

RUSSIA AND THE BLACK SEA – THE CAMPAIGN OF 1738  
IN CRIMEA  
(A REPORT BY THE RUSSIAN FIELD MARSHAL LASCY)

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Tsar Peter the Great (1689–1725) was the first monarch who started to put into practice the old Russian projects of gaining access to the Black Sea (and, further on, to the Straits and the “warm seas”). The Russian-Ottoman war of 1686–1700 (as part of the war of 1683–1699 between the Porte and the member states of the Holy League) was won by Russia. By the Russian-Ottoman peace treaty of Istanbul (1700), Russia wrested from the Ottoman Empire the fortified ports of Azov and Taganrog (thus gaining access to Azov Sea, but not to the Black Sea as well), and a part of the Ukrainian steppe lying between the lower course of the Boug and the lower course of the Don. Moreover, the Russians were able to keep their military fleet in the Azov Sea, created in 1696<sup>1</sup>. The following ten years of tensioned peace were followed by the Russian-Ottoman war of 1710–1711. Turning to good account Russia’s involvement against Sweden in the Northern War (1700–1721), the Porte won this war and in 1711–1714 regained all the Ottoman territories ceded to Russia in 1700. Thus, the Ottoman Empire became again the sole master of the Black Sea basin<sup>2</sup>.

Neither Peter the Great nor his successors – Catherine I (1725–1727), Peter II (1727–1730) and Anna Ivanovna (1730–1740) – could come to terms with the territorial losses suffered in 1711-1714 to the benefit of the Porte. They put in great efforts so that Russia might recuperate these losses as soon as possible and eventually gain the much coveted access to the Black Sea. However, given the international background, the fact that the Porte was comfortable with the Russian-Ottoman border as it was and wished to keep the peace with Russia, the Russian

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<sup>1</sup> Cemal Tükin, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Devrinde Boğazlar Meselesi*, İstanbul, 1947, pp. 15-31; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı*, vol. I, Ankara, 1951, pp. 38-48; idem, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, Ankara, 1970, pp. 1-15; S.F. Oreškova, *Russko-tureşkie otnoşeniia v naceale XVIII v.*, Moskva, 1971, pp. 26-33; Mustafa Ali Mehmet, *Istoria turcilor*, Bucureşti, 1976, pp. 230-249; N.N. Molceanov, *Diplomatia Piotra Velikogo*, Moskva, 1990, pp. 33-162.

<sup>2</sup> C. Tükin, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-40; A.N. Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı*, vols. I-II, Ankara, 1951-1953, pp. 49-705; idem, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, pp. 15-21; idem, *İsveç Kırallı XII. Karl'ın Türkiye'de Kalışı ve bu sıralarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, İstanbul, 1943; S.F. Oreškova, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-187; N.N. Molceanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-305; Mihai Maxim, *Culegere de texte otomane*, Bucureşti, 1974, pp. 118-125; M.A. Mehmet, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-255; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Anglo-Dutch Mediation in the Russo-Turkish Peace Treaty of the Prut (1712–1713)*, in “Southeastern Europe”, 5, Part 1, 1978, pp. 88-101; Veniamin Ciobanu, *Les Pays Roumains au seuil du 18-e siècle (Charles XII et les Roumains)*, Bucarest, 1984, pp. 87-154.

efforts of expansion in other directions as well, and Russia's internal problems, the Russian-Ottoman peace could be kept for 21 years (1714–1735)<sup>3</sup>. Russia was able to embark upon a new anti-Ottoman war only in October 1735. The Russian leaders believed that circumstances were propitious and were counting on military support from Iran and Austria. They were also counting on the favorable neutrality of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Saxony, England and Holland<sup>4</sup>. Austria entered this war as an ally of Russia in July 1737<sup>5</sup>. Thus, against her will, the Porte was drawn into the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739. Quite fortunately for the Ottomans, Iran broke her anti-Ottoman commitments sanctioned by the Russian-Iranian treaty of March 1735 and signed the peace with the Porte in October 1736, thus ending the Ottoman-Iranian war started in 1730<sup>6</sup>.

In the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman war of 1735–1739, Russia had a minimal objective and a maximal objective. The minimal objective was to reestablish the Russian-Ottoman border set by the bilateral treaty of 1700. This border gave Russia access to the Azov Sea (but not to the Black Sea as well). Russia's maximal objective was to annex the entire northern littoral of the Black Sea, from the Dnestr (or Danube Mouths) to the Kuban (Crimea included). As to the Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia), Russia's maximal objective stipulated their union into a buffer state under the "protection of Russia"<sup>7</sup>. In her turn, Austria had as a maximal objective the annexation of some smaller territories on the border

<sup>3</sup> N.N. Molceanov, *op.cit.*, pp. 305-431; Boris Nolde, *La formation de l'Empire russe. Études, notes et documents*, vol. II, Paris, 1953, pp. 20-22; L.A. Nikiforov, *Vnešniaia politika Rossii v poslednie godi Severnoi voini. Ništadtskii mir*, Moskva, 1959, pp. 251-333; G.A. Nekrasov, *Rol Rossii v evropeiskoi mejdunarodnoi politike 1725–1739 gg.*, Moskva, 1976, pp. 74-81; M.A. Mehmet, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-263; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză între 1733–1739 (I). Anglia și războiul de succesiune a Poloniei (1733–1735)*, in SMIM, t. XVII, 1999, pp. 177-181.

<sup>4</sup> G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-243; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză între 1733–1739 (II). Anglia și războiul austro-ruso-turc (1736–1739)*, in SMIM, t. XVIII, 2000, p. 95.

<sup>5</sup> J.W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa*, Theil V, Gotha, 1857, pp. 720-727; N. Iorga, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, Band IV, Gotha, 1912, pp. 430-434; L. Cassels, *The Struggle for the Ottoman Empire: 1717–1740*, London, 1966, pp. 167-191; K.A. Roederer, *The Reluctant Ally: Austria's Policy in the Austro-Turkish War (1737–1739)*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University, 1972, pp. 32-68; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-104.

<sup>6</sup> I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. IV, part I, Ankara, 1988 (fourth edition), pp. 233-234.

<sup>7</sup> Boris Nolde, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 23-24; G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 245, 258-260; A. Kociubinskii, *Graf Andrei Ivanovici Osterman i razdel Turčii. Iz istorii Vostocinogo voprosa. Voina piati let (1735–1739)*, Odessa, 1899, pp. 129-131; E.B. Şulman, *O poziții Rossii v konflikte s Turčiei v 1735–1736 gg.*, in "Balkanski Istoriceskii Sbornik", t. 3, 1973, pp. 8-9, 40; Leonid Boicu, *Principatele Române în raporturile politice internaționale (secolul al XVIII-lea)*, Iași, 1986, pp. 125-126.

with the Ottoman Empire, Moldavia and Wallachia. Austria's maximal objective was the annexation of Bosnia, Ottoman Serbia, the northwestern part of nowadays Bulgaria, Wallachia and, if possible, Moldavia<sup>8</sup>.

Even if at the beginning of the war everything seemed to indicate an easy and clear victory of Russia and Austria (on the rise) over the Porte (in decline), developments took a quite different turn. Under attack by Russia (October 1735) and Austria (July 1737), the Porte seemed to be in a desperate position. However, very soon, a number of factors combined and saved the Ottomans from disaster. These factors included the Russian-Austrian disagreements, Austria's military and financial weakness, the Russians' inability to capitalize on their military achievements, and the changes occurred in the international background in the spring of 1738, which determined Austria and Russia to quickly settle the peace with the Porte and imposed France, who was pro Ottoman, as a mediator<sup>9</sup>. On the contrary, the Ottomans were able to turn to good account the aforementioned factors and benefited from the political and diplomatic efforts made by Ambassador Villeneuve and from the expertise of Bonneval (the reformer of Ottoman artillery). They stalled the peace negotiations until the situation on the battle fields and the international background became as favorable as possible<sup>10</sup>. Under the circumstances, assisted by mediator Villeneuve and prevailing herself of her victories over the Austrians, the Porte gained important territories (Belgrade, northern Serbia and Oltenia) from Austria<sup>11</sup>. The territorial losses suffered by the

<sup>8</sup> N. Iorga, *op. cit.*, Bd. IV, pp. 426-427; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, part I, pp. 258-260; K.A. Roiderer, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-73; idem, *Futile Peace Making: Austria and the Congress of Nemirov (1737)*, in "Austrian History Yearbook", tomes XII-XIII, 1976-1977, pp. 100-150; E de Hurmuzaki, *Fragmente zur Geschichte der Rumänen*, vol. V, București, 1886, pp. 64-65; idem, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, supliment I, 1, București, 1886, p. 509, doc. 744; Keralio, *Histoire de la guerre des Russes et des Impériaux contre les Turcs en 1736, 1737, 1738, 1739 et de la paix de Belgrade qui la termina*, t. I, Paris, 1780, pp. 155-156; Alexandru Vasilescu, *Oltenia sub austrieci (1716-1739)*, I, *Istoria politică a Olteniei sub austrieci*, București, 1929, pp. 168-169; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>9</sup> G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-304; Rumiana Mihneva, *Rossia i Osmanskaia imperiia v mejdunarodnâh otnoşeniiah v seredine XVIII veka (1739-1756)*, Moskva, 1985, pp. 28-47.

<sup>10</sup> I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 279-297; Albert Vandal, *Une ambassade française en Orient sous Louis XV. La mission du marquis de Villeneuve (1728-1741)*, Paris, 1887, *passim*; Heinrich Benedikt, *Der Pascha Graf Alexander von Bonneval (1675-1747)*, Graz-Köln, 1959, pp. 119-133.

<sup>11</sup> I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 289-291; A. Vandal, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-388, 399-400; Al. Vasilescu, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 213-218; Vasile Mihordea, *Contribuție la istoria păcii de la Belgrad. 1739*, Craiova, 1935, pp. 15-16; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 228-237, 253-258; J. Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman*, vol. XIV, Paris, 1839, pp. 463-467; J.W. Zinkeisen, *op. cit.*, Theil V, pp. 785-798; N. Iorga, *op. cit.*, Bd. IV, pp. 445-446; N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercean, *Diplomația europeană în epoca modernă*, București, 1984, p. 179.

Porte to Russia were relatively small. Moreover, the Ottomans were able to block the Russians' access to the Black Sea<sup>12</sup>. The Russian-Ottoman and Austrian-Ottoman peace treaties were signed in Belgrade (7/18 September 1739). As already mentioned above, these successes were especially due to a number of external factors favorable to the Porte which concealed her weaknesses. For the Ottoman army was plagued by acts of mutiny and suffered several defeats by the Russian army (such as it had happened in 1730–1736, in the clash of the Ottomans with the Iranian army). The Ottoman finance and the entire Ottoman economy were increasingly weaker. The Ottoman decline was steady albeit slow. The events occurring in the following decades would make this situation ever clearer and cause the Porte serious military defeats and great territorial losses<sup>13</sup>.

Therefore, at the end of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739, despite great military, financial, political and diplomatic efforts, Russia was only able to achieve her minimal objective, namely the recuperation of the territories lost in 1711–1714 and the return to the Russian-Ottoman border of 1700. The Russians were thus gaining access to the Azov Sea, but not to the Black Sea as well. However, owing to the territorial gains of 1739, Russia was able to take an important step in the direction of the Black Sea<sup>14</sup>. In 1739–1768, she would increasingly consolidate her authority over these territories and develop considerably on the military, institutional and economic levels. As a result of the change in the international background to the detriment of the Porte, the long Russian-Ottoman peace (1739–1768) would end and a new Russian-Ottoman war would break out (1768–1774). The Porte would be unable this time to cope with the superior power of Russia and the latter would eventually gain access to the Black Sea<sup>15</sup>.

These were in short the causes, the development and the consequences of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739, launched by Russia in October 1735 under the form of a Russian-Ottoman war.

<sup>12</sup> C. Dapontes, *Ephémérides Daces ou Chronique de la guerre de quatre ans (1736–1739)*, vol. II, Paris, 1881 (ed. Émile Legrand), pp. 346-355; Abbé Laugier, *Histoire des négociations pour la paix conclue à Belgrade, le 18 septembre 1739, entre l'Empereur, la Russie et la Porte Ottomane par la médiation et sous la garantie de la France*, vol. II, Paris, 1768, pp. 336-354; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. 257; A. Vandal, *op. cit.*, pp. 394-398; Al. Vasilescu, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 218-220; V. Mihordea, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 292-294; R. Mihneva, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-39.

<sup>13</sup> On the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, see for instance: Yücel Özkaya, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı kurumları ve Osmanlı toplum yaşantısı*, Ankara, 1985.

<sup>14</sup> See n. 12.

<sup>15</sup> I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 365-427; R. Mihneva, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-111; E.I. Drujinina, *Kiuciuk-Kainardjiiskii mir 1774 g. (ego podgotovka i zakliucenie)*, Moskva, 1955, pp. 248-365; M.A. Mehmet, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-290.

I shall address in what follows the clashes of 1738 between the Russian and the Ottoman-Tatar troops, with a special focus on the Russian military campaign of 1738 in Crimea. I shall also take the opportunity to point out to a Russian document until now unemployed and left unknown (although published in its original version in Russia in 1906). The document in question is a report by the Russian Field Marshal Lascy of 30 June/11 July 1738, concerning the victory wrested the previous day against the Ottoman-Tatar troops in the area of the Perekop Isthmus, an event which enabled the Russians to enter the Crimean Peninsula.<sup>16</sup>

There are several reasons which prompted me to devote this article to the Russian-Ottoman clashes of 1738 and, especially, to the Russian military campaign in Crimea. On the one hand, the little attention given to the aforementioned issue in Romanian historiography<sup>17</sup>, and on the other hand its great impact on the final stage of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739 and its effects, which were felt not only in Russia, Austria or the Porte, but equally in Moldavia and Wallachia<sup>18</sup>.

In October–November 1735, the Russian military expedition against the Ottoman-Tatar fortifications of Perekop (the “northern gate” to the Crimean Peninsula) had fallen short of its goal<sup>19</sup>. On the contrary, the anti-Ottoman (and anti-Tatar) military campaigns undertaken by the Russian troops in 1736–1737 were successful. Mention should be made here that the main commanders of the Russian troops fighting in 1736–1739 against the Ottoman-Tatar troops were field marshals Münnich and Lascy. The former was of German extraction, and the latter of Irish extraction<sup>20</sup>. In 1736, the Russians conquered the fortified port of Azov (*Azak*) and rebuilt the fortified port of Taganrog (*Taygan*), which they had been forced to evacuate and destroy in early 1712. Additionally, they laid waste most of the Crimean Peninsula (including the capital of the Khanate of Crimea,

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<sup>16</sup> *Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoriceskogo Obščestva*, t. 124, Iuriev, 1906, pp. 63–64. This volume of *Sbornik* includes documents of the Ministry Cabinet (*Kabinet Ministrov*) of Russia dating to 1 July – 31 December 1738 (old style). The report of Field Marshal Lascy is accompanied by an order of 14/25 July 1738 by Vice-Chancellor A.I. Ostermann and Minister A.P. Volânskii to the Senate (Russian Government) concerning its publication and the celebration of the Russian victory of Perekop in all the Russian towns (*ibidem*, pp. 62–63).

<sup>17</sup> Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză între 1733–1739 (II) Anglia și războiul austro-ruso-turc (1736–1739) (continuare)*, in S.M.I.M., t. XIX, 2001, pp. 161–162.

<sup>18</sup> For the last stage in the aforementioned war and the role played by the Russian-Ottoman battles of 1738, see this article. For the outcome of this Russian-Austrian-Ottoman armed conflict, see notes 11–12.

<sup>19</sup> Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. I, pp. 11–13; G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 244–245.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză (I)*, pp. 179–180.

Bahçesaray). However, the imminent approach of the winter, flaws in provisioning, disease and the guerilla war carried out by the Tatar and Ottoman troops forced the Russian troops to withdraw from Crimea and winter in Russian Ukraine<sup>21</sup>. In the following year (1737), the army corps under the command of Field Marshal Münnich conquered the important Ottoman fortified ports of Oçakov and Kılburun. In its turn, the army corps under the command of Field Marshal Lascy laid waste most of the Crimean Peninsula, defeated in a number of clashes the Tatar and Ottoman troops and, upon the coming of the autumn, withdrew to winter in Russian Ukraine. In September 1737, Münnich's troops, after having left behind strong garrisons at Oçakov and Kılburun, returned to Russian Ukraine and settled down in winter camps. Except for the two aforementioned fortresses (to which added Azov and Taganrog, conquered in 1736), the Russians were forced to withdraw from all the territories they had conquered. The reasons were the same as in 1736 (the coming of the winter, the poor provisioning of the troops, disease, and the guerilla war carried out by the enemy)<sup>22</sup>. However, the Russian leaders were entitled to deem highly satisfactory the results of their troops in the anti-Ottoman and anti-Tatar military campaigns of 1736–1737. Practically, Russia had gained access to the Azov Sea, and access to the Black Sea as well.

The aforementioned Russian military successes were nonetheless put into shadow by the defeat of the allied Austrian troops and the political and diplomatic failures of Russia and Austria in the last months of 1737.

As already mentioned, in July 1737 Austria joined the war as an ally of Russia. The victories wrested by the Austrian troops at first (July–August 1737) were followed by a strong Ottoman counteroffensive. The Porte's troops were able to regain swiftly most of the territory recently occupied by the Austrians in Bosnia, Ottoman Serbia, the northwestern part of nowadays Bulgaria, Muntenia and Moldavia. Moreover, in the autumn of 1737, the Ottomans retook the greatest part

<sup>21</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 76, Sankt Petersburg, 1891, pp. 501-547 (the volume includes the correspondence with London of the English diplomats accredited to the capital of Russia, 1733–1736); *Sbornik*, t. 80, Sankt Petersburg, 1892, pp. 1-32 (the volume includes the correspondence with London of the English diplomats accredited to the capital of Russia, 1736–1739); Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. I, pp. 25-84; Cristoph-Hermann von Mannstein, *Mémoires historiques, politiques et militaires sur la Russie depuis l'année 1727 jusqu'à 1744, par le Général Manstein*, Paris, 1771, pp. 127-188; C. Dapontes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 3-9; N. Iorga, *op. cit.*, Bd. IV, p. 424; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 255-256; R. Mihneva, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-32; G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-248.

<sup>22</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 146-230 (reports sent from Sankt Petersburg, in 1737, by the English ambassador C. Rondeau to Lord Harrington); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-241; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. I, pp. 101-122; Mehmed Subhi, *Tarih*, Istanbul, 1198 H. (1783-1784), f. 99; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor. Istoria Moldovei între anii 1695-1754* (ed. N. Camariano and A. Camariano-Cioran), București, 1965, pp. 409-413; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 263-265; G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-257.

of Oltenia (Romanian territory annexed by Austria in 1718, by the Austrian-Ottoman peace treaty of Passarowitz). It was obvious that the Porte was considering taking offensive action against the Austrian troops in the following year (1738) as well<sup>23</sup>.

On the political and diplomatic levels, the most important event of the year 1737 was the Peace Congress of Nemirov (16 August – 11 November). This congress was held without the participation of a mediator. The two parties in conflict (the Porte and the Russian-Austrian alliance) negotiated directly. The congress ended in complete failure due to three factors: the exaggerate claims of Russia and Austria, the Russian-Austrian disagreement over the Romanian Principalities and the Bugeac, and the developments on the battle fields (the defeats suffered by the Austrians and the early withdrawal of the Russian troops in winter camps in September). On these grounds, the Porte rejected all the claims raised by Russia and Austria, ended the peace congress, and announced her intention to carry on with the war<sup>24</sup>.

After the failure of the Congress of Nemirov, the Russian Government was ever more tempted to settle a peace with the Porte based on the *uti possidetis* principle. This peace (beneficial to Russia) was to be settled through English-Dutch mediation. The failure of the Ottoman-Tatar attempt to retake Oceakov (16/27 October – 29 October/9 November 1737) made the Russians even more confident about being able to achieve this target<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> See n. 5.

<sup>24</sup> Mehmed Subhi, *op. cit.*, f. 113-114; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, pp. 393-395; E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, supplement I, 1, p. 505, doc. 738, p. 509, doc. 744; idem, *Fragmente*, vol. V, pp. 64-72; N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente cu privire la istoria românilor*, vol. I, București, 1895, pp. 347-349; idem, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, Bd. IV, pp. 426-428; idem, *A History of Anglo-Roumanian Relations*, Bucharest, 1931, p. 32; Constantin Giurescu, *Material pentru istoria Olteniei sub austrieci*, vol. III (1733-1739), București, 1944, pp. 190-192, doc. 132; *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 198-200 (C. Rondeau's report of 3/14 September 1737 to Lord Harrington); J. Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman*, vol. XIV, pp. 380-386; J.W. Zinkeisen, *op. cit.*, Theil V, pp. 703-710; A. Vasilescu, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 168-169; Constantin Șerban, *Relațiile politice româno-turce în timpul războiului ruso-turc din 1735-1739*, in "Analele româno-sovietice", *Istorie*, 1956, no 4 (16), pp. 119-121; M.A. Mehmet, *Istoria turcilor*, pp. 265-266; N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercan, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-179; V. Ciobanu, *Relațiile politice româno-polone între 1699 și 1848*, București, 1980, pp. 64-65; L. Boicu, *op. cit.*, pp. 104, 125-126; Nagy Pienaru, *Informații istorice dintr-o colecție inedită de documente otomane din 1737: "Telhisat-ı Sadrazam Muhsinzade Çelebi Abdullah Paşa"* (The Reports of Grand Vezir Muhsinzade Çelebi Abdullah Pasha), in SMIM, t. XV, 1997, pp. 85-96; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză (II)*, pp. 101-105.

<sup>25</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 225-228, 230 (C. Rondeau's reports of 19/30 November and 21 November/2 December 1737 to Lord Harrington); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-241; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, pp. 409-413; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 264-265; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106.

The plan for action drawn up by the Ottoman leaders in early 1738 included military offensive operation against the Austrian troops and defensive military operation against the Russian troops. This plan was put into practice both in 1738 and in 1739. Thus, the Porte was hoping to recover integrally (or almost integrally) the territories ceded to Austria through the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718), namely Oltenia, northern Serbia (Belgrade included), and the Banat. Additionally, the Ottomans were hoping that once Austria had signed the peace with the Porte, Russia would feel compelled to do the same. The Ottoman Empire was even willing to restore to Russia, if necessary, the territories conquered in 1711–1714 (thus giving her access to the Azov Sea, but not to the Black Sea as well)<sup>26</sup>.

After the defeats in the clashes with the Ottoman troops in the last months of 1737, Austria had formed the goal to settle the peace with the Porte as quickly as possible, based in the return to the Austrian-Ottoman border settled in 1718. To this purpose, the Austrian troops were to carry out defensive operations meant to block the advance of the Ottomans with a maximum of damage and casualties caused to their army. Thus, it was hoped that the fierce resistance put up by the Austrians and the offensive of the Russian troops would determine the Ottomans to accept the peace under the aforementioned terms<sup>27</sup>.

The determination of the Russian Government to sign the peace with the Porte grew even stronger in the early months of 1738. The causes were multiple and included the important material and human sacrifices made by Russia during the war years of 1735–1737, the military and financial weakness of the Austrian ally, the anti-Russian uprisings of the Bashkirs, the access to power of an anti-Russian revisionist group in Sweden (May 1738), the anti-Russian attitude of part of the Polish nobility, and the imposing of France, who was pro-Ottoman, as a mediator between the Porte and the Russian-Austrian alliance (over England and Holland, who were pro-Russian and pro-Austrian). Thus, in May 1738, Russia offered the Porte moderate peace terms, including restoration of the fortified ports Oçakov and Kılburun, after the fortifications were demolished, and under the obligation that the related fortifications would never be rebuilt. Otherwise, the future Russian-Ottoman peace would have been based on the stipulations of the bilateral treaty of 1700. Thus, Russia would have been granted access to the Azov Sea, but not to the Black Sea as well. However, not having yet occupied all the targeted Austrian territories, the Ottomans rejected the Russian proposals<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 278-281; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, in SMIM, vol. XIX, 2001, p. 158.

<sup>27</sup> J. Hammer, *op. cit.*, vol. XIV, pp. 408-411; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ocerki istorii SSSR. Period feodalizma. Rossiia vo vtoroi četverti XVIII v.*, Moskva, 1957, pp. 385-387; S.M. Soloviev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevnejših vremen*, kn. X (t. XX), Moskva, 1963 (republished), pp. 447-448; G.A. Nekrasov, *op. cit.*, p. 266; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160, 163-164.



Realizing that a peace treaty acceptable to Russia could only be forced upon the Porte by the way of arms, the Russian leaders started new anti-Ottoman military operations in the spring of 1738. Like in 1737, these operations were to be launched in two directions. The army corps under the command of Field Marshal Lascy was to march into Crimea, cause as much damage as possible to the Tatar and Ottoman troops and, eventually, seize the important Ottoman fortified port of Caffa (*Kefe*). Whereas the army corps under the command of Field Marshal Münnich was to march westward into the Russian part of Ukraine, cross the Dnepr, the Boug and the Dnepr, and seize the strategic Ottoman fortress of Bender. Had these objectives been achieved, the Porte would have been compelled to redirect a large part of her troops from the anti-Austrian front to the Dnepr and, possibly, to Crimea. The pressure on Austria would have diminished, and the Russians would have had all the means to persuade the Ottomans to quickly sign a peace honorable to Russia. This would have also enabled them to reiterate the peace proposals of May 1738, which the Porte would have been forced to accept<sup>29</sup>.

In the spring of 1738, the Russian army corps under the command of Field Marshal Münnich counted approximately 60,000 men. It also included English volunteers, who were always well received at the court of Tsarina Anna Ivanovna. In May 1738, Field Marshal Münnich began his advance towards the Dnepr. His troops moved westward and crossed the Dnepr and the Boug. Between the Boug and the Dnepr, on Ottoman territory, the Russian troops had their first clashes with the Ottoman-Tatar troops. These counted approximately 30,000 men. They included Ottoman troops under the command of the beylerbey of Silistra-Oceakov (who at the time had his headquarters in Bender) and the Tatars of Bugeac, led by a prince (*sultan*) of the Giray dynasty. The name of the aforementioned beylerbey was Numan Pasha. The Russians defeated these armies and reached the Dnepr (near Râbnița) on 23 July/3 August 1738. Field Marshal Münnich did not venture into crossing the river. The banks of the Dnepr in the area were steep and rocky, which hindered considerably any offensive operations. Also, the serious flaws in the provisioning of troops, the ever greater number of Russian soldiers succumbing to heat and lack of food, as well as the plague raging in Moldavia and in the Polish region of Camenița were as many factors persuading Münnich not to cross the Dnepr. On 31 July/11 August 1738, the Russians began to withdraw towards the Boug, marching into what then was Polish territory. Upon hearing about the plague epidemics, on 22 August/2 September 1738, the ministers of the Tsarina ordered Field Marshal Münnich to withdraw from Poland and cross the Boug back into Russian Ukraine. The order was carried out by the end of September 1738, when the Russian troops settled in winter camps eastward of the Dnepr. Until the Boug, the Russians were constantly pursued and attacked by the Ottomans and Tatars,

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<sup>29</sup> See the following notes.

who even entered the territory of Poland, neutral in this war, without causing any damage to the civilians though. Thus, even if having wrested yet another victory against the Ottoman-Tatar troops, deficient logistics and the excessive heat and dryness of the climate prevented the Russians from keeping the Ottoman territories they had managed to conquer (just as it had happened in Crimea in 1736–1737)<sup>30</sup>.

The withdrawal of Münnich's troops from the Dnestr into Russian Ukraine was undoubtedly a failure. This failure was accompanied by another one, with much more serious consequences. On 31 August/11 September 1738, the Russian troops evacuated and laid waste the fortress of Ocaekov. Several days later, they did the same with the fortress of Kilburun. These two fortresses, lying in the area where the Dnepr and the Boug flow into the Black Sea, were of great strategic importance. Münnich justified these actions by the fact that the related fortresses were isolated, left without supplies and, more importantly, plagued with disease, and therefore unable to withstand an Ottoman-Tatar attack. Two more arguments were added here by the Russian vice-chancellor A.I. Ostermann: the danger of a Swedish attack on Russia and the urgency of signing the Russian-Ottoman peace. The Swedes were thus being suggested that Russia was willing to make some territorial concessions to the Porte in order to be able to quickly sign the peace with the Ottomans and employ the troops thus made available to repel a possible attack from the north. The message given to the Ottomans was that the evacuation and destruction of the two aforementioned fortresses were proof that the moderate Russian peace proposals of May 1738 had been made in all earnestness. Abandoning the fortresses of Ocaekov and Kilburun without any struggle or peace treaty was nonetheless a bitter failure and a serious mistake. Certainly, the Ottomans, under these circumstances, reoccupied the two fortresses and started to rebuild them with no delay<sup>31</sup>.

As already shown, in the spring of 1738, the Russian corps under the command of Field Marshal Lascy had been ordered to enter Crimea and begin operations there. It counted approximately 40,000 men. Lascy's troops were to cause as much damage as possible to the Tatar and Ottoman troops in the area and, eventually, seize the important fortified port of Caffa. In addition to its

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<sup>30</sup> Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-275; *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 278-279 (doc. 138), 311 (doc. 152), 314-315 (doc. 154), 315-316 (doc. 155), 327-328 (doc. 161), 336 (doc. 167), 339-340 (doc. 169), 349 (doc. 174), 355-356 (doc. 178), 358-359 (doc. 179), 363 (doc. 181) (C. Rondeau's reports of June-September 1738 to Lord Harrington); C. Dapontes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 110, 113-115, 120-122, 126-128; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, pp. 417-421; *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, p. 386; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn X (t. XX), pp. 437-441; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

<sup>31</sup> Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-275; *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 355-356 (doc. 178), 395 (doc. 194) (C. Rondeau's reports of 7/18 October and 25 November/6 December 1738 to Lord Harrington); *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, p. 386; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn. X (t. XX), pp. 441-442; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

considerable strategic importance, the capture of Caffa would have prevented the Crimean Tatars to come to the relief of the Ottoman troops on the Dnestr line or on the anti-Austrian front. Furthermore, it would have probably triggered a transfer of some of the Ottoman troops engaged in against the Austrians, which would have relieved the pressure exerted on the Austrians troops. The advance of Lascy's troops southward, along the Crimean littoral of the Azov Sea, was to be backed up by the Russian fleet harbored in the ports of Azov and Taganrog and under the command of the vice-admiral of English origin Bredal. This fleet was to ensure, at least partially, the provisioning of Lascy's troops, attack the right Ottoman and Tatar flank by sea, and neutralize the Ottoman military fleet which had sailed from the Black Sea into the Azov Sea<sup>32</sup>.

The Russians troops under the command of Field Marshal Lascy reached the Perekop Isthmus on 25 June/6 July 1738. This isthmus, which borders on the Black Sea to the West and on the Sivaş Gulf (which belongs to the Azov Sea) to the East, was the only way of access to Crimea and the "northern gate" of this peninsula. At the time, the Perekop Isthmus was crossed from the West to the East by a fortified line built by the Tatars and the Ottomans. This line was defended by approximately 30,000 Tatar soldiers under the command of the Crimean Khan Mengli Giray II and by approximately 5,000 Ottoman soldiers under the command of Ebu Bekir Pasha (who had three tuğ-s). To the East, on the southern bank of the Sivaş Gulf, was posted *kalgay sultan* with approximately 10,000 Tatar soldiers. The latter was the first deputy of the Crimean Khan. A newly built fortified line, given by a ditch and an earth wall, lay in front of the positions held by his troops. *Kalgay sultan* and his troops had been posted there out of precaution. As a result of the excessive heat and strong west wind, the Sivaş Gulf had dried out almost completely in that particular area, and could be crossed quite easily, either on horseback or on foot<sup>33</sup>.

Field Marshal Lascy became aware that the fortified line of the Perekop Isthmus, approximately 8 km in length, was difficult to conquer by frontal attack. Thus, he resorted to a ruse. The Russian troops laid camp in front of the aforementioned fortified line of the enemy and several thousand soldiers were posted there, with all the luggage and the tents, and with the greatest part of the wagons of the Russian army. Diversion was thus being created. Lascy's intention was to ford the Sivaş Gulf, which had dried out almost completely, break through the troops of *kalgay sultan*, and advance westward, along the northern littoral of the Crimean Peninsula. This would have enabled him to attack the fortified line of

<sup>32</sup> Mannstein, *op. cit.*, p. 275; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. 24; *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, p. 387; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn. X (t. XX), pp. 442-443; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 63 (Fieldmarshal Lascy's report of 30 June/11 July 1738 to Tsarina Anna Ivanovna); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-276; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 24-25; *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, p. 387; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn. X (t. XX), p. 443; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*

the enemy from the rear, with a good chance of defeating the Tatar and Ottoman troops posted there<sup>34</sup>.

In the following morning (26 June/7 July 1738), the Russian troops began the aforementioned manoeuvre. The greatest part of the Russian soldiers – with the majority of the field cannons and a small number of wagons – crossed the Sivaş Gulf and, after a short clash with the enemy, managed to break through the fortified line defending the positions of the troops of *kalgay sultan*. The latter withdrew with his soldiers to the south. The Russian troops marched into Crimea. During the same day, they occupied the small Ottoman fortress of Sivaş Kule, lying on the west end of the fortified line defended by the troops of *kalgay sultan*. The garrison of the small fortress, counting several hundred Ottoman soldiers, had fled. Lascy's soldiers advanced approximately 7 km to the west and laid camp. Several detachments of Cossacks were sent out in the direction of the Perekop Isthmus and to the south, far into the Crimean Peninsula, to gather information and capture prisoners. Over the night, 16 Tatar soldiers captured by the Cossacks were brought to Lascy's camp. The Russian cannons left behind were also brought to the newly laid camp<sup>35</sup>.

The advance of the Russian troops towards the Perekop Isthmus was resumed the following morning at dawn (27 June/8 July 1738). In just a few hours, the Russians reached close to the fortified line of the Perekop Isthmus, advancing from the southeast, namely from the rear. In the middle of this fortified line lay a strong Ottoman fortress, which the Russians called *Perekop*. The Ottomans called it *Or (Ur) Kalesi*, with the Perekop Isthmus bearing the name of *Or (Ur) Kapısı*. At first, Ebu Bekir Pasha refused to hand over to the Russians the fortress of Perekop, which was under his command. Field Marshal Lascy decided to bomb the fortress and thus force the over 2,000 Ottoman military defending it to capitulate. He took advantage of the fact that upon the advance of the Russian troops, the Tatar and Ottoman soldiers defending the fortified line lying west and east of the fortress had fled into the Crimean Peninsula. The following night, the Russians placed into firing position a number of mortars (modern cannons using explosive projectiles) and several medieval cannons (with non explosive projectiles). The latter were called by the Russians *puşki*. Throughout the day of 28 June/9 July 1738, the aforementioned pieces of Russian artillery bombed Perekop<sup>36</sup>.

During the following night, the Russians set into firing position additional pieces of artillery. The Russian artillery fired at the fortress throughout the night and on 29 June/10 July 1738 until noon, when the commander of the Ottoman fortress of Perekop, Ebu Bekir Pasha, sent a letter to Field Marshal Lascy by which

<sup>34</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 63; Mannstein, *op. cit.*; Keralio, *op. cit.*; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 63; Mannstein, *op. cit.*, p. 276; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. 25.

<sup>36</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, pp. 63-64 (the aforementioned report of Feldmarshal Lascy); Mannstein, *op. cit.*; Keralio, *op. cit.*

he was offering to capitulate. Lascy accepted the capitulation on condition that the Ottoman commander should hand over the fortress within three hours and place himself and the entire garrison in the hands of the Russians, as war prisoners. Indeed, at three p.m., the Ottomans came out of the fortress and delivered themselves into the hands of the Russians, and the latter occupied the fortress. On the occasion, the Russians captured over 2,000 Ottoman soldiers and over 80 pieces of artillery (both mortars and bronze cannons). They also found there an important quantity of gun powder but little supplies<sup>37</sup>.

On the following day (30 June/11 July 1738), Field Marshal Lascy sent to Sankt Petersburg a report addressed to Tsarina Anna Ivanovna. In this report (which is being published below in English translation), Lascy was making a fairly detailed description of the efforts to capture the Tatar-Ottoman fortified line of the Perekop Isthmus. The report reached Sankt Petersburg on 13/24 July 1738 and caused much satisfaction. On the very same day, thanks were given to God for the Russian victory of the Perekop Isthmus in a religious service held at the cathedral in Sankt Petersburg. The event was further celebrated in the Russian capital with the artillery salvos. A copy of Field Marshal Lascy's report was sent to the Academy of Sciences of Sankt Petersburg, to be printed. Another copy had been sent to the Senate (Russian Government). The Ministry Cabinet (a small State Council of three members, subordinated to the Tsarina but ranking above the Senate) sent to the Senate on 14/25 July 1738 an order requesting that Lascy's report should be posted up in all Russian towns. Religious services were to be held and salvos fired, to honor the victory of Lascy's troops. The order of the Ministry Cabinet to the Senate was signed by two of the three members, namely by vice-chancellor A.I. Ostermann and Minister A.P. Volânskii<sup>38</sup>.

After the victory of the Perekop Isthmus, Field Marshal Lascy and his soldiers laid camp there for several days, after which they continued their advance southward, into the Crimean Peninsula. The territory they were crossing seemed almost deserted. As already mentioned, Lascy's ultimate objective was to conquer the Ottoman fortified port of Caffa (the headquarters of the governor of the eyalet bearing the same name). During their advance in the direction of Caffa, on 9/20 July 1738, the Russian troops were suddenly attacked by 20,000 Tatar soldiers. The brunt of this surprise attack was taken by the Dnepr Cossacks, who made the rearguard of Lascy's army. A fierce and gory battle ensued. Four Russian regiments of dragons (cavalry) and the Don Cossacks immediately came to the relief of the Dnepr Cossacks. Balance was thus established, but the Tatars could

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<sup>37</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 64; Mannstein, *op. cit.*; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 25-26; *Sbornik*, t. 80, p. 328 (doc. 161) (C. Rondeau's report of 11/22 July 1738 to Lord Harrington); *Očerki istorii SSSR*, p. 387; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*

<sup>38</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 124, pp. 62-63 (A.I. Ostermann and A.P. Volânskii's order of 14/25 July 1738).

not yet be defeated. After several hours of fighting, several Russian regiments of infantry marched on the Tatars and forced them into withdrawal. Thus, the battle was won by the Russian army. Approximately 2,000 Tatars and 700 Russians lay dead on the battle field<sup>39</sup>.

Despite the two aforementioned victories, the Russian troops were in a difficult situation. Crimea had been laid waste owing to the battles fought by the Russians against the Tatars and the Ottomans in the previous years (1736–1737). Lascy's troops were advancing into a land scorched by the enemy. As the days passed, the Russians were experiencing ever more severely deprivation, exhaustion and disease. Additionally, the Ottomans and the Tatars seemed to be favored by chance. Most of the Russian fleet in the Azov Sea under the command of Vice-Admiral Bredal had perished in a powerful storm. Other Russian ships had been sunk in the sea battles against the Ottoman squadron of the great admiral (*kapudan paşa*) Süleyman Pasha. The surviving Russian ships had been set aflame, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Ottomans. The ensuing consequences were all the more important, as the main mission of Bredal's fleet had been the provisioning of Lascy's troops. After several marches and a few small clashes with the Tatar and Ottoman troops, Field Marshal Lascy and his men withdrew towards the Perekop Isthmus, where they laid camp by the middle of August 1738. They remained there until the end of the month. After which, given the difficulties in provisioning, the disease and the attacks by the Tatar and Ottoman troops, Lascy left the Perekop Isthmus, after having destroyed the related fortified line, and withdrew into Russian Ukraine. In early October 1738, the troops settled into winter camps<sup>40</sup>. Like before, in 1736–1737, the Russian troops marching into Crimea had proved their superiority and defeated once more the Tatars and Ottomans. However, flaws in logistics, the loss of the fleet, and the inability to adjust to the hot and dry climate prevented them from keeping the territories they had conquered.

Lascy's military campaign in Crimea of the following year (1739) was similar with those of 1736–1738 and ended in autumn, by the same withdrawal into winter camps in Russian Ukraine<sup>41</sup>. On the other hand, the military campaign undertaken by the troops of Münnich in Moldavia in 1739 was successful owing to more favorable weather conditions and the availability of supplies. Unfortunately

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<sup>39</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, p. 336 (doc. 167) (C. Rondeau's report of 8/19 August 1738 to Lord Harrington); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, p. 277; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 26–27.

<sup>40</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, p. 356 (doc. 178) (C. Rondeau's report to Lord Harrington of 2/13 September 1738); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, p. 278; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. 27; C. Dapontes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 112, 120–121; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, p. 421; *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, p. 387; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*; Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*

<sup>41</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, p. 513 (doc. 254) (C. Rondeau's report of 14/25 July 1739 to Lord Harrington); C. Dapontes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 282; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Relațiile Angliei cu Principatele dunărene în perioada 1714–1803*, București, 1994 (typed manuscript), p. 88.

for the Russians and the Austrians, Münnich's success came too late (his troops were able to march into Jassy only on 3/14 September 1739) and had little influence on the outcome of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739<sup>42</sup>. In 1738–1739, Austria had suffered severe military defeats from the Ottoman troops, mainly attributable to her military and financial weakness, but also to the fact that the Ottomans had been able to concentrate against the Austrians the greatest part of their troops<sup>43</sup>. The fact that the Russians had conquered in 1738–1739 a number of north-Pontic Ottoman territories but had been unable to keep them, and had withdrawn into winter camps in early autumn, enabled the Porte to lead a defensive war against the Russians and employ in it only the Tatar troops and not more than 30–40,000 Ottoman soldiers, whereas the remaining 80,000 Ottoman soldiers could be employed in the war against the Austrian troops<sup>44</sup>. Defeated, Austria signed with the Porte the Peace Treaty of Belgrade (7/18 September 1739), by which an important number of territories were being ceded to the Ottomans<sup>45</sup>. Not wishing to be left alone in the war with the Porte, and also fearing a possible Swedish attack from the rear, to which added the unfavorable developments in Poland and in some Russian provinces, Russia decided reluctantly to settle in her turn the peace with Ottomans. The Russian-Ottoman peace treaty was signed in Belgrade, on the same day of 7/18 September 1739. As already mentioned above, Russia had to settle for limited territorial gains (a return to the Russian-Ottoman border of 1700)<sup>46</sup>. Thus, it becomes evident that the Russian-Ottoman clashes of 1738–1739, including the Russian military campaign of 1738 in Crimea, had considerable influence on the outcome of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739.

Two documents are provided in the appendix, in English version. They are the report of the Russian Field Marshal Lascy of 30 June/11 July 1738 to Tsarina Anna Ivanovna concerning the victory wrested against the Ottoman-Tatar troops on the previous day, which enabled the Russian troops to march into the Crimean peninsula<sup>47</sup>, and the order of vice-chancellor A.I. Ostermann and of Minister A.P.

<sup>42</sup> *Sbornik*, t. 80, pp. 501-544 (the reports of C. Rondeau and John Bell of Antermomy of June-November 1739 to Lord Harrington); Mannstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-316; Mehmed Subhi, *op. cit.*, f. 169-170; C. Dapontes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 287-291, 319-320, 365-370, 396-399; *Cronica Ghiculeștilor*, pp. 447-485; Keralio, *op. cit.*, t. II, pp. 135-156; N. Iorga, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, Bd. IV, pp. 440-441, 446-447; C. Șerban, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-132; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Relațiile Angliei cu Principatele dunărene în perioada 1714–1803*, pp. 89-99; *Ocerki istorii SSSR*, pp. 388-391; S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn. X (t. XX), pp. 450-461.

<sup>43</sup> S.M. Soloviev, *op. cit.*, kn. X (t. XX), pp. 448-450; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *loc. cit.*, pp. 284-285, 291; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Politica orientală engleză (II) (continuare)*, in SMIM, XIX, 2001, pp. 160-161, 163.

<sup>44</sup> See the note above.

<sup>45</sup> See n. 11.

<sup>46</sup> See n. 12.

<sup>47</sup> For the original text of this report by Fieldmarshal Lascy (in Russian), see: *Sbornik*, t. 124, pp. 63-64. Translation, underlining and brackets by me (A.T.). Key words from the

Volânskii of 14/25 July 1738 to the Senate (Russian Government), concerning the celebration of the Russian victory of the Perekop Isthmus in Sankt Petersburg, as well as in all the other Russian towns<sup>48</sup>. These two documents are liable to throw a better light into the development and results of the Russian-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735–1739, which, in addition to allowing the preservation of the Ottoman Empire and of its suzerainty over Moldavia and Wallachia, also marked a new step taken by Russia in the direction of the Black Sea, the Balkan Peninsula and the Straits.

## APPENDIX

### Translation

*Notification by the (Ministry) Cabinet to the Senate on the forwarding to the Senate of a copy of General Field Marshal von Lascy's report "on the welcome capture in Crimea of Perekop and of its fortress". The copy will be sent, together with the orders as to its publication, to Novgorod, Riga, Revel, and to all the other provinces\*.*

From the (Ministry) Cabinet of Her Imperial Majesty to the Senate.

This copy includes the report sent by General Field Marshal von Lascy to Her Imperial Majesty, on the welcome capture in Crimea of Perekop and of its fortress – for which yesterday a service was held here, in the Cathedral, thanks being given to God Almighty, and artillery salvos were fired – an identical copy having been sent to the Academy of Sciences, for publishing. And it is required that the Senate should immediately send to Novgorod, Riga, Revel, and to all the other provinces orders with identical copies of the aforementioned report in attachment, so that these copies may be published everywhere. Moreover, in the large towns where there is artillery, after the religious service giving thanks to God Almighty for this brilliant victory over the enemy allowed by Him through the army of Her Imperial Majesty, salvos should be fired, as the custom is on such celebrations. And, to save time, the Department of the Senate in Moscow has been notified in written about the aforementioned events today, directly by the (Ministry) Cabinet. Andrei Ostermann, Artemii Volânskoi. 14 July 1738.

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original text (in Russian), additional information and short explanations were put between brackets, for a better understanding of the document.

<sup>48</sup> The original text of this order (in Russian) was published in *Sbornik*, t. 124, pp. 62-63.

\* This title of the order of 14/25 July 1738 can be found (in Russian) in *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 62.



*Copy of General Field Marshal von Lascy's report of 30 June 1738 from Perekop\*\*.*

As already mentioned in my previous report, I continued the march directly towards Perekop. On 25 June, at one in the afternoon, I reached safely, with my army, the ford of Sivaş. Then I gathered detailed information on the situation in the area from prisoners captured shortly before my arrival there. Thus, I found out that on the fortified line of Perekop and in the fortress there were approximately 40,000 Turkish and Tatar horsemen and footmen ready for defence. And at the aforementioned ford of Sivaş, which is fortified by a new line given by a ditch and an earth wall, was posted *kalgay sultan*, namely the deputy of the Tatar Khan, together with all the other Tatar soldiers, guarding that ford. I noticed that the said ford, because of the excessive heat, could be used in order to get the army across. Thus, I left the luggage, wagons and army tents under good care, on that line where the (enemy's) camp (of Perekop) lay, so that the enemy should be left ignorant of and in doubt about my intentions as to the place and time of the attack. On the morning of 26 June, with the help of God, I crossed the ford of Sivaş with the largest part of the army and of the field and siege artillery. After some opposition from the enemy, I was able to cross the ditch and climb over the earth wall defending that ford.

Beyond that wall lay the fortress of Sivaş Kule (*Civaş Kule*), built by the enemy. In this fortress there was a garrison of several hundred soldiers. Upon my approach, the garrison fled the fortress. Neither did *kalgay sultan*, posted not far away with his Tatar soldiers, wait for a direct attack by our vanguard. And he quickly withdrew deep into Crimea. The fortress of Sivaş Kule, mentioned on the occasion of our successful crossing of that ford was occupied by our soldiers. And on that day, detachments of irregular troops of our army, which had been sent in pursue of the enemy, captured 12 Tatars. However, the heavy rain which began after that crossing and continued until nightfall prevented the rest of the artillery from crossing the ford before dark. For this reason, after the crossing of the ford, the army covered only 7 versta\*\*\* and laid camp. And on the following night, various detachments of our irregular troops were sent into Crimea, and in the direction of Perekop, and along the fortified line towards the Black Sea, to gather intelligence on the enemy. These detachments brought back to our camp a mirza and three ordinary Tatars, and killed several hundred enemy soldiers.

On the morning of 27 June, I marched my army directly on the fortress of Perekop. Having reached within firing distance, I sent to its commander, in keeping with the custom, a written request for capitulation. However, instead of capitulating, the enemy launched a strong cannon fire from the fortress. By doing

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\*\* This title of the report of 30 June/11 July 1738 can be found (in Russian) in *Sbornik*, t. 124, p. 63.

\*\*\* 1 versta = 1066 m.

so, the enemy prevented us throughout the day from digging up the ditches enabling us to besiege and attack the fortress. Shortly after nightfall, I sent out a number of strong detachments along the fortified line (of the Perekop Isthmus), left unguarded by the Turkish and Tatar enemy, who, upon my arrival, had fled into Crimea. Half way within firing distance from the aforementioned fortress, my troops occupied a position and arranged for the positioning of several mortars. Also, the positioning of a cannon battery was undertaken, only it could not be carried through because of the shortness of the night.

Throughout the day of 28 June, that fortress was bombed with several mortars and cannons laid on a suitable mound.

During the night of 28 to 29 June, new artillery batteries were set in place and provided with two additional mortars (*mortirî*) and several cannons (*puşki*). The latter employed cannon balls of 12 and 18 pounds respectively. The ditches on the right flank were dug until near the fortress. The ones on the left flank were dug until the old fortified line near the fortress. Throughout the night of 28 to 29 June and during the day of 29 June, the day of the Saint Apostles Peter and Paul, from morning till noon, the mortars and the cannons were fired continually. For this reason, the enemies found themselves in difficult position. The commander of that fortress, Ebu Bekir (*Abubeker*) Pasha, who had three tuğ-s (*trehkodnâi*) – and who had come here from Caffa only two days before, together with several hundred Janissaries, on a mission of command and assistance – sent us right after midday a written offer to capitulate and deliver the fortress into our hands. Capitulation was granted, on condition that he should deliver the fortress within three hours, and he, the pasha, together with the entire garrison, should place themselves in our hands as war prisoners.

Thus, at three in the afternoon, the gates of the fortress, the gunpowder depots and the warehouses were occupied by General Cvartermeister de Brigny, and Colonel Lascy with ten companies of grenadiers marched into the fortress. The soldiers of the Turkish garrison were made war prisoners. And indeed, they are now completely disarmed, in our army camp.

For lack of time, I was unable to find out the exact number of soldiers in this garrison, or assess the size of their artillery or of the booty captured from the enemy. Therefore, I cannot report on these issues. However, I shall send a detailed report on these matters through another courier, without fail.

At present, over 2,000 Turkish prisoners are in our army camp. And many (Turks) are hidden in cellars and other places. A search is under way and many have already been found. Over 80 pieces of artillery were captured in the fortress, both mortars and bronze cannons.

I shall report on all the details of this welcome event through the first courier.