REVIEW OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES 2018, VOL. XVII, NO. 3

http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/1644-857X.17.03.06

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‘Gazeta Warszawska’ on the Russo-Turkish War (the 1789 campaign)

Summary. The article presents a selected campaign of the Russo-Turkish War, which Turkey fought with Russia and its ally, Austria, in 1787–1792. The Authoress used the reports of ‘Gazeta Warszawska’ – a leading information magazine, published in 1774–1793 under the editorial supervision of an ex-Jesuit, Father Stefan Łuskina, as the principal source of information. Throughout the entire conflict, Łuskina’s newspaper reported regularly (almost in every issue) on activities on the eastern front. The editor-in-chief was an advocate of pro-Russian position, which did affect the information provided by the publication. The news from the Eastern War published in ‘Gazeta Warszawska’ was selected in such a way as to show the superiority of the Russian army over the Ottoman fleet and army and to prove that the opponents of the Tsaritsa would be inevitably defeated.

Keywords: ‘Gazeta Warszawska’, Polish information press, Stefan Łuskina, Russian-Turkish war of 1789–1792, 1789 campaign, 18th century.

‘Gazeta Warszawska’ was the leading news daily on the Polish press market, printed in the capital of the Polish Republic in 1774–1793, and its first editor and publisher was an ex-Jesuit priest, Father Stefan (*alias* Szczepan) Łuskina (1725–1793)[1]. At the beginning of January 1794 the magazine

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[1] On the subject of Łuskina and his publishing activity, see J. Szczepaniec, *Łuskina Stefan*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. XVIII, Wrocław 1973, pp. 577–579; and J. Łojek, *‘Gazeta Warszawska’ księdza Łuskiny 1774–1793*, Warszawa 1959, pp. 9–16 et seq.; idem, *Historia prasy polskiej*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 26–27; W. Giełżyński, *Prasa warszawska 1661–1914*, Warszawa 1962, pp. 58–60; J. Bartoszewicz, *Gazeta księdza Łuskiny*, [in:] idem, *Znakomici mężowie polscy w XVIII wieku. Wizerunki historycznych osób*, vol. I, Warszawa 1855, pp. 263–330.

changed its name to 'Gazeta Krajowa', from April 26, it was published as 'Gazeta Wolna Warszawska', and from mid-November it was published under the former title 'Gazeta Warszawska'. Each issue of the journal consisted of a four-page basic issue and a supplement of the same size. The first part was broken into two columns, the supplement was usually printed on the entire page. Each issue opened with news from the country, followed by reports from abroad. Father Łuskina never highlighted more important articles in any way. Frequently important, but extensive reports were printed in small type, while short, insignificant information – in regular-sized type. The supplement included last-minute news that was too important to wait until the next edition, as well as conclusions of articles from the first part, and finally the section 'Doniesienia z Warszawy' [Reports from Warsaw] was printed at the end, which was equivalent to contemporary classifieds.

Łuskina's title provided extensive information, on par with other leading European magazines. It consisted of information from Poland, mostly on a national scope, as well as news from other countries of the Old Continent, and even from America. One could read there about the life and health of the royals, the political situation in individual countries, diplomacy, ongoing armed conflicts, debates in the English Parliament, and aside from that – about persons who lived to see particularly old age, natural disasters and 'peculiar cases'.

Material for the newspaper came mainly from foreign press. The lack of adequate funding did not allow Łuskina to keep permanent or temporary correspondents in foreign countries, who would systematically send him messages. Therefore, he had to make do with subscribing to foreign publications, especially French, German and Italian, because he spoke those languages fluently. He translated articles printed there, edited them to suit his needs, and published them in his journal. Occasionally, he also used letters and private notes from France, England or Germany and headlined them as 'from a letter'[2].

As far as the Russo-Turkish War (1787–1792) is concerned, as it is of particular interest to us, 'Gazeta' closely followed the military operations throughout its duration. It reported about land and sea

[2] Detailed information about this magazine: J. Łojek, *'Gazeta Warszawska' księdza Łuskiny...*, pp. 22–39; idem, *Historia...*, pp. 27–28; W. Giełżyński, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–61; J. Bartoszewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 263–330.

operations, enemy movements, the state of health of monarchs (especially Joseph II) and commanders, described the most important battles and small skirmishes, printed statistical news, texts of manifestos and international treaties, finally reported on the course of peace talks and mediation of European courts. Depending on whether Łuskina considered the facts described to be relevant, the information was extensive or perfunctory. He also sometimes remained silent about the most important events, if they were not to his liking. As an advocate of pro-Russian stance, the editor-in-chief praised Catherine II (1729–1796), applauded the bravery and valour of the Russian soldiers and exaggerated their victories. He also spoke with sympathy about the Austrian ally of Russia, while writing about the Turks with contempt. He liked to cite the 'excesses' allegedly committed by the Ottoman soldiers in the occupied territories, reported on their desertions, lack of discipline and unwillingness to join the army. At the same time, however, he admired their bravery, although this could have been a by-product of the sources from which he made reprints.

The Russo-Turkish war began in August 1787. Having failed to obtain the recognition of Georgia's independence and the return of Crimea, the Sublime Porte unexpectedly broke diplomatic relations with Russia and launched a military operation[3]. However, the direct reason for the outbreak of the conflict was the meeting of the Empress with Joseph II in Kherson in May that year, which the Sultan's Imperial Council, the Divan (*Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn*) treated as a provocation. Sultan Abdülhamid I (1725–1789)[4] set up an army of more than 200,000 men under the command of the Grand Vizier Koca Yusuf Pasha. He also sent a strong fleet to the Black Sea, commanded by the Kapudan Pasha, Gazi Hassan. The plan was to attack Kinburn, Kherson and Crimea from Ochakiv. The Russian army had fewer men (120,000 soldiers) and was unprepared for the war. It consisted of two armies: the Ukraine Army under the command of the over 60-year-old Field-Marshal Pyotr Rumyantsev, which was meant to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia, and the Yekaterinoslav Army, with Prince Grigory Aleksandrovich Potemkin

[3] All complaints and contentious issues, many of which concerned violations of the treaty in Küczük-Kainarji (1774), were listed in the Porte manifesto of August 1787, reprinted in full by 'Gazeta Warszawska' (No. 41–43 of 1788, no page).

[4] See *Abdulhamid I*, [in:] *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. I (*A-ak–Bayes*), 15th ed., Chicago 1998, p. 22.

as the commander, set to occupy Black Sea fortresses up to the mouth of the Danube, and at the same time to protect the Crimea from enemy attack. There were regiments stationed in the Caucasus and Kuban, commanded by General Tökele[5].

Turkey started the war with an attack on a Russian fort in Kinburg, a spit facing the mouth of the Dnieper opposite Ochakiv. Two attempts (on September 14, and October 1, 1787) to blow up the landing in Kinburg were repelled by the unit under the command of General Alexander Vasilyevich Suvorov, who killed or pushed several thousand landing Ottomans into the sea. Moreover, the late season was not conducive to major undertakings, and both sides were waiting for Austria. In February 1788 Emperor Joseph II (1741–1790), fulfilling his obligations as an ally of the Empress of All-Russia, declared war on the Porte. His army of more than 200,000 men, cordoned along the borders, entered the enemy's territory and began siege operations. It occupied Khotyn in Moldavia and several smaller fortresses in Bosnia (Dresnik, Dubica, Novi) and Serbia (Šabac). At first, the Russians carried out activities quite sluggishly. During the summer their fleet defeated the Turks in the Dnieper estuary and near Ochakiv (June 18 and 28, 1788) as well as near the island of Fidonisi to the east of the Danube Delta (July 14, 1788). The land troops, in turn, occupied the fortified Ochakiv fortress, taken by a violent assault after a siege that lasted many weeks (December 17, 1788)[6]. Łuskina returned

[5] See W. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, vol. I, Warszawa 1991, p. 28; R.K. Massie, *Katarzyna Wielka. Portret kobiety*, Kraków 2012, p. 474; A. Skałkowski, *Przełom w dziejach Europy wschodniej (1788–1795)*, [in:] *Wielka historia powszechna,* vol. VI (*Od wielkiej rewolucji do wojny światowej*), part 1 (*1789–1848*), eds J. Dąbrowski, O. Halecki, M. Kukiel, S. Lam, Warszawa 1936, p. 182; P.P. Wieczorkiewicz, *Historia wojen morskich. Wiek żagla*, vol. I, Warszawa 1995, p. 407; J. Gozdawa-Gołębiowski, *Wojny morskie 1775–1851*, Warszawa 2001, p. 139.

[6] More on the beginning of war and campaign of 1788, see W. Kalinka, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–45; W. Morawski, S. Szawłowska, *Wojny rosyjsko-tureckie od XVII do XX wieku*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 80–86; J. Gozdawa-Gołębiowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–142; P.P. Wieczorkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 406–410; M.Z. Mayer, *The price for Austria's security: part I – Joseph II, the Russian Alliance, and the Ottoman War, 1787–1789*, 'International History Review' 2004, vol. XXVI, issue 2, pp. 268–283; in particular M. Karkocha, *Wojna rosyjsko-turecka na łamach 'Pamiętnika Historyczno-Politycznego' (1787–1788)*, [in:] *Sic erat in votis. Europa i świat w czasach nowożytnych. Studia i szkice ofiarowane Profesorowi Zbigniewowi Anusikowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, eds M. Karkocha, P. Robak, Łódź 2017, pp. 311–342; eadem, *Początek wojny rosyjsko-tureckiej w świetle doniesień 'Gazety Warszawskiej' księdza Łuskiny (1787–1788)*, [in:] *Ab Occidente referunt…*

to this subject several times, publishing official military reports (Russian and Turkish) in his 'Gazeta'[7].

In the first months of 1789, the editor-in-chief informed about the war preparations for the upcoming campaign. The Turks collected food, weapons and ammunition. They strengthened strongholds of strategic importance: Belgrade (Serbia), Bender (Bessarabia), Berbir and Banja Luka (Bosnia). They mobilised all the forces of a multimillion state to fight. In the winter of 1788/1789, many troops, much more numerous than expected, were brought from all corners of Asia to the vicinity of Constantinople. Pasha Kara Osman Oglu, ordered by the Divan to provide 7000–8000 men, gathered the army in the strength of 48,000 soldiers. Hoping for plentiful loot, the Sultan's subjects came in throngs and enlisted under the banners of Mohammed with great enthusiasm[8]. The Ottoman fleet, seriously damaged in 1788, was also rebuilt. In mid-April (issue 30) Łuskina reported: 'In the shipyard, the work is carried out day and night, they also buy foreign ships to expand their maritime power. Among other things, three English frigates and one corvette were bought, but seeing as they are quite old, they will not be of much use'[9]. Several issues later he wrote: 'Reports from Tsarogrod say that there are now more than 3000 people working there every day on setting up lifeboats. Captain Basha [Kapudan Basha – M.K.] himself encourages the workers to work and punishes the lazy ones. This Great Admiral so far still receives the graces of the G[reat] Sultan and wants to redress the mistakes of his past in this year's campaign. He also intends, having taken on his fleet and cargo ships, to deliver an army of 24,000 men to Crimea'[10]. In order to raise funds for the war, the Divan ordered the subjects to bring all their silver equipment, dishes and ornaments to the mint, to be melted for money. The Greek nation was to donate a total of 5000 okas[11], the Armenian – 4000 okas, the Jewish – 3000 okas, and

'Zachód' doby nowożytnej w badaniach historyków polskich, eds M. Markiewicz, K. Kuras, R. Niedziela, Kraków 2018, pp. 87–109.

[7] GW, February 21, 1789, No. 15, supplement, pp. [1–3]; February 25, No. 16, p. [3] and supplement, p. [2]; March 14, No. 21, p. [3].

[8] GW, March 28, 1789, No. 25, supplement, p. [2]; April 11, No. 29, p. [4]; April 15, No. 30, supplement, p. [2]; April 25, No. 33, p. [4].

[9] GW, April 15, 1789, No. 30, supplement, p. [2].

[10] GW, April 29, 1789, No. 34, supplement, p. [2].

[11] 1 oka = 3 pounds and 7 ounces of Tuscan weight. GW, April 18, 1789, No. 31, p. [3].

the Turkish – 20,000 okas. It was estimated that this would allow 36,000,000 piastres to be minted, and given the lower internal value and lighter weight of the new currency, the operation would bring the treasury almost 18,000,000 profit[12].

Russia and its ally Austria were also arming themselves. As the latter was planning to deploy an army of 300,000 men, Joseph II ordered the recruitment of volunteers in all German provinces and the collection of war contributions (expenditure on the 1789 campaign was estimated at 60,000,000 Kaiser-Goldgulden)[13]. The main commander of the land forces, replacing the ailing Franz Moritz Count von Lacy (*sive* Lascy)[14], was the 78-year-old Field-Marshal Andreas Hadik von Futak[15]. In turn, Joseph Nicolaus baron de Vins (*sive* de Wins)[16] took over the command of troops in Croatia. His predecessor, Ernst Gideon baron von Laudon (Loudon)[17], commanded over the army of 70,000 men (former corps of Wartensleben, Hohenlohe and Coburg), which was to operate in the region of Moldavia, Bessarabia and Wallachia, along with Russian troops. Łuskina reported that Hadik would start military operations by attempting to seize Belgrade[18].

There were also changes in the army of Catherine II. Field-Marshal Pyotr Rumyantsev Zadunaisky was recalled to St Petersburg, and Prince Nikolai Repnin was sent in his place. Both armies, Yekaterinoslav and Ukraine, were placed under the command of

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[12] *Ibidem*.

[13] GW, February 7, 1789, No. 11, p. [3]; February 14, No. 13, pp. [2–3]; March 7, No. 19, p. [4]. The editor-in-chief reported that the imperial army against the Turks in 1789 consisted of 159 infantry battalions and 90 cavalry divisions. There were 59 generals in this army. Specification of Austrian land forces – GW, May 16, 1789, No. 39, supplement, p. [3].

[14] See J. Hirtenfeld, *Der Militär-Maria-Theresien-Orden und seine Mitglieder: Nach authentischen quellin bearbeitet*, Wien 1857, pp. 60–62; C. von Wurzbach, *Biographisches Lexicon des kaiserthums Oesterreich, enthaltend die lebensskizzen der denkwürdigen personen, welche seit 1750 in den österreichischen kronländern geboren wurden oder darin gelebt und gewirkt haben*, Teil XIII (*Kosarek–Lagkner*), Wien 1865, pp. 464–469.

[15] 'Although he is 78 years old, he is of good health and has much vigour' – Father Łuskina wrote. GW, March 21, 1789, No. 23, supplement, p. [3]. See C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil VII (*Habsburg [Magdalena-Wilhelmine] – Hartlieb*), Wien 1861, pp. 166–170.

[16] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 287–290.

[17] See *ibidem*, pp. 48–57; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil XVI (*London–Marlow*), Wien 1867, pp. 66–92.

[18] GW, March 21, 1789, No. 23, supplement, p. [3]; March 25, No. 24, p. [3]; April 4, No. 27, supplement, p. [3]; April 15, No. 30, p. [2].

Duke Potemkin, who as a reward for the occupation of Ochakiv was promoted to Field-Marshal. The task of the Russian troops was to conquer Bender and occupy the entire Bessarabia[19].

From time to time, news from the front was interwoven with reports of peace negotiations conducted through the Spanish, Prussian and French courts. The Porte made Russia's recognition of the independence of the Crimea a prerequisite for all talks. It also demanded the return of lost land and fortresses (Ochakiv, Khotyn, Novi, Šabac and Dubica) and 40,000,000 roubles of compensation for war costs incurred[20]. Venice, as in the previous year, declared neutrality[21]. In the spring of 1789 it was already known that peace negotiations would fail. Łuskina wrote in issue 36: 'It is certain that there is no need to think about any agreement between the warring powers, since the Porte rejected the proposed settlement plan from both imperial courts, and from the Spanish court in Tsarogrod'[22]. Elsewhere, he stated: 'All hope of peace has already disappeared and this year's campaign will probably be one of the bloodiest yet'[23].

Spring floods, an epidemic in the imperial army (*typhus bellicus*)[24] and, above all, Joseph II's illness delayed the launch of the campaign on the Austrian side. It was not until April 27 that Marshal Hadik left for Semlin (serb. Zemun) in order to take over the highest command over the main forces, camped at Lugoj in Banat. Their task was to shield Mehadia from the enemy's attack, and, if possible, the army was to invade the Wallachia 'in part to separate the main Turkish army from Banat and from the Belgrade area, in part to establish the battleground in the enemy country, or [...] in order to join the Transylvanian and the Prince of Cobourg's corps, also intended to invade the Wallachian region'[25].

Taking advantage of the enemy's tardiness, the Turks tried to enter the territory of Joseph II at various locations. They surrounded the Austrian Gradiška and burned nearly 500 houses in Croatia. They tried to occupy Kinenyi in Transylvania several times, albeit without

[19] GW, April 22, 1789, No. 32, pp. [3–4].

[20] GW, March 7, 1789, No. 19, p. [4]; March 11, No. 20, p. [3]; March 14, No. 21, p. [3]; March 18, No. 22, p. [4]; May 20, No. 40, p. [4]; May 27, No. 42, supplement, pp. [2–3].

[21] GW, May 2, 1789, No. 35, p. [3].

[22] GW, May 6, 1789, No. 36, supplement, p. [2].

[23] GW, April 29, 1789, No. 34, supplement, p. [1].

[24] GW, June 13, 1789, No. 47, p. [3].

[25] GW, June 3, 1789, No. 44, p. [4].

much success. In Muntenia, Anatolian Serasker Haggy Soitary with 5000 cavalrymen attacked the Austrian front guard under the command of Colonel Andreas Count Karaiczay de Wallje-Szaka on April 22[26]. The Turks lost 40 men and 100 horses in the skirmish, the Austrians casualties included 14 killed and 32 wounded[27]. The Ottomans also failed the attempt to control Dobrozello in Bosnia (May 26)[28].

In issue 42, Łuskina's magazine published information about the death of Sultan Abdülhamid I, who died on April 7, 1789 at the age of 65[29]. Several issues later, the editor wrote that 'the Turkish Emperor's life ended with an apoplexy, which he had already suffered earlier; the rumours that he had been strangled or poisoned are therefore completely false'[30]. The Sultan's throne was taken over by 27-year-old Selim III (1761–1807)[31], a supporter of further warfare. On April 15, he called the Divan, which decided to continue the military operations 'with the utmost vigour' or to break the peace negotiations with Vienna, conducted through a French envoy. The new ruler was of the opinion that Crimea must remain independent, and all Austrian and Russian conquests should be returned to the Ottoman Empire. The war was considered a 'holy war' (*jihad*), and throughout the country, a conscription of men aged 16 to 60 was proclaimed[32]. The decision on the armed nature of the conflict was followed by personnel changes. Gazi Hassan Pasha, blamed for the fall of Ochakiv, was stripped of the office of the Grand Admiral. He was appointed the serasker of Izmail and entrusted with the task of reclaiming the lost fortress[33]. Vice Admiral Hussein Küçük Pasza received the highest command over the fleet. Łuskina also reported the conclusion of a subsidy treaty between the Porte and Sweden,

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[26] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 293–295.

[27] GW, June 3, 1789, No. 44, pp. [3–4]; June 10, No. 46, p. [4]; June 24, No. 50, supplement, p. [2].

[28] GW, July 1, 1789, No. 52, supplement, pp. [2–3].

[29] GW, May 27, 1789, No. 42, p. [3].

[30] GW, June 20, 1789, No. 49, p. [3]. Researchers agree that the news of the loss of Ochakiv (December 17, 1788) was the cause of the sudden illness and subsequent death of the sultan. See e.g. H. Topaktaş, *Osmańsko-polskie stosunki dyplomatyczne. Poselstwo Franciszka Piotra Potockiego do Stambułu (1788–1793)*, Kraków 2017, p. 66.

[31] See *Selim III*, [in:] *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. X (*Reti–Solovets*), Chicago 1998, pp. 620–621.

[32] GW, June 20, 1789, No. 49, pp. [3–4]; June 24, No. 50, supplement, p. [3].

[33] GW, June 20, 1789, No. 49, p. [4]; July 1, No. 52, p. [3].

according to which the latter was to receive financial assistance of 12,000,000 piastres, half of which in 1789, and the remainder in the following three years, 2,000,000 per year[34].

The main objective of the Turkish land and naval forces in the upcoming campaign was to regain Ochakiv. The ground troops were divided into four armies. The first one under the command of the Grand Vizier (100,000 soldiers), camped at Izmail, was to march on Ochakiv and take this fortress back from Russians. From the side of the sea, the army was to support a fleet of nearly 120 larger and smaller vessels. The second Ottoman army was tasked with defending Belgrade, the third was to operate in Muntenia against allied Austrian and Russian troops, and the last one was to operate in Banat[35].

The launch of military operations on the Russian side took place at the end of April 1789, and a little later on the Austrian side, as has been mentioned. At first, however, the allied troops acted quite sluggishly, only engaging in minor skirmishes and assaults, of which Łuskina systematically informed in his magazine. 'The present campaign does not mean to save blood and it is meant to be as intense as possible', Łuskina wrote in one of the July issues. 'Minor skirmishes already take place frequently and a lot of blood is shed on both sides. Already now our men [Austrians – M.K.] prefer to stand bravely at the battleground and even risk dying, albeit with glory, rather than in stay idle for so long in the insalubrious country, in misery, to miserably succumb to infectious diseases (and without any use)'. And further on: 'The current Field-Marshal, Laudon, whom we count among our greatest chiefs [...], however,

[34] GW, June 17, 1789, No. 48, p. [4]. Three months later Łuskina informed that Gustav III (1746–1792), in exchange for signing an agreement with High Porte, demanded three million piasters every year throughout the war, which the sultan finally accepted. The publisher of 'Gazeta' also wrote that part of the money was paid out to the Swedish monarch. He also explained that the Ottoman Empire financially supported Gustav III, as he bound the Russian fleet in the Baltic Sea through war operations, preventing it from crossing to the Mediterranean Sea. GW, September 23, 1789, No. 76, p. [4]; October 14, No. 82, supplement, p. [4]. It should be added here that the aforementioned subsidy agreement was signed on July 11, 1789. Under the agreement, Turkey was to provide Sweden with financial assistance in the total amount of 20,000 *akçe* pouches. The parties also undertook not to sign separate agreements with the Russian Empire. See H. Topaktaş, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

[35] GW, June 10, 1789, No. 46, supplement, pp. [3–4]; June 17, No. 48, p. [4]. Specification of the Turkish fleet: GW, August 5, 1789, No. 62, p. [4].

cannot so far deal with these Turkish warriors. The Field-Marshal in question has employed all conceivable ways to lure them from the mountains to the field, but they do not allow themselves to fall into these snares. Sitting between the mountains, they are constantly attacking our troops, and such fierce skirmishes are as extremely useful to the Turks, as they are tremendously harmful to us'[36].

In issue 54 (July 8 edition) Father Łuskina informed about the change of war plans by Field-Marshal Laudon. The commander abandoned the intention of conquering the fortresses of Cetinja, Bichać and Banja Luka and, headed by 17 infantry battalions and four cavalry divisions, set off to Slavonia in order to attack the enemy from that side in the open field[37]. Another corps of Laudon's army, consisting of 12,500 men, received an order to occupy Old Gradiška, i.e. Berbir. The siege was led by the General of the Artillery Johann Theodor baron von Rouvroy[38], 'the most skilled in the art of artillery'. On the night of 22 to 23 June, the Austrians crossed the Sava River and surrounded the fortress from three sides, leaving the defenders the possibility of escaping. 'This idea', Łuskina wrote, 'is based on the experience gained many times during the present war, i.e. that the Turks try to face every attack made against them lively and with determination, by fleeing immediately, provided an opportunity to do so is left to them; and when this opportunity is taken away from them, they usually resist most fiercely'[39]. A Turkish unit of 5000 men set off to help the besieged. They set up a camp in a nearby forest, waiting for Pasha's reinforcements from Travnik (4000 soldiers). Meanwhile, the Austrians continued the artillery assault, coming closer and closer to the enemy fortifications. On July 9 in the evening they suddenly noticed that 'not only did the enemies located in the forest disappear, having dismantled their tents, but also that the Turkish garrison in Berbir escaped from the fortress along the path that our [imperial] men deliberately left unguarded'[40]. Laudon sent some forces after the fleeing enemy, and entered an abandoned fortress with the rest of the unit. According to an official report, Austrian losses throughout the siege were 41

[36] GW, July 11, 1789, No. 55, p. [4].

[37] GW, July 8, 1789, No. 54, supplement, p. [1]; July 11, No. 55, supplement, p. [3].

[38] C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil XXVII (*Rosenberg–Rzikowsky*), Wien 1874, pp. 175–177.

[39] GW, July 25, 1789, No. 59, supplement, p. [2].

[40] GW, August 8, No. 63, supplement, p. [3].

killed and 133 wounded. In the fortress 35 bronze cannons, four iron cannons and the same number of mortars were found. The emperor was so happy with this success that he made a toast in honour of the general and his soldiers three times[41].

Meanwhile, Selim III, impatient with the lack of victories, released Koca Yusuf Pasha from the office of Grand Vizier and appointed Isaac Pasha as commander of Vidin. The former Grand Vizier was arrested and beheaded. For three days his head was displayed to the public with an inscription: 'This is the fate that awaits traitors of the monarch!'[42]. The new commander-in-chief of the Ottoman army decided to direct the majority of the army against the Russians. He ordered the troops in Bulgaria to march to Bessarabia, where a significant portion of the troops from the Wallachia region also moved. The Wallachian Hospodar Mavrogheni left only 30,000 soldiers to defend his own territory and attack the Transylvanian routes. Another Ottoman corps under Serbian command of Abda Pasha (10,000 men) was located near Niš, from where they were to observe the movements of the main imperial army and come to the rescue of Belgrade, should the need arise[43].

In issue 70 from early September, the editor-in-chief reported on the bloody battle that took place on August 1 near Focşani in Moldavia between the combined Austrian-Russian forces and the Turkish army. Two issues later he published the official Austrian report about this battle, probably reprinted from one of the German newspapers. The Imperial unit was commanded by Prince Federick Joseph von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld[44] and the Russian – by General Suvorov. The Ottoman army, which encamped the Putna River at Focşani, was under the command of Dervish Mehmed Pasha, a three-tug serasker, as well as the two-tug Osman Pasha and Suleiman Pasha.

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[41] GW, August 15, 1789, No. 65, p. [4]. On the subject of the fortress, see F. Taubmann, *Vita e fatti eroici del Barone Gedeone di Laudon, tradotta la prima volta dal tedesco*, parte 1, Firenze 1790, pp. 18–36; G.B. Malleson, *Loudon: A Sketch Of The Military Life Of Gideon Ernest, Freiherr Von Loudon, Sometimes Generalissimo Of The Austrian Forces*, London 1884, pp. 223–226. We should add here that the siege of Berbir cost the Austrians 254,000 Kaiser-Goldgulden. The Turkish garrison sailed to Banja Luka, where it was not accepted. GW, August 19, 1789, No. 66, p. [2]; September 5, No. 71, p. [4].

[42] GW, September 2, 1789, No. 70, supplement, p. [3].

[43] GW, August 8, 1789, No. 63, p. [2]; August 19, No. 66, supplement, p. [2]; August 29, No. 69, p. [4]; September 2, No. 70, supplement, p. [3].

[44] See C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil II (*Bninski–Cordov*), Wien 1857, pp. 395–398.

Duke Coburg, having reported that he was preparing for the Turkish army's attack, turned to Suvorov, who was camped near Bârlad, and asked him for help. In response to this appeal, the Russian general at the head of a unit of 6000 men set off in a fast march, covering 10 miles within 24 hours. On the night of July 28, the Russians merged with the 15,000-strong Coburg's corps, located in the Adjud area on the Seret River. On the following day, three bridges were built over the Trotuş River, after which, on July 30, the allied army crossed the river in three columns, heading first towards Călimăneşti and then towards Mărăşeşti. After a short stop, on the same day in the evening the troops set off on their way. Having received news of the approaching Turkish picket, Suvorov sent 1500 Cossacks against them, but they were scattered by the enemy. The commander of the Austrian regiment, Major Michael Baron von Kienmayer[45], disregarded the greater numbers of the opponent and assaulted the Turks with great impetus, forcing them to flee. Then he reached the Putna River, drove Osman Pasha out of the camp, which he then burned down.

Meanwhile, the combined Austrian-Russian army continued the march. On July 31, it crossed the Putna River on pontoon bridge in the morning, and then, in battle formation, it advanced by another mile, approaching the Turkish fortifications near Focşani. The right wing of the enemy troops stood in a fortification set with cannons, the left wing, consisting of cavalry, stretched on the plain. Suvorov ordered a cavalry attack and Coburg sent Spleny's division into battle. The Turks responded with a powerful round of cannon fire. The Austrian ride under the command of Colonel Massaros, supported by the rifle fire of the Karl Schröder battalion, approached the left flank of the enemy and hit the sipahi with such an impetus that they immediately scattered and fled behind Focşani. Three other hussar divisions with bare sabres attacked the Janissaries in the same wing, who were just retreating to the nearby St Samuel's monastery. At the same time, the Russians and the Karaichay's unit attacked the entrenched Turkish right wing, forcing the enemy to retreat[46]. Colonel Karl von Auersperg, commander of the Karl Schröder battalion, tried to seize the monastery where the Janissaries took refuge, but was killed while trying to break through the gate. Soon Prince Coburg arrived

[45] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.* p. 268; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil XI (*Károlyi–Kiwisch und Nachträge*), Wien 1864, pp. 244–251.

[46] J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 282–283.

there at the head of a battalion of volunteers, bringing cannons. The Austrians broke through the monastery walls and came inside, cutting down all their enemies. The rest of the Turkish army (more than 30,000 soldiers) fled from the battlefield in great panic. The cavalry withdrew to Rymnik and Buzău, Janissaries to Brăila, leaving the whole camp for the victors, along with the artillery, well-stocked warehouses and army coffers. About 1500 Turkish soldiers died in the battle and 96 were taken prisoner. The Austrian losses were much smaller: 25 killed and 70 wounded. Among the fallen were the aforementioned Count Auersperg, Count Orelly and 20 other officers. The victors took 16 flags and 10 cannons. After the battle General Suvorov returned to his former position on the Prut, and Coburg entered the Wallachia, protecting Transylvania from enemy attack. As a token of appreciation, Joseph II gave the Russian commander a valuable golden snuffbox encrusted with diamonds[47].

The main imperial army in Banat, with almost 100,000 soldiers, could not boast similar successes. Initially it was camped in Lugoj, then near Opovo and Mehadia, and from May 28 in the region of Bela Crkva and Pančevo. Hadik's activities in this area were basically limited to protecting the vulnerable routes against enemy attacks[48]. Łuskina wrote that the reason for the Austrian army's

[47] GW, September 2, 1789, No. 70, supplement, p. [3]; September 5, No. 71, supplement, p. [2]; September 9, No. 72, pp. [3–4]; September 12, No. 73, p. [2]. For details on the Battle of Focşani, see F. Taubmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–50; F. Anthing, *History of the campaigns of Count Alexander Suworow Rymnikski, field-marshal-general in the service of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of all the Russians: with a preliminary sketch of his private life and character*, vol. II, London 1799, pp. [55–71]; F.C. Schlosser, *History of the Eighteenth Century and of the Nineteenth Till the Overthrow of the French Empire with Particular Reference to Mental Cultivation and Progress*, vol. VI, London 1844, pp. 166–167; M.Z. Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 292; A. Andrusiewicz, *Katarzyna Wielka. Prawda i mit*, Warszawa 2012, p. 495. In historical literature there are different data concerning both the number of troops that fought at Focşani, as well as the losses incurred by the armies. It is generally reported that the imperial forces amounted to 18,000 and the Russian forces to 7,000 soldiers. See e.g. I. de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, London 1981, p. 409; F. Anthing, *op. cit.*, p. [71]; W. Kalinka, *op. cit.*, p. 475. According to Andrzej Andrusiewicz (*op. cit.*, p. 495), the Austrian commander had 12,000 soldiers under orders, and Suvorov – only 5000. Turkish losses amounted to 1500–2000 killed and about 300 taken prisoner. The allied forces had 400 dead. See S.S. Montefiore, *Potiomkin, książę książąt*, Warszawa 2000, p. 497; idem, *Katarzyna Wielka i Potiomkin*, Warszawa 2013, p. 525; F. Anthing, *op. cit.*, p. [71].

[48] GW, May 30, 1789, No. 43, supplement, p. [3]; June 20, No. 49, supplement, p. [3]; June 27, No. 51, supplement, p. [2]; July 1, No. 52, p. [3]; July 4, No. 53, p. [3].

inaction was a shortage of supplies[49]. Not without significance was also the poor state of health of the Commander-in-Chief, about which 'Gazeta' reported from time to time[50]. In August, the emperor summoned the gravely ill Hadik to Vienna, appointing Field-Marshal Laudon in his place, whom he ordered to take over Belgrade. To this end, Laudon began the concentration of troops in the area of Semlin, where he founded the headquarters and where Archduke Francis and General of the Artillery Karl Clemens, Count Pellegrini arrived in early September[51]. On August 29, the breaking of the Serbian armistice, concluded in November of the previous year, was announced[52]. The imperial army in Banat was ordered to march to Syrmia. On September 12 it crossed the Danube above Ujpalanka and the following day – the Sava River on a boat bridge. On September 14, the Austrians surrounded the fortress and started digging tunnels. Belgrade was a well-fortified and food-supplied fortress, defended by a Turkish garrison of 8000 to 25,000 soldiers, according to various reports. Laudon had at his disposal about 50,000 men and a multitude of heavy artillery (37 24-pound cannons, 54 18-pound cannons, 36 12-pound cannons and 50 mortars of various calibre). The corps of General François Sébastien de Croix Count de Clerfayt[53] stayed in the vicinity. It was meant to repel the attack of the former Belgrade commander, serasker Abda Pasha, who was heading there from Semendria with 30,000–40,000 soldiers[54].

Łuskina regularly informed about the progress of the siege army, printing detailed reports from the Belgrade camp. He praised Laudon's prudence and valour[55], and was critical of the Ottomans'

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[49] GW, July 4, 1789, No. 53, p. [3].

[50] See e.g. GW, September 5, 1789, No. 71, p. [4]; September 23, No. 76, supplement, p. [3].

[51] C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil XXI (*O'Donnell–Perényi*), Wien 1870, pp. 440–443.

[52] GW, December 31, 1788, No. 105, supplement, p. [3]; January 7, 1789, No. 2, supplement, p. [4].

[53] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 284–287.

[54] GW, September 12, 1789, No. 73, pp. [2–3]; September 26, No. 77, p. [3]; October 3, No. 79, p. [3] and supplement, p. [3]; October 7, No. 80, supplement, pp. [2–3]; October 14, No. 82, p. [4] and supplement, p. [3]; October 17, No. 83, supplement, p. [3]; October 21, No. 84, supplement, p. [3]. Report on the crossing of the Austrian front guard through Sava on September 10/11 – GW, October 10, 1789, No. 81, supplement, pp. [2–3].

[55] For example GW, October 21, 1789, No. 84, p. [3]: 'Laudon's Field-Marshal riding on horseback is often very close to the battery, and flying bullets don't bother him at all'.

ability to fortify strongholds. He wrote in one of the issues: 'The Turks in Belgrade have so far shown themselves to be at least the same people of no experience in the art of defending and sieging fortresses, as their brethren in Novi and Berbir had. Instead of what they should have done, namely if not prevent the crossing of our [imperial troops] over the river Sava with all their might, then at least hinder them substantially, they allowed us to cross in peace and did not even think about setting up on Mount Dedina, i.e. Vracha, two very important positions. Their inability to do so seemed clearer every day, because during the day they often shoot a lot [...], while at night, when they should be the most active, all they do is shout "Halla, halla!" and they do not even think to light up the square and break down and destroy our work in a night--time battery'[56].

On September 17, 1789, Belgrade was completely blocked, and on September 29, Field-Marshal Laudon issued an order to start the assault. On that day in the evening the artillery bombardment of the fortress began, and the following day at around 9:00 am the Austrians launched an attack on it with four columns. In a short time all the suburbs from the Danube to the Sava were captured and manned with their own crew. Laudon's emissary, sent with the demand to surrender the fortress, heard an arrogant response from the commandant Osman Pasha: 'As long as my beard does not catch fire I will not surrender'[57]. Several days later, on October 8, the terms of the capitulation were agreed. The crew (7000 soldiers) were allowed to leave free 'with movables belonging to individual persons'. The garrison was sent back to Orşova (Romanian Orşova) under Austrian escort. The conquerors took over the entire artillery (351 cannons of various calibre, 10 iron cannons, 34 bronze mortars, 50 iron chaika guns), substantial amount of ammunition and food, more than 20 chaikas and 45 smaller ships. During the siege about 2000 Turkish soldiers died and 1700 were wounded. Austrian losses amounted to 289 dead and 732 wounded[58].

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[56] GW, October 21, 1789, No. 84, p. [2].

[57] GW, October 28, 1789, No. 86, supplement, p. [3].

[58] GW, October 21, 1789, No. 84, pp. [2–3]; October 28, No. 86, supplement, pp. [2–3]; November 4, No. 88, supplement, pp. [2–3]; November 11, No. 90, p. [4]; November 14, No. 91, supplement, pp. [2–3]. More on the siege and occupation of Belgrade, see F. Taubmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–79, 109–122; G.B. Malleson, *op. cit.*, pp. 230–232. See also W. Kalinka, *op. cit.*, p. 476. When sending Laudon the Order of Maria Theresa, the emperor said that 'as a reward for his merits, he

At the news of the occupation of Belgrade, the German emperor was beside himself with joy. Not surprisingly, it was the first serious success of his army. On October 14, in the metropolitan church in Vienna, the solemn *Te Deum* was sung to celebrate the victory. Joseph II decorated Laudon with the Order of Mary Theresa with a diamond-encrusted star, worth 60,000 Kaiser-Goldgulden, and allowed him to wear it, although it was the privilege reserved to the monarch himself as the great master of the order. In addition, the General of the Artillery Christoph Count von Wallis[59] was made Field-Marshal and Governor of Belgrade and Serbia, and the Field-Marshal Lieutenant Johann Georg Count von Browne[60] was promoted to General of the Artillery and Commander of Belgrade. General Wilhelm Klebeck[61], who brought news of the occupation of the fortress, received a golden snuffbox encrusted with diamonds worth 2000 ducats[62].

At the end of October 'Gazeta Warszawska' reported another great success of the allied forces against the Turkish army, achieved on September 22 on the Rymnik River (tributary of the Siret) in Moldavia. After the defeat of the Turks at Focşani, the Grand Vizier crossed the Danube at the head of the army of 100,000 men and set up a camp near Galați. He intended to join forces with the Wallachian Hospodar Mavrogheni to crush the Coburg corps. Unfortunately for the Turks, the Austrians intercepted a letter from the Ottoman commander, in which he revealed his plans to Mavrogheni. Informed of the danger, Suvorov came to help with 8000 men. The Austrian general had 27,000 men under his command. The reconnaissance reported that the Ottomans do not expect any attacks from the opponent. Suvorov took command of all Austrian-Russian forces and gave the order to attack. 'A sudden fear gripped the Turks', reported Father Łuskina, 'especially when they unexpectedly saw Russian troops under Suvorov's command.

can give him no more than what he himself carries with his heart'. The medal was to remain in the family of the Field-Marshal until the expiration of the men's line, and then, for 120,000 Keiser-Gulden, return to the treasure. GW, November 14, 1789, No. 82, supplement, p. [3].

[59] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 196–198; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil L (*Ullik–Vassimon und Vastag–Villani*), Wien 1884, p. 271.

[60] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–251; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil II, pp. 164–165.

[61] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 256–258; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil XII (*Klácel–Korzistka*), Wien 1864, pp. 26–27.

[62] GW, November 4, 1789, No. 88, supplement, pp. [2–3].

Their retreat was so hasty that only 31 slaves were brought by our [Austrian] men, but more than 4000 Turks were cut down and abandoned 80 cannons were seized on the battlefield [...]. During this sudden flight of the Turks, the bridge over the Rymnik River collapsed underneath them, and many of them drowned"[63].

In the November issues of the newspaper, readers could learn about further progress of the imperial army in Serbia and the Wallachian region. On October 7, Prince Friedrich Wilhelm von Hohenlohe--Kirchberg[64] defeated 10,000 Turkish soldiers under the command

[63] GW, October 28, 1789, No. 86, pp. [2–3] (cited by *ibidem*, p. [3]). For details on the course of the clash, see *Erläuterter Plan von der berühmten Schlacht bei Martinjestie in der Wallachey, in welcher unter den Befehlen sr. Durchlaucht des Herzogs Friedrich Josias von Sachsenkoburg, k.k. Generals der Kavallerie (nunmehrigen Feldmarschalls,) und des militärischen Theresienordens Großkreuz, der Großvezier mit 100000 seiner besten Truppen am 22. Sept. 1789 entscheidend geschlagen wurde*, Prag 1789; F. Taubmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–59; F.C. Schlosser, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–168; F. Anthing, *op. cit.*, pp. [79–107] (information that Turkish losses totalled 10,000 soldiers, of whom 5000 died in battle, 2000 were killed in the forest or died from wounds, and 3000 drowned in Rymnik. The losses on the other side were insignificant – Austrians had 115 fallen in battle and 300 wounded, Russians only 57 killed and 110 wounded). See also S.S. Montefiore, *Potiomkin...*, p. 499; idem, *Katarzyna Wielka i Potiomkin...*, pp. 526–527 (this author states that the Turks lost 15,000 soldiers in battle); W. Kalinka, *op. cit.*, p. 475; I. de Madariaga, *op. cit.*, p. 409; and *Erläuterter Plan von der berühmten Schlacht bei Martinjestie...*, pp. 5–24. At this point, let us add that in recognition of his merits, the Empress named Suvorov 'Rymnicki' [of Rymnik], awarded him the Order of St George of the First Class, decorated with diamonds, and gave him a sword with an inscription: 'The Conquerors of the Great Vizier', encrusted with diamonds (the value of both gifts was 60,000 roubles), and promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel of the Preobrazhensky regiment, and Emperor Joseph II made him a count. Officers and soldiers of both corps were also adequately remunerated by the Tsarist. The first received a promotion and an award, the second – payment in cash. Those who stood out in the battle in a special way were awarded a medal with the inscription 'Rymnik'. See F. Anthing, *op. cit.,* pp. [110–111]; F.C. Schlosser, *op. cit.*, p. 169; A. Andrusiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 495, 497; S.S. Montefiore, *Potiomkin...*, p. 501; idem, *Katarzyna Wielka i Potiomkin...*, p. 529.

Elsewhere Łuskina reported that in Constantinople the defeat over Rymnik was at first treated as an unfortunate 'tentative'. The Grand Vizier did not mention the defeat he had suffered. He later reported to the Porte that he had lost 20,000 soldiers, all artillery and equipment in the battle. Several months later he was killed for that. The Sultan appointed a former Kapudan Pasha Gazi Hassan in his place. GW, December 26, 1789, No. 103, supplement, p. [3]; January 27, 1790, No. 8, p. [2].

[64] See *Oesterreichisches Militär-Konversations-Lexikon. Unter Mitwirkung mehrerer Offiziere der k.k. Armee*, redigirt und hrsg. von J. Hirtenfeld, Bd. III (*H–Kulm*), Wien 1852, pp. 248–249; C. von Wurzbach, *op. cit.*, Teil IX–X (*Hibler–Hysel und Zablonowski–Karolina*), Wien 1863, pp. 196–197.

of Kara Mustafa and seized his camp with all the ammunition and artillery (five cannons) at Portseni. On the battlefield 1500 Ottoman soldiers died. When they heard of the fall of Belgrade, the Turks surrendered Semendria on the Danube (the capitulation took place under similar conditions as the Belgrade fortress). Immediately afterwards they withdrew from Požarevac (October 12)[65]. Łuskina wrote that after occupying Belgrade, Field-Marshal Laudon set out for Orsova, located on a Danube island near Mehadia. The fortress was not very well fortified, so the Austrians expected to occupy it soon. On October 27 the garrison was called to surrender, and after the request was denied, the firing began. The siege was commanded by Archduke Francis himself, for which he was honoured with the Grand Cross of the Order of Maria Theresa[66]. In November the Austrians also occupied Lipníc and Losča[67] on the Drina River in Serbia and drove the opponent out of the whole area[68].

As far as the activities of Catherine II's army are concerned, Łuskina did not report much on this subject throughout the spring and summer; in fact, there was not much to write about. The commander-in-chief of the Russian land and maritime troops, Prince Potemkin, stayed with his main forces near Ochakiv until the end of August 1789, ready to defend the fortress acquired with such difficulty. At the same time, the Ukrainian Army under Prince Nikolai Repnin's command was preparing to attack Bender. In issue 85 of the end of October, 'Gazeta Warszawska' informed about the blockade of that fortress, and two issues later it wrote about the beginning of the firing of Izmail, from where Repnin had earlier driven out Gazi Hassan's troops, who withdrew to Kilya. The Russians also stormed Odziaba castle, which was poorly defended. The most of the few small crew (200 soldiers) were killed and 80 people were taken prisoner. The heavy artillery fire prevented the Ottoman fleet from coming to the rescue. During the fighting one Turkish ship was burnt down and two were seized[69].

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[65] GW, November 4, 1789, No. 88, supplement, p. [2]; November 14, No. 91, p. [4]; November 18, No. 92, p. [3]. See M.Z. Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

[66] See J. Hirtenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 356–383.

[67] These places could not be identified.

[68] GW, November 25, 1789, No. 94, p. [4]; December 2, No. 96, p. [4]; December 12, No. 99, p. [3]. See W. Kalinka, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

[69] GW, October 24, 1789, No. 85, supplement, p. [2]; October 31, No. 87, supplement, p. [3].

On October 19 Russian troops began the siege of Bender, one of the most important Turkish fortresses with strong fortifications. It was defended by a garrison of 7000 to 10,000 soldiers[70] (according to various reports). 'They have enough food to last for two years', said Father Łuskina. 'The commandant of the fortress sent many redundant men and women out of the city early, even before the beginning of the siege; so it seems that the Turks want to resist the most'[71]. Meanwhile, Potemkin's army, after capturing the Kaushany (Romanian Căuşeni), on September 25 took by storm the fortified port of Khadjibey (now Odessa) at the mouth of the Dniester River. They captured the Palanca Castle and forced the 1500-man Turkish garrison in Akkerman to surrender. The victors seized all the artillery (600 cannons) and excellent war supplies. The newspaper wrote that thanks to the occupation of Akkerman, the Russians took hold of both banks of the Dniester and keep the Bender fortress under suitable siege. The latter surrendered on November 5. The Tsaritsa rewarded Potemkin and his soldiers with diamonds 'in the shape of a laurel wreath' and sent them 100,000 roubles[72].

In Kuban, where General Tökele's branch was operating, the Russians did not do that well. In issue 74 of the newspaper Łuskina reported the defeat of Russian troops that lost to Battal Pasha, after which the Turks entered the Crimea and captured the seaside fortress Yenikale. The Kabardian Tatars broke the Russian lines between Yekaterinburg and Mozdok and demolished the fortress of St George[73].

The Russo-Turkish War, also known as the Great Eastern War, was not, of course, limited to land-based operations. However, the publisher of 'Gazeta Warszawska' did not write much about the battles at sea, although it is difficult to say whether it was because of the lack of interest in this subject or because the magazines to which Łuskina subscribed provided insufficient information about it, as they were the main source of knowledge about the world and the conflict in

[70] GW, May 2, 1789, No. 35, p. [3]; November 25, No. 94, p. [4]. According to R.K. Massie (*op. cit.*, p. 476) 20,000 soldiers were stationed in the fortress.

[71] GW, November 25, 1789, No. 94, p. [4].

[72] GW, November 28, 1789, No. 95, p. [2]; December 23, No. 102, p. [4] (here information that the Russians found 300 guns and a significant amount of ammunition in Bender); January 13, 1790, No. 4, pp. [3–4].

[73] GW, September 16, 1789, No 74, p. [2]. More on the activities in Kuban, see P.O. Bobrowskij, *Kubanskij jegierskij korpus 1786–1796 gg.*, Pietierburg 1893, pp. 43–45.

progress for him. The latter seems more likely. As mentioned, the naval forces of the Porte in 1789 consisted of about 130 smaller and larger vessels, of which several (initially 15, then 22)[74] were to operate on the Adriatic Sea. They were commanded by Grand Admiral Hussein Küçük Pasha, appointed to replace the deposed Gazi Hassan. On May 10, the Turkish Black Sea Fleet sailed out, taking a course on Berezan. They intended first to reclaim the island, which was lost in the last campaign, because without it the siege of Ochakiv could not be properly supported[75]. The Russian fleet in the Black Sea, under the command of Rear Admiral Marko Ivanovich Voinovich, consisted of seven line ships and 22 frigates. In addition, the Russians had a fleet of 24 galleys and 187 various type of lifeboats, in the waters of the Dnieper estuary. They also managed to set up several highly operative privateer squadrons on the Adriatic, commanded, among others, by Major Lambro Cazzioni, Greek in the service of the Empress of All--Russia. His actions were so taxing for Turkish ships that some vessels had to be transferred to the Mediterranean Sea. One of the successes of the Russian fleet in the discussed campaign (the only one recorded by the Łuskina's magazine) was the occupation of the island of Zea in the Archipelago[76].

The last issues of 'Gazeta Warszawska' from 1789 are filled with reports of the siege of Orsova. In order to force the fortress to surrender, Laudon decided to occupy the heavily fortified castle of Cladova, from where food was delivered to the defenders. The garrison was summoned to surrender on November 11. 'Initially, the Turkish commander was against the capitulation, then he demanded three days of ceasefire to think about it, and when granted his request, he surrendered at the last [...] without firing even once' – wrote Łuskina. A garrison consisting of one thrice-tug pasha, one double-tug pasha, an agha of the Janissaries, a sipahi agha, 324 cavalrymen and 153 Janissaries were free to leave for Vidin. 27 bronze cannons, four iron cannons, lots of ammunition and provisions were found in the warehouses. Together with Cladova,

[74] Literature cites different data. There are three liners and eight frigates. See P.P. Wieczorkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

[75] GW, July 8, 1789, No. 54, p. [3]; July 18, No. 57, supplement, p. [3]; August 5, No. 62, p. [4]; November 11, No. 90, supplement, p. [2].

[76] GW, May 23, 1789, No. 41, supplement, p. [2]; July 11, No. 55, p. [3] and supplement, p. [3]; November 25, No. 94, p. [4]. More on maritime activities in the campaign under discussion, see J. Gozdawa-Gołębiowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–144; P.P. Wieczorkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 410–411.

the Austrians seized a rich and hardly destroyed by the war county of Kraina, consisting of more than 150 cities and towns[77].

Upon receiving the news that Cladova was taken, Laudon sent a messenger to Orsova with a demand to surrender the fortress. The commander asked to be given several days to think about it. On November 19, the Austrian commander repeated his demand for surrender. A round of cannon fire answered him. A long-lasting siege of the fortress began and turned into a blockade. The editor-in-chief reported that the imperial army standing at Orsova 'has to endure a lot of inconvenience due to the severe temperatures there, so cold so that the sentries change every half hour. Meanwhile, soldiers do not lose commitment because, with the special efforts of the monarch, all provisions and wine are provided with abundance and free of charge'[78]. It was not until April 1790 that the fortress finally surrendered[79].

The coming winter halted further military action and the enemy armies spread out to wait it out. Imperial troops stretched the cordon from Cladova to Focşani, securing the peace of Wallachia. The Potemkin's army was divided. Four infantry regiments under the command of General Krechetnikov remained in Bender, the rest of the infantry was located in Bessarabia, while cavalry in White Russia and the *gubernyas* along the border[80]. The fighting parties joined the negotiation table. Peace negotiations took place in Iaşi, Prince Taurida's quarters, and ended in failure due to the excessive demands of Catherine II and the Porte's reluctance to make far-reaching concessions[81]. The superpowers involved in the conflict began preparations for a new war campaign[82].

In conclusion, it should be stated that 'Gazeta Warszawska' published detailed reports from the Russian-Turkish war, which Austria joined in February 1788 as an ally of Catherine II. It printed

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[77] GW, December 16, 1789, No. 100, supplement, p. [2].

[78] GW, January 23, 1790, No. 7, p. [4].

[79] GW, December 16, 1789, No. 100, supplement, p. [3]; December 23, No. 102, p. [3].

[80] GW, January 16, 1790, No. 5, supplement, p. [3]; January 23, No. 7, supplement, p. [3].

[81] The Tsaritsa demanded that Crimea, Kuban and Ochakiv be granted to Russia, and for the Austrian ally of acquisitions in the form of Belgrade and Khotyn with the whole surrounding area. Turkey wanted to keep Wallachia at least. See e.g. GW, January 23, 1790, No. 7, p. [4].

[82] For instance, GW, January 20, 1790, No. 6, supplement, p. [2]; January 23, No. 7, supplement, p. [3]; January 27, No. 8, supplement, p. [3]; January 30, No. 9, p. [2]; February 13, No. 13, supplement, p. [3]; February 20, No. 15, p. [4].

lists of land and sea forces, information about commanders, described the course of land battles along with rather insignificant skirmishes. From time to time it also reported on activities at sea. Łuskina's sympathies lay on the side of the Empire of All-Russia, as well as its ally, Austria. The editor strove to demonstrate the superiority of the allied forces over their opponent. He praised the courage of Russian and imperial soldiers and the prudence and courage of their commanders. He also tried to justify the lack of major actions on the Austrian side in the initial period of the campaign. He perceived the Turkish army as a chaotic and unorganised mass, unable to demonstrate knowledge of the art of besieging and defending fortresses, although at the same time he did not deny its battle and bravura bordering on madness and, above all, contempt for his own life, typical for romantic heroes and people fighting for ideas.

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Małgorzata Karkocha

'Gazeta Warszawska' o wielkiej wojnie wschodniej (kampania 1789 roku)

Artykuł przybliża wybraną kampanię wielkiej wojny wschodniej, która toczyła się w latach 1787–1792 między Turcją a Rosją i sprzymierzoną z nią Austrią. Źródłem informacji wykorzystanych przez Autorkę są doniesienia 'Gazety Warszawskiej' – czołowego pisma o charakterze informacyjnym, ukazującego się w latach 1774–1793 pod redakcją eks-jezuity, księdza Stefana Łuskiny. Przez cały okres trwania konfliktu łuskinowska gazeta regularnie (niemal w każdym numerze) relacjonowała działania na froncie wschodnim. Ksiądz redaktor był zwolennikiem orientacji prorosyjskiej, co nie pozostało bez wpływu na treść przekazywanych informacji. Publikowane w 'Gazecie Warszawskiej' wiadomości z wojny wschodniej dobierał w taki sposób, aby wykazać wyższość oręża rosyjskiego nad flotą i armią osmańską oraz dowodzić nieuchronności klęski przeciwników carycy.

Słowa kluczowe: 'Gazeta Warszawska', polska prasa informacyjna, Stefan Łuskina, wojna rosyjsko-turecka 1789–1792, kampania 1789 roku, XVIII wiek.