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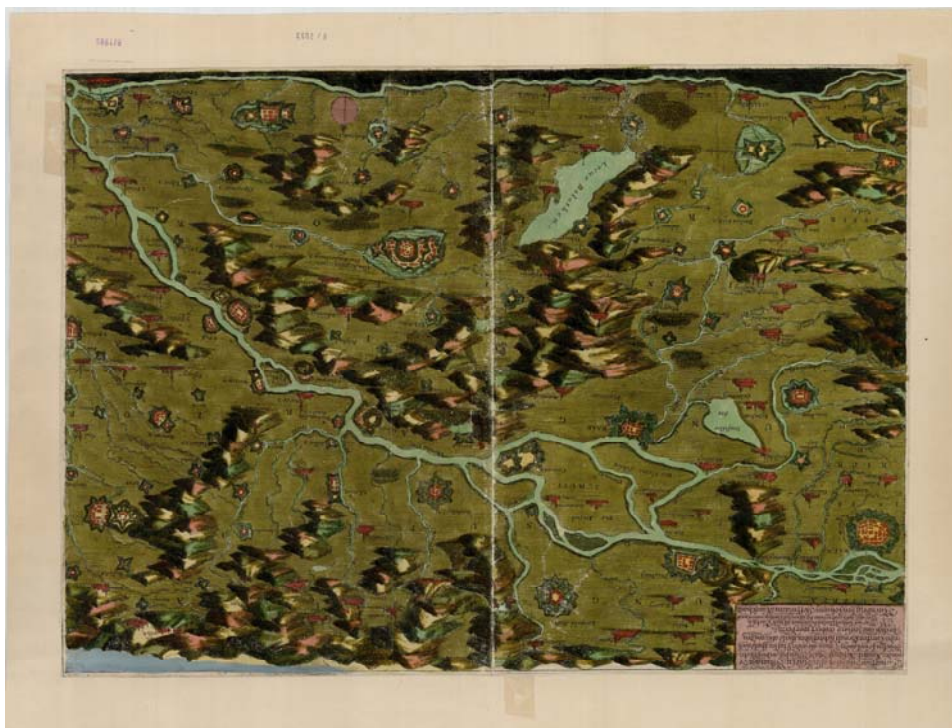
## **THE BATTLE OF ST. GOTTHARD – MOGERSDORF/MODINCI, 1 AUGUST 1664**

*ABSTRACT: The 17th century was one of the most turbulent centuries in the history of Europe. Both its beginning and its end were marked by wars with the Ottoman Empire, the first half by a 30-year religious war, and the second half by a mini-ice age, in addition to the final turnaround in the Austrian-Turkish wars. Given all of this, the Austrian-Turkish war between 1663 and 1664 seems to be only a minor episode. Nevertheless, this war was considered an important turning point in European history. It coincided with the time when the surface area of the Ottoman Empire in Europe was at its largest and signaled the end of the Ottoman power and domination in South-Eastern Europe. The battle of Saint Gotthard did not change the course of European history; however, it did expose some of the weaknesses of the Austrian Imperial Army on the one hand and the failings of the Turkish Army on the other. It can be argued that the experience of this battle convinced the Austrian emperor that victory in the Austrian-Turkish war was possible. At the same time, this was an essential motivational aspect for Hungary in the coming fighting with the Turks. During this period, Hungary was still mainly under the occupation of the Ottoman Empire. The above-mentioned was followed by the slow, but persistent decline of the Ottoman rule in the Western Balkans.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Austrian Empire, Ottoman Empire, Battle of Saint Gotthard*

## Introduction

The battle, which took place on August 1, 1664, in the village of Modinci (SL) or Mogersdorf (GER) in present-day Austria, is known in European history as the Battle of St. Gotthard/Modinci in today Hungary. In the 17th century, Modinci/Mogersdorf was a small village in Burgenland, so the actors of the battle then and later historians deemed the real battlefield a much larger and more critical place – St. Gotthard/Monošter.



Picture 1 – *Map of Turkish and Austrian fortresses between Vienna and Osijek in 17<sup>th</sup> century*<sup>1</sup>

The main scene of the Austrian-Turkish wars was Hungary, which was mostly occupied by the Turks in the 16th century. The Austrians controlled only the Upper Hungary at that time (present-day Slovakia)

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<sup>1</sup> Military History Institute and Museum, Budapest, Museum Archives, Karte der Türkischen und Österreichischen Festungen zwischen Wien und Osijek, 17. Jahrhundert, B IX za 482-7.

and the narrow strip of Western Hungary (present-day Austrian Burgenland). In the 17th century, Hungary was one of the most fortified areas in Europe, although it is still widely believed that it was a large, vast and empty country. Many fortresses in Hungary resulted from the construction of a defensive line that the Habsburgs began to erect in the Danube Region after the Turkish siege of Buda in 1541. Although the construction work on new and old fortresses was carried out mainly by the Italian masters in the so-called Italian style, only the fortresses Raab (taken over by the Turks in 1594 and 1682) and Neuhausel (taken over by the Turks in 1663) were brand new modern star forts.<sup>2</sup> The Turkish march was intended to restore the Turkish rule in Hungary and Transylvania. The result of the war in 1663 was very unfavorable for the Austrians. They lost the significant fortress Neuhausel practically at the gates of Vienna and several minor fortifications and some territory in the Upper Hungary. On the other hand, they managed to keep the majority of the Imperial Army intact despite the extremely unfavorable number ratio.

Despite negotiations, both the Austrians and the Turks were preparing for new military confrontation in 1664. By March 1664, the Turks had succeeded in casting new cannons in Belgrade and preparing all the necessary military equipment for the spring march. In 1664, the Grand Vizier counted on an army of about 100,000 soldiers including 10,000 Janissaries and about 12,000 Spahis – cavalymen, about 15,000 light cavalymen from the provinces and about 15,000 Tatars. The Turkish Army thus counted about 60,000 soldiers in combat units and approximately 40,000 more companions.<sup>3</sup>

The Austrians did not stand still either and officially levied nearly 200,000 men. However, this was only a number on paper, as they could only send around 28,000 troops to fight the Turkish Army. They indeed had at their disposal at least 50,000 more soldiers, but they consisted of fortress crews throughout Hungary and Austria and were primarily unsuitable for battlefield combat, and about 80,000 Croatian and Hungarian soldiers, who also did not present a serious opponent to the Turkish soldiers.

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<sup>2</sup> Gábor Ágoston, "Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry" In: *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, editors Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 61-75.

<sup>3</sup> Markits Köhbach, "Die diplomatische beziehungen zwischen Österreich und dem Osmanischen Reich (Vom Frieden von Zsitva Torok bis zum 1. Weltkrieg)", In: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies IV*, editors Halil Inalcik, Nejat Goyunc, Heath W. Lowry (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1984), 237-260.

### Imperial (Habsburg) regiments (the names of the regiments are according to their owners)

Infantry		Cavalry	
Souche .....	1,500	Montecucoli .....	800
Baden .....	1,500	Sporck .....	800
Strozzi .....	1,800	Heister .....	700
Lacron .....	2,000	Holstein .....	800
Spick .....	2,000	Garnier .....	1,000
Monteverges .....	2,000	Knie .....	600
Gonzaga .....	2,000	Schneidau .....	800
Demeurs .....	2,000	Rappach .....	900
Coop .....	1,200	Caprara .....	900
Wallis .....	2,000	Zeyse .....	900
Kayserstain .....	1,800	Walter .....	600
Spaar .....	1,500	Picolomini .....	1,000
Pio .....	1,500	Schmid .....	1,000
Porzia .....	1,800		
Nassau .....	2,000	Croats	
Montfort .....	2,000	Gouscheniss .....	600
Spankau .....	2,000		
Schönkirche .....	2,000	Dragoons	
Fuchs .....	2,000	Pascheve .....	900
Gegman .....	2,000	Jacque .....	800
Kilmanseck .....	2,000	Görzke .....	800
<b>Total Infantry</b> .....	<b>41,600</b>	<b>Cavalry</b> .....	<b>13,900</b>

### The National Army of the Roman-German Empire – the State Army

Infantry		Cavalry	
Lower Rhineland .....	450		90
Burgundy .....	1,662		360
Frankish .....	1,731		524
Bavaria .....	1,914		547
Swabia .....	3,000		500
Upper Rhineland .....	1,200		300
Westphalia .....	2,000		450
Upper Saxony .....	3,200		750
Lower Saxony .....	1,834		516
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>16,991</b>		<b>4,037</b>

## The Army of the Rhine Alliance

Infantry		Cavalry
France .....	4,000	2000
Bavaria .....	1,200	200
Pfalski .....	0	120
Mainz .....	1,000	200
Trier .....	1,000	200
Cologne .....	1,000	200
Münster .....	1,200	200
Bremen and Pomeranian .....	800	200
Starssburg .....	150	
Würtebnerg .....	500	
Hessn – Kassel and Darmstadt ...	800	
Pfalz – Neuburg .....	1,000	
<u>Braunschweig – Luneburg .....</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>200</u>
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>13,850</b>	<b>3,520</b>

If all of the listed units had been in their perfect strength, the Allied Army would have had 72,741 foot soldiers and 21,475 cavalrymen at its disposal. Around 6,000 French soldiers had to be added to this. However, no regiment at the time reached these numbers even remotely. The regiments of the Rhine Alliance, which participated in the winter march that claimed many casualties and more wounded and sick soldiers, primarily due to low temperatures, which did not rise above zero for a single day, were notably weakened. Thus, the Allied Army had only about 28,000 men at its disposal (cavalry and infantry combined).<sup>4</sup>

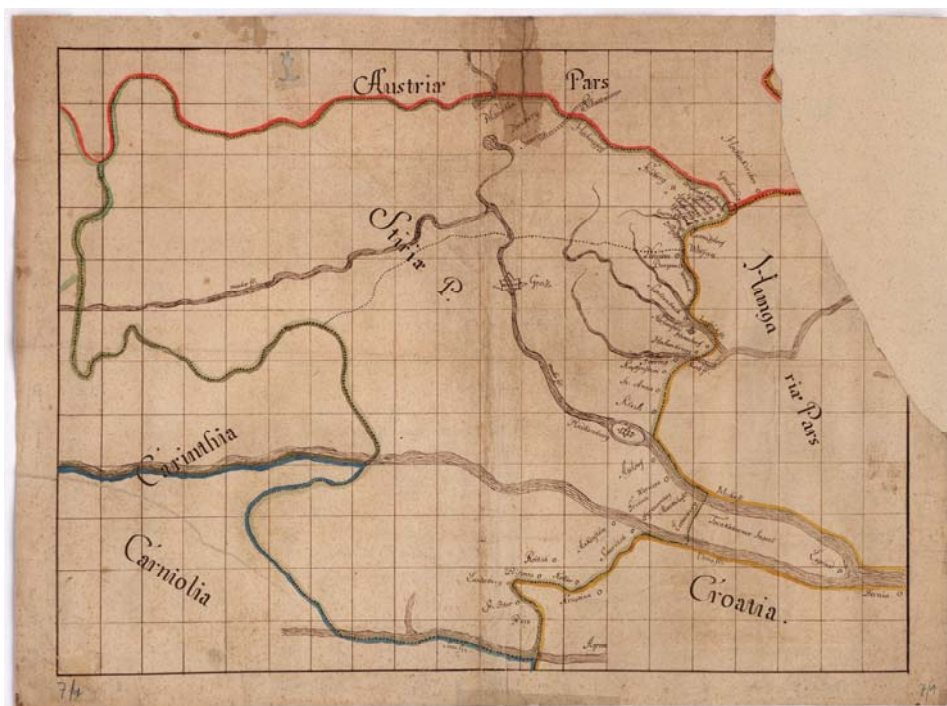
## The Battle of Mogersdorf

After the fall of Novi Zrin in July 1664, the nervousness in the Allied Army camp escalated, as none of the generals knew about the secret negotiations to end the war. Consequently, they were all more concerned about where the Turkish Army, which, despite the German reinforcements, was still overwhelmingly outnumbered, would be headed. The fear that the

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<sup>4</sup> Gábor Ágoston, "The Impact of the Habsburg-Ottoman Wars: A Reassessment", In: Die Schlacht von Mogersdorf/St. Gotthard und der Friede von Eisenburg/Vasvár 1664, editors Karin Sperl, Martin Schetz, Arno Strohmeyer (Eisenstadt: Burgenländische Forschungen Band 108, 2016), 89-101.

Turks would invade Styria after the fall of Novi Zrin was justified as the area between the Mur and Raba Rivers in the north was easily passable, and only Radgona stood on the way to Graz. Radgona, however, despite its modern fortification, could not have defied the Turkish Army for long. In addition, even the Mur River, especially upstream towards Radgona, did not constitute a serious obstacle. Therefore, the Allied commanders decided to concentrate their Army in Prekmurje and Goričko, where the Turkish Army would have had to pass if they wanted to invade Styria.<sup>5</sup>



Picture 2 – Styrian – Hungarian border in 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, the secret negotiations between the emperor's envoys and the Grand Vizier ended. They finally reached an agreement – a compromise on the tribute that the emperor was supposed to pay to the sultan. It was agreed that the rulers would exchange gifts: the emperor was to give the sultan a gift in the amount that the Turks requested. Therefore, the Grand

<sup>5</sup> Gwynne Jones, "The Turning Point On The Danube, Part I – V, 1664", <http://nswcdespatch.blogspot.com/> (accessed April 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv Graz (StLa), Österreichische - Ungarische Grenze 17. Jahrhundert, Plänesammlung Stmk. M.1, Nr. 25.

Vizier did not send the Tatars into the interior of Styria, and the Turks no longer made a serious effort to find a way across the River Rába.<sup>7</sup> At the very time when the negotiations were in the final stage, Ahmed Pasha decided to speed things up. Therefore, on August 1, 1664, he ordered Mehmed Pasha and Kaplan Pasha to start building a bridge over the River Rába on a Muslim holy Friday. In doing so, he indicated that if the negotiations were not concluded, he would invade the Habsburg hereditary lands with the Army and loot them. Therefore, the Janissaries, entrenched on the south bank of the river during the night, crossed it around six in the morning to build a bridgehead on the other bank and enable the construction. A few Janissaries crossed the river on camels, and the others sitting behind the Spahis on horses. They quickly chased away the two hundred-headed guards of the State Army, which retreated to the village of Mogersdorf. The Janissaries then dug a trench on the left bank of the river and fortified themselves there. At the same time, the Turkish cavalry had already reached the State Army camp, triggering a general alarm in the Allied Army at seven o'clock and consequently chaos.<sup>8</sup>

After the alarm, Field Marshal Spaar sent his adjutant General Lautterburg to General Hohenlohe with the message to send reinforcements as soon as possible. He rode off to the river himself, but barely did get to the fence, which was just a shot away from the State Army camp, when he saw the soldiers guarding the river fleeing in panic. In the confusion and crowd that had arisen, he barely escaped the incoming Turkish cavalry. Meanwhile, there was complete confusion in the camp of the State Army: the officers were calling the servants and looking for pieces of equipment and weapons, the musketeers were shouting and demanding gunpowder, which was scarce; some were demanding bullets, others ignition coils and all of this was drowned out by drums and trumpets announcing the alarm. The Generals Fugger, Puecher and Count Baden Durlach could finally issue an order and lead the infantry regiments with the musketeers from the camp towards the Turks by the river around 10 o'clock. The regiments marched to the fence that separated them from the plain by the river. The battle line shattered there because the passageway was too narrow to hold.

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<sup>7</sup> Hakan Karagöz, "Der Habsburgisch-Osmanische Krieg von 1663/64 und der Friede von Eisenburg/Vasvár aus osmanischer Sicht", In: Die Schlacht von Mogersdorf/St. Gotthard und der Friede von Eisenburg/Vasvár 1664, uredniki Karin Sperl, Martin Schetz, Arno Strohmeyer (Eisenstadt: Burgenländische Forschungen Band 108, 2016), 121-135.

<sup>8</sup> Erich Prokosch, *prim.*, Krieg und Sieg in Ungarn – Die Ungarnfeldzüge des Grosswesirs Körprülüade Fazil Ahmed Pascha 1663 und 1664 nach den "Kleinodien der Historien", seines Sigelbewahrers Hasan Aga (Osmanische Geschichtschreiber), (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1976), 210-216.

Meanwhile, the cavalymen also managed to depart from the camp toward the Turks.<sup>9</sup> Three hours after the Turks had crossed the river, the German infantry regiments and cavalry troops were approaching the Turks through woods and bushes. When the latter, who were still on the other side of the river, noticed that the German regiments were approaching the Janissaries erecting an emergency bridge over the river, they crossed the river without being given a command to help their comrades on the other side. The river was crossed by about 5,000 men and some commanders and officers, including Ismail Pasha, Janissary Agha, Kaplan Pasha and Georgian Mehmed Pasha. Interestingly, all these soldiers and commanders crossed the river without the order of the Grand Vizier because the messengers in the Turkish camp did not even give the signal of alarm or call for a battle.<sup>10</sup>

In the camp of the State Army, there were nine regiments, namely: regiment Fugger (Commander Count Fugger), the Frankish regiment (Colonel Pleytner), the Bavarian regiment (General Sentry Pucher), the Upper Saxony regiment (Count Sulms), the Upper Saxony regiment (Colonel Weydenbach), the Lower Saxony regiment (Colonel Endten), the Swabian regiment (Prince Birckenfeld), the Upper Rhine regiment (Count Nassau) and Westphalian regiment (Colonel Wierich). The commander of the State Army, Field Marshal Count Badenski, sent five infantry regiments (regiment Fugger, Frankish regiment, Lower Saxony, Westphalian and Bavarian regiment) and a part of the cavalry toward the Turks along the river. The regiments did not advance in a clustered line, but came individually through the forest and onto the plain along the river. At 10 a.m., the Imperial Schmid regiment of the Chirasir (heavy cavalry) and two infantry regiments, the Nassaus and the Kielmanese regiment, were sent to them as reinforcements.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the first Turkish soldiers reached the outskirts of the village of Mogersdorf, where they encountered the advancing Frankish infantry regiment of Colonel Pleytner along the southwestern fence. They retreated to the plain along the river. The Frankish regiment (Colonel Pleytner) pursued

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<sup>9</sup> *Eigentliche Abbildung und Beschreibung der remarquablen Victorie der Christl. HauptArmee, wider den Erbfeind und NiderHungarn A. 1664 den I Aug. N.C. erhalten, 1664, Bavorska nacionalna biblioteka, [https://www.omnia.ie/index.php?navigation\\_function=2&navigation\\_item=%2F358%2Fitem\\_46NGJWUIWMWHXQUTRYGOTMZER2AHP5I&repid=1](https://www.omnia.ie/index.php?navigation_function=2&navigation_item=%2F358%2Fitem_46NGJWUIWMWHXQUTRYGOTMZER2AHP5I&repid=1).*

<sup>10</sup> E. Prokosch, *gen. quote*, 210-216.

<sup>11</sup> Johann von Stauffenberg, *Gründliche warhafftige Und unpartheyische Relation Des blutigen Treffens, zwischen dem Erbfeinde Christlichen Nahmens und Blutes auff einer, und dem Christlichen Kriegsheer auf anderer Seitten, gehalten den 1. Augusti An. 1664. bey S. Gotthard in Ungern*, (Fischer, 1665), [https://books.google.si/books?id=mMtCAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=sl&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.si/books?id=mMtCAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=sl&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) (accessed April 2022).



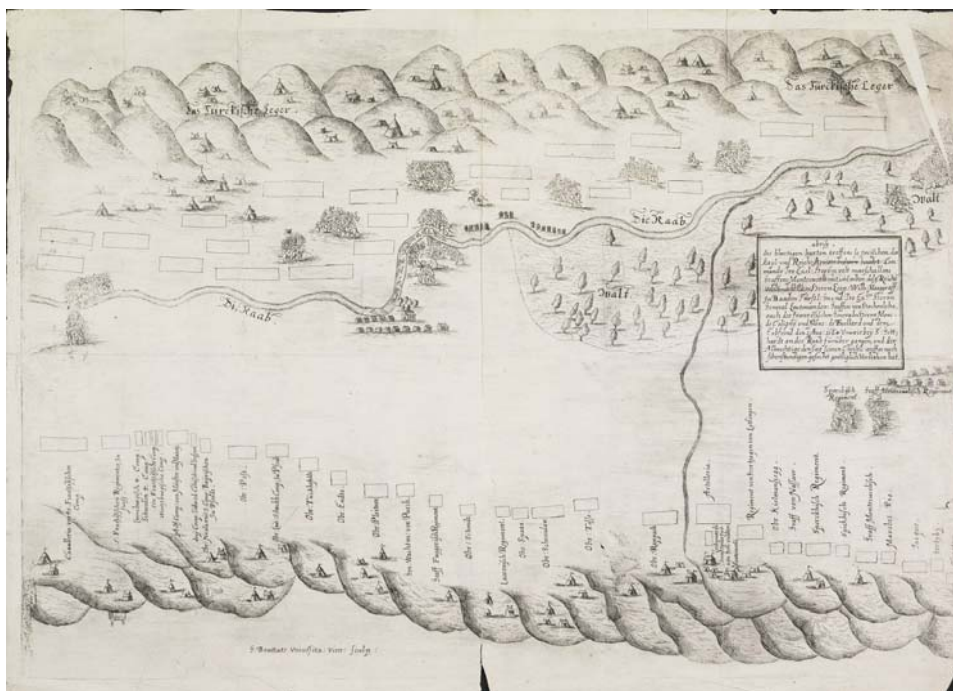
them, followed by the Lower Saxony regiment (von Endten) and the Westphalian regiment (Lieutenant Colonel Wierich) to their right. Two companies of cavalry and Fuggers and Bavarian foot soldiers followed.

However, before the foot soldiers and cavalry could line up to help each other in the battle, the Turks fiercely attacked the right wing of the Frankish regiment closest to them. The battle line of the infantry regiment consisted of spearmen in the middle and musketeers on the left and right flanks. The attacking Turks were to be held back by the first salvo of the musketeers, which, however, caused them a minor damage, so they threw themselves at the musketeers, who tried to retreat behind the spearmen. The brutality and speed of the Turkish attack caused the musketeers to make a panic attempt to withdraw behind the spearmen, bumping into them while doing so and causing confusion so that they could not direct their spears at the Turks in time to hold them back. However, once the spearmen and the musketeers saw that those who the Turks had already reached had their heads chopped off, they both dropped their weapons and tried to escape. The panic then spread like wildfire among the soldiers and the commanders, who dropped their partisans and even among the ensigns, who dropped the flags or joined the fleeing crowd of the soldiers with the flags in their hands.

Meanwhile, the confusion spread to the other regiments of the State Army. The musketeers from other regiments were also running into the spearmen or getting caught between spears, impaling on them while escaping. Their escape also influenced the spearmen, who could not establish a defensive line and were also throwing away their spears and starting to flee. Thus, the Frankish regiment began retreating - fleeing under the protection of the standing Lower Saxony regiment under the command of Colonel Endt, who successfully resisted until he was hit by a Turkish bullet and disabled for further command. After the loss of the commander, panic took over this regiment and drove the soldiers to flight. The Westphalian regiment and Lieutenant Colonel Wierich, who stood to their right, were first attacked by the Spahis; when they also began panicking, the Janissaries burst in on them. The survivors confused the Fugger and Bavarian regiment behind them with their impulsive escape. The Turks thus soon broke up the two regiments and set the survivors on the run. Field Marshal Spaar tried to stop the fleeing soldiers, but in vain because the fear of the advancing Turks was too great.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Schauplatz Serinischer auch anderer Teutschen Tapfern Helden-Thaten: Was nemlich Verwichnes 1663. und nochlauffendes 1664. Jahr, Ruhm- und Truckwürdiges von ... Herrn Generalen ... verrichtet worden ; Die Namen ermeldter Helden sind folgende: Herr Graf Peter und Niclaus Serin ... ; Sehr nützlich, anmuthig und Zeitverkürtzlich zu lesen, 1664, Bavarian State Library, [https://books.google.si/books?id=PnVVAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=sl&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.si/books?id=PnVVAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=sl&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) (accessed April 2022).



Picture 3 – Order of battle by Mogersdorf, August 8, 1664<sup>13</sup>

At the end of the battle, where the Turks attacked the foot soldiers of the State Army, there were huge piles of decapitated bodies, mainly where the Westphalian Regiment had been fighting. Even the cavalry that was supposed to stand behind the musketeers and help them did no better than the infantry. After the confusion that engulfed the infantry regiments, the cavalry troops also started running away, and many musketeers ended up under the hooves of their own cavalry. The situation was the worst at the end of the plain in a narrow passage through a wooden fence, where the cavalymen forcibly paved their way over the bodies of their infantry. Soldiers and officers kept dropping their weapons and flag bearers the flags; they all fled together to save their lives. However, only a few managed to escape the Turkish swords. Later, an officer who participated in the conflict wrote: "Although I have participated in many conflicts, I have never witnessed such a panic. The soldiers of all five regiments were so shocked that they let themselves be

<sup>13</sup> Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel (HAB), Gerard verm. Bouttats: Schlachtordnung vor dem Gefecht zwischen Kaiserlichen und Türkischen Truppen bey S. Gotthardt an der Raab 1664, Graph. A2: 13.

beheaded without even trying to escape or defend themselves. All they could do was shout loudly, Mother Mary, help me'."<sup>14</sup>

Around 2000 soldiers and officers of the State ran from the battlefield and took refuge in Fürstenfeld and Graz, while some fled all the way to Vienna. In a short time, the Turks defeated and shattered as many as five regiments of the German State Army as the entire burden of the attempt to drive the Turks back across the river fell on them. None of the Allied commanders expected the Turks to cross the river at this point and go into battle, so the help was coming too slowly. The first to come to aid were the soldiers of the Imperial Regiment, mixed with the fleeing soldiers. Consequently, these too withdrew in disarray and with great losses. The Turks, meanwhile, raided the camp of the State Army, causing panic and flight of the few remaining soldiers. They occupied the forest and the village of Modinci/Mogersdorf and the entire arch of the river Raba on its northern bank and began to entrench themselves. In the Allied Army, a big hole was gapping in the center. At the same time, the Turkish reinforcements were coming across the river; about 3000 Janissaries and just as many Spahis.<sup>15</sup>

Soon after the confrontation, Montecuccoli sent two infantry and one Cuirassiers regiment to flank the invading Turks. New troops joined them from the right flank of the state troops. However, their counterattack through the small forest soon ended, as they were affected by the panic of the fleeing state companies. The center of the Allied front was completely empty after the defeat of the State Army, and only in time the counterattack from both wings of the Allied Army did begin to fill the void and re-establish the front line. Thus, Montecuccoli and the Imperial troops attacked the left flank of the Turkish army.

Meanwhile, General Hohenlohe and the soldiers of the Rhine Alliance, the rest of the state troops and the French tried to retake the village of Modinci/Mogersdorf. Count Waldeck and two cavalry troops drove the Turks advancing north of the Modinci back to the village, which Hohenlohe then attacked with two battalions of infantry and four troops of cavalry around 11:00. In fierce confrontation during which the village was engulfed by fire, he managed to retake it, except for a few houses where the Janissaries barricaded themselves. Despite several

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<sup>14</sup> J. von Stauffenberg gen. quote.

<sup>15</sup> Özgür Kolçak, "The Composition, Tactics and Strategy of the Ottoman field army at Zrinyi – Újvár and St. Gotthard (1663–1664)", In: *La bataille de Saint Gotthard et la paix de Vasvár: Expansion Ottomane-Coopération Européenne*, editors Ferenc Toth and Zsolt Czigany Balazs (Budapest: MTA, 2017), 73-92.

violent attacks, they could not take them and finally burnt the houses down. The Janissaries rather burned than surrendered themselves in them.<sup>16</sup>

While the Turks raided the camp, the commanders of the state troops gained time to gather and reorganize the remains of the battered regiments. The French regiments Fifica: Tourain and Morvas le Ferte occupied the edge of the village of Modinci/Mogersdorf and the sunken road. Then the French Duke of Lorraine, Charles, led the French Cuirassiers regiment to drive the Turks out between the sunken road and the river. After the first failed attempt, he was joined by three infantry regiments, the French regiment of La Corona and two German regiments of Sparr and Tasso, and the Imperial Scheidauca Cuirassiers regiment under the command of Montecuccoli himself. It was only after fierce confrontation that they managed together to push the Turks back to the river.<sup>17</sup>

With the advance of the Imperial, French and Allied troops towards the river, the Turks, who had invaded the State Army camp through the forest, were suddenly cut off from their main body. When they realized that the path back was closed, they first moved towards Modinci, where the troops of General Hohenolhe stopped them. Then they tried again to make their way back to the river, but they were surrounded from all sides by that time. Nevertheless, surrendering did not cross their minds, and all of them fought to their deaths.<sup>18</sup>

Between the general alarm at 7 a.m. and the counterattack by the German national army at 10 a.m., three hours elapsed, which corresponds to the time it took the troops to prepare for combat operations. However, the fight going on since early morning was becoming more and more tragicomic. The Turks, who broke up the center of the Allied Army did not even try to seize the opportunity offered to them to penetrate through the broken center behind both wings of the Allied Army. Still, they devoted themselves to looting the camp of the State Army and, at the same time, peacefully continued to build

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<sup>16</sup> Diarium, Und Kurtze warhafft Erzehlung, Wie die Belägerung der Vestung Canischa, Den 17. (27.) Aprilis vorgenommen ... So dann, Wie nach beschehenem Abzug, der Türk die Vestung Neu Serinwar attaquiret, und endlich erobert: Samt einem Historischen und Geographischen Vorbericht, Von denen beeden berühmten Oertern, Canischa und Serinwar, 1664, Bavarian State Library, <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb10513873?page=1> (accessed April 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Continuatio, Was kürztlich bey Canischa, Serinwar und andern Orten, zwischen den Christen und Türcken vorgelauffen, 1664, Bavarian State Library, [https://books.google.si/books?id=IRhWAAAACAAJ&pg=PP1&dq=Continuatio,+Was+k%C3%B4rtzlich+bey+Canischa,+Serinwar+und+andern+Orten,+zwischen+den+Christen+und+T%C3%BCrcken+vorgelauffen&hl%20b=sl&source=%20u\\_gbs\\_selected\\_pages&cad%20d=2%20u#v=onepage&q=Continuatio%2C%20Was%20k%C3%BCrtzlich%20Canischa%2C%20Serinwarnd%20andern%20Orten%2C%20zwischen%20Christennd%20T%C3%BCrcken%20vorgelauffen&f=false](https://books.google.si/books?id=IRhWAAAACAAJ&pg=PP1&dq=Continuatio,+Was+k%C3%B4rtzlich+bey+Canischa,+Serinwar+und+andern+Orten,+zwischen+den+Christen+und+T%C3%BCrcken+vorgelauffen&hl%20b=sl&source=%20u_gbs_selected_pages&cad%20d=2%20u#v=onepage&q=Continuatio%2C%20Was%20k%C3%BCrtzlich%20Canischa%2C%20Serinwarnd%20andern%20Orten%2C%20zwischen%20Christennd%20T%C3%BCrcken%20vorgelauffen&f=false) (accessed April 2022).

<sup>18</sup> H. Karagöz, gen. quote, 121-135.

the bridge across the river and consolidate their positions along it. Bosnian Beylerbey Ismail Pasha, Janissary Agha, Kaplan Pasha and Mehmed Pasha acted according to the order of the Grand Vizier and ensured that the bridge across the river was being built. Thus, Mehmed Pasha, a Georgian who had crossed the river with the other three commanders and had participated in the attack on the five German regiments, retreated to the Turkish camp after defeating them as he thought their task was accomplished.<sup>19</sup>



Picture 4 – Battle of Morgensdorf in 1664<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, the Turks along the river arranged their ranks and got new reinforcements. About 10,000 of them were thus on the north bank of the river. A new battle began, in which Turks and Allies took turns attacking. On that day, the Turks attacked the Allied Army more than ten times, but failed to break through the front lines, although they repeatedly drove away the regiments standing on the front line. Over and over again, they were beaten and forced to retreat to their starting positions.

<sup>19</sup> E. Prokosch, gen. quote.

<sup>20</sup> Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel (HAB), Aufeinandertreffen der christlichen und türkischen Armeen an der Raab bei S. - Rothart in Niederungarn 1664, Graph. A2: 127.

Meanwhile, with the help of the French, Hohenlohe managed to retake Modinci, while Montecuccoli drove the Turks out of the plain back towards the river. Around noon, the war council of all the commanders of the United Army was convened. They were choosing between two options: defending their current positions or attacking the Turks along the river with all their might. The most ardent supporter of the attack was General Hohenlohe. He told the other commanders: "If the enemy remains in its current positions tonight, none of us will have our heads on our shoulders tomorrow as they will end up in some Turkish bag." At the time of this consultation, on the right flank of the Allied Army at the level of Weichselbaum, some 4000 Turkish cavalymen crossed the River Raba, but General Sporck and his cavalry managed to push them back.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the Turkish attacks claimed numerous casualties, especially among officers. The Turks, as usual, attacked exceptionally vigorously. The resounding screams repeatedly led to the escape of parts of the Allied cavalry, which resulted in the closed line of cavalry squadrons being crushed, leading to man against man fights. The Allied Army tried to avoid this because individual cavalymen were not mostly a match for the Turkish soldiers and their proverbial sword skills. However, no matter how hard the Allied officers tried to keep their cavalymen in a tight line, they could succeed by no means. Those who fell off the horse quickly ended up under a Turkish sword. In such conflicts, the officers were mostly those who drew the short straw. Many of them fell as they were at the head of the battle line during the attacks and the last during the retreats.<sup>22</sup>

After several hours of fighting, the Allied Army managed to strike a balance on the battlefield. The losses in the attacks and counterattacks were roughly the same between the two opponents. The Turks decided not to attack again that day, but keep the crossing and the bridgehead on the northern bank of the river Raba. To this end, the Janissaries dug ten trenches along the river one by one to help deter the attack by the Allied Army. However, because the trenches were dug up in the lowlands, they could only defend themselves from one trench at a time. This type of defense only makes sense if many trenches are dug in the hill, one above the other so that all the defenders can fire at the attacking enemy at the same time.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Diarium, gen. quote.

<sup>22</sup> Mohammed Fatih Çalışır, "The Grand Vizier Köprülüâde Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (1635–1676) and the Battle of Mogersdorf/Saint Gotthard (1664)", In: *Die Schlacht von Mogersdorf/St. Gotthard und der Friede von Eisenburg/Vasvár 1664*, editors Karin Sperl, Martin Schetz, Arno Strohmeyer (Eisenstadt: Burgenländische Forschungen Band 108, 2016), 207-215.

<sup>23</sup> H. Karagöz, gen. quote, 121-135.

As the Allied Army, despite several attacks, failed to drive the Turks to the other side of the river, their position was becoming increasingly intolerable. The commanders, therefore, decided to attack the Turks with all their forces. They divided the troops into two ranks, assigned the cavalry to help the infantry and ordered them to advance slowly towards the Turkish positions along the river while the musketeers, with their uninterrupted salvos, should try to destroy the enemy. Some 15,000 troops were sent against the Turkish positions, while the rest of the army, some 13,000 men, remained in reserve.<sup>24</sup>

Around four o'clock in the afternoon, the Allied Army began advancing in a very tight battle line toward the Turks. The Turkish soldiers, who were no longer expecting the attack that day, started to retreat in a panic even before real confrontation took place. Only about 200 Turkish soldiers were killed in the trenches on the bank of the river, while the others either drowned in it or were shot. Some of them were killed after they had reached the other bank. The Allied Army thus drove the Turkish Army, which had suffered considerable losses, to the other side of the river without major problems.<sup>25</sup>

The battle lasted from six in the morning when the Janissaries crossed the river and drove out the German guard. It then ended with the defeat and withdrawal of the Turkish Army on the southern bank of the river around five in the afternoon, involving practically the entire Allied Army with about 20,000 men, and on the other hand, at the peak of the battle, about 10,000 Turkish soldiers.<sup>26</sup> By taking and destroying the Turkish bridgehead, the Allied Army won a tactical victory. According to rough estimates, between 4,000 and 6,000 soldiers were killed on both sides and at least a few thousand were injured. Given the number of casualties, the Allied Army suffered a much more significant loss and, according to Field Marshal Montecuccoli and Hohenlohe, needed reinforcements after the battle to continue fighting.<sup>27</sup> Afterwards, General Hohenlohe sent a message saying that the Allied Army had little more than 2,000 soldiers capable of fighting.<sup>28</sup> General Hohenlohe may have exaggerated the assessment a bit, but the fact is that the Allied Army had not been in good shape since the siege of Kaniža. The situation worsened after the fall of Novi Zrin and the dispute with Nikola Zrinski, who made sure that the supply of food and animal feed to the Army was not only delayed, but practically stalled. In

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<sup>24</sup> J. Stauffenberg, gen. quote

<sup>25</sup> Diarium, gen. quote.

<sup>26</sup> M. Čalšir, gen. quote, 210-216.

<sup>27</sup> Diarium, gen. quote.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

addition, the health status of most soldiers (also due to the stormy summer) was inferior. The hungry, tired and sick Army, which was further exhausted after a day of fighting with the Turks on August 1, 1664, no longer represented a serious military force in the event of a new conflict, which the Allied generals were well aware of.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> H. Karagöz, gen. quote. 121-135.



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## **БИТКА КОД СЕНТ ГОТХАРДА – МОРГЕНСДОРФА/МОДИНАЦА, 1. АВГУСТА 1664. ГОДИНЕ**

(Резиме)

**П**рвог августа 1664. године турска војска није планирала никакву битку јер за тим није било потребе. Уз то, мање јединице турске војске требале су да уреди мостобран и изграде мост преко реке Раб. Међутим, покрете турских трупа браниоци су схватили тактички на супротан начин, као напад главнине турских снага. Уследила је одлука да се крене и ангажује пет пешадијских пукова и део коњице са циљем уништења мостобрана и протеривања турских снага на супротну обалу реке. Међутим, цела ова акција била је исхитрена, лоше координирана и вођена. Уз то су на Турке послати релативно неискусни немачки војници. Када је Ибрахим – паша, који је надгледао осигурање мостобра-

на уочио да немачки пукови иду ка реци, послао је део својих јањичара на другу обалу. Њима се добровољно придружио и део турских војника који се већ налазио на тој страни реке. Поред тога, уз њега и његове јањичаре још додатних 10.000 јањичара и спахија прешло је реку и одмах се устремило на надолazeће немачке трупе. Неискусни немачки војници нису били у стању да се одупру турском нападу, тако да су Турци кратким и силовитим ударом у потпуности преузели иницијативу на бојном пољу. Центар савезничке армије је разбијен и Турцима се отворила могућност да јој зађу с леђа. Међутим, уместо да искористе прилику и с леђа угрозе оба крила савезничке војске и потисну их ка реци, Турци су пропустили ту могућност за постизање коначне победе. Главномандујући савезничке војске искористили су ову неочекивану паузу у дејствима да консолидују своје трупе и поново успоставе заједничку одбрамбену линију. Након целодневних борби уз реку, они су у поподневним часовима донели одлуку да крену у општи напад на мостобран. То се показало као пун погодак, будући да су изненадили Турке који тога дана више нису очекивали нападна дејства. Док су бежали преко реке многи турски војници су изгинули или су се подавили. Ипак, губици су тога дана били приближно исти на обе стране. Битка коју нико није желео, имала је великог одјека у јавности и донела је славу аустријском цару. Ова победа изазвала је и доста унутрашњих трзавица у Аустрији, пошто хрватско-угарско племство није могло да схвати да је после тако "блиставе победе" над турском војском, према одредбама варшавског мира граница остала непромењена а Османско царство задржало своју доминацију над Угарском још наредних двадесетак година.

КЉУЧНЕ РЕЧИ: Аустријско царство, Османско царство, Битка код Сент Готхарда