, pp. 167-182.

⁴⁹ BOA. TT.d. [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Tapu Tahrir Defteri / Prime Ministry Ottoman

villages, which has persisted to the present day, was largely shaped by late 18th-century migration from Podolia.

CONCLUSIONS

In the last quarter of the 18th Century, Khotyn and its surrounding areas experienced intense, multifaceted migration due to their location on the Ottoman Empire's northern frontier. Among the leading causes of these migrations were the physical destruction and security threats directly resulting from the Ottoman-Russian wars, outbreaks of disease, economic impoverishment, as well as the political, religious, and administrative pressures faced by Jewish, Ukrainian, and Polish communities living under Habsburg and Russian rule. While the Muslim population was leaving Khotyn due to wars and epidemics, Jewish and Ukrainian communities from regions such as Galicia and Podolia began settling in the city and its surroundings. This reciprocal population movement led to a significant transformation in the region's demographic structure, eventually turning Khotyn into a cosmopolitan settlement.

The Ottoman Empire managed these migrations in a planned manner, organising the process through various administrative and financial measures, including resettlement efforts, logistical support, and the payment of per diem (harc-ı râh). While some groups were repatriated after the wars, a significant number remained and continued to live permanently in Khotyn and other parts of the Ottoman lands. In conclusion, the migration movements in Khotyn during the late 18th Century not only signified a demographic shift but also represented a profound restructuring of the region's social, cultural, and religious fabric. This process laid the historical foundations of the present-day ethno-demographic structure and played a decisive role in shaping the region's multicultural identity.

Archives, Tapu Tahrir Registers], 888, pp. 27-30; N. N. Murzakevich, *Materialy dlya istorii Novorossiyskoy pravoslavnoy Ierarkhii* [Materials for the History of the Novorossiysk Orthodox Hierarchy], Vol. 9, Odessa, 1875, pp. 285-286; Alexandr Prigarin, "Blagochestie zemli Moldavskoy" kak faktor formirovaniya staroobryadtsev Yugo-Vostochnoy Evropy ["The Piety of the Moldavian Land" as a Factor in the Formation of Old Believers in Southeastern Europe], *Conferința "Statalitatea Moldovei: continuitatea istorică și perspectiva dezvoltării"* [The Conference "The Statehood of Moldova: Historical Continuity and Development Perspective], Chișinău, 2017, pp. 200-216.

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