

B RITISH REACTIONS TO CHARLES XII'S STAY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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Abstract:

In 1709 the Great Northern War took an unfortunate course for Sweden, as following Charles XII's defeat at Poltava, he was forced to retreat to Bender in the Ottoman Empire, where he would remain for 5 years.. The Swedish King's retreat in the Ottoman Empire also reverberated in Britain, which at the time was involved in the War for Spanish Succession (1709-1714), and consequently sought for tranquillity at the North and Baltic Sea. While politicians were worried about the Swedish fleet, a worry which only aggravated after George I's accession to the British thrones in 1714, writers such as Daniel Defoe and others could not refrain from expressing their admiration for the 'Warrior King' Charles XII. Soon after his return, Charles XII would even be associated with the Jacobite faction, rival to the House of Hanover which at the time ruled Britain. The purpose of this paper is to offer an overview of the whole spectrum of British publications and reactions regarding Charles XII's sojourn in the Ottoman Empire, during his stay's duration (1709-1714) and up to his death and the immediately subsequent period.

Rezumat:

În 1709, Marele Război Nordic a urmat un curs nefericit pentru Suedia deoarece ca urmare a înfrângerii lui Carol al XII-lea la Poltava, el a fost forțat să se retragă la Bender, în Imperiul Otoman, unde va rămâne timp de 5 ani. Retragerea regelui suedez în Imperiul Otoman a avut, de asemenea, reverberații în Marea Britanie, care la acea vreme era implicată în războiul de succesiune spaniol (1709-1714), și, prin urmare, căuta liniștea la Marea Nordului și la Marea Baltică. În timp ce politicienii erau îngrijorați de flota suedeză, o îngrijorare care doar s-a accentuat după urcarea lui George I pe tronul britanic în 1714, scriitori cum ar fi Daniel Defoe și alții nu au putut să se abțină de la exprimarea admirației lor pentru „războinicul rege” Carol al XII-lea. Curând după întoarcerea sa, Carol al XII-lea a fi fost chiar asociat cu facțiunea iacobită, rivala Casei de Hanovera ce guverna la

acea vreme Marea Britanie. Scopul acestei lucrări este de a oferi o imagine de ansamblu a întregului spectru de publicații și reacții britanice cu privire la sălășluirea lui Carol al XII-lea în Imperiul Otoman, începând din perioada șederii sale (1709-1714) și până la moartea sa și în perioada imediat următoare.

Keywords: Charles XII of Sweden, Bender, George I, London Gazette, Daniel Defoe

Introduction

Although the name Demirbaş Şarl might not mean a lot to a history amateur, it is not the case of a professional, who knows the fact that it hides the 'nickname' acquired by Charles XII¹, the King of Sweden², during his five years long stay in the Ottoman Empire (1709-1714).

This name, Demirbaş Şarl, derives from the allocation awarded to him by the Ottoman Empire, as in Turkish *demirbaş* means 'fixed rent'. Sultan Ahmed III³ was very generous in his treatment to the Warrior King Charles XII,⁴ as we shall see, offering him not only money but even the required means for founding a real Swedish enclave in the Ottoman Empire.

The subject is widely treated by Romanian but also by foreign scholars,⁵ being especially interesting, because it brings together two

¹ See Byron J. Nordstrom, *The History of Sweden* (London: Greenwood Press Westport, 2002), 44; Michael Roberts, *The Age of Liberty: Sweden 1719-1772* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Jill Lisk, *The Struggle for the Supremacy of the Baltic 1600-1725* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967).

² He was actually not the 12th king of Sweden bearing the name Charles (Karl), but the 6th, as earlier kings used numerals based on myths and legends. See Frans Gunnar Bengtsson, *The life of Charles XII, King of Sweden, 1697-1718* (London: Macmillan, 1960), passim; Ragnhild M. Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969).

³ Ahmed III (أحمد الثالث *Ahmed-i sālis*, regnant 1703-1736), was the son of the Sultan Mehmed IV, being born in Dobruja at Dobrich, and is known especially for his good relations with France and for the commencement of Lâle Devri during his reign. For a detailed sketch of the Ottoman Empire during the early modern age as well as the XIXth century see Stoica Lascu, 'Modernizarea Turciei și interferența relațiilor otomano-turco-europene în viziunea profesorului Halil Inalcik. Cu prilejul împlinirii a 90 de ani [The Modernization of Turkey and Ottoman-Turkish-European Interferences in the Vision of Professor Halil Inalcik. On the Occasion of His 90th Anniversary]', in *Revista Română de Studii Eurasiatice* III 1-2 (2007): 311-320.

⁴ For an interesting and thorough analysis of belligerence versus pacifism regarding Charles XII's status as a warrior king see Ernst L. Moerck, 'From War-Hero to Villain: Reversal of the Symbolic Value of War and a Warrior King,' *Journal of Peace Research* 35, 4 (July 1998): 453-469.

⁵ For more on this interesting "long stay" and especially for his view on the nearby Moldova and Wallachia see Silviu Miloiu, Oana Lăcuțeanu, Elena Dragomir, *O concepție Românească*

different cultures (the one of Early Modern Northern Europe and an Oriental civilization on the other hand), in an episode which is maybe comparable to the history of the Byzantine imperial guards, which were made up of Varangians/Vikings (*Væringjar*; Greek: Βάρανγοι, Βαρτάρου) during the IX-X centuries.

King Charles XII's fame also derives from the fact that he was the last absolute king of Sweden and that he participated in the Great Northern War.⁶ This very war will be the cause of Charles XII's retreat in the Ottoman Empire.

As it is well known, the conflict began in 1700 when King Charles XII was opposed to Czar Peter the Great of Russia,⁷ Frederick IV of Denmark and Augustus II of Saxony. While Denmark and Saxony were not a big concern for Sweden, this was not whatsoever the case of Peter the Great's Russia.⁸ During these restless times, Britain⁹ and the Netherlands

a Nordului [A Romanian Conception of the North], vol. I (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2009), 12-14. Also see: Amira Alessandro, *Storia del soggiorno di Carol XII in Turchia* [History of the stay of Charles XII in Turkey] (București: Nicolae Iorga Press, 1905); Veniamin Ciobanu, *Charles XII et les Roumains – Carol al XII-lea și Români* (București: Domino, 1999); Veniamin Ciobanu, *Les pays Roumains au seuil du 18e siècle. Charles XII et les Roumains* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984); Federico-Ernst von Fabricé, *Anecdotes du Séjour du Roi Charles XII de Suède a Bender* (Hamburg : 1760) ; G. L. Ionescu-Gion, *Călătoria lui Carol al XII-lea prin Țara Românească* [Charles' XII Travel through Wallachia] (București: 1890); Nicolae Iorga, 'Charles XII a Bender' *Revue Historique du Sud-Est Européen* 4-6 (April-June 1926); Nicolae Iorga, 'Karl XII och Romänien' *Svenska Danngbladet* (12 December 1929); Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Fragments tires de Chroniques Moldaves et Valaques pour servir a l'histoire de Pierre le Grand, Charles XII, Stanislas Leszczyński, Démettre Cantemir et Constantin Brancovan* (Iași : 1845) ; V. Mîhordea, *Carol XII la Tighina* [Charles XII in Tighina] (Bucharest : 1943).

These valuable bibliographic indications are found in Silviu Miloiu, *O concepție Românească a Nordului* [A Romanian Conception of the North] vol. II *Repertoriu de documente și trimiteri bibliografice* [Vol. II Repertoire of Documents and Bibliographic References] (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2009), 75, 77-81.

⁶ Costel Coroban, 'Sweden and the Jacobite Movement (1715-1718),' *Revista Română de Studii Baltice și Nordice* 2, 2 (2010a): 132.

The subject also enjoyed resonance in the official *London Gazette*, see: The London Gazette, no. 4961, 2 February 1711, p. 1; no. 4989, 8 April 1712, p. 1; no. 4998, 29 April 1712, p. 1; no. 5094, 10 February 1712, p. 2; no. 5105, 21 March 1712, p. 1; no. 5120, 12 May 1713, p. 4; no. 5122, 19 May 1713, p. 5; no. 5272, 26 October 1714, p. 2; no. 5277, 13 November 1714, p. 1; no. 5330, 17 May 1715, p. 1.

⁷ Petru I the Great (Pyotr Alexeyevich Romanov, regnant 1682-1725), the architect of the Russian Empire.

⁸ Coroban, 2010a, 133.

⁹ The Kingdoms of England and Scotland were united into the United Kingdom of Great Britain following the Treaty of Union of 22 July 1706, which entered into effect on 1 May

would confront France and Spain in the Wars of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the larger part of Europe thus becoming engulfed in wars.¹⁰ Peter the Great of Russia, Frederik IV of Denmark and Norway, and August the Strong of Saxony and Poland-Lithuania saw the expansion of the Swedes as a threat to their own position in the Baltic area and thus formed the Northern Alliance, hoping to at least maintain the status quo. This is the basis of the future Swedish-Hanoverian hostility. As the allies would soon find out, 'pacifying' Sweden would be difficult to obtain, as Charles XII swiftly acted against them. First the King of Sweden invaded Denmark, forcing his cousin, Frederik IV, to settle for peace as soon as 1700 (the Peace of Travendal), while in the same year defeating a Russian army three times more numerous at Narva.

Then, moving against Saxony and Poland-Lithuania, he defeated the armies of August the Strong at the Battle of Kliszów (1702), and again at the Battle of Fraustadt (1706) followed by the Treaty of Altranstädt (1707, guaranteed by the British and the Dutch¹¹), finally installing Stanisław Leszczyński as king of Poland-Lithuania and thus obtaining a favourable peace.

The Defeat at Poltava and the Retreat to the Ottoman Empire

'For it is customary with the Turks not only to defray the expenses of ambassadors to their place of residence, but plentifully to supply, during the time of their sojourn, the needs of the Princes who take refuge among them'
*Voltaire**

1707. See Bob Harris, 'The Anglo Scottish Treaty of Union, 1707 in 2007: Defending the Revolution, Defeating the Jacobites,' *Journal of British Studies* 49, 1 (Jan. 2010): 28-46.

¹⁰ Irene Scobbie, *Historical Dictionary of Sweden* (Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2006), 105

¹¹ Henry L. Snyder, 'The Formulation of Foreign and Domestic Policy in the Reign of Queen Anne: Memoranda by Lord Chancellor Cowper of Conversations with Lord Treasurer Godolphin' *The Historica Journal* 11, 1 (1968): 155

* Marie Arouet Voltaire, *History of Charles Twelfth. Introductory Note by Rt. Hon. John Burns, M. P.* (London, New York: J.M. Dent & Sons, Dutton, 1912), 183 (this history was written by Voltaire during 1727 and 1728).

'When will you help my lion devour
this Czar?' *Mâh-Pâre Emetullah Râbi'a*
*Gül-Nûş Valide Sultan***

The greatest trial was the well-known battle of Poltava of 27 June 1709,¹² when the 30,000 Swedes of Charles XII were defeated¹³ by the almost double in size army of Peter the Great¹⁴. Several thousands prisoners were then taken by the Russians, while Charles XII and his ally¹⁵, Mazepa¹⁶, managed to save themselves by passing the borders into the Ottoman Empire and arriving in Bender (Tighina) together with approximately 1,500 troops.¹⁷

Certain difficulties were encountered at the crossing of the Bug River, and the royal convoy had to resort to buying extraordinarily expensive, but nonetheless extremely necessary supplies from the Ochakiv Pasha. The boats they received from the local authorities were so small that the crossing of the Bug took 3 days. This fact allowed the avant-garde of the Russian cavalry to reach the Swedes from behind, many of the falling prisoners or drowning in the struggle.¹⁸

Charles XII reached Bender on the 1 August 1709, when he was received with royal honours by his friend, the seraskier (general) Yusuf Pasha. Initially the Swedes were offered tents to live in, as it was the custom for the military camps of the time. Cannon volleys were shot in honour of the new guests and Yusuf Pasha warmly welcomed them in the name of Sultan Ahmed III, even offering Charles XII the keys of the city

** The mother of Sultan Ahmed III, apud Voltaire, 190.

¹² All dates are in the Old Style, unless specified otherwise. For the New Style 11 calendar days must be added. Thus 27 June 1709 becomes 8 July 1709.

¹³ The second greatest defeat of Sweden would taken place at Perevolotchina, where the rest of the Swedish land army, lead by general Löwenhaupt, has been cleared, Ciobanu, 1999, 70; Voltaire, 165.

¹⁴ Andrina Stiles, *Suedia și Zona Baltică 1523-1731* [Sweden and the Baltic Area 1523-1731] (București: Editura ALL Educational, 2001), 128.

¹⁵ Hurdubețiu, 153.

¹⁶ Ivan Stepanovych Mazepa (or Mazeppa, b. 1639 – d. 1709) was the Hetman of Ukraine (of the Cossacks) from 1687 to 1708. He played an important role during the Battle of Poltava. Generally, his fame is negative in Russian language historiography, because he was an enemy of Peter the Great and an ally of Charles XII. More so, the Russian Orthodox Church has maintained an anathema over his name even to the present days. See M. Hrushevsky, *Illustrated History of Ukraine* (Donetsk: BAO Press, 2003), 382.

¹⁷ In the Romanian lands Peter the Great's victory was welcomed, in the hope that this Christian Orthodox leader would take some actions for improving the fate of all Orthodox peoples under the Ottoman Empire, Hurdubețiu, 153; Ciobanu, 1999, 80.

¹⁸ Oscar Brownig, *Charles XII of Sweden* (London: Hurst and Blackett Limited, 1899), 229-230.

and inviting him to live within the city walls. Although the King of Sweden initially refused, preferring the lifestyle of the Swedish military camp at Varnitza (a small establishment near Bender), he trusted Yusuf Pasha and his good intentions and eventually accepted. He was also considering that accepting the invitation would make Yusuf Pasha's task of protecting him from the Russians a lot easier.

Initially it was thought that his stay would only last for a short while, and that Charles XII would seek to return to Pomerania or Sweden as soon as possible, but there were different causes which contributed to the prolonging of this famous 'visit'. First of all, Charles XII's foot was wounded during the battle of Poltava, but the most important factor was his ambition of halting the expansion of Peter the Great of Russia¹⁹ by keeping Poland allied to him and eventually also attracting the Ottoman Empire in this alliance, since communicating with the Sultan was considerably easier from within his Empire. Still, the avant-garde of Charles XII's small host was exploring the possibility of eventually joining the army of the allied general Krassow in Poland. Such a reconnaissance expedition was undertaken by a troop of Cossack and Zaporozhians under general Gyllenkrook in September 1709, but his unfavourable report was confirmed by himself being captured in Chernivtsi by the Russians, with the help of the Wallachian Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu²⁰.

Despite these facts, if King Charles XII really wanted to return to his territories it is hard to believe that he would have been stopped. The ongoing Spanish War of Succession²¹ was coming to an end, which meant that the attention of the other European Powers would again turn towards the East, and consequently to limiting Peter the Great's ascension. Almost all the Great Powers offered to help Charles XII when receiving news of his retreat to the Ottoman Empire: France offered to send a ship to the Black

¹⁹ The only thing upon which these rivals agreed upon was their enmity towards the Hanoverian succession to the British thrones in 1714. See Costel Coroban, *Politică și alegeri în Anglia de la Glorioasa Revoluție la Marea Reformă 1688-1746* [Politics and Elections in England from the Glorious Revolution to the Great Reform 1688-1746] (Iași: Editura Pim, 2010b), 62.

²⁰ See Daniel Flaut, *The international political system of the Romanian Countries (1672-1699)* (Constanța: Ovidius University Press, 2005), and Iolanda Țighiliiu, "Domeniul lui Constantin Brâncoveanu [Constantin Brâncoveanu's Domain]," in *Constantin Brâncoveanu*, ed. Paul Cenovodeanu, Florin Constantiniu (București: Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1989), 74-94; Bogdan Mihail, 'Un episod al războiului dintre Liga Sfântă și Imperiul otoman: Bătălia pentru Belgrad (1687-1690) [An Episode of the War between the Holy League and the Ottoman Empire: the Battle for Belgrade (1687-1690)],' *Revista Română de Studii Eurasiatice* III,1-2 (2007), 81-91; *Documente privind istoria românilor* [Documents Regarding Romanian History], Hurmuzaki Collection XVI (București: 1912), 159-216.

²¹ This opposed Great Britain and Holland versus France and Spain.

Sea in order to bring him home, while the Dutch came with a similar offer; Austria offered him free pass through Hungary and the Holy Roman Empire, but Charles XII refused all these offers, also maybe in the desire of avoiding a shameful appearance in his capital, after having achieved so many victories in the past.

Regarding the Ottoman Empire, Charles XII instructed his messenger, Neugebauer²², to petition the Sultan for an escort to Poland, and also to gather information whether the Ottomans would join Sweden in a commercial agreement – which was actually an alliance proposal. The received answer was only partially favourable, and completely evasive in the issue of Charles XII's plea for an escort. But the King of Sweden found the answer to his liking, as he planned to stay longer, in order to better advocate his case against Peter the Great to the Sultan.²³

Returning to the Swedish camp at Tighina, the Ottomans' hospitality was really outstanding. The Treasury subsidized King Charles XII with 45 pounds per day, besides the supplies required by his 'court', which although seemingly very simple, had the same guards and servants as any court of the time. Also, there was a time of prayer every day of the week, and three masses were held on Sunday, each one accompanied by drums and trumpets.

The number of the King's companions, including generals, officers, bodyguards, priests and other members of the suite, was 400 initially, increasing to approximately 1,000 in the end. While during the beginning most of them lived in military tents, with the winter's arrival they had to build proper houses in order to be better protected from the cold.

A local problem was the probability that the Dniester might flood the camp during the winter (with the sudden melting of the snow), but Charles XII, in his usual stubbornness refused to move the camp further away from the river. It seemed that the Dniester was also impressed by the Swedish King, as no floods were reported during 1709 (sic!). In the same legendary logic, the rumours were that a deer herd was constantly following the King's 'court', which consequently during their stay in the Ottoman Empire did not miss game meat.²⁴

It is doubtless that these kinds of stories are fictional, but their appearance would not have occurred provided the King had not been as popular among the locals as he was. It can even be said that the Turks, Tatars and other inhabitants of those time's Tighina were fascinated with

²² Ciobanu, 1999, 79.

²³ Brownig, 235.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 232.

him.²⁵ This fascination is mostly the result of the heroic stories about his deeds, but was also fuelled by the King's exceptional personality, who in comparison to other European royalty of those times, felt more at ease on the battlefield and not in the company of ladies, at the same time despising wealth and grandiosity. Even more, his refusal to serve wine and the regularity and humbleness of his prayers made him seem like a Muslim.²⁶ A certain episode is very well known, when a Turk allegedly tapped his shoulder and assured him that had Allah provided the Turks with a Sultan like him, they would have conquered the whole world.²⁷

In the meanwhile, at the level of international relations, new alliances were forged in Charles XII's detriment (consisting of his older enemies: Prussia, Russia and the dethroned Augustus II of Poland, who was now ruling in Saxony). The immediate effect of this alliance was the invasion of Poland (although this implied the breach of the Treaty of Altranstädt²⁸), and also the invasion of Livonia and Volhynia by Russia, and of Scania by Denmark. This state of affairs was dangerous for Sweden, which also suffered from its King's absence.

Back in Charles XII's camp at Tighina, everyday life quickly became one of military routine and strictness, after the first few moments of enthusiasm and uniqueness. Charles XII began every day by reading a chapter from the Bible, afterwards attending morning prayers. Then followed different negotiations and business, and lunch were always frugal. Afternoon was reserved to military drill and horse riding, and many times it happened that he had to change his horse.²⁹ Upon his return, he would assist evening prayers, after which sometimes he would even fall asleep with his clothes still on.³⁰

His rare moments of free time were dedicated to analyzing military tactics and strategies (it is said that he wrote two volumes of notes during his stay in the Ottoman Empire) and to playing chess, together with general Poniatowski³¹ or with his minister, Grothusen³². Charles XII also

²⁵ Voltaire, 192.

²⁶ Brownig, 232.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ciobanu, 1999, 73.

²⁹ Voltaire, 190.

³⁰ Brownig, 239.

³¹ Count Stanisław (or Stanislas) Poniatowski (1676-1762), was a noble of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and general of the Swedish army.

³² Christian Albert Grothusen, Swedish noble and minister of Charles XII, (Voltaire, 191). Interestingly, in chess there is a famous strategy problem called 'Charles XII at Bender' which displays a complicated arrangement of the pieces during a fictional chess game played in the Swedish camp at Varnitsa (a village near Tighina, to not be confounded with

appreciated Racine's or Corneille's tragedies, Mithridates being his favourite piece, because he saw in it a reflection of his own fate,³³ but he also enjoyed the chivalric legends told by his servant, Hultmann. In general the King maintained a good mood towards his soldiers and subjects while staying at Bender (appreciating their humour and discussing their complaints thoroughly). Sometimes he even joked about his court, as was the case of those who were too well dressed, according to his Protestant religious viewpoint. Just like his archenemy, Peter the Great, he would not participate in the festivities that were organized in the camp, or would leave immediately after their opening.³⁴

Regarding the communication with Sweden (which was now governed by the Senate - a council of the most prominent nobles), initially there was no regular post in those parts, but starting with 1710 a post system linked to the Austrian one through Hungary was created. Despite this fact, Charles XII sought to discourage any communication with Sweden, sending letters there monthly or even rarer. More so, sometimes he would read the correspondence received or sent by his soldiers.

A controversial aspect was the King's finances during the period of his retreat in the Ottoman Empire, because it is apparent that he had enough money to finance diplomatic and military endeavours, but his source is rather unknown, as his treasury was captured after the defeat he had suffered at Poltava. Expenses such as sending diplomatic gifts to the Crimean Khan Devlet II Giray³⁵, to the Pasha of Ochakiv or to the seraskiers of Bender are somehow inexplicable. One possible source could be the fortune of his ally, Mazepa, a quarter of which he inherited after his death on 2 October 1709 at Bender, and the daily allocation provided by the Sultan. The Sultan also helped him in borrowing large sums of money, and some sources say that during 1709-1710 he was funded by France³⁶, which

Varnitsa in the Prahova County or Varnitsa in the Arad County). For more details see: <http://www.chessproblem.net/viewtopic.php?f=44&t=308>.

³³ The title refers to Mithridates VI Eupator, the ancient King of Pontus (120-63 a.Chr.) and archenemy of the Roman Empire.

³⁴ Brownig, 240.

³⁵ Devlet II Giray (1648-1718) was the Khan of Crimea between 1699-1702 and 1709-1713 (being succeeded after 1713 by Qaplan I Giray, who was at his second reign, which would last until 1715). The Crimean Khans allegedly were direct descendants of Genghis Khan. See www.hansaray.org. It seems that Devlet II Giray has been toppled on the official reason of mistreating Charles XII of Sweden, but considering that they shared the same interests against Russia and were allies, such an accusation seems to have been simply forged in order to cover the usual political-economic reasons for the replacing of the Crimean Khans by the Sultan.

³⁶ Brownig, 241.

had the habit of sponsoring absolutist regimes (after all, the Sun King also gave money to the 'absolutist' King James II of England, who was dethroned following the Glorious Revolution of 1688³⁷), plus that France was in very good relations with Sultan Ahmed III of the Ottoman Empire. It is further suspected that the money received from France actually remained in Constantinople, where they were used in earning the benevolence of the Ottoman statesmen, thus not actually reaching Tighina.³⁸

The main secretaries of Charles XII during his stay in the Ottoman Empire were chancellor Müllern and Karsten Feif³⁹, the later being the one in charge with home affairs. Charles XII trusted his chess partner the most, minister (Christian Albert) Grothusen, but also Stanislaw Poniatowski⁴⁰, the commander of his personal guard, and baron Fabricius von Holstein-Gotorp⁴¹, who was sent to him by his 'grand vizier' in Sweden, Baron von Görz⁴², and who would remain together with the King until 1714, proving to be a hard-working and loyal man.

If initially, as we have seen, Neugebauer's negotiations with the Porte remained unfruitful, Charles XII decided to send Stanislaw

³⁷ Coroban, 2010b, 48, 51, 61.

³⁸ Brownig, 241.

³⁹ "Kasten Feif was the son of Peter Feif and grandson of the Scot, James Fife who had originally migrated to Sweden from Scotland. Kasten was born to Peter and his wife Maria Hoff in Stockholm in September 1662. Apparently in 1670 Kasten was sent to Finland as a hat-maker, but his master's business failed, and Kasten returned to Sweden. Through his knowledge of the Finnish language he obtained work in royal service. Twenty years later he joined the chancellery and from then on was steadily promoted in the civil service. By 1697 he was registrar and in 1704 a senior secretary. His ennoblement followed in 1705. Two years later he transferred to the Finnish chancellery. He apparently became one of King Karl XII's 'right hand men' particularly whilst the king was away on campaigns. The great Northern War saw him take on military duties as 'Ombudsrad' in 'Krigs Expedition'. Kasten allegedly issued the passport for 'Peter Frisk' (Karl XII's pseudonym) in 1714... Feif had become a Swedish baron in 1715 and married Anna Kristina Barckhusen (1674-1724). Kasten died on 17 March 1739." Taken from University of St. Andrews Institute of Scottish Historical Research, *The Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern European Biographical Database* (SSNE), Record ID: 6281, <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne/index.php>, accessed 4 November 2010.

⁴⁰ See note 29.

⁴¹ Fabricius Ernst Friedrich von Holstein-Gottorp, for the letters exchanged with Charles XII or with the minister Görtz see *The Genuine Letters of Baron Fabricius, Envoy from his Serene Highness the Duke Administrator of Holstein to Charles XII of Sweden...* (London: Printed for T. Beckett and P. A. Dehondt, at Tully's Head, in the Strand, MDCCLXI). This volume was initially published in Hamburg in 1760, and then translated into English in the version indicated here.

⁴² Georg Heinrich von Görtz (1688-1719), diplomat and statesman.

Poniatowski in a similar mission, namely of turning the Ottoman Empire against Russia using the time's means (bribery and palace intrigues), in which general Poniatowski would prove to be efficient. He even presented the Sultan with a portrait of the Czar painted in Amsterdam with the legend 'Petru Primus Russo-Graecorum monarcha.'⁴³ There were also rumours in Constantinople that the Grand Vizier Çorlulu Ali Pasha⁴⁴ (who was in charge of the external policy) had received gifts from P. A. Tolstoi, the ambassador of Peter the Great, in order to maintain his country neutral to Russia's expansion. Sultan Ahmed III either refused to believe these rumours or he preferred to further observe the evolution of the Great Northern War, as he only deposed Ali Pasha after receiving the news of the Swedish general Magnus Stenbock against the Danes⁴⁵ - which had invaded Scania⁴⁶ - at Helsingborg (27 February 1710).⁴⁷

It was thought that the new Grand Vizier, Numan Köprülü Paşa, would be more favourable to Sweden's interests, but he proved to be a hesitant person, probably leading parallel negotiations with Poniatowski and receiving his gifts as well as also discussing with the Russian envoy. At least he seems to have realized the fact that Russia's expansion could not bring anything good for the Ottoman Empire, and some preparations started to be made for an eventual re-conquest of the Azov. In his turn, he was replaced by Mohammed Baltacı (his name also appears in many more versions, such as Baltadji, Baltadgi or Baltaji, and his origins were Italian), a vizier who really acted in Sweden's favour. Even more, Swedish intrigues were augmented by the Crimean Khan, which after all was at the Northern border of the empire and felt first the effects of the Russian expansion. In 1710 when Peter the Great addressed an ultimatum to the Sultan asking him to hand over Charles XII, according to the existent treaties between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, his messengers were arrested and locked up. Then, on 30 November 1710, in a solemn assembly of the Divan, the declaration of war on Russia was decided, much to Poniatowski's and Charles XII's satisfaction. According to the Ottoman customs of those times,⁴⁸ the Russian Ambassador Tolstoi was rendered half naked and exposed to the public of Constantinople on a really unimposing horse, after which he was locked up in the (Yedikule Hisarı) Seven Towers fortress.⁴⁹

⁴³ Hurdubețiu, 155.

⁴⁴ Ciobanu 1999, 77.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁴⁶ Hurdubețiu, 154.

⁴⁷ Brownig, 248.

⁴⁸ Voltaire, 212.

⁴⁹ Brownig, 249.

Encouraged by these circumstances, Charles XII wrote to his sister Ulrika that he trusted the future and that after all Sweden's situation would improve. More so, he even threatened the Austrian Emperor in a letter that, leading a Turkish host, he would occupy his country and the rest of Germany.⁵⁰ Although it is true that his sojourn to Bender was beneficial in turning the Ottoman Empire against Russia, many historians agree that had he returned to Sweden as soon as possible he would have been of better use to his country, but as we have seen, the young King's character and the factors earlier discussed, caused him to take a different decision.⁵¹

Returning to the war that just broke out between the Ottoman and the Russian Empire, it is interesting to notice that the Sultan, besides asking the Russians in an ultimatum to return Azov, Poland and the Cossack lands to him, he also added the destruction of Sankt Petersburg as a condition, and even the returning to Sweden of the territories taken by Peter the Great, of the prisoners and loot captured. The Czar of course refused such demands and consequently the war commenced in February 1711 by the invasion of Poland. On 28 January Charles XII had emitted a declaration to the Polish people denouncing the violation of the Altranstädt Treaty by the current King, Augustus II the Strong, and showing the Polish people that Augustus sold himself to the Czar, and would have to repay him by ceding a part of Poland:

'With great labour and danger, and with great sacrifice of Swedish blood, we have restored the noble Polish nation to freedom, we cannot without sorrow see them groan once more under the lawless rule of King Augustus. Our feelings are what they always have been, and we have spared no expense or labour to restore freedom to your country and the throne to your legitimate King. For that reason we have concluded an alliance with the Ottoman Porte and the great Khan of Tartary, for the sake of Polish freedom. For this purpose we send a numerous army, under our crown General Potocki, into your country, and we are intending soon to follow ourselves with a more powerful host. Every Pole who has a heart for the welfare of his fatherland, his aged parents, his wife and his children, every Pole in whom the former feeling of Polish self-respect has not been extinguished by the yoke of slavery, and every Pole

⁵⁰ Apud Hurdubețiu, 155.

⁵¹ Brownig, 250.

who desires to see the end of his country's misery, all these will hasten to range themselves under our banner.'⁵²

But this manifesto was not successful, and the military expedition that followed did not receive the sympathy of the local Polish population. In the meanwhile, Peter the Great's army was joined by the army of the Moldavian Prince⁵³ Dimitrie Cantemir⁵⁴, but together they would suffer a defeat at Stănilești on the Pruth river (18-22 July 1711)⁵⁵, on which the Czar commented that it was just like Charles XII's defeat at Poltava. The latter had been invited by the Grand Vizier to join the battle, but he refused, thinking that it would not be appropriate for a King to join the suite of a minister. Still, when he received the news of the Turkish-Tatar victory, he visited the camp of Grand Vizier Mohammed Baltacı and Khan Devlet II Giray and congratulated them for the great host that they assembled, also noticing in irony that it is a pity that great army would not actually get to fight.⁵⁶ He was referring to the Treaty of Huși that had been agreed upon by the Ottoman Empire and the Russians on 21 July 1711.⁵⁷ Although the Ottoman Empire obtained the Azov, the demolition of the Tagarnog fortress and a few other ones, besides the halt of Peter the Great's influence over the internal affairs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,⁵⁸ for Charles XII's Sweden this treaty⁵⁹ meant losing their possible southern ally.⁶⁰

Khan Devlet II Giray agreed with Charles XII, himself confessing that Peter the Great had been totally surrounded and could have easily been captured. On the other side, the news of the peace was enthusiastically received in Constantinople. To Charles XII's unrest, the Treaty of Huși also stipulated that both Augustus II the Strong of Poland and Peter the Great agreed to let him pass freely to Sweden, with an escort of 6,000 cavalry supplied by the Grand Vizier Baltacı, and it is not surprising that the King of Sweden started feeling slightly unwanted. He

⁵² Brownig, 251-252.

⁵³ Voltaire, 216.

⁵⁴ They had sealed the Treaty of Lutsk, on 13 April 1711. Peter the Great styled himself the defender of Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians, Hurdubețiu, 155.

⁵⁵ Stiles, 131.

⁵⁶ Hurdubețiu, 156.

⁵⁷ The ratification of this treaty only took 10-12 hours, a unique case in the history of diplomacy, Ciobanu, 1999, 78.

⁵⁸ Peter the Great would not respect these conditions after escaping the danger of being captured by the encirclement of Grand Vizier Mohammed Baltacı.

⁵⁹ Voltaire, 224.

⁶⁰ Brownig, 252-254.

did not directly refuse this warranty, but he asked for another 30,000 infantry troops and a large sum of money as a loan.⁶¹

Peter the Great's breach of the Treaty of Huşi made Sultan Ahmed III remove Mohammed Baltacı from the office of Grand Vizier, to which Yusuf Pasha⁶², a statesman favourable to Charles XII, was appointed. When the situation started looking like there would be a new conflict between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires, a new treaty was signed, to the dismay of Charles XII of Sweden, who started thinking it might be the time for returning to Sweden. But now Augustus II the Strong of Poland and Peter the Great denied him safe passage, while the Ottomans were also not eager to meet his increasing demands (and escort of 6,000 sipahis and 30,000 Tatars, plus a loan). Thus, King Charles XII of Sweden had to remain for another two years in the Ottoman Empire.⁶³ Initially he was 'invited' to Demotika⁶⁴ (or Demotiki⁶⁵) (12 February 1713, near Adrianople, today Edirne), from where he would depart on 20 September 1714, passing to the Holy Roman Empire through Wallachia,⁶⁶ and arriving back to Sweden, where in honour of his admiration for the Ottoman navy he would build the Jarramas (Yaramaz) and Jilderim (İldîrîm) ships.⁶⁷

Political Reactions

'You may be sure that her Majesty is not willing to engage in another Warr, or draw herself into the Quarrells of the North' *Viscount Bolingbroke*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 255-256.

⁶² Gürcü Ağa Yusuf Pasha, Grand Vizier between 1711-1712.

⁶³ Brownig, 258-260.

⁶⁴ Voltaire, 278; *The London Gazette* no. 5183 (19 December 1713), p. 1; no. 5155 (12 September 1713), p. 1.

⁶⁵ Stiles, 132.

⁶⁶ *The London Gazette* no. 5277 (13 November 1714): 1, 'Vienna, Nov. 7. N. S. Letters from Piresti in Wallachia of the 21st past relate, that the King of Sweden was arrived there, having avoided passing through the Capital Town of that Province; and that Genera Sparre with his Troops from Bender was expected in 4 or 5 Days... 'tis reckoned he will enter Transylvania about the middle of this Month These letters confirm, that before his Swedish Majesty's departure from Demotica... the Porte having refused him the Loan he asked, he would not accept any present in Money... [his generals - ed.] being informed that their meeting him in Transylvania or Hungary would be very uncertain, ... to set out yesterday for Prague, and if he does not come that way, to go on to Pomerania...'

⁶⁷ Hurdubeşiu, 156-157.

In 1709 Britain was ruled by Queen Anne Stuart (1702-1714) and was still heavily involved in the Wars of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), during which the Duke of Marlborough would earn his glory. It was during these times and those of William of Orange (1688-1702) that some seeds of conflict were planted between England and Sweden, a fact which could have only resulted in a negative image of Charles XII in the eyes of the British government.

Still, before the Battle of Poltava, Queen Anne's main minister, Lord Godolphin, had high hopes of convincing Charles XII to join the British against the French in the ongoing war. This was largely an unfeasible project because it would have firstly required a state of peace between Sweden, on one side, and Russia and Denmark, on the other side. Then, had Sweden joined Britain against France, it is highly possible that Russia would have tried to balance the scales by moving against Sweden.⁶⁸

It is interesting to notice that in a memorandum of a conversation of Lord Chancellor Cowper with Lord Godolphin, dated 1 September 1707, it is appreciated that 'Sweden agreed w[i]th Emp[ero]r-a zealous Protestant-to enter into nearer measures w[i]th him, if Denmark and Czar not offended. To be made easy in the subsisting his Troops.'⁶⁹ Thus, Charles XII is seen as 'a zealous Protestant' thanks to his initiative of negotiating with the Emperor on behalf of the Silesian Protestants.⁷⁰

In spite of being officially allied (but not required to effectively lend each other military help in offensive actions⁷¹) with Sweden, the British did not appreciate the fact that the Swedish navy was controlling the Baltic Sea, as this affected its own trade⁷² with Russia, Denmark and Norway, Finland

⁶⁸ Snyder, 156.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁷⁰ See *The London Gazette* no. 5351 (30 July 1715): 1.

⁷¹ Snyder, 156.

⁷² During 1697 to 1714 the annual value of the British imports from Sweden (including Finland) varied from 143,000 l (pounds) to 246,000 l, averaging to 182,000 l, while exports were much lower, varying between 70,000 l in one year and as low as 22,000 l in another. The trade with Denmark and Norway averaged to 76,000 l for imports and 43,000 l for exports. Trade with Russia varied even more, with a mean value of 124,000 l for imports, and a close average value for exports: 107,000 l. During the last three years of the period considered trade to Archangel had to be diverted to St. Petersburg. For the Baltic countries area, the Eastland Company imported on average 146,000 l every year, and exported 137,000 l. The main British exports were woollen cloth and fabrics, hardware, metals (iron, lead, tin), tobacco, sugar, rice and other produce from the colonies in America. Source: J. F. Chance, 'England and Sweden in the time of William III and Anne' *The English Historical Review* (from now on *EHR*), Vol. 16, No. 64 (October 1901): 677.

See John J. Murray, 'Robert Jackson's Mission to Sweden (1709-1717),' *The Journal of Modern History* 21, 1 (Mar. 1949), 4.

and Poland-Lithuania. Not only that more was imported from Sweden than it was exported to, but the Swedes also insisted that their ships were to be used, while British merchants complained that they were treated very harsh by the Swedish burghers, unlike the French or the Dutch traders.⁷³ It is important to note that as much as $\frac{3}{4}$ of Britain's woollen manufactures were exported to Russia and the Eastland Company,⁷⁴ and all this trade passed through the Baltic Sea. The Swedish fleet also kept under blockade the ports that the Russians had taken from them with their land armies.⁷⁵

A short and clear example of English enmity against Sweden is the negative opinion⁷⁶ of Bolingbroke (St. John, Queen Anne's Secretary of State) on Sweden and Charles XII, as he complains about the "unaccountable . . . and intolerable" Swedish attacks upon the English navy. Continuing to express his total discontent for Charles XII's warlike policy and ambitions, and threatening the feeble Swedish navy with the might of the British fleet he shows that Sweden "is reduced to the last extremities, oppressed by taxes,⁷⁷ starved by the decay of trade, and dispeopled, as well by the frequent draughts of recruits, as by the pestilence."⁷⁸

On the Swedish side, since Charles had to stay in the Ottoman Empire, someone else ruled Sweden for him, and that person was Georg Heinrich von Görtz (1688-1719), diplomat and statesman.⁷⁹ He was one of the few who, despite widespread popular discontent, believed that Sweden's power had not been depleted, and hence made a perfect prime minister *avant la lettre* for the bold and adventurous king.⁸⁰ To the British it seemed that all he did was ruin Sweden by continuing Charles XII's military ambitions even though he was away at Bender. Görtz attracted the enmity of both the commercial bourgeoisie and the nobles because of the following factors: the uproar caused by his announced four years delay in

⁷³ Chance 1901, 678-684

⁷⁴ Chance, 1901, 678. The Eastland Company was the British competitor of the Hanseatic League, trading with the Baltic states and Scandinavia. Also see Preben Torntoft, 'William III and Denmark-Norway' *EHR* 81, 318 (January 1966): 1-25; and J. F. Chance, William Duncombe, 'William Duncombe's «Summary Report» of his Mission to Sweden, 1689-92' *EHR* 39, 156 (October 1924): 571-587.

⁷⁵ Chance, 1901, 697.

⁷⁶ Also see The London Gazette no. 5478 of Saturday, October 20, 1716.

⁷⁷ Also see The London Gazette no. 5508 (29 January 1717).

⁷⁸ *Apud* Howard D. Weinbrot, 'Johnson, Jacobitism and Swedish Charles: "The Vanity of Human Wishes" and Scholarly Method' *English Literary History*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Winter 1997), 950.

⁷⁹ The British envoy in Sweden during 1709-1717 was Robert Jackson, see Murray.

⁸⁰ It is no wonder that upon Charles' return to Swedish territories, Görtz quickly greeted the King and even obtained greater power, being made responsible only to His Majesty.

paying the merchants' loans,⁸¹ his unexpected issuing together with Casten Feif⁸² of copper coins in April 1716 and the fact that he was a stranger especially attracted the hostility of the prospective heirs⁸³ and their entourage.⁸⁴

Charles XII's minister to London was Count Gyllenborg, who after the defeat at Poltava hastily complained about the now miserable situation of his country and asked for Britain and Holland not to abandon Sweden. There were even discussions for a treaty of defensive alliance.⁸⁵ But this does not mean that 'Charles at Bender was not less confident, and little less feared, than Charles at Warsaw or in Saxony.'⁸⁶ It was feared that after his first failed attempt of passing through Poland, he would try again this time with an impressive army of Turks and Tatars by his side, and nobody would be able to stop him.

For example, Sir Robert Sutton, the British ambassador to Constantinople, reported that Swedes, Cossacks, Wallachs, Poles, 10,000 Turks and a greater host of Tatars could follow Charles XII in Poland. Later letters, from 25 March/4 April 1711, further increased the size of Charles XII's imaginary army by 80,000 janissaries and sipahis and another 40,000 Tatars. Similarly, in Poniatowski's correspondence the number of 80,000 troops was advanced.⁸⁷ Sir Robert Sutton and the Dutch ambassador, Count Colyer, worked against Charles XII's envoy and always sought to prevent a war from starting between the Ottomans and the Russians. But the French ambassador, Des Alleurs, supported Charles XII's bellicose efforts.

⁸¹ Actually being forceful loans, these de facto extortions were called in Swedish by the very gentle names of "förskottar till kronan" (1710 and 1713), "förskottar till Pommerska Arméen" (1716), "förskottar till flottans utrusting"(1716) - i.e. loan (Germ. Vorschuss) to the Crown, loan for the purpose of paying the armies in Pomerania, loan for the fitting out of a fleet, etc. See Jonas Berg, Bo Lagercrantz, *Scots in Sweden* (Stockholm: Nordiska Museet, 1962), 8.

⁸² Although Casten Feif was born in Sweden, it should be noted that Scottish warriors did not go to Sweden to serve under Charles XII out of special devotion to the Jacobite cause. A romantic view is also that they were "fascinated by the commanding personality of one of the most extraordinary monarchs the world has ever seen", as it is said by George A. Sinclair, 'The Scottish Officers of Charles XII' *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. 21, No. 83 (April 1924), 178.

⁸³ Of which Ulrika Eleonora, the sister of Charles XII named after their mother, would succeed him.

⁸⁴ Chance, 1903, 85-86.

⁸⁵ Chance, 1901, 690-691.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 691.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

As we have seen in the last sub-chapter, many times were the Ottomans ready to attack Russia, but most of the time they either stopped because the Grand Vizier had been changed, or they quickly sued for peace after insignificant victories. As the historian J. F. Chance brilliantly puts it, 'the hostilities began and ceased, reopened and ceased again, so waxed and waned the terror of Charles's return,⁸⁸ so were the western allies uneasy or content, the king of Denmark inclined to or averse from terms, Augustus and Peter anxious or indifferent to see the neutrality enforced.'⁸⁹ The Great Powers feared that Charles XII's remaining forces on the continent (most of them under general Krassow), would cease being neutral, and they were right, as Charles XII sent instruction to Sweden that no treaties should be signed without him being informed first. The news reached Britain and her allies in June 1710, and this meant that Krassow's men might take the offensive, even though they were not in a good shape at all.⁹⁰ Charles XII also forbade Krassow to allow his men to serve as mercenaries for the neighbouring powers, so on 4 August 1710 an additional convention was signed between England, Holland, Austria, Prussia, Hanover and other states in order to form a joint force able to keep Krassow's army in check. Soon, given the situation that the Ottoman Empire did not hurry to follow Charles XII's intrigues, it became apparent that this joint force was not that necessary as expected, and supplying men and money for it was a problem for Britain, as troops were needed elsewhere.⁹¹

Contrary to Sir Robert Sutton's concerns regarding the Swedes, Secretary of State St. John⁹² believed that Britain should not interfere on the continent and that 'the Muscovite and the Pole' should not be helped against Sweden, so that a balance of power could be kept. In a letter dated

⁸⁸ *The London Gazette* no. 5284 (7 December 1714): 4.

⁸⁹ Chance, 1901, 692.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 692.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 692-693.

⁹² Henry St. John (16 September 1678 - 12 December 1751), better known as Viscount Bolingbroke (created such in August 1712), was an influential British politician and philosopher. Most importantly see Harry T. Dickinson (ed.), 'The Letters of Henry St. John to the Earl of Orrery, 1709-1711,' *Camden Miscellany*, Vol. XXVI. *Camden Fourth Series. Volume 14* (London: The Royal Historical Society, 1975):137-199; Harry T. Dickinson (ed.), 'Letters of Bolingbroke to the Earl of Orrery, 1712-13,' *Camden Miscellany*, Vol. XXXI. *Camden Fourth Series. Volume 44* (London: The Royal Historical Society, 1992): 349-371. Harry T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London: Constable, 1970), 2-4.

Also see Harry T. Dickinson, *A Companion to Eighteenth Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 65; Coroban, 2010b, 61, 75, 91; David Mallet (ed.), *The Works of the Right Honourable Henry St. John Lord Viscount Bolingbroke in Five Volumes*. Vol. I. (London: MDCCLXXVII), 68; George Wingrove Cooke, *Memoirs of Lord Bolingbroke* (London: R. Bentley, 1835), 401.

29 December 1710, in the imminence of the Ottoman invasion of Russia, he calls to moderation regarding British implication in the problems of the North:

'The Rupture of the Turks, and their attacking Muscovy or Poland, would not have any great or immediate influence on our affairs were we well secured from any Enterprize on the side of Pomerania. But that is the capital point at present, and ought to be fenced against with the utmost precaution, since the King of Sweden has openly avowed his dislike of the Neutrality, and at the same time increased his Troops to a considerable number. These steps leave no room to doubt of his intentions, when he shall have an opportunity of employing that Corps. And therefore as the danger seems to be very imminent on that side, the remedy ought to be applyed both very quickly and effectually. You may be sure that her Maj^{ty} is not willing to engage in another Warr, or draw herself into the Quarrells of the North. But if the Empire should be embroiled, there are so many inconveniencys that will apparently ensue, that there seems to be no way of avoiding them, but by putting it out of the power of the King of Sweden to disturb the Neutrality from that Quarter. We would rather see this done by the Princes chiefly concerned, than have an immediate hand in it ourselves. But it is agreed that some timely and effectuell measures must be taken to prevent the recalling of Troops from the Service of the Allys, and quiet our apprehensions on that side.'⁹³

The situation in Britain was aggravated at the end of 1710 when news came from Constantinople that the Sultan was preparing to go to war against the Russians. Charles XII issued a manifesto, besides the one to the Poles, to the attention of the Sweden's allies, including Britain, threatening to revise his attitude and act irrespective of their interests if they continued to act against him:

'Quod si autem praeter omnem spem et expectionem quisquam amicum animum exuens remoram aut obstaculum ipsi objiceret, tum cum in eo fuerit, et justis armis ipsi sit

⁹³ Chance 1901, 693-694.

persequendus conjuratus hostis, declarat Sua Regia Majestas se non posse eundem alio quam aggressoris loco habere.⁹⁴

This manifesto was issued because, as we have seen, at the moment of the breach of the Treaty of Altranstädt and the Peace of Travendal by Peter the Great and Augustus the Strong (by their interference in Poland in 1709), Sweden's allies, including Britain, only reacted by formal protests even though they were bound as guarantees of the treaty. The only one who explained himself was George of Hanover, the future King of Great Britain.⁹⁵

Grievous reports from Vienna and the Hague augmented the danger posed by the Ottomans and Charles XII (who, as we have seen, did not even join the Ottoman army, considering it would have been unfit for a King to join an army commanded by a Grand Vizier and not other royalty). St. John even believed Charles XII's threats of attacking the Holy Roman Empire with the help of France. Britain needed to deploy 20,000 soldiers as contribution to the army meant to neutralize Krassow's corps, so Marlborough had to part of three of his battalions. Eventually, the allies could not decide where to deploy these troops and who was to lead them (either George of Hanover or his daughter's husband, who was the Prince of Prussia, or Augustus II the Strong), so their initiative failed.⁹⁶

Hanover also worried Charles XII would invade the Holy Roman Empire, and in the hope of attracting Charles XII's friendship they offered him a loan of 250,000 crowns for the safety of Bremen and Verden. Charles XII accepted the loan, but only through private dealers, adding that an alliance to Hanover is preferable to one to Prussia. In 1712, given the weakness of Sweden, now ruled by letters from the Ottoman Empire, Denmark occupied Bremen-Verden, and three years later would trade it to George I of Hanover (1714-1727) in exchange for his help against Charles XII.

In January 1711 the British decided to send Captain James Jefferyes to Bender to directly negotiate with Charles XII, since he had previously travelled with the Swedish army and was even taken prisoner at Poltava. He reached Bender on 28 April 1711, which was about the time when Charles XII's protest manifesto reached The Hague and consequently Britain. The British government was perplexed and did not know whether they should back Russia and Poland or give in to Sweden's demands.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 693.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 695.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 694.

Accordingly, St. John writes that 'Every measure that occurs to one's thoughts is immediately attended by a crowd of objections; and yet the necessity of resolving on something presses us very hard.'⁹⁷

Efforts were made in the purpose of a truce, but Charles XII would not even hear about it, as he was on the losing side in the Great Northern War and this would have meant wasting all his efforts at Constantinople. This is the moment when in England arose a wave of sympathy for Sweden. Its source was compassion for the losing side but also the realization that Russia was much more of a threat than Sweden. After all, Krassow's Swedish army in Pomerania was almost non-functional, while the same could be said about the help Charles XII's mustered from the Ottomans. St. John wrote to Commander Marlborough on 10 July 1711 that 'The Muscovites are, without dispute, in greater forwardness than the Turks, and the King of Sweden in little condition to support that *fierté* which he put on when he protested against the act of neutrality'^{98, 99}

Regarding Captain James Jefferyes' negotiations with Charles XII, he sent a letter dated 8 July 1711 to London informing the government that Charles XII refused to recognize any arrangements about Krassow's army in Pomerania taken without his consent, refused to suspend the blockade of Peter the Great's new ports at the Baltic, and again reminded Queen Anne of her duty to uphold Sweden's interests in relation to Denmark and Saxony, while his interests regarding Russia would be supported by the Porte. These harsh responses convinced the British that they cannot collaborate with Charles XII, and made them remember again how the 'groundless and intolerable' Swedish blockade of some of Peter the Great's ports hurt their commercial interests. Thus, the British government ultimately did not oppose to the invasion of Sweden's Pomerania (decided by a resolution adopted on 14 August 1711 at The Hague) by Denmark and Saxony with the complicity of Prussia. Still, Secretary of State St. John, in a letter to Whitworth and Marlborough (12 and 10 July 1711), warned that although

'the States hope that these Princes will go no further than barely to deliver themselves from the apprehension which they are under of that Body [Krassow's Swedish army in Pomerania - ed.]. Your Grace sees how little likely it is that

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 696.

⁹⁸ He was referring to the agreement of the allies to render his army in Pomerania under Krassow neutralized.

⁹⁹ *Chance*, 1901, 697.

King Augustus and his allies will exert much moderation in their success, and how destructive it may prove of the Ballance of Power in the North, and of the Protestant interest in Germany, if those provinces of Sweden should be subdued and parcelled out. . . . The Dutch have had the whole conduct of this affair; if they get as well out of it, I shall have a great opinion of their ability or of their luck.¹⁰⁰

And he maintained the same tone, defending Sweden again in a letter to Orrey, dated 24 July 1711:

'To enter into an actual Warr with Sweden, either by employing the Corps of Neutrality, or by payinig the Saxon troops whilst they are employed according to the desire of King Augustus, is contrary to the inclination of all our Ingagements. On the other hand to stand by and behold the Destruction of Crassau's army, and the conquest of Pomerania, has something very mean and cruel in it.'¹⁰¹

Around this time the news of Peter the Great and Dimitrie Cantemir's defeat at Stănilești on the Pruth (of 22 July 1711) reached Britain, along with information regarding Marlborough's successes in the Netherlands, which would lead to negotiations regarding the Treaty of Utrecht in October 1711 (the treaty would only be agreed upon 18 months later, in 1713). The British government received the news of the Russians' defeat positively, while their advance within the Holy Roman Empire inside Swedish territories was seen as a breach of the balance of power.¹⁰²

The British Whig government was eager to end any hostilities with France but this meant that it also no longer had an excuse not to interfere in the Northern affairs. In preparation for that moment, Whitworth was dispatched to Carlsbad where he met Peter the Great in October 1711, and afterwards followed him to St. Petersburg. But he could not do much in the purpose of obtaining commercial benefits for Britain or alienating Russia from France or from Denmark, and he was not even helped by the fact that the British and Dutch envoys at Constantinople had mediated the Ottoman-Russian peace.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 698.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Murray 2.

¹⁰³ Chance 1901, 698-700.

A new phase of the Northern problem arrived with the defeat the Swedish general Magnus Stenbock (who in 1710 defeated the Danes again at Helsingborg, as we have seen), during the winter of 1712. This meant that the last land army was eliminated. The German states of the Holy Roman Empire which were affected by these military manoeuvres held a congress, but it proved to be inefficient in taking any actions. Affected by these events, Charles XII yielded to Queen Anne of Great Britain's offers of mediation, but he confessed that he 'had reason to look upon her offers as words of course and compliment rather than anything in reality.'¹⁰⁴

But the King of Sweden would soon be infuriated when during the spring of 1712, the British envoys at Constantinople, Sutton and Colyer, put a stop to his plans of again turning the Ottoman Empire against the Russians. They acted in the belief that the Swedes were allies of the French, and that their irruption into Poland would hurt the British war effort, as new resources would have been required for the Northern front. Still, Charles XII could not afford to lose the support of Queen Anne, so he responded positively to Her Majesty's envoy's offers of providing mediation, the promise of sending a fleet to the Baltic within a year and the upholding of the guarantees and treaties between them.¹⁰⁵ The fleet would not be sent, as the arrival of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 meant the advent of Britain as a world commercial power, and as such, one no longer affected by the status of the Baltic.

Returning to the British' fear of Swedish-French collaboration, one must not consider it as irrational, because after all, as we have seen in the first part, Louis XIV had offered to help Charles XII return from Bender,¹⁰⁶ furthermore had supported Charles XII's envoys at Constantinople and also sent aid to general Magnus Stenbock. Still, there is plenty of evidence that besides these moments, one cannot talk of a proper Swedish-French collaboration. Charles XII himself mentions this in his letters, and he further asserts that as a member of the Holy Roman Empire, he could not become allied with Louis XIV. This is also confirmed by the correspondence between Louis XIV and his ambassadors at the Porte,¹⁰⁷ so indeed, while this concern of the British had some fundamentals, it certainly did not correspond to reality. While this fear of France was explainable but unnecessary, the fear that helping Sweden would offend the Czar was very real. St. John (Bolingbroke) advised that nothing should be done against

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 701.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 701-702.

¹⁰⁶ *The London Gazette* no. 5260 (14 September 1714): 1-2; no. 5272 (26 October 1714): 2.

¹⁰⁷ *Chance* 1901, 1702.

Russia, who now controlled the Baltic, without the help of either the Dutch or the French, which was not a feasible project. Chance (1901, 703-74) writes that 'During the remainder then of Anne's reign the help her ministers could give to Sweden was confined to diplomatic negotiation, to exhortations which 'were ineffectual, and threats which were disregarded.'

Gyllenborg, the Swedish minister in London, always reminded of the agreements of 1700 between England and Sweden, but he was countered by the government with the fact that those agreements had a defensive character, while any British intervention at this moment would prompt Russia to respond with war.¹⁰⁸ It is interesting to ponder whether the British answer would have been different had Charles XII been located in Sweden and not so close to the Russian Empire, and within the borders of an enemy of it. Queen Anne's government still did not abandon hope of obtaining peace for Charles XII, and thus in July 1713 her envoy at The Hague, Strafford, held a meeting of the foreign ministers in the purpose of discussing a peace project between Sweden, Denmark and Russia. On 7 August 1713 he even directly proposed that the Danes stop their offensive actions, to no avail.¹⁰⁹

In the meantime, Charles XII's situation worsened with his move to Demotika, closer to Constantinople, and he witnessed the ratification of a third Ottoman-Russian peace. Gyllenborg again reminded the Queen of the necessity of respecting the treaties between Britain and Sweden and even suggested that a public declaration in this respect on her behalf would completely eliminate any trace of Swedish mistrust that might have appeared in regard to Her Majesty's envoys in Constantinople. Still, every British effort was rebutted by new claims and pretensions of Charles XII.¹¹⁰ He reinstated the Baltic blockade, and announced that he would not accept an imposed peace, when the intervention of Prussia came.¹¹¹

Prussia's new King, Friedrich Wilhelm (1713-1740), proposed an alliance with Britain, Holland and Hanover or only with Britain alone, in the purpose of winning back Sweden's provinces from Denmark,¹¹² but the plan failed, although it received British sympathy. Letters directly from Charles XII were received with the same sympathy, but instructions were given to the British diplomatic envoys that they should avoid any discussion of direct British aid. Practically, the British were only willing to

¹⁰⁸ Murray, 1-2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 704.

¹¹⁰ Murray, 7.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 704-707.

¹¹² *The London Gazette* no. 5183 (19 December 1713): 1.

help by papers and words.¹¹³ They did so in February 1714 when they proposed that Charles XII should ally himself with Prussia, who in turn would intervene in Holstein-Gottorp in Sweden's interests, in exchange for Stettin.¹¹⁴

This plan also failed because Prussia did not go on to provide the required help. By this time the British merchants, whose interests in Russia and the Eastland were seriously hurt by Charles XII's renewed blockade, convinced the British government to take action for securing peace once again.¹¹⁵ Messages were sent to The Hague, Paris, Copenhagen, and St. Petersburg, in which threats were made and it was affirmed that Sweden was an important nation for the Queen and she would not witness its dismembering. Some states, like Holland, answered only too late, while others completely ignored these messages, thinking that Britain is too divided by internal factions and very prone to betraying its alliances. The British threats were met with jokes, as the Swedish minister Görtz writes from Berlin: 'Je vous dis à regret que tout l'on sauroit prêcher à la Cour icy de la vigueur de la Cour Britannique n'est regardé que comme des chansons;'¹¹⁶ and as a Danish statesman declares: 'se mocquoit des menaces de l'Angleterre, etant convaincu qu'Elle n'oseroit rien faire par la crainte qu'Elle a pour le Czar, qui ne manqueroit pas de faire massacrer les Marchands Anglois, et de se saisir de leurs effets.'¹¹⁷

Despite these discouraging responses from the continental powers, Britain persevered and a fleet of three ships (the Woolwich, Dolphin and Flamborough) under Captain Archibald Hamilton were sent to inspect the situation and try to save as many traders¹¹⁸ as possible in the Baltic.¹¹⁹ But six days after he received his instructions, Queen Anne died, and was succeeded by her cousin, George I of Hanover (1714-1727),¹²⁰ during whose reign the Anglo-Swedish relations changed quite a lot.¹²¹

Britain successfully faced its first important Jacobite rebellion in 1715,¹²² when the forces of John Erskine, Earl of Mar,¹²³ acting in the name

¹¹³ *The London Gazette* no. 5330 (17 May 1715): 1.

¹¹⁴ *Chance* 1901, 710.

¹¹⁵ Murray, 3-4.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 710-711.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 711.

¹¹⁸ *The London Gazette* no. 5317 (2 April 1715): 1.

¹¹⁹ Murray, 7.

¹²⁰ *Chance* 1901, 711.

¹²¹ Murray, 9.

¹²² See Coroban, 2011.

¹²³ His naming as a Secretary of State during the reign of George I appears in *The London Gazette*, no. 5154 (8 September 1713), p. 1.

of the Old Pretender,¹²⁴ were defeated at the battles of Preston and Sheriffmuir. There were discussions with Charles XII and the Jacobites¹²⁵ in Sweden took some actions¹²⁶ (some supply ships were sent), but in a very limited manner since the Swedish army was heavily needed on the continent.¹²⁷

This rebellion took place in the context of the Hanoverian succession, when the Earl of Mar, a Tory, was quickly catalogued as a Jacobite traitor by the Whig politicians in London, which recently ascended to power thanks to the change of dynasty. In vain had the Earl of Mar sent letters of loyalty to George I of Hanover, as he was removed from his position as Secretary of State in Scotland, which led to his hasty and reckless, as he soon found out, assumption of the Jacobite cause.¹²⁸ After his defeat, the Jacobites who could escape went back to France together with James Francis Edward Stuart (The Old Pretender), where they would again begin to seek help against George I of Great Britain and Hanover.

Charles XII, after the return from his stay in the Ottoman Empire in 1714,¹²⁹ instructed his minister, Görtz, to surreptitiously journey to the Netherlands in search of finances. The purpose was to revitalize what was left of Sweden's maritime power. The only ones interested in funding Charles XII's fleet were the Jacobites. They were those English, Scots, Irish and Welsh who were still loyal to the dynasty of James II Stuart of England, exiled during the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689. James II

¹²⁴ James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766), son of the exiled Roman-Catholic James II of England, and whose birth, among other factors, led to the Revolution of 1688.

¹²⁵ *Chevalier de St. George to Duke of Berwick*, 9 July 1715, in Percy M. Thornton, *The Stuart Dynasty Short Stories of Its Rise, Course and Early Exile, the Latter Drawn from Papers in Her Majesty's Possession at Windson Castle 2nd Edition* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1890), 229; also for the masonic dimension of the Swedish-Russian-Jacobite negotiations see Steve Murdoch, 'Des réseaux de conspiration dans le Nord? Une étude de la franc-maçonnerie jacobite et hanovrienne en Scandinavie et en Russie, 1688-1746,' *Politica Hermetica. La Franc-Maçonnerie et les Stuarts au XVIII^e Siècle. Stratégies Politiques, Réseaux entre Mythes et Réalités* No. 24 (2010), 29-57; and Robert Collis, "Jacobite networks, freemasonry and fraternal sociability and their influence in Russia, 1714-1740," *Politica Hermetica* No. 24 (2010), 89-100. I owe many thanks to Professor Steve Murdoch for providing me with these articles.

¹²⁶ *The London Gazette* no. 5530 (16 April 1717), p. 2.

¹²⁷ Steve Murdoch, *Network North. Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe 1603-1746* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), 316.

¹²⁸ Molly Davidson, *The Jacobites – Scottish Histories* (New Lanmark: Geddes & Grosset, 2004), 68-69; John L. Roberts, *The Jacobite Wars: Scotland and the Military Campaigns of 1715 and 1745* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 16; 21; Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Rebellions* (Dalkeith: Scottish Cultural Press, 2004), 126-127.

¹²⁹ *The London Gazette* no. 5269 (16 October 1714): 1; no. 5369 (1 October 1715), 1; no. 5448 (3 July 1716): 1;

having died in 1701, they now gathered around his son, Francis Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender). In 1715-1716, the Pretender attempted to invade Britain in order to prevent the succession of George I of Hanover, but failed. Through the Swedish envoys in London and Paris (Gyllenborg and Sparre, respectively), Görtz¹³⁰ tried to obtain an agreement from the Jacobites that money would be secretly loaned to Charles XII in exchange for Sweden helping a new Jacobite invasion. British counterintelligence was well aware of these negotiations. Eventually the government of George I arrested Gyllenborg, furthermore publishing his documents. This was done in the hope of internationally isolating Sweden, as the British Hanoverian monarch feared a Russian-Swedish-Jacobite alliance.¹³¹

Literary and Historiographical Reactions

‘On what Foundation stands the Warrior's Pride?
How just his Hopes let *Swedish Charles* decide;
A Frame of Adamant, a Soul of Fire,
No Dangers fright him, and no Labours tire;
O'er Love, o'er Force, extends his wide Domain,
Unconquer'd Lord of Pleasure and of Pain;’
Samuel Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (Lines 192-197)

Just like there were various British diplomatic/political reactions to Charles XII's Sweden during and after his retreat in the Ottoman Empire, these political and military events also echoed in the literature of the time, especially in the work of Daniel Defoe. Swedish poets have of course also been inspired by the endeavour of Charles XII,¹³² and to go even further from literature and into popular culture, there is even a chess problem called ‘Charles XII at Bender.’¹³³

Still, sometimes the endeavours of Charles XII were also viewed as:

‘distant Battles of the Pole and Swede,
Which frugal Citizens o'er Coffee read,
Careless for who shall fail, or who succeed.’¹³⁴

¹³⁰ *The London Gazette* no. 5541 (25 May 1717), 2.

¹³¹ See Coroban, 2010a.

¹³² Geijer and Tegner have described Charles XII as a war hero, while Heidenstam and Strindberg portrayed him in a negative image. See Moerk.

¹³³ For the chess problem see footnote 32.

¹³⁴ Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent* (London: John Bell, MDCCXCI), xi.

This was not the case of the 'Scots gentlemen' (considered to be actually Daniel Defoe,¹³⁵ but I would dare say that Kasten Feif might have played a role in the writing of this book, since he travelled with Charles XII and served as his secretary for home affairs, and later would serve in the Swedish government), who published 'The History of the Wars of his late Majesty Charles XII King of Sweden From his First Landing in Denmark to His Return from Turkey to Pomerania.'¹³⁶ In the very Preface he informs us that:

'The subject is as fruitful of Great Events, as any real History can pretend to, and is Grac'd with as many Glorious Actions, Battles, Sieges and Gallant Enterprizes, Thing which make a History Pleasant, as well as Profitable, as can be met with in any History of so few Years that is now extant in the World'¹³⁷

The rest of the book is filled with valuable reference to Charles XII's stay in 'Turkey:'

'the Turks received his Swedish Majesty with great Hospitality; and treated him with a great deal of Courtesy; but there was not yet so much as any Prospect of obtaining Assistance from them in the Grand Affair'¹³⁸

The rest of the paragraph continues with a description of how the Russian ('Czarish') ambassadors were better received and treated at Constantinople than their Swedish counterparts. As we have seen, this was not always the case, as the Grand Vizier's benevolence often was for sale, but at least this fragment shows us that the British did not uniquely believe that Charles XII would be immediately offered a great host to lead against Europe by the Sultan.

Then, regarding the Tatar Khan, we are told that:

¹³⁵ Herbert G. Wright, 'Defoe's Writings on Sweden,' *The Review of English Studies* 16, 61 (Jan. 1940), 32.

¹³⁶ *The History of the Wars of his late Majesty Charles XII King of Sweden From his First Landing in Denmark to His Return from Turkey to Pomerania. The Second Edition. With a Continuation to the Time of his Death* (London: A. Bell, W. Taylor, J. Osborn, MDCCXX).

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 209.

'the said Cham [Khan - ed.] became so embark'd in the King of Sweden's interests, that he not only shew'd him all possible Acts of Humanity and a princely Generosity; but undertook to influence the Grand Seignior in his Favour and in his Interests'¹³⁹

While in the next fragment it is revealed that the Swedish soldiers taken prisoners by Peter the Great 'were sent to the Frontiers of Muscovy, on the South and East Sides, as to Asoph [Azov - ed.], Astracan [Astrakhan - ed.], and the Borders of the Turks dominions.'¹⁴⁰ The description of the Ottoman dignitaries is not neglected, and it is somewhat exact: 'The Bassa [Pasha - ed.] of Aleppo, called Mehemet, a Friend to these Measures [war against Russia - ed.], was just before this made Vizier Azem in the Place of Kuprioglu; and the Mufti being brought to join with him, the Grand Seignior made a Shew of being very hearty in the Interests of his Swedish Majesty; and tho' at first he seem'd something difficult, was at last brought over fully to espouse him...'¹⁴¹ Mention is also made of 'the Hospodore [Hospodar/Domn - ed.] of Moldavia... and had by his means laid up a very great Magazine of Provisions for his Army at Jassy his Capital City.'¹⁴²

What follows is an account of the Battle of Stănilești on the Pruth River with the acknowledgement that the Ottoman army lost the rare chance of proving its might to Europe.¹⁴³ It must be noted that the account of Charles XII's adventure in the Ottoman Empire receives a reduced space in this book (about 40 pages, out of a total of 397), in comparison to the number of pages dedicated to the affairs of the Swedish homeland or of General Krassow's army in Pomerania, and ends with the King who 'enter'd Transylvania, and came to Hermanstadt the [text missing from the Book - ed.] of March [...] traversed the whole Kingdom of Hungary and Empire of Germany, and passing Incognito [...] arrived at Straelsund, to the infinite joy and satisfaction of his subjects.'¹⁴⁴ It is very interesting to note that in the introduction of the next section of the book, the author confesses that: 'As to those Things in his Swedish Majesty's story, which have some Relation to Great Britain, I shall speak of them with all the Caution and Prudence, that the Duty to our Government requires of me, and endeavour as little as possible, to concern the History of our Country,

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 219.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 219-221.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 248.

with that of the King of Sweden.¹⁴⁵ This of course means that the text can, from the start, be considered inaccurate regarding Swedish-British relations, while still offering the opinion of a British man on Swedish affairs.

Regarding the later period, of the so called Swedish-Jacobite plot, there are two 1717 pamphlets signed by Daniel Defoe: *What if the Swedes Should Come? With some Thoughts About Keeping The Army on Foot, Whether they Come or Not* and *A Short Narrative Of the Life and Death Of John Rhinholdt Count Patkul, A Nobleman of Livonia, Who was Broke alive upon the Wheel in Great Poland*. In both these accounts Charles XII as well as the Jacobites are discredited, the former for his absolutism and the latter for their disposition of sacrificing Britain to a former power for their own interest.¹⁴⁶ This defamatory tone does not match the one of *The History of the Wars, of His Present Majesty Charles XII* nor the one of a different, undated (but considered to also have been written in 1717) pamphlet, called *A Short View of the Conduct of the King of Sweden*.¹⁴⁷

There are, of course, numerous later references in British literature¹⁴⁸ and popular culture to Charles XII, but they do not represent the purpose of the current approach. Nevertheless, Samuel Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749)¹⁴⁹ has reached a certain degree of popularity that warrants for its memento here. It is written in the same style as the post-1720 Swedish literature (i.e. it portrays Charles XII in the negative image of a tyrant who contributed to Sweden's downfall¹⁵⁰). While Defoe and the other writers at least mentioned about Charles XII's sojourn in Turkey, Johnson refers to his defeat at Poltava and subsequent retreat in the following verses:

'Hide, blushing Glory, hide *Pultowa's* Day:
The vanquish'd Hero leaves his broken Bands,
And shews his Miseries in distant Lands;
Condemn'd a needy Supplicant to wait,
While Ladies interpose, and Slaves debate.' (Lines 210-214)

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 251.

¹⁴⁶ Wright, 27.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 28.

¹⁴⁸ See Lord Byron, *Mazeppa* (dramatic poem, 1819). For fiction see: E. M. Almedingen, *The Lion of the North: Charles XII King of Sweden* (1938).

¹⁴⁹ See Weinbrot, Horne.

¹⁵⁰ See Moerck.

This is perhaps one of the most negative depictions of Charles XII's retreat in the Ottoman Empire, which is barely referred to as 'distant Lands,' where the King waits in misery and supplication, while others take the initiative in Europe.

Conclusion

Needless to say, the impact of Charles XII's alleged collaboration with the Jacobites inspired Defoe a lot more than the Swedish King's endeavour in the Ottoman Empire, which in turn mostly contributed to Charles XII's becoming a super-hero icon of the early eighteenth century. This very super-human image of Charles XII made the British fear his opposition so much that they vastly overestimated his involvement with the Jacobites, leading to an unprecedented event in the Westphalian system of international relations: the arrest of Count Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy in London, and the publishing of his diplomatic documents.

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