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Czajkowski's Christian Army of the Sultan, 1853–1870

ABSTRACT

In the mid-19th century, a Polish writer, political agent and renegade, called Michał Czajkowski (Sadık Paşa), managed to do something remarkable in the Ottoman Empire. After the beginning of the Crimean War in 1853, in that complex international and geopolitical situation on the Balkans and amidst the triangle of the great empires—the British, French and Russian—he created the first official regular Christian military unit within the Ottoman Empire. That “Christian army” was composed almost entirely by Christians. The official Christian character of that Ottoman military unit made them an unique instrument and representative of the modernization processes during the Tanzimat era. As an Ottoman general Michał Czajkowski (Sadık Paşa) commanded his Slavic Regiment for nearly 20 years from 1853 to 1870 throughout the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

KEYWORDS

19th Century, Ottoman Empire, Michał Czajkowski (Sadık Paşa), Slavic Regiment, Polish in Balkans

In the mid-19th century, a Polish writer, political agent and renegade, called Michał Czajkowski (Sadık Paşa), managed to do something remarkable in the Ottoman Empire. After the beginning of the Crimean War in 1853, in that complex international and geopolitical situation on the Balkans and amidst the triangle of the great empires—the British, French and Russian—he created the first official regular Christian military unit within the Ottoman Empire. That

“Christian army” was composed almost entirely by Christians. The official Christian character of that Ottoman military unit made them a unique instrument and representative of the modernization processes during the Tanzimat era. As an Ottoman general Michał Czajkowski (Sadık Paşa) commanded his Slavic Regiment for nearly 20 years from 1853 to 1870 throughout the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

Michał Czajkowski was born in 1804 in the small town of Halczynek, today in Ukraine, back then part of the Russian Empire. Czajkowski’s ancestry on both maternal and paternal sides comes from the mid-Polish nobility (*szlachta*).¹ As a descendant of the famous hetman of the Zaporozhian Sich and other Cossacks commanders, Czajkowski was educated in the best Cossacks traditions and legends. He graduated two lyceums and at the age of 17 as a young landlord, he entered in the nobility circles in the region. After the death of his mother and uncles, Czajka inherited vast wealth and properties. Everything changed when the November Uprising against the Russian Empire broke in 1830. The young nobleman abandoned everything and immediately enlisted as a volunteer.² One year later, the Russian monarchy crushed the November Uprising, leaving Michał deprived of his inheritance and forced him to emigrate in France as the majority of the Polish participants and accomplices in the uprising. This vast emigration of those Poles is also known as the Great Emigration (*Wielka Emigracja*). Paris became the center of the Polish emigration and there Czajkowski began his literary activity. After 1836 Czajkowski drew closer to Prince Adam Czartoryski (1770–1861)—the leader of Polish conservative-liberal camp of the Great Emigration also known as Hotel Lambert, which was residing in Paris. Hotel Lambert was one of the most vital and influential Polish émigré camps in exile of the Great Emigration. Czajkowski accepted the ideas of Czartoryski and joined the political activity of Hotel Lambert, with the idea to help create one “Polish foreign policy.”³

As such, in 1841 Michał Czajkowski arrived for the first time in the Ottoman Empire with a French passport and French protection, to create and lead the so-called Eastern Agency of Hotel Lambert. The Agency would work on one of the main political goals of the rich Polish circles in exile—the Slavs in the Euro-

¹ R. Rawita-Gawroński, *Michał Czajkowski (Sadık-Pasza) jego życie, działalność wojskowa i literacka*, S. Petersburg 1901, pp. 4–5; J. Chudzikowska, *Dziwne życie Sadyka Paszy. O Michał Czajkowskim*, Warszawa 1971, pp. 11–23; M. Czajkowski, *Pamiętniki Sadyka Paszy Michała Czajkowskiego*, Lwów 1898, pp. 1–5.

² Czajkowski was part of the so called Volhynian Cavalry Regiment. See: K. Różycki, *Pamiętnik Pułku Jazdy Wołyńskiej 1831 r.*, Kraków 1898, pp. 7–9; 31–38.

³ *Записки Михаила Чайковского (Мехмед-Садык-паша)*, „Русская старина” 1898, no. 2, pp. 450–451.

pean part of the Ottoman Empire.⁴ The objectives of the mission were to create an independent center of the Slavs on the Balkan Peninsula, gradually acquiring more freedom and independence within the Ottoman Empire. The most important goal, however, was to reduce the Russian influence over the Slavs. In order to do that they needed to work actively on an anti-Russian policy among all Slavic subjects of the Sultan, and using it for the Polish national question.⁵

It is important to be mentioned here that the British and mainly the French asylum, financial and political support for the Polish émigrés was strictly a pragmatic and geopolitical initiative. While the Poles were hoping to solve their national question and gain independence, both Western European powers calculated that can used them solely for their geopolitical interests, one of which was diminishing the Russian influence on the Sublime Porte.⁶ Czartoryski himself with his considerable political experience was able to grasp this situation in depth. In 1836 he suggested to the French Foreign Ministry that the Polish émigrés can and should be used as an instrument of the French foreign policy. Especially on a secret anti-Russian mission in the East, carried out by experienced Polish agents or military officers.⁷ Hence the next couple of decades the agents of Hotel Lambert will be used for various espionage, diversion and military missions in the East.⁸

Back in the Ottoman capital, the Czajkowski's activities in the East naturally were strictly observed by the Russian Empire. For that purpose, the Russian diplomatic network was engaged. Right after Czajkowski's arrival in Istanbul, we learn from some secret reports between the ambassador Titov (1807–1891) and the chief of the Russian secret police (also known as The Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery) count Benkendorf (1782–

⁴ For more on that topic see: J. Skowronek, *Polityka bałkańska hotelu Lambert (1833–1856)*, Warszawa 1976; H. Hahn, *Aussenpolitik in der Emigration. Die Exildiplomatie Adam Jerzy Czartoryskis 1830–1840*, München–Wien 1978; A. Cetnarowicz, *Tajna dyplomacja Adama Jerzego Czartoryskiego na Bałkanach. Hotel Lambert a kryzys serbski 1840–1844*, Kraków 1993.

⁵ R. Berry, *Czartoryski's Hôtel Lambert and the Great Powers in the Balkans, 1832–1848*, "The International History Review" 1985, Vol. 7, p. 52.

⁶ P. Dangin, *Historie de la Monarchie de Juillet*, t. 1, Paris 1884, pp. 163–164.

⁷ Д. Симеонов, *Френската политика на Балканите, 1829–1853*, София 1977, pp. 117–118.

⁸ H. Hahn, *Possibilities and Limitations of Foreign Policy in Exile: Adam Jerzy Czartoryski's Hotel Lambert in Western Europe, 1831–1840*, [in:] *Eastern Europe and the West. Selective Papers from the Fourth World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies*, ed. J. Morison, London 1992, p. 10; M. Handelsman, *Adam Czartoryski*, t. 2, Warszawa 1949, pp. 5–16 et passim.

1844), that they already received detailed information from the Russian diplomatic mission in Paris. Both commented that Czajkowski's travels and activities in the Ottoman Empire had to be observed and evaluated.⁹ Czajkowski was engaged with Hotel Lambert until 1850. In his almost ten year stay in the Ottoman Empire as an agent, Czajka led the vast network of the Eastern Agency throughout European provinces of the Ottoman Empire, unfolding large-scale action. Czajkowski achieved something remarkable for a factual informal representative, earning respect and recognition from the Sublime Porte. During that period he created influential connections in the Ottoman government. Maybe there is no such exaggeration in the assessment of the Prince Adam Czartoryski for his top agent's activity: "From Danube to the Adriatic Sea any work of importance for the Christian population was not undertaken without inviting the Polish agent to take over the leadership."¹⁰

In the same time, at the end of the 1840s, some changes in the Balkan geopolitical layers were materialized. The French Republic drew closer to the Ottoman Empire, defending its integrity, as well as with the Russian and Austrian Empires, to the detriment of the national movements in Hungary and the Balkans. With those steps, the Republic was trying to maintain its trade and economic interests and increase the influence within the Sublime Porte to fight the Russian positions there.

At this context, in 1850 due to the Petersburg's exerted influence on the Sublime Porte to deport Czajkowski and some other anti-Russian Polish political agents, and primarily after the retreated support for him from Paris at the same time, Czajkowski found a shelter as a subject to the Sultan converting to Islam and accepting the name Mehmed Sadık.¹¹ The retreated French support was a minor concession for the Republic, which aimed to gain a better political position in the East, strengthening the ties with the Ottomans and the Russians.¹² Of course, the strong Russian influence within the Porte was the other part of the explanation. With that conversion step, the Polish political agent didn't cause considerable damage to the Eastern Agency rather than an outburst in the Polish press.¹³ Czajkowski knew what will be the consequences of

⁹ АВПРИ, f. 151, inv. 482, No. 3267, pp. 2–8.

¹⁰ В. Смоховска-Петрова, *Михаил Чайковски-Садък паша и Българското възраждане*, София 1973, pp. 93–94.

¹¹ C. Badem, *Sadyk Pasha in the Light of Ottoman Archives (1848–1871)*, [in:] *The Crimean War 1853–1856. Colonial Skirmish or Rehearsal for World War? Empires, Nations and Individuals*, ed. J. Borejsza, Warsaw 2011, p. 94.

¹² Д. Симеонов, op. cit., p. 242.

¹³ „Czas” 1851, r. IV, nr 11 (15 stycznia), p. 2; „Goniec Polski” 1851, r. II, nr 7 (10 stycznia), p. 1 et passim.

such “radical” step—he will be condemned both by the Slavs and by the Poles as he wrote that to Prince Czartoryski in the summer of 1850—6 months before the actual conversion took place—when started to consider this very idea.¹⁴ The decision of Sadik did not come as a big surprise since at the end of the 1840s he started gradually and pragmatically change his political views towards the Sublime Porte, causing some conflicts with Hotel Lambert and Adam Czartoryski. One can notice that Czajkowski's political change of views towards Turkophilism was pragmatically aligned with the French foreign policy, as was his previous Slavophilism aligned with the practical political policies of Hotel Lambert in the East. At the end he probably saw the way out of his tough situation by staying in the East, seeing the opportunity to make a career as a subject to the Sultan. It is interesting though that in his memoirs, Czajka also points out that he has accepted without hesitation the proposition made to him to convert to Islam since he “loves from the heart” the Sultan Abdulmejid I (1823–1861) and the Grand Vizier Mustafa Reshid Paşa (1800–1858).¹⁵ Some authors suggest that Czajkowski's decision to convert to Islam is due to his “Cossack myth” or “dream,” which was not able to fulfill with Hotel Lambert.¹⁶ As the Polish historian Jerzy Skowronek explains, we don't have any hint or information that would suggest something like that.¹⁷ Indeed the topic will appear, but only after 1854.

After the conversion, Mehmed Efendi was provided materially by his majesty the Sultan with a small mansion in Sazlıbosna and more than 2 hectares of land.¹⁸ Initially, Mehmed Sadık Efendi performed some minor diplomatic tasks for the Sublime Porte. The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 changed the situation drastically. Immediately after the beginning of the war, Mehmed Sadık introduced a Memorandum to the Ottoman government through the sadrazam Reshid Paşa. He proposed the creation of regular regiments composed from the Cossack population of Northern Dobrudja and the Christian subjects of the Sultan. According to the project, the commanders had to be Poles and the unit would bear the name Ottoman Cossacks. The Sultan approved the Memorandum, and on November 27th 1853 issued an *irade*, promoting Sadık Efendi to the rank of *mirmiran* Paşa, and officially assigning

¹⁴ BCz, rkps. 5429, pp. 755–756.

¹⁵ *Записки Михаила Чайковского (Мехмед-Садык-паша)*, „Русская старина” 1898, бр. 9, p. 673.

¹⁶ B. Смоховска-Петрова, op. cit., pp. 106–110 et passim.

¹⁷ J. Skowronek, *Kontrowersje wokół Sadyka Paszy (na marginesie pracy Wandy Smochowskiej-Petrowej, Michał Czajkowski – Sadyk Pasza i Bałgarskoto wazrażdane, Sofia 1973)*, „Przegląd Historyczny” 1976, t. 67, nr 4, p. 662.

¹⁸ *Записки Михаила Чайковского...*, op. cit., p. 675.

him the task of organizing and commanding the Ottoman Cossack Regiment. The title of *mirmiran* was the equivalent of the brigadier general and it was usually conferred upon civilian Paşas.¹⁹

Sadık Paşa chose the Malorussian (or Ukranian) as a basic language of the Cossack Regiment due to its similarity to the Polish, Russian and other Slavic languages. The recruitment of volunteers for the Ottoman Cossack Regiment began simultaneously in Edirne, Istanbul and partly in Şumnu (Shumen).²⁰ It was formed almost exclusively by volunteers. From the very beginning, the unit was attached to the regular Ottoman army. The Christian character of the regiment was formed mainly by the Poles, who were the officers and sergeants and the Bulgarians as regular soldiers. Some of the Non-Muslims were criminals pardoned for their crimes in order to enlist in the regiment. There were also some Serbians, Hungarians, Russians, Albanians, Jews, Gypsies enlisted in the regiment. After the initial recruitment, at the beginning of 1854, the Slavic Regiment consisted of six squadrons, five regular and one irregular, the latter composed of Nekrassov Cossacks from Asia Minor.²¹

For the Sadık Paşa's dismay, during the initial recruitment of the new regiment, the genuine Cossack element in the face of the Dobrudja' Old Believers was actually missing. The mission of Sadık's envoy Janusz Woronicz (1805–1874) in Northern Dobrudja to recruit the real Cossacks turned out to be a total failure.²² Only a few Old Believers enlisted as volunteers and they were immediately given the rank of officers by Mehmed Sadık himself.²³ At the same time though the Sublime Porte managed to recruit some of the Dobrudja's Tatars and Cossacks population, but they were attached to the irregular Ottoman army. Later on, during the Crimean War, after a heavy defeat around Silistra, part of those irregular Old Believers was forcibly attached to the Mehmed Sadık's regiment. With them, the Polish renegade created two more incomplete squadrons.²⁴

On January 23rd 1854, all squadrons in full parade uniforms were fallen in line in the courtyard of the Edirne's governor konak. The ceremony was attended by all civil, cleric and official figures. The Cossacks took an official oath before their bishop and their flag, and everyone swore in whatever they wanted—the Bible, the Qur'an or the Torah. The governor and future Grand

¹⁹ C. Badem, *Sadyk Pasha...*, op. cit., p. 95.

²⁰ "Цариградски вестник" 1853, год. IV, бр. 148 (21 ноември), p. 15.

²¹ M. Czajkowski, *Kozaczyzna w Turcyi: Dzieło w trzech częściach*, Paryż 1857, pp. 110–111.

²² *Записки Михаила Чайковского (Мехмед-Садык-паша)*, „Русская старина” 1898, бр. 10, p. 186.

²³ В. Кельсиев, *Польские агенты въ Цариградѣ*, „Русский вестникъ” 1869, Т. 84, p. 183.

²⁴ M. Czajkowski, *Kozaczyzna...*, op. cit., p. 111.

Vizier Mehmed Kibrıslı Paşa (1813–1871) held a touching speech in front of all about the importance of this Christian Regiment in which everyone would fight together under one banner and in which Christians could finally carry weapons.²⁵ Edirne's Metropolitan also gave a speech in which he stimulated the soldiers to be faithful to the Sultan.²⁶ After the oath, the regiment officially received the old banner of the Zaporozhian Cossacks. The two-colored silk banner depicts silver Muslim crescent with a star on the red background and golden Christian crest on the white background.²⁷ The Ottoman Cossacks Regiment would become popular as the "the Slavic Regiment" or "Kazak Alay"²⁸ among the Muslim and Non-Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire.

The news about the creation of the Christian Regiment during the Crimean War was spread in the European press too. The existence of the Ottoman Cossack Regiment was maybe firstly felt at most by the Christian subjects of the Sultan in Rumelia. The Slavic Cossacks brought substantial change in the social layers of the everyday life for the Non-Muslim population, infiltrating new and unknown until that time processes. The press articles, the original documents and reports from Russian, Ottoman, Polish and other officials showed very clearly that the Ottoman Cossacks Regiment grew extremely popular in a very short time. They were even called "our army" by the Christians. Wherever the Ottoman Cossacks pass through on their way, they were warmly greeted with sincere joy and admired greatly, especially by the Christian population.²⁹ People gathered from the entire region—cities, towns and villages.³⁰ Seeing the regiments' magnificent parade uniforms, swords, Christian crosses portrayed on the flags of their spikes, riding horses, and speaking their language, we can imagine that their Christian compatriots were mesmerized. No wonder that in the next 20 years literally thousands of Christians, mainly Bulgarians, were going to enlist as volunteers in the Christian army of the Sultan from all over Rumelia—from Istanbul, Edirne, Sliven, Shumen, Plovdiv, Sofia, Pleven, Bitola, Kazanlak, Kalofer, Sopot, Pirdop, Kotel, Razgrad, Gabrovo, Dubnitsa, Piro, Vrana, Seres, Prilep, Nevrokop etc.

²⁵ "Цариградски вестник" 1854, год. IV, бр. 159 (6 февруари), p. 59.

²⁶ К. Суходолска, *Българите в неиздадените мемуари на Чайка Чайковски (Садък-паша). Съобщава с кратки бележки дъщеря му Каролина Суходолска*, „Сборник за народни умотворения, наука и книжнина" 1894, Т. 10, p. 455.

²⁷ *Записки Михаила Чайковского (Мехмед-Садък-паша)*, „Русская старина" 1898, бр. 10, p. 198.

²⁸ Kazak Alayı (from *Turkish*)—Cossack regiment.

²⁹ К. Суходолска, op. cit., p. 456.

³⁰ „Цариградски вестник" 1854, год. IV, бр. 162 (27 февруари), p. 72.

On the other hand, we have some Ottoman official reports curiously stating that after the establishment of the Ottoman Cossacks Regiment the Greeks and Armenians were constantly running away and hiding from them in various villages. As well as refusing to shelter them in their homes. Both, Armenians and Greeks, were declaring that they'd prefer to burn down their houses rather than let in those Christian traitors fighting for the Sultan.³¹ At the opposite, there were several records showing extreme sympathy and grief among Non-Muslims after tragic incidents with soldiers. For example in Yambol and Sliven, after the death of Cossack Regiment's soldiers, the entire population went to honor the deceased on the funeral.³²

Before the end of the Crimean War, in 1855, we can see another occasion on which Sadık Paşa was used as an instrument of the political modernization in the Ottoman Empire. Being in Istanbul at that time, Mehmed Sadık was ordered by the Sublime Porte to prepare a study on the possibility to officially draft Ottoman Christians to the army. At that time, while the Crimean War was still going on, there was a conference convened in Vienna for peace negotiations among the European great powers. One of the demands from the Ottoman side was to improve the status of Non-Muslims subjects in the Ottoman Empire. If Non-Muslims were to be equal to Muslims, then, among other things, they would also be subject to military service instead of paying the poll tax. This forced the Ottoman government to try to find how to include Non-Muslims in the army. The Sadık Paşa's report to the Grand Vizier considered places from where Christian volunteers could be recruited. For cavalry troops, he pointed out Tarnovo, Nisch, Yeni Pazar and Sarajevo, while for infantry—Mostar, Scodra, Janina, and Salonica.³³ According to the Sadık Paşa, as he wrote in his memoirs, the Sultan wanted this project to be discussed with the representatives of the European powers. Ultimately, they did not like the idea. The British ambassador in Istanbul Lord Stratford de Canning (1786–1880) even told Mehmed Sadık that this reform should not be allowed, because within a few years the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire would form a full and army trained and capable of fighting. Austria also didn't support the project, fearing the growth of military spirit among the Ottoman Slavs. After the Ottoman government met such opposition from all sides and from the European powers, they did not carry out this reform.³⁴

³¹ BAR Msc. 4904, vol. I, pp. 4–5.

³² И. Стойчев, *Казакъ алаятъ на Чайковски*, София 1944, p. 81.

³³ C. Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853–1856)*, Leiden 2010, pp. 341–342.

³⁴ *Записки Михаила Чайковского (Мехмед-Садык-паша)*, „Русская старина“ 1904, бр. 12, p. 512.

During the Crimean War, the Ottoman Cossack Regiment took an active part as a vanguard in the Dobrudja war theater and in the offensive actions of the Ottoman army at Bucharest and the Prut River.³⁵ Meanwhile, at the beginning of 1854 count Władysław Zamoyski (1803–1868) arrived in the Ottoman capital as a representative of Adam Czartoryski and Hotel Lambert. Both of them were trying to get permission from the Ottoman, British and French governments to create one entirely Polish Regiment (Legion), who would fight in the Crimean war too. It is important to be mentioned that Hotel Lambert tried extensively during the 1830s and 1840s to create a purely Polish military unit throughout Europe—namely Polish Legion—with the idea to use it to solve their national question, causing a great European war with Russia or Austria. Those attempts failed, unsupported by France and Britain. Now naturally those endeavors of Zamoyski caused a collision between Zamoyski himself and Mehmed Sadık.³⁶ At the end of 1854 Hotel Lambert and Zamoyski succeeded in their goal and the Sultan had issued an *irade* for the creation of one purely Polish Regiment.³⁷ This Polish Regiment has a rather short life. At the beginning it was named not “Polish Legion,” but “Second Ottoman Cossacks Regiment” and in November 1855 went under British command by the name “Cossacks Cavalry Division” (*Dywizja Kozaków Sułtańskich*). The Polish division did not participate in any combat activities during the war and was disbanded in July 1856.³⁸

After the Treaty of Paris and the end of the Crimean War in 1856, the Porte ordered the formation of the second Dragoon Regiment under Sadık Paşa's command. Part of the volunteers from the disbanded Polish Division enlisted in the new Dragoon Regiment. Both regiments with Sadık Paşa were appointed to guard the Greek border³⁹ and to execute various missions in the region like keeping the peace and fighting the outlaw brigands.⁴⁰ The very existence of the

³⁵ More about the Crimean campaign of Czajkowski and his Ottoman Cossacks Regiment see: M. Czajkowski, *Moje wspomnienia o wojnie 1854 roku*, Warszawa 1962.

³⁶ P. Wierzbicki, *Działalność Sadyka Paszy w czasie wojny krymskiej na tle jego relacji z obozem Czartoryskich*, [in:] *Polacy i ziemie polskie w dobie wojny krymskiej*, red. J. W. Borej-sza, G. Bąbiak, Warszawa 2008, pp. 110–112.

³⁷ „Wiadomości Polskie” 1854, r. I (14 października), p. 98; „Wiadomości Polskie” 1855, r. I (10 stycznia), p. 147.

³⁸ For more on that topic see: P. Wierzbicki, *Dywizja Kozaków Sułtańskich. Polityczno-wojskowe koncepcje stronnictwa Czartoryskich w okresie wojny krymskiej (1853–1856)*, Kraków 2013.

³⁹ „Цариградски вестник” 1857, год. VII, бр. 339 (27 юли), p. 143.

⁴⁰ A. Чайковский, *Заметки о турецкой кавалерии и о славянском легионе, бывшем под командою Садыка-паши*, „Военный сборник” 1875, бр. 7, pp. 150–151.

Ottoman Cossacks Regiments was, of course, a result of a political decision, supported by the Sublime Porte in the spirit of Tanzimat reforms as well as from France and especially Britain. Mehmed Sadık knew that fact very well, mentioning it many times through the years his service as a subject to the Sultan.⁴¹ It must be mentioned that the existence of Sadık Paşa's Christian army put the Russian interests and influence in Rumelia at stake. Petersburg clearly showed to the Porte during and after the Crimean War that they are not satisfied with the situation.⁴² In a number of secret reports Russian officials clarified that if there are stationed or quartered soldiers from the Cossack Regiments in some region, the Russian influence there among the Non-Muslim were decreasing considerably.⁴³ Nothing can be done at that time though. Sadık and his Cossacks were supported from the highest levels within the Ottoman government as well as by the British Empire through their diplomatic network in Rumelia.

From 1860 to 1865 the Ottoman Cossacks Regiment was stationed in Monastir (today's Bitola) after 1865 Edirne became headquarters for the Cossacks. Sliven was their home in 1866–1868 and of course many more cities in Rumelia for a shorter period of time. The sources showed that wherever the Ottoman Cossacks are stationed, especially for a longer period, there are visible changes there. Those changes in the structure were spread mainly in the social sphere, but also in the military and even in the political realm to some extent. The Christians from those villages not only volunteered in the regiments but grew more confident. They were introduced to new ideas and manners, education, even in some cases protection from high ranking officers and sergeants of Slavic Regiment. The sources showed a number of cases in which when a Christian subject of the Sultan is robbed, mistreated or killed the Cossacks stationed in the same village were actively engaged in finding the perpetrators or resolving the issue.⁴⁴ In Islimiye or Sliven, for example, an ordinary Ottoman town, Sadık Paşa and the Polish officers from the Ottoman Cossacks Regiment played the role of transmitters of modernization in 1860s by introducing the European lifestyle to the inhabitants. Sadık started organizing for the first time official receptions with an equal number of men and women as well as receptions with European dances and modern clothes. Due to that infiltration, the most

⁴¹ BCz, rkps. 5464, pp. 1127–1128; M. Czapska, *Ludwika Śniadecka*, Warszawa 1958, pp. 194–196 et passim.

⁴² C. Badem, *Sadyk Pasha...*, pp. 104–105.

⁴³ В. Полторац, *Документи про Михала Чайковського в Державному архіві Одеської області*, [in:] *Чорноморська минушина. Записки відділу історії козацтва на Півдні України*, Т. V, Одеса 2010, pp. 145–146; ДАОО, f. 1, inv. 203, No. 15 for 1857, p. 37.

⁴⁴ АВПРИ f. 180. Посольство в Константинополе, inv. 517/2, No. 1415, pp. 17–22.

eminent among the inhabitants of Sliven followed the example and started to organize dancing-parties, thematic meetings, or to pay scheduled visits of friends etc.⁴⁵

It is worth mentioning that the Cossack Regiments had also a military orchestra, which through the years, attended hundreds of Orthodox and Catholic masses, especially on Christian holidays. The musicians from the Christian army attended those masses in full Ottoman parade uniforms. After the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, even the Ottoman Cossack's orchestra played during the celebration on the streets of Istanbul. In 1872, the military orchestra was detached in a special musical squadron.⁴⁶

After the mid-1860s, in the Ottoman government, deep political changes started. The changes led the conservative circles to gain more power within the Sublime Porte. Hence since 1866 the influential Ottoman statesman and future serasker Husseyin Avni Paşa (1819–1876) and the conservative “old Turkish” circles wanted to remove the Christian character and command of the Ottoman Cossacks Regiments, according to the memoirs of Sadık's aide-de-camp at that time.⁴⁷ Mehmed Sadık responded with resignation, claiming once again openly that the importance of the Christian army lies in their political aims, in their Slavic composition. And if they lose their political character, they would become just mercenaries, thus then their existence would not make any sense.⁴⁸

At that time, Sadık Paşa was still influential within the Ottoman Government and his resignation was not accepted. This uncertain situation continued as such until 1870 when The Sublime Porte decided officially to remove the Christian character, command and Slavic language of the Ottoman Cossacks Regiments and to incorporate them in the regular Ottoman cavalry. Sadık Paşa was alone back then, since his former colleagues, powerful friends or supporters within the Ottoman Empire and abroad has disappeared from either the world or from the political scene. His resignation was accepted in August 1870.⁴⁹ The event was covered widely in the press too.⁵⁰ The process of incorporation

⁴⁵ „Сливен” 2003, бр. 6 (21 септември), р. 17.

⁴⁶ И. Попов, *Изъ миналото на Одринъ*, София 1919, pp. 19–20; И. Стойчев, op. cit., pp. 84–87.

⁴⁷ A. Zlatanov, *Niepublikowane wspomnienia Michała Czajkowskiego – Sadyka Paszy*, „Studia z dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej” 2018, t. LIII, z. 2, p. 123. For a Bulgarian translation see: A. Златанов, *Непубликувани спомени за Михаил Чайковски – Садък паша*, [in:] *Българите в Османската империя, XIX в. Понятия, структури, личности*, съст. В. Рачева, София 2017, pp. 107–132.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁹ Ibidem.

⁵⁰ “Свобода” 1870, год. I, бр. 42 (16 септември), р. 332; „Свобода” 1870, год. I, бр. 42 (23 септември), р. 341 et passim.

or “conversion” of the Christian army was completed in 1872. By that time all the Polish officers and sergeants have deserted from the Ottoman army too. Some Bulgarian and other Slavs remained on Ottoman service in the next years. The “Christian army” ceased to exist in 1877 during the Russo-Turkish War.

In conclusion, we can state that the existence of the examined Christian army of the Sultan or Ottoman Cossacks Regiments had a great influence and left durable and visible traces among the Christian subjects of the Sultan in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire. All of the above mentioned clearly manifested the different layers and dimensions of Sadık Paşa's and his Cossacks's actions as an example of the infiltration of the new processes in the political, social and military sphere within the Ottoman Empire during and after the Crimean War.

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