

ROMANIAN-RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF DOBROGEA (JUNE 1877-NOVEMBER 1878)

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Abstract. The present study presents and analyzes the Russian administration installed in Dobrogea after the occupation of the region by the Tsarist troops at the beginning of June 1877 and until November 1878, when most of the region (Constanța and Tulcea counties) was taken over by Romania following the decision of Berlin Congress (July 13, 1878). Romanian documents, due to the Dobrogea research team, led by Colonel Stefan Fălcoianu before the installation of the Romanian administration and army in the province, have been used. Russian sources from the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Empire archive are also highlighted.

Keywords: Dobrogea, Russian occupation, administration, Ivan Vasilievich Beloterkovetz

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The April 1877 Chronicle of Southeast Europe records the opening of the military stage of the new phase of the “Oriental Crisis” unleashed in the Balkans in 1875.

For the European front, the Russian commander planned two military operations. Both started from the south of Bessarabia where Russia had deployed important military forces. The first consisted in the movement of three military divisions through Romania towards the Danube, where in the Zimnicea area they were to carry out military actions to cross the river and advance towards the fortress of Plevna, strongly reinforced by the Ottoman command with a system of fortifications.

Since Dobrogea was part of the Ottoman Empire with a special geopolitical position, the leadership of the Russian troops assigned the 14th Army Corps to occupy the region.

The Turkish army had important effective forces concentrated in the fortresses on the Danube, and a squadron on the river that could endanger the missions of the Russian troops.

Under the command of General Apolon Ernestovici Zimmerman (1825-1884), the 14th Corps forced the Danube on the night of 9/21 and 10/22 June 1877 north of Măcin to land on the right bank of the river. On various floating means, the Russian military managed to build the bridgehead, creating the conditions for the

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