

Although the introduction of this system was to some extent successful in suppressing the centrifugal tendency of the ruling classes of the two principalities, the move also had serious side effects. That is to say, although of the same religion, the Phanariote governors dispatched from Istanbul, who were considered Greek speaking "foreigners" by the local *boiers*, tended to place their own people in positions of importance at the expense of the *boiers*, causing the latter to rebel against such "foreign" interference by once again approaching the Russian and Habsburg Empires. Moreover, in order to quickly recoup the huge bribes they had to pay Ottoman government officials for their appointments, there were Phanariotes who exceeded the normal "exploitation" allowed in the two tributaries, causing serious fiscal difficulties for all classes of the populace and increasing expectations towards their fellow Christians in Russia to deliver them from Ottoman rule.

Despite the growing Russian influence in the two principalities from the end of the 17th century through to the first half of the 18th century, the Ottoman Empire managed to maintain its relations with them, stabilizing its vacillating rule over them. However, this Ottoman relations with the two principalities were bound to change with the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War in 1768.

2. 3. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca as the Turning Point

Having experienced a significant shrinkage in its territory during the last years of the 17th century, the Ottoman Empire managed not to suffer anymore defeats at the hands of either the Russian or Habsburg Empires up through the first half of the next century, and was even able to recover some of what it had lost. Then in the aftermath of its defeat in the Russo-Turkish War, the peace treaty signed in 1774 became an important starting point for intervention in Ottoman affairs by the countries of Europe—that is, the so-called "Eastern Question".

From the very onset of the War in 1768, the Ottoman forces were overwhelmed by the Russians, who established a position of strength in a very short time. The following year the Russian Army marched into Moldavia, then Wallachia, occupying their respective capitals of Iași and Bucharest and gaining the loyalty and cooperation of not only the *boiers*, clergy, and local populace, but also the Phanariote princes who were expected loyal to the Ottomans.

Seeing Russia gaining the upper hand in the Crimean Khanate, the other Ottoman

leading figures at the court, and high officials of the Sublime Porte, and the appointment of Phanariotes with direct access to the ruling class in Istanbul was expected to speed up the payment of tribute owed by the two principalities.

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tributary, and its naval victories in Aegean Sea, the countries of Western Europe, in particular Prussia and the Habsburg Empire, fearing Russia's rapid advance south, strongly urged the Ottoman Court to make peace with the enemy, while at the same time demanding that Russia return the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia to their Ottoman "suzerain". Consequently, due to such international pressure, the Russians were forced to return the two principalities, but in order to leave in place the possibility of a future revival of their influence there, demanded various conditions during the peace negotiations, resulting in Article 16 of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca which contains ten provisions regarding the two polities, the most important of which were probably Items 8 through 10, which read as follows.

8. *Cizye* to be remitted to Istanbul will be collected by deputies dispatched every two years, with no other tax imposed on the two principalities. They will enjoy rights identical to those granted under Sultan Mehmed IV [r. mid-17th century].
9. Both principalities will be granted the right to have representatives stationed in Istanbul.
10. The Russian representatives stationed in the Ottoman Empire will be allowed to express his opinion concerning conditions in the two principalities.

The content of the 1774 Treaty was based mainly on a draft submitted by the Russian delegation during the negotiations conducted in Bucharest the previous year. In that draft, the Russians demanded, instead of those stipulated in Items 8 and 9, that both principalities be taxed once every three years and that they be allowed to set up consulates in Istanbul, as in the case of the Republic of Ragusa. Ragusa, which held the same status of "vassal state" as Wallachia and Moldavia, had not been obliged to pay yearly taxes, and was thus even more loosely governed by Istanbul than the two principalities.⁸ Therefore, Russia, aiming to maintain a foothold in the two principalities, demanded the same treatment of them as Ragusa in order to further weaken the Ottoman government's control over them. Although the language regarding Ragusa would be stricken from the final Treaty text, it is interesting to note that the Russians selected, from among the flexible, diversified relationships between the Ottoman government and its vassal states, that of Ragusa to be adopted as a model for Wallachia and Moldavia.

Regarding Item 10, which reads:

It is agreed that the Russian representative stationed in the Ottoman Empire will be allowed to express his opinion concerning conditions in the two principalities, and

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⁸ On Ragusa-Ottoman relations, see [Biegman 1967; Фрейденберг 1984].