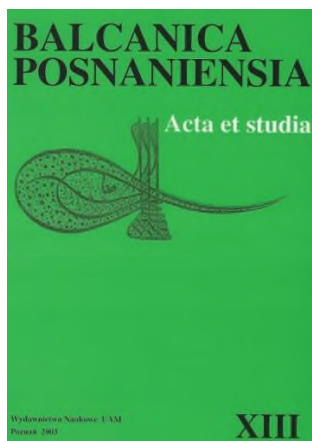




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AN ELEMENT OF THE JURIDICAL STATUTE OF ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES IN THE OTTOMAN POLITICAL SYSTEM (18th CENTURY)

VENIAMIN CIOBANU

ABSTRACT. Ciobanu Veniamin, *An element of the juridical statute of Romanian Principalities in the ottoman political system (18th century)* (Elementy statusu prawnego romańskich księstw w otomańskim systemie politycznym XVIII wieku). Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et studia, XIII, Poznań 2003. Adam Mickiewicz University Press, pp. 223-234. ISBN 83-232-1275-9, ISSN 0239-4278. Text in English.

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As I have already found on another occasion,¹ the development of research of the Romanian-Ottoman relations for centuries, was and continues to be again a nearly favourite concern of Romanian historiography. But there are so many unknown matters that it makes it so difficult to take a global decision, even a hazardous one, on the complexity of the Romanian-Ottoman relations. It is also true that on the other hand, the results of the investigations, made by Romanian historians, represent so many steps made on the difficult way of deciphering one of the most important chapters of Romanian history but also of the relations between the countries of East-Central Europe. It is already known that the juridical statute of the countries and then of the Romanian principalities represented an *example* of these relations and the historians of the field were in a dilemma many times.

Having these results concerning the 18th century, so evident for the second half, also thanks to the rich Ottoman information published by us, especially it could be found that an important aspect of the problems discussed however remained *marginal*, on the whole elements which outlined the juridical statute of

¹ V. Ciobanu, *Un aspect al raporturilor juridice româno-otomane din secolul XVIII, viziune istoriografică și realitate juridică* în "Xenopoliana". Buletinul Fundației Academice "A. D. Xenopol", din Iași, VI, 1998, 3-4, p. 5-65.

the Romanian principalities in the 18th century. That means an Ottoman conception on the juridical statute of the *reign institution*,² said in a different way, on the *juridical relations* between the Principalities and the Suzerain Power. Some aspects of this conception were approached by myself, except that already mentioned, at no. 1, and in other two studies which are for now in manuscript. My attempt at making topical again the discussions on this subject was suggested and consequently facilitated also by the two great series of Turkish documents, that I have known until now.³

Finally I feel that it is my duty to make a previous specification. It is not my intention to exhaust this subject. Such a pretension could be improper because when we are talking about the Ottoman documentary sources, and also about the desire of knowing, nobody knows, and not only the Romanian historians, when and how much the Ottoman documentary sources could be known. Undoubtedly any finding of such documents, unknown yet, could confirm, partially or totally, or at the contrary could invalidate my suppositions which arose from the sources I had. That is why I take the liberty to make only a few considerations, validated or not, that I hope to examine again the necessity of the approach of the history of the relations between the Romanians and the Ottoman, from the point of view of the Ottoman and not only from the economic one.

Concerning the *juridical relations*, my sources suggested to me that they materialized in a big diversity of components. One of them could be formulated by the syntagm of the *conditions that a candidate had to accomplish to be designated for the reign*, which represent the object of this study. From the *ideological* point of view, they had been reformulated, by an order of the sultan Ahmed III on March 17-26, 1714, concerning the deposing of Constantin Brancoveanu, the prince of the Romanian Country at that time. With that occasion, it was reminded that, "in accordance with the *fetva* of *seyh-ul-islam*, when a people from the *giaour* family (in this case the Romanians – n.Ven.C.) is subjected to the Highness the sultan of Islam and Muslim ...then over them is appointed and designated a voivode – by the High Sultanate – one of their people" (s.Ven.C.).⁴ In order to obtain this high position, the candidate had to prove "loyalty and honesty" for the Padishah,⁵ as the reign was given to him from the "high imperial favour".⁶ Said in a different way,

² Most of the researchers were concerned, and not without a reason, with the economic aspects of this statute; some of the remarkable results obtained by such an approach, referring to the global research of the juridical statute of the Principalities, were discussed again by G. Badarau, *Considerații privind raporturile româno-otomane între 1774 și 1802* (I), in "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A. D. Xenopol", XX, 1983, Iasi, p. 135-151.

³ The volume of documents "*Relațiile Țărilor Române cu Poarta Otomană în documente turcești 1601-1712*" Bucharest, 1984, published by Tahsin Gemil and the document of V. Veliman, "*Relațiile româno-otomane 1711-1821, Documente turcești*", Bucharest, 1984.

⁴ Cf., V. Veliman, op.cit., p. 87.

⁵ Cf., T. Gemil, op.cit., p. 451.

⁶ V. Veliman, op.cit., p. 74, 80, 91, 106.

the reign was the expression of “the benevolence” and “the generosity” of the sultan. And there was not another interpretation because the two Principalities were considered as sultan’s “property”, “remained and inherited from his glorious ancestors”.⁷

The “material” forms of “the loyalty” and “the honesty” those “overwhelmed” were in debt with “all-glorious imperial gifts”, that means those placed on one of two princely sees, of the Principalities, are enumerated with accuracy in the Ottoman documents. Their number and content were varied, depending on the fluctuations of the internal situation but also on the international position of the Ottoman Empire. As the second one was obviously deteriorated during the second half of the 18th century, between the conditions that the candidates had to accomplish for the reign emerged new ones, imposed by the necessity to have as princes of Moldavia and Romanian Country factors able to contribute really to improve the relations of the Ottoman Empire with European powers. That means to be used to defuse the oriental crisis – aggravated, specially in the mentioned period – that obviously endangered the Ottoman interests in the Oriental Europe.

A concrete expression of this situation was also the Russian-Turkish war, between 1768 and 1774. On that occasion, the Wallachian boyar Manole (Emanuel) Giani-Ruset distinguished himself by his total devotion to the Ottoman cause and as caimacan in Oltenia, he contributed to maintain this province under the Turkish control, stopping in this way to be occupied by the Russian army. His successful action determined some of the commanders of the Ottoman army of the Danube, to suggest his designation as a prince of the Romanian Country. But their intervention put the great vizir of that time, Halil pasa Avaz-Zade, in a real dilemma. He resolved it in a manner suggesting another element of the *juridical relations* between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman Empire, from the category of the *conditions* the candidates for the reign had to accomplish, in order to be recognized as princes, not only by the Ottoman Empire, but also by the people of those countries. That means a compromise of the great vizir to maintain Manoli (Emanuel) Giani-Ruset of the side with the Ottomans but at the same time to respect one of the conditions of the *real* exercise of the reign. According to his complaint (*arz*) of March 19, 1770, he reported to the sultan Mustafa III that Oltenia “was in a situation of submission with his one thousand villages”, thanks to Giani-Ruset, but on the other hand “*the princely dwelling place of the Romanian Country, Bucharest, was in the hands of the enemies* (that means the Russian – n.Ven.C.; s.Ven.C.).⁸ “*That is why* – continued the great vizir – *is he clearly would*

⁷ Ibidem, p. 81; for the significance of this syntagm see V. Panaite, *Pace, razboi si comert în Islam, Tarile Române si dreptul otoman al popoarelor (secolele XV-XVII)*, Bucharest, 1997, p. 353 and the following.

⁸ M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria României*, vol. I, 1455-1774, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1976, p. 316.

put on the caftan (hil'at) for the beilic of the Romanian Country, that means something out of place for the people. For this reason, in order to be not prejudicial for his devotion and his posts⁹, he put openly the caftan for caimacania of the Romanian Country, but secretly he received in a famous hand the order of receiving the reign of Oltenia and Romanian Country, and in order to inform the raia about it, he received an order of mission with that end in view" (s.Ven.C.).¹⁰

So these are the conditions I referred to: a prince could not be recognized as *such* and he could not exercise his competences, by order and in name of padisah, *only if he could be installed in the capital of the country*. As at that time Bucharest was occupied by the Russian army, this condition was not accomplished and out of the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Empire, the great vizir hoped that *"soon Bucharest and its neighbourhood could be saved from the enemies' hands and things could be in order again, and we will get our own back on the enemies of the Mouslim faith (in this case on the Russian – n.Ven.C.), all things will return to be the same"* (s.Ven.C.).¹¹ So it could be supposed that Manoli (Emanuel) Giani-Ruset reigned from May 1770 until October 1771 only on the basis of that *"mission order"*¹² to legitimize him before raia and that was probably as a *solemn firman* which was read, *in normal times*, in the hall of the princely divan, in the presence of the delegate of the Ottoman Empire.

However this condition was shirked in another case and this could prove how the international position of the Ottoman Empire could influence his decisions in the field. We are referring to the circumstances when Alexandru Moruzi was nominated to reign Moldavia to the end of the year 1791. For the merits he gained during the Russian-Turkish peace negotiations, he was designed as a prince of the country even in autumn of that year, but all this remained a secret because of the possible opposition of Russia and was officially recognized only by the firman of 28 November – 7 December 1791, when the peace with Russia was already clear. He exercised his jurisdiction only on a little part of the country – the South-East zone – because of the presence of the Russian and Austrian army which withdrew from Moldavia only to the end of the year 1792 and the ceremony of his installation to the reign took place in Roman where he was at that time, and not in Iasi, the

⁹ Knowing that there was the possibility to be only a leader and not a voivode, he directed the attention that "those raia (in Oltenia – n.Ven.C.) and from neighbourhood will not trust and will not respect my words, saying that it was not wise for the high royalty (voyvodalik). For this reason – he said – it is clear that I shall have defaults in accomplishing my duties". So, being "a submissive and modest raia obeying the High Devlet", as he was not considered worthy of "this position" (as prince – n.Ven.C.) he asked to return to "The Gate of the Happiness" (s.Ven.C.) (cf., *ibidem*).

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 316-317.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 317.

¹² *Ibidem*: it seems that in the same conditions, reigned in Moldavia too, during May 1788 and March 1789, during the Austrian-Russian occupation of Moldavia, determined by the Russian-Austrian-Turkish war, between 1787 and 1792.

capital of the country, on March 27th, 1792. However, it was considered that “the ceremony of his nomination was deliberately postponed, just because all *the royal honours had to be presented and welcome as usual in the capital of the country*” (s.Ven.C.).¹³

But this “derogation” from the *rule* was dictated by the necessity to resolve as soon as possible a situation which became very dangerous for the Ottoman Empire, a consolidation of the Russian positions in Moldavia. Russia already brought some of the boyars of the country into its interest, to increase the propaganda against Ottomans, based on the promise to take off Moldavia from the Ottoman political system. That is why one of the most important missions of the prince, *designated and enthroned in special conditions*, was to remove the metropolitan named by Russians, Gavril Banulescu-Bodoni, and replaced him with another one, “suitable and worthy” of the trust of Ottoman authorities. As Gavril Banulescu-Bodoni, by his authority and influence as metropolitan “had to contribute not so much from a spiritual point of view, but especially from the politic point of view to maintain and to increase the relations of the people of the country with the great power from the East”.¹⁴

In this way the international complications the Ottoman Empire confronted in the second half of the 18th century, which represented a menace for its positions in Romanian Principalities, determined the Ottoman commanders to be more careful with the qualities of those which contended the reign. However the same international circumstances limited the Ottomans's liberty to action in the field, The Ottoman Empire sometimes simulated to adapt to the situation. That happened during the nomination, for the second time, in 1774 of Grigore III Ghica to reign Moldavia. Even it was very well known that the Phanariot owed his return to reign to the strong pressures in Istanbul, made by Russia and Prussia, which interests, especially the Russian one, were promoted to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire, the sultan Abdul Hamid I pretended in the royal berat another thing. “He eat the breat of my high Devlet and made so many charities and benevolences” which was very true – but “*he is a skillful man, able to rule the country and to put it in good order*” (s.Ven.C.).¹⁵ If we could discuss about this capacity, at the contrary, the invocation in this document of September 27, 1774, of another condition, which the just named pretended to accomplish, was not in accordance with the reality; so, “*his devotion and his sincerity*”, which “*clearly proved by his actions and his behaviour*” (s.Ven.C.).¹⁶ Pretending that Grigore III Ghica accomplished the most

¹³ V. Veliman, *Date noi cu privire la circumstantele alegerii mitropolitului Moldovei (1672) si statutul politic juridic al Principatelor Române* in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie si Arheologie A. D. Xenopol” volume XXIII, 1986, Iasi, p. 605.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ M. A. Mehmet, op.cit., p. 320

¹⁶ Ibidem.

important requirements “*by my highest royal benevolence and kindness...the reign of Moldavia...on condition that he has to make efforts and to take care of the guard, the defence and the protection of Moldavian raia*” (s.Ven.C.).¹⁷

At the same time, the reign of the Romanian Country was “given” as a “duty full of security and devotion” of Alexandru Ipsilanti, just because the sultan took into account “*the devotion and the honesty you expected from my royal person*”.¹⁸ It should also be stated that there was the trust of the padisah in his “*ability and capacity to accomplish with all necessary measures concerning prosperity of the country and the assurance of peace and protection of the people and subjects*” (s.Ven.C.).¹⁹

The sultan probably believed to be entitled to put all his hopes in his nominee for the reign of the Romanian Country, as Alexandru Ipsilanti accomplished that position so important and of great responsibility in the Ottoman institutional system, namely dragoman of the “Royal Divan”. This last condition was decisive on the occasion of the designation of Nicolae Caragea to replace Alexandru Ipsilanti at the reign of the Romanian Country, after approving his resignation,²⁰ and also the following one, Mihail Sutu. For the last one, the existing tradition in his family was invoked concerning the devotion to the interests of the Ottoman Empire, confirmed many times in various other posts accomplished by himself.²¹ The post of dragoman of the “royal divan” represented for Alexandru Mavrocordat, named also “Firaris”, an occasion to show “his sincere behaviour and his devoted actions”.²² But, as it is well known, all these represented only a screen, used to hide this real feelings to the Ottoman Empire, as after he became a prince, he proved to be a real Russophile.

As all rules, the obligation for the Phanariots candidates to make a certain *cursus honorum* at the reign of the Principalities, which its culminating point was the high dignity of great dragoman of the Ottoman Empire, registered a famous exception, known for so much time. It is the nomination in March 1786 of Nicolae Mavrogheni to reign the Romanian Country. At that time, the new parvenu to the dignity of prince was not descended from Fanar and as we know, he did not study

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ V. Veliman, *Relatiile româno-otomane...*, p. 484

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria României*, volume II, 1774-1791, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1983, p. 36.

²¹ Ibidem. p. 34.

²² “Leaving the devotions proved by his ancestors for my high royalty” – sultan Abdul-Hamid I said in an order of December 26, 1783 – January 4, 1784, to high Ottoman officials “he, from the period he was young and until now, he was devoted, zealous and so interested to make all efforts to accomplish important duties in my high royalty, leaving them up to his justice, or during his position as capuchehaia or dragomanat at my royal Divan, or to establish the nizam of the country and to protect raia”; so there are reasons enough to accept his requests (s.Ven.C.) (cf., ibidem, p. 51).

the “high political school”, if I could say that, of the great dragomanat, but he came from the Greek Islands and was only a dragoman of the Ottoman fleet. I think that the arguments invoked by his protectors, the great vizir of that time, Koka Jusuf pasa and the commander of the Turkish fleet, Gazi Hasan pasa, were very interesting. The most important was considered not so much the devotion proved by their candidate during the Russian-Ottoman war between 1768 and 1774, as for “*his honesty few times bigger than that of the Greeks of Fanar*”, that justified his conviction that in case the sultan Abdul-Hamid would name him as a prince of the Romanian Country, “*he would be more devoted*” than those people (s.Ven.C.).²³

But the two high officials knew that their “invocation” could initiate a real storm in the Phanariot caste because it was obvious that he did not assist passively at the undermining of a *privilege* that undoubtedly became a *monopoly*. As a result, “*in order to impede the Greek malefactors, established in Fanar, to invent various rumours*” (s.Ven.C.),²⁴ of course about the candidate and his supporters, the great vizir and capudan pasa proposed a compromise to create at least the appearance of respecting the *conditions* introduced long time ago, which governed the nomination of the princes of Moldavia and Romanian Country. As “*the voivodes of the Romanian Country and of Moldavia were always selected from ancient times from beizadele (the sons of the Romanian vaivodes) and from the ex-vaivodes or tergimans of the royal Divan*”, they considered that “*it could be more suitable that the mentioned Mavrogheni, the servant first has to be named tergiman of Divan and then to reign the Romanian Country*” (s.Ven.C.).²⁵ If it was only a stratagem to avoid undesired troubles,²⁶ it is suggested by another specification of them with such an idea, which decided that “*in the third day and after the nomination of the servant as tergiman of the royal Divan, he had to be named immediately prince and to be dressed with caftan*” (s.Ven.C.).²⁷ Besides, knowing that they can't ignore the “rights” the phanariots already gained, Koka Jusuf pasa and Gazi Hasan pasa believed that “*it is one of the necessities of the justice that the position of tergiman of the Divan after the nomination of Mavrogheni as a prince of the Romanian Country has not to be given to another one, but it has to be given again of the actual tergiman*”, that means to Alexandru (Ioan) Callimachi “*and to avoid in this way the excuses*” (s.Ven.C.).²⁸

²³ Ibidem, p. 55; see the *Catalogul documentelor turcesti*, vol, II (1455-1829) by M. Guboglu, Bucharest, 1965, p. 302

²⁴ V. Veliman, *Relatiile româno-otomane...*, p. 560

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ “As it was so obvious – said the two authors of telhis for Abdul-Hamid I, in March 1786 – that when Mavrogheni will be named as tergiman of the royal Divan, the ex voivodes and especially the Greeks from Fanar, thinking that they have priority to reign, will be malefactors and will make all kind of rumours” (s.Ven.C.) (cf., ibidem)

²⁸ Ibidem.

I don't know precisely what kind of "excuses" the great vizir and the commander of the Ottoman fleet wanted to avoid. We could say that they took into account the "excuses" that the Phanariots could invoke to justify some actions, less "orthodox", that could put the Ottoman Empire in a delicate situation. I neither know if Alexandru Mavrogheni passed the three days in the Ottoman capital as great dragoman. But the arguments of both are suggesting to me the hypothesis that their approach has not only subjective reasons – first their personal interests – but represented also the expression of a state of spirit that already found place between the Ottoman commanders and became every time more hostile for the Phanariots. That signal was repeated more clearly 15 years later to announce the definitive "*divorce*" between the Ottoman Empire and the Phanariots, at a moment when it was so clear that to "cohabit" with them meant to speed up the process of *total loss, especially in the favour of Russia*, of the control of the Romanian Principalities. I am referring of course to the year 1821, when in very well-known circumstances, the Ottoman Empire decided to establish again the ancient system of *earthly reigns*.

Until that time, the Phanariots were high in favour of the Ottoman Empire, and as we know they even succeeded in determining it to promulgate at the beginning of the year 1819 a "Rule concerning the eligibility in Moldavia and the Romanian Country and for the position of dragoman of the Ottoman Empire and of the Admiralty" that established the monopoly for only four families of phanariots, which possessed by turns of the *reign institution*. The rule is also important for the previous approach because it stipulated that dragoman of the Admiralty, that means of the Ottoman fleet, high dignity accomplished also by Nicolae Mavrogheni, "*he could arrive at the reign of Romanian Countries only passing through the dragomanat of the imperial Divan*" (s.Ven.C.);²⁹ but even of them, of course, only those who "are devoted and go to the right way and are tried also by the trust" (s.Ven.C.).³⁰

The defeat of Alexandru Mavrocordat-Firaris represented another alarm signal, but that time for the Ottoman Empire, which had the possibility in that way to note – how many times? – that some Phanariots did not respect the *special conditions* they were sent to "govern" a Principality or another one. There were also some of them the proved already their devotion for his interests, without any doubt concerning them. One of them was Alexandru Ipsilanti, which in his long reign in the Romanian Country (September 15, 1774-January 4, 1782) he proved "good actions" and "worthy of the aprovatl" of the padisah.³¹ That is why, he was con-

²⁹ Ibidem and n.7.

³⁰ A. Otetea, *Un cartel fanariot pentru exploatarea Tarilor Române* in "Studii, Revista de Istorie", 3/1959, p. 112.

³¹ The clause represented also a reconfirmation of the art. 22 of "The book of law" (Kanunname)" by Selim III in 1792, who, as it is known, introduced new elements in the Ottoman-Romanian relations,

sidered to be the most suitable to repair the material but especially the moral damages produced to the Ottoman Empire by the fugitive Alexandru Mavrocordat. One of the most grave “accusations” for him was his incapacity to “govern” the country and especially his *avidity*, which was not “*suitable for the voivodes named to protect the raia*” as sultan Abdul-Hamid I said (s.Ven.C.).³² Giving the reign of Moldavia to Alexandru Ipsilanti, the sultan said to him that he expected “good actions and right behaviours concerning the high royalty, the reign of the country, the protection of the raia”.³³

The real fear of the Ottoman commanders against eventual complications, internal but also external one, the escape of the “heinous Firari”³⁴ probably determined Abdul Hamid I to extol Alexandru Ipsilanti,³⁵ but not at impulses representing the expression of the conditions he was sent to reign Moldavia.³⁶ In the firman of the sultan Abdul-Hamid I, of March 31-April 9 1787, that enumerated those conditions, there was a specification suggesting that one of them devolved upon the prince, *as a person*, and the other was a responsibility of the *reign institution*, that means *by the country*. As he was warned to make all efforts “*to arrange and decide*

to increase and to guarantee, on basis of a special law, the internal autonomy of the Romanian Principalities, dictated by the spirit of the peace negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and Austria, at Sistov (1791) and Russia, at Iasi (1792). The most important one concerned a new settlement of the juridical conditions of the reign institution. Answering to a desideratum of Russia, but also estimating the previous experience of the Ottoman Empire in the field, this article stipulated that the reign institution will be not encumbered in the future by the free arbitrator of the Ottoman high officials that “commercialized it”. The reigns of the two principalities will be more stable than the previous period, because the voivodes will be not deposed without a guilty” and there will be no more a financial condition to give the reign. With that end in view, only the great dgagoman of the royal Divan could be selected reign the Romanian Country and Moldavia (cf. M. A. Mehmet, *O noua reglementare a raporturilor Moldovei si Tarii Românești fata de Poarta la 1792 (A book of law – Kannunname – in Turkish language)* in “Studii” no. 4, 1967, p. 702).

³² “either concerning the accomplishment of my royal duties, or to prosper the country, by protecting the poor raia, or to accomplish all his tasks”, “according to the indulgence” (s.Ven.C.) (cf. M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti...*, II, p. 99).

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Even more he had to “surpass himself”, making “efforts to make better services, actions and good behaviours than those during your reign in the Romanian Country, to deserve the favour to be named by my royalty and to do and to proceed in accordance with the requirements of my famous order, given for your mission and to avoid by all means to have behaviours contrary to expectations” as Abdul Hamid I urged him in firman of 21-30 January 1787 (s.Ven.C.) (cf., ibidem, p. 100); see also the *Catalogul documentelor turcesti*, II, p. 30, 311, 313.

³⁵ M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti...*, II, p. 121.

³⁶ “My royalty I know, proving even from the period you were young devotion, obedience and justice in all yours actions and behaviours, respecting all the orders, and especially all your actions and behaviours during seven years you reigned in the Romanian Country, were on my happy royal indulgence and you had a brilliant behaviour concerning the reign of the country and the protection of the poor raia” (s.Ven.C.) (cf., ibidem).

properly on all may royal orders, given for your faith or the reign (vayvodalik) of Moldavia, and also to obtain in any situation my royal benevolence"(s.Ven.C.).³⁷

The beginning of the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in August 1787, determined the same Ottoman commanding circles to insist on the necessity to accomplish accurately by Alexandru Ipsilanti the conditions he took the reign of Moldavia, especially all consequences of the escape to Russia of Alexandru Mavrocordat-Firaris, which replaced him to reign. Along the same line, the firaman of September 24 - October 3 1787 intended to proceed as it proceeded during his reign in the Romanian Country. At that time he paid attention to "*accomplish and to arrange the orders and actions leaved up to your good faith, and also to arrange and to prosper the country, protecting the raia*" (s.Ven.C.).³⁸ In other words, "*to arrange all the matters concerning Moldavia and to accomplish those leaved up to him devotion*".³⁹

Finally, the evolution of the political and military events, which involved the Ottoman Empire, especially the last war, with the Russian-Austrian coalition, increased the conviction of the commanding circles of Istanbul about the necessity that the selection of the Phanariots for the reigns of the two Principalities had to be made more carefully. As the Ottoman Empire wanted to take advantage of the peace with Austria as much as possible, and of the armistice with Russia, that announced the peace with that enemy, the personal qualities of the future princes had to be suitable for the objectives proposed by the Ottoman Empire. Between them, one of the most important was to diminish and then to eliminate totally the influence of Russia in the Principalities, especially in Moldavia. That is why the great vizir Koka Jusuf pasa considered that "*we have to be sure that the future voivode (in Moldavia -n.Ven.C.) will prove devotion in accordance with the requirements of the time and situation, and during this period he will find material to repair the fortress (at the Moldavian borders, destroyed during the war-n.Ven.C.) and will resolve all other problems*" (s.Ven.C.).⁴⁰

Besides these qualities as good administrator, he had also to accomplish a very important *political condition*. That is to say "*he also has to be wise to find those lieges and boyars of Moldavia who joined with Russian and betrayed the High devlet, between those which proved devotion for the high devlet*" (s.Ven.C.).⁴¹

Taking into account that as considered the sultan Selim III, the consignee of telhis of about 1791, which informed him about the discussed matter, "*the lieges*

³⁷ In brief, he had to draw "the raia of the country and the helpless people and to accomplish important duties, keeping their peace and the welfare" and make "all the time everything to prosper the country"(cf. *ibidem*, p. 121-122).

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 122.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 196.

⁴¹ V. Veliman, *Relatiile româno-otomane...*, p. 595.

and boyars of Moldavia are now as in Moscow" (s.Ven.C.),⁴² the selection was very difficult. As "who is able to govern them and to make them obedient?" the sultan wondered; probably was the "ex" dragoman of the Divan, Manuel Antioh Caragea, which accomplished that dignity during May 1788 – October 1790, and in accordance with the same opinion, he proved to be "a weak and insecure man", so it was not sure that he "could be a voivode accomplishing all requirements of that time" (s.Ven.C.).⁴³ As a result, the sultan ordered to be informed about that person that could be "suitable" for such a mission, and the great vizir decided to discuss".⁴⁴

The consignee of that decision, of course one of the high officials of the Ottoman Empire, with influence in the field, was convinced that "*the mentioned problem is one of the matters that can't be discussed*" (s.Ven.C.).⁴⁵ So he focused his attention on two of the potential candidates to reign Moldavia, Alexandru Callimachi and Alexandru Moruzi. The first one, an ex great dragoman (January 1785 – April 1788) proved to be, a "*devoted, honest and experienced servant that, trying to be pleased*"⁴⁶ to the Ottoman Empire, of course, with the occasion of various high dignities accomplished by him (s.Ven.C.).⁴⁷ Even he gave to him this "certificate of good behaviour", he was not convinced that the ex dragoman "could be or not able to reign Moldavia in accordance with the requirements of this time, as the great vizir wrote" (s.Ven.C.).⁴⁸ The second one was at that time dragoman in function and he took part of the Ottoman delegation at the peace negotiations with Austria, of Sistov. He also proved to be "*a devoted, correct, intelligent servant, with perceptive faculty and a good orator*"(s.Ven.C.).⁴⁹ He had also another advantage, he was young. So Alexandru Callimachi was more that 50 years old, Alexandru Moruzi was 20 years younger. But the author of the telhis did not want, for reasons we don't have to comment, to take the responsibility of the decision and he preferred to prevaricate, saying that he "*can't know which of them is suitable to be voivode*" (s.Ven.C.).⁵⁰

In the same way proceeded the sultan Selim III. But he was more clearly concerning the *essential condition* to be accomplished by the future prince of Moldavia, to have *not so much experience*, but he must be "*clever in affairs*" of a *certain kind*, in order to *accomplish all requirements of the Principality, of the faith and of the state*" (s.Ven.C.).⁵¹ As the padisah said, "*Moldova will have the same*

⁴² Ibidem.

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁶ Ibidem.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 596, n. 8-14.

⁴⁸ Ibidem. p. 596.

⁴⁹ Ibidem.

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

*border with Moscow (Russia, on Nistru – n.Ven.C.) so it has to be named as voivode, a devoted man, knowing the matter”(s.Ven.C.).*⁵² Alexandru Moruzi was considered to accomplish this *essential condition*, so he was designated as prince of Moldavia, being accepted, as it was previously said, thanks to extraordinary circumstances, the derogation from another *essential condition*, it mean *handing the external marks of the reign, not in the capital of the country, but in another locality, where the new voivode of Moldavia had to live for o period.*

Qualities of some kind conditioned the bringing back in March 1791 in the Romanian Country of one of its ex princes, Mihai Sutu.⁵³ And as he was “born with so much devotion and justice” and also because “even from the past” he was “wise” and had “the quality to have much zeal and skill” and “he was born” to endeavour how much it is necessary”, the great vizir Mehmed Izzet pasa “honoured him” by asking additional tasks, besides those he was designed to accomplish as a prince of Moldavia.⁵⁴

Translated by Dragoş Ungureanu

⁵² Ibidem.

⁵³ Recognizing his merits in the service of the Ottoman Empire, proved during the first reign in the Romanian Country (July 6 1783 -March 1786) and considering that he will make efforts again to “keep the peace and the welfare of the poor and helpless people”, that had suffered so much after the war, sultam Selim the III-rd reminded him by the firman of 10-19 September 1791 that “voyevodalik of the country mentioned above (Moldavia – n.Ven.C.) you received from my royalty” (s.Ven.C.) with those conditions (cf. M. A. Mehmet, *Documente turcesti privind istoria României*, volume III, 1791-1812, Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1986, p. 2

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 81.