

Arkadiusz Janicki, *Wyprawa Michała Kleofasa Ogińskiego do wschodniej Kurlandii i na Dyneburg w 1794 roku* [Michał Kleofas Ogiński's Expedition to Eastern Courland and Dyneburg in 1794], Gdańsk, 2024, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 236 pp., 15 maps, 28 ills, index of personal and geographical names

The historiography of the Kościuszko Uprising of 1794 is rich and varied, comprising syntheses, monographs, and research articles; however, it cannot be called homogeneous. For many years, the scholars were primarily focused on the general course of the Uprising, its international context, military aspects, and the most important individuals involved. Side issues mainly were described only in connection with the aforementioned main topics. Earlier publications were based on incomplete source material, memoirs, and older studies. This paucity of sources, especially archival ones, was rooted in the political situation in Poland at the time, which influenced the topics covered and the materials used. It was not until the turn of the twenty-first century that it became possible to access many previously unknown or difficult-to-access sources. This mainly applied to documents stored in the archives in Russia and the former Soviet countries.

This historiographical gap regarding the Kościuszko Uprising is filled by Arkadiusz Janicki's book *Wyprawa Michała Kleofasa Ogińskiego do wschodniej Kurlandii i na Dyneburg w 1794 roku* [Michał Kleofas Ogiński's Expedition to Eastern Courland and Dyneburg in 1794]. The author is a researcher who has been studying the history of Poles in the Russian Empire for many years, particularly in the Baltic region (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia). The book covers an episode of the 1794 Kościuszko Uprising: the Polish army's fight against the Russian army in the area of Courland. Although Polish historians have written extensively about the Uprising, this episode has never been explored in such detail.

The author used a rich source base, particularly archives, drawing on materials stored in many countries, including Poland – the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw (AGAD), Russia – the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), the Russian State Archives of Ancient Documents (RGADA), and the Russian State Military Historical Archive (RGVIA), all three located in Moscow, the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA) in St Petersburg, Lithuania – the Lithuanian State Historical Archives (LVIA) in Vilnius, Latvia – the Latvian State Historical Archives (LVVA) in Riga. Janicki also consulted the manuscript collections of national libraries in Russia, i.e. the Russian State Library (RGB) in Moscow, the National Library of Russia (RNB) in St Petersburg, and in Poland – MNK the Czartoryski Library (a branch of the National Museum in Kraków), and the Kórnik Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It must be stressed that some of these materials are currently difficult to access or unavailable to many researchers.

Among the archival sources, reports stored in the Russian State Military Historical Archive (RGVIA) in Moscow take centre stage. The vast collection of the Military Scientific Archive (No. 846) comprises documents of military significance, organised chronologically and categorised by the rulers of Russia. These documents describe individual wars and conflicts fought by the Russian Empire. In addition, archival materials generated by the central state authorities, local authorities, and individuals involved in the events described were used.

The book is split into four chapters that chronologically cover Michał Kleofas Ogiński's campaign in Courland. There is a bibliography, an index of people and places, maps, illustrations, and a summary in five languages (English, German, Russian, Latvian, and Lithuanian). The maps, indispensable for military history studies and descriptions of military operations, greatly help the reader follow the author's argument and understand the content adequately.

The primary goal of the book was to provide a deeper understanding of these events, as well as to establish and verify their chronological sequence. This mainly concerned dating, a process complicated by the use of two different calendars (Gregorian and Julian) in Poland, Prussia, and Russia, as well as chronologically vague documents, memoirs, and earlier studies. The author also sought to preserve the events in question and the people involved in them from falling into oblivion.

It must be noted that the author successfully achieved these challenging objectives. The book presents many new factual and chronological findings, offering a more comprehensive view of Michał Kleofas Ogiński's campaign. Janicki quotes numerous sources, mainly archival ones, and uses them to challenge existing findings. He also incorporates many micro – historical threads related to the biographies of little – known figures who played key roles in the events of the Uprising. In the following three chapters, he presents Michał Ogiński's expedition in detail, although he focuses mainly on military aspects. The last chapter concerns the Polish and Russian reactions to the expedition, both official and unofficial (rumours and gossip). The Russian authorities' treatment of people suspected of supporting the Kościuszko Uprising is also discussed.

Despite the book's great value, it does have some flaws that occasionally make it difficult for the reader to follow the author's narrative. A few sections typically found in military history studies are nowhere to be seen, and the book belongs to this category, as clearly indicated by its title: *Michał Kleofas Ogiński's Expedition to Eastern Courland and Dyneburg in 1794*. In the opening sections of the treatise, the author should have characterised the theatre of war and presented the forces of both sides, their organisation and size. Even a brief description of the Kościuszko Uprising and the destination of the expedition (Dyneburg) in its context would have been helpful.

In general, the book under review should be considered very valuable and important for the historiography of the Kościuszko Uprising. The author explores a lesser-known aspect of Poland's struggle against the Russian Empire in 1794. It contains many findings that clarify or verify both previous conclusions and the chronology of events. Arkadiusz Janicki also introduces many little-known or unknown sources into academic circulation, primarily archival documents stored in foreign archives.

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