

Balkanistic

Forum '13

БАЛКАНИСТИЧЕН
ФОРУМ 1



NATIONAL MODELS OF MEMORY
THE RUSSO-OTTOMAN WAR 1877-1878

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BF  **zum '13**
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ФОРУМ

ИЗДАВА МЕЖДУНАРОДНИЯТ УНИВЕРСИТЕТСКИ
СЕМИНАР ЗА БАЛКАНИСТИЧНИ ПРОУЧВАНИЯ И
СПЕЦИАЛИЗАЦИИ ПРИ ЮГОЗАПАДЕН УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
“НЕОФИТ РИЛСКИ” - БЛАГОЕВГРАД

Година XXII

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ISSN 1310-3970

www.bf.swu.bg
www.cceol.com



NATIONAL MODELS OF MEMORY
The Russo-Ottoman War 1877 – 1878

Editors: Petar Vodenicharov, Dominik Gutmeyr



THE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE PART OF THE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROJECT PIRSES-GA-2011-295167: "POLITICS OF MEMORY AND MEMORY CULTURES OF THE RUSSIAN-OTTOMAN WAR 1877/1878: FROM DIVERGENCE TO DIALOGUE", SUPPORTED BY SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME, MARIE CURIE ACTIONS, PEOPLE, INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH STAFF EXCHANGE SCHEME

THIS ISSUE 1/2013 IS PUBLISHED BY THE SUPPORT OF THE BULGARIAN SCIENCE FOND OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ИЗДАВАНЕТО НА НАСТОЯЩИЯ БРОЙ ОТ СПИСАНИЕТО ПРЕЗ 2013 Г. Е С ФИНАНСОВАТА ПОДКРЕПА НА ФОНД „НАУЧНИ ИЗСЛЕДВАНИЯ“ ПРИ МИНИСТЕРСТВО НА ОБРАЗОВАНИЕТО, МЛАДЕЖТА И НАУКАТА

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Introduction

The project “Politics of Memory and Memory Cultures of the Russian-Ottoman War 1877/1878: From Divergence to Dialogue” (MEMORYROW), which is funded by the European Commission’s “International Research Staff Exchange Scheme – Marie Curie Actions” for four years, has been an initiative of the Balkanistic Seminar at Blagoevgrad University. With its partner organization, the Centre for Southeast European History and Anthropology at University of Graz a successful application to the European Commission was formulated and excellent partner organizations identified: the Institute of National History “Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje”, the Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Folklore and Social Anthropology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Department of History at İstanbul Bilgi University, the Batumi University, the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia in Yerevan, and the Russian State Social University of Stavropol’. Our consortium started working on February 1, 2012. The first work package “The Russo-Ottoman War – National Models of Memory” lasted eight months and peaked in a workshop held at Graz University on September 8, 2012. The articles presented in this volume are results of this workshop. Before I come back to the articles it seems to be adequate to provide with an overview on the ideas the project is based upon.

1. Memory studies as an emerging multidisciplinary academic field

It is basically rooted in two ongoing societal and academic processes. (1) Recently, regional history has attracted considerable theoretical and public interest in the Balkans as well as in the neighboring Caucasus region. The Black Sea region as object of historical representation, which is increasingly undermining national and nationalistic historiography has achieved an important place in research due to the fact that during the previous years the region has become a crossing point of a new critical awareness at the border between science, politics, and the public.¹ The increased interest for transnational and global history is part of this renewing process. (2) Although the study of the politics of memory and memory culture is by far not new² memory studies is only an emerging multidisciplinary academic field.³ Only in 2008 the first volume of the journal “Memory Studies” appeared. In a program-

matic contribution Roediger and Wertsch pointed out the multidisciplinary endeavor, which comprises among other the fields of anthropology, history, education, literature, psychology, philosophy, and sociology. Historians, for instance, work with written sources, memoirs, eyewitness descriptions; literacy scholars are interested in memory related issues such as autobiographical memoirs and characters in novels; educational experts focus on textbooks, teachers, and educational processes in order to unveil unconscious attitudes of students about the past of their country; anthropologists are interested in the transmission of culture from one generation to the next and come herewith close to the border to psychology; architects and artists are asked to build monuments and statues to celebrate the past of a great event and/or a great people. Memory studies have not yet developed unique methods or specific theoretical concepts and, therefore, create working bases on careful borrowing from other disciplines.⁴ Fundamental questions have to be raised: What are memories for? How do memories construct our past? How do we build shared collective memories? How does memory shape history and culture?⁵

Politics of memory of the Russo-Ottoman War (ROW) of 1877 – 1878 is part of the formation of national narratives in the Balkans, in Turkey, and in the Caucasus in the 19th and 20th centuries. The official politics of memory of these countries is based on symbols that unite, generalize and fix contradicting memories, which have been passed from one generation to the next. Symbolic commemorations, monuments and jubilees contribute to the sustainability of divergent national memories; the Batak-affair⁶ was only the peak of an iceberg.

Therefore, the overall aim of the project is to prepare ground for a revision of conflicting images of the ROW of 1877 – 1878. The project considers itself positioned within the new tendencies in regional and memory studies indicated above, and aim on the establishment of a network of researchers from all countries with relevant ROW memories in order to facilitate this revision. It is worth mentioning that this is the first initiative of this kind.

The project did not start from the scratch but can rely on studies already conducted in the region or its neighbourhood. First and foremost, the Tbilisi Initiative (funded by the Council of Europe) launched in 1997 by a group of scholars from Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan working on a joint textbook on the history of the Caucasus from the antiquity to 1921, has to be mentioned. This initiative, however, turned out to be a failure.⁷ More successful was “The Southeast European Joint History Project”, which aimed at the revision of ethnocentric history teaching and at the idea of multi-perspectivity of contested historical events.⁸ Whereas these two initiatives were focusing on textbooks, Wertsch’s “Voices of Collective Remembering”⁹ focuses explicitly on one aspect of the project’s aims, namely on the collective memory of Russia and other successor states of the Soviet Union. Wertsch, who represents a sociocultural perspective, treats collective memory primarily as textual mediated memory conditioned by historical narratives. Wertsch’s as well as Garagozov’s psychological research on collective memory in the Caucasus region¹⁰ provides the project with guidelines of orientation. There exists abundant literature on memory culture and the politics of memory about the Balkans. This genre has become fashionable; however, the ROW has been hardly treated in this context.¹¹

'Politics of memory' is understood here as official memory propagated by states and their institutions (schools, universities, ministries), media, national celebration days, and the equipment of the public space with historical monuments, street and place denomination. Potential actors are political leaders, teachers, priests and preachers, journalists and municipalities. Whereas politics of memory is initiated from above, 'memory cultures' are predominantly fueled bottom-up and widely uncontrolled or even contradictory to politics of memory. These individual as well as collective memories of groups, victims and actors are often suppressed such as the memories of women, migrants, and minorities. Politics of memory and memory cultures interact permanently with each other and therefore power relations come into play, indeed.

2. Historical background

It has to be underlined that a critical research or re-research of the ROW does not belong to the project's ambitions; it will focus on the memory production related to this tragic war. What follows is a short description of the major events of the ROW without specific bibliographic references.¹²

The ROW of 1877 – 1878 emerged as a conflict between the Ottoman Empire and an Eastern Orthodox coalition led by the Russian Empire. Fought out in the Balkans and in the Caucasus, its origins lie (1) in the increasing nationalism in the Ottoman Balkans and (2) in Russia's ambition to compensate its territorial losses in the Crimean War and to re-establish its domination in the Black Sea region and to affirm its position in the Caucasus.

After uprisings in Bosnia (1875) and Bulgaria (1876) against Ottoman administration, Serbia and Montenegro declared war against the Empire, which ended with a defeat of the Balkan states. Finally Russia entered the theatre of war. The war was proclaimed in Chişinău (today capital of Moldova), where the Russian Emperor Aleksandr II on 12th/24th of April 1877 signed a manifesto, which declared war against the Ottoman Empire with the avowed aim of righting the wrongs of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Russian and Romanian troops began to capture the redoubts protecting the Ottoman-Bulgarian city of Plevna.

The Russians under Field Marshal Iosif Vladimirovič Romejko-Gurko succeeded in capturing passes at the Stara Planina Mountain in Bulgaria, which were crucial for manoeuvring during the summer of 1877. Next, both sides fought a series of battles for the Šipka Pass. Gurko made several attacks on the Pass and eventually secured it. Ottoman troops spent much effort to recapture this important route but failed. Eventually Gurko led a final offensive that crushed the Ottoman troops around Šipka Pass. Besides the Romanian Army (which mobilized 130,000 men) and more than 12,000 volunteer Bulgarian troops (*opālčenie*) recruited from the local Bulgarian population as well as many *hajduk* detachments (irregular troops) fought on Russia's side in Stara Planina Mountain.

In the battles on Šipka Pass (10th, 11th, and 12th of August 1877) Bulgarian volunteers led by the Russian General Stoletov succeeded to keep the pass under Russian control. The Russian victory at the Šipka Pass (December 1877) and at Plevna opened the way to the region of Thrace and to the Ottoman capital of Istanbul. In February 1878 Russian troops reached the suburbs of Istanbul. A preliminary

peace treaty was signed in the small town of San Stefano (today Yeşilköy) on 19th of February/3rd of March 1878. The treaty provided the creation of an extended Principality of Bulgaria. Therefore March 3, the day of the signature, is celebrated as 'Day of Liberation' in Bulgaria, as official recognition of its ethnic boundaries and as symbol of 'Greater Bulgaria'. However, the enlarged Bulgaria envisioned by the treaty alarmed neighbouring states as well as France, Austria-Hungary, and Great Britain. As a result, it was never implemented and became superseded by the Treaty of Berlin concluded at the Congress of Berlin (June 13 – July 13, 1878).

In the Caucasus, in the Georgian and Armenian populated areas, the Russian Caucasus Corps was composed of approx. 75,000 men under the command of Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevič, Governor General of Caucasus. The Russian force stood against an Ottoman army of approx. 80,000 men commanded by General Ahmed Muhtar Paşa. Many of the Russian commanders were of Armenian descent. One of them, Lieutenant-general Ter-Gukasov, conducted the initial assault into Ottoman territory by capturing the town of Doğubayazıt (East Anatolia) on April 27, 1877. Armenians' collaboration with Russia was reciprocated against the Armenian civil population in the West Armenian regions of Anatolia, where Kurds were encouraged to attack it.

As result of the war in the Caucasus, Russia succeeded in claiming the Kars (East Anatolia) and Batumi (Southwest Georgia) Caucasian provinces. After the victorious war the political map of Caucasus has been redrawn. Under the imperial rule of Russia Georgia regained its historical borders, including the southwestern, partly Muslim province of Ajara with Batumi as central city. Armenia was divided with its western parts left under the Ottoman rule and its eastern parts under Russian rule. According to the Armenian historiography the Treaty of Berlin neglected the justified Armenian claims for a united Armenia and caused the beginning of the so-called 'Armenian question'. Disappointed by the European powers a guerrilla war began in Armenian territories in Anatolia, which ended disastrous for the Armenian population in the course of WWI.

As result of the war in the Balkans the principalities of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, each of them had already enjoyed *de facto* sovereignty before the war, formally proclaimed independence from the Ottoman Empire. After almost five centuries of Ottoman domination (1396 – 1878), the Bulgarian state was re-established as Principality of Bulgaria, covering the region between the Danube River and the Balkan Mountains (except North Dobrudja which was attached to Romania) as well as the region of Sofia, which became the new state's capital. The Congress of Berlin (June 13 – July 13, 1878) also permitted Austria-Hungary to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina and the United Kingdom to take control over Cyprus.

The war had dramatic consequences for all of the countries involved. Turkish historiography is widely convinced that the First Constitutional Period inaugurated in 1876 was terminated in 1878 by the Sultan due to this war. The massive migrations of the Muslim people from the lost territories of the Ottoman Empire to its 'core lands', which resulted in a vital demographic change in favour of the Muslims in Anatolia, has been presented as the beginning of the great Muslim 'exodus'. Although the war was lost by the Ottoman army, heroic stories about commanders

(e.g. Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa in the Caucasus and especially Gazi Osman Paşa in the Balkans) have prevailed until today.

The war caused persecutions and migrations of Christians, Muslims and Jews. The Muslim population of Bulgaria suffered severely from the war, though the exact number of casualties and refugees is disputed. The estimates of Muslim civilians, almost all of Turkish origin, killed during the war range from tens of thousands to 262,000. The number of Muslim refugees is also disputed; R.J. Crampton claims 130,000 fled, while McCarthy claims a total of 515,000, almost all Turkish¹³. On the Russian side approx. 15,000 people were killed in battle and more than 80,000 died from disease. On the Ottoman side approx. 30,000 were killed and 90,000 died from disease.

The ROW constitutes an outstanding event in the history of the Balkans, as it is connected to the peak of the Eastern Question, namely the distribution of the European territories of the Ottoman Empire among the Balkan states and the role played by the Great Powers in it. The ROW is also connected with the Macedonian Question, the religious, diplomatic and educational struggle between the Balkan states of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, which became rivalries in the partition of the geographical region of Macedonia in the Balkan Wars of 1912 – 1913.

With the Treaty of San Stefano attempted to create a Greater Bulgaria, which included considerable parts of Macedonia. Therefore, Greek historiography has presented the Treaty of San Stefano as a conspiracy of the Russian diplomacy against Greece. This treaty caused a severe alienation between Greece and the neighbouring Slavic states, which in historiography is called 'Slavophobia' (fear of the Slavs). Shortly after, in the summer of 1878, the Congress of Berlin set aside what was agreed upon in San Stefano. However, it was impossible to annul the irredentist and purely nationalistic aspirations of the mentioned Balkan countries with regard to Macedonia. The decades after the Berlin Congress were conflict-laden ones in the Balkans. Each of the states tried to adopt economic, religious, educational and military means in order to promote their interests in the region.

3. Contradicting cultures of memory

The ROW was a major historical event, which resulted in the establishment of a new political order in the Balkan and Caucasian regions and determined their long-term development. In the decades that followed, the peace treaties were interpreted as crucial – but in different and often opposing ways by the nations directly involved in the war (Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Georgians, Bulgarians, Macedonians and Russians). In every nation/country contradicting official cultures of memory emerged. In Bulgaria, e.g., the conclusion of the San Stefano Peace Treaty was celebrated as a national feast, but in Greece it was received as a tragic event because it stipulated the integration of most of Macedonia to Bulgaria. In the Ottoman Empire, the war and the following preliminary Treaty of San Stefano and the definite Treaty of Berlin have been regarded as dramatic peak of nationalist separatist movements aimed at the destruction of the Empire. Interpreted in contradicting ways, the ROW served national ideologists as basis for strengthening national identities. In Bulgaria, for instance, it gave birth to a long-lasting tradition of Rus-sophilism.

The Cold War divided the Balkan and Caucasian region with Bulgaria and the Soviet Union states of Russia, Armenia and Georgia as members of Warsaw Treaty on the one hand and Turkey and Greece as NATO members on the other hand. The diverging memories of the ROW were used to deepen the hostile stereotypes in the ideological propaganda on both sides of the iron curtain. After the end of the Cold War the ROW has not been critically reinterpreted but gave rise to a new wave of nationalism, which was aimed against the 'eternal' enemy – Turks and Greeks for Bulgarians, Turks for Armenians, Slavic Macedonians for Greeks and vice versa. More than 130 years after, the remembrance of the ROW still plays an important role in the historically involved countries – new monuments are built, new films are shot, and old heroes in new political constellations are celebrated.

Aside from minor revisions, the ROW resulted in the present state (administrative) boundaries. The war and the new boundaries caused waves of emigration, persecution, minority formation – and assimilation processes with long-term consequences still on debate. Persecution and assimilation of Muslim minorities in Christian countries and vice versa are also part of the war's memory. Today, economic politics such as Russian energy export to Europe and Caspian energy export backed by Turkey aim at establishing zones of influence misusing also memory traditions about the ROW.

Following European practices as in the case of the reinterpretation of the French-German relations, some attempts for mutual research of traumatic memory of conflicts have been made in the Balkans so far. A good example is the already mentioned "Southeast European Joint History Project". The main motivation of the project is to include the ROW into processes of that kind ("from divergence to dialog") and constitutes a pioneer attempt in bringing together, comparing, sharing, and relating the separated national memories of the war in a multi-perspective way of interpretation. Since so far the war has been researched by political and military historians almost exclusively, our main target will be to encourage an interdisciplinary approach in the sense of emerging 'memory studies'. In order to overcome ethnocentric images, myths, stereotypes, and prejudices – their historical, political and cultural contexts will be researched. The official media- and art rhetoric about the war and its representation in the text books for history, literature, and geography will be critically analysed. The project is guided by the ambitious motivation to give a voice to the neglected by the dominating national narratives about the war – such as of emigrants, minorities, and women. In addition, the instrumentalization of war memory in mass culture and mass media – tourism, advertisement, film, and internet – will be analysed.

This volume's articles are investigating the contradicting cultures of memory in depth. They document how differently memories were shaped by political decisions taken after the ROW: the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin. The most powerful actor in the formation of cultural memory was historiography of the Soviet Union. Four of the seven national historiographies included in the project and in the volume were put under the umbrella of Soviet historiography: Russia, Georgia, Armenia (and Bulgaria from the late 1940s until 1989). Macedonia as Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as Greece and Turkey as sovereign countries had to develop their specific positions. Analysing the articles, which have been written by the coun-

tries' teams or team leaders, it becomes immediately clear that the events of the ROW have very divergent meanings for the respective collective memories, which is also expressed by the higher and lower level of intensity of research. In Bulgaria and Russia the war has received highest attention, which is not only expressed by historiography but also by a vivid memory culture.

The volume is opened by the Austrian team member Dominik Gutmeyr. His contribution "History and Memory: A Tendency towards Transdisciplinarity and the Influence of Politics of Memory on the Formation of Historical Narratives" provides the reader with a general orientation on modern memory studies and various manifestations of memory policy. The author discusses in detail the intertwining aspects of both history and memory and pleads in favour of a multi-perspective and transdisciplinary approach in the study of memory cultures. Specialists from various fields collect all kinds of sources – written and oral, eyewitnesses' descriptions, manifestations in literature and fiction, analyses of textbooks and educational systems, planning and construction of memorial sites and monuments and processes of intergenerational transmission of culture and memories. However, either a universally applicable methodology or the objective for memory studies to be transdisciplinary ones has not yet been realized. Gutmeyr's paper explicitly refers to constellations of power relations, when it comes to the selection and interpretation of sources and the role of power elites in public commemoration. Perusing the texts of this volume it becomes evident that these two aspects are present in every country and every national historiography. The ideologies of nationalism and socialism demonstrate to be the most powerful forces that have been shaping collective memory and memory culture. Since two decades or so the political-ideological pressure that rested upon the national historiographies has been loosened everywhere, has paved the way to plurality and open discussion on critical historical issues. However, an unbiased approach to the ROW is still rather an exception than the rule.

Bulgarian collective memory has the closest relation to the events of 1877 – 1878. The battle on Pass Šipka as well as the Treaty of San Stefano has become unshakeable icons of the national memory. One of the aims of the Bulgaria team-paper "‘Battles in the Past’ or ‘Battles for the Past’. Bulgarian National Models of Memory and Memory Policy" is to investigate the transformation of traditional religious memory to modern memory policies. The point in time when the former oscillated to the latter is marked by the war period of 1912 – 1918. After that the state became the main actor in the memory culture. During the interwar period the still valid historical tropes were affirmed: The ROW concluded a half a millennium's period of enslavement, conversion, suppression and exploitation by the 'Turks'. The paper identifies the main instruments of historical-memory affirmation in the hands of the state, namely public research institutions and historiography, national education institutions, monuments, museums and annual commemorations.

The Bulgarian paper critically states that, so gratifying the creation of a Bulgarian statehood was, the outcome of the ROW laid ground for two myths: (1) The myth of the uncompleted Bulgarian state since the Treaty of Berlin carved Macedonia from the young state and returned it to the Ottoman Empire. This provided with the ideological fundament for the country's involvement in the two Balkan Wars and

the Great War with its disastrous results. In public opinion Macedonia still is considered a Bulgarian land. (2) The Communists' myth of the Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union respectively as 'double liberator'. The 'second liberation' (in 1944) had significant impact on the memory of the "first" liberation, which became ideologically re-interpreted: "The roles of the Russian Orthodox Church, tsar, the nobility of officers and nurses were silenced to highlight the role of the common soldier – Slav brothers, who helped twice the Bulgarians to liberate from the 'Turkish and Fascist yoke'". This myth about the 'double liberator' found expression in monumental art, museum policy, legislation, celebrations and the grandiose memorial Plevna Panorama, which was erected as symbol-monument of the Bulgarian-Soviet friendship in 1977.

As already mentioned, Russian and Soviet historiography held a hegemonic position in the interpretation of the ROW in both the empires' sphere of interest. This is elucidated by the paper of the Russian team. Its paper also clearly carves out the erratic memory models based on political conjunctures. Memory politics can be subdivided in three main periods: the pre-Soviet, the Soviet and the post-Soviet period; the Soviet period again can be divided in a Stalinist and a post-Stalinist period, beginning with Chruščëv's 'thaw' policy. Historiography of the pre-revolutionary period focused on military historiography. Its exponents were leading commanders in the ROW and military historians. Among other works, an official history of the ROW ("Description of the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula") was published. As a general trend, the authors conclude that military historiography of this period was in line with the official justification of the war – the liberation of the Slavic brother-nations from the Ottoman yoke.

In the Soviet period, on the basis of Marxist 'historic materialism' certain aspects of the ROW were highlighted such as Russia's foreign policy, which was considered as 'reactionary' and as an expression of the ruling class's interests. Whereas under Stalin's regime the outcome of 'research' was dictated by the ruling Party, under Chruščëv historians enjoyed more freedom, which resulted in an increasing number of studies on the ROW. Comprehensive volumes on the war events were published. Its 100th anniversary, celebrated as anniversary of the Balkan nations' liberation from the Ottoman yoke, provided the opportunity to intensify research of new historical facts and details; its interpretation remained ideologically biased.

In the post-Soviet period the situation changed completely. Instead of the Marxist paradigm a plurality of theoretical positions as well as research interests have arrived. Now, theoretical considerations circle around concepts of memory and oblivion, remembrance and collective memory. Also historical-anthropological positions in form of a 'new military history' are represented: soldiers and commanders not as heroes but as men in extreme war conditions, their thoughts, feelings and behaviour, when panic broke out, and the notion of duty and honour; details of front life, constructions of the enemy's image as well as the phenomenon of women as war participants. Previously neglected sources such as ego-documents (memoirs, letters and diaries) are being increasingly exploited. Previous taboo topics such as heritage of the Cossacks or the participation of the North Caucasian nations in the Russian army in the ROW are being discussed.

One of the most appreciated experts of the history and culture of the North Caucasian nations, Professor Tat'jana Aleksandrovna Nevskaja, who teaches at the North Caucasus Federal University of Stavropol' and who is member of the Russian research team. Petar Vodenicharov, member of the Bulgarian team, made an interview with her, which is printed in the present volume. The interview circles around topics such as the character of the Russian expansion to the North Caucasus; was it colonization or modernization? Further about the contribution of the North Caucasian peoples to Russian culture, the relations between Russia and Ossetia in the late eighteenth and during the nineteenth century, the contribution of Ossetians and other Caucasus peoples to the Russian victory in the ROW and the memory politics of the Soviet Union and Russia expressed by public monuments, which T.A. Nevskaja calls "contradictive".

The Russian-Soviet periodization of historiography on the ROW can also be applied for the Armenian and Georgian case. The eastern parts of the Armenians' territories were under Russian and the western parts under Ottoman rule, when the ROW broke out. Therefore, many Russian Armenians volunteered in the Russian army in order to support the 'liberation' of the Armenians under the Ottoman 'yoke'. The liberation failed and therefore the 'Armenian question' remained open. In the pre-Soviet era scholarly analyses of the ROW from the Armenian side practically did not exist. Nikolaj Georgievič Adonc (1871 – 1942), a prominent Armenian historian, who was appointed professor at St. Petersburg University in 1916, was the first, who committed himself to write about the Armenian question. After the Sovietisation the ROW as well as the Armenian question was severely tabooed in the 1920s and 1930s. According to the research findings of the Armenian team even to mention the prominent Armenian participants in the ROW was prohibited. The situation improved only after Stalin's death; still in the late 1950s initial works about the ROW and the role of Armenians in it could be published. The public had to wait until 1981, when "The history of the Armenian nation" in six volumes was published in Yerevan and the ROW was presented in the broader context of Armenian history. The relative marginality of the ROW in Armenian historiography is underlined by the fact that only two books on the Armenian participants in the ROW have been published in the post-Soviet era.

Contrary to the Armenian case, as one of the results of the ROW the Georgian territories were united under Russian rule. Georgian militias had volunteered in Russian army. In December 1877 the Russian army liberated the southwestern region of Ajara, which was previously under Ottoman control, with its significant Muslim-Georgian share in population. In the pre-Soviet era a substantial historiographical treatment of the ROW by the Georgian side is missing. This holds true also for the Stalin era. The best monographs that have been published yet emerged immediately after Stalin's death by one and the same author, namely Shamshe Megrelidze. In 1956 his book "Liberation of Ajara from Turkish ruling" and in 1963 his monograph "From the history of South-West Georgia" was published. Instead of public historiography on the ROW alternative forms of memory do exist. For instance, the memories of the Muslim refugees, who left the region of Ajara after its occupation by Russian troops, in fiction, in form of ethnographical collection, in folklore, music, public celebrations and in the ecclesiastical memory.

Also Macedonians volunteered in the Russian army in hopes of liberation of their lands from Ottoman rule; they were part of the Bulgarian Volunteer Corps. Whereas in the Treaty of San Stefano Macedonia was foreseen as part of Greater Bulgaria, the Treaty of Berlin subdued the region again to Ottoman domination. As a consequence, uprisings against the re-incorporation were organised – but in vain. As result of the Balkan Wars the country was divided and attached to Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. Lacking of academic institutions until the establishment of the Federal Republic of Macedonia in the framework of Yugoslavia, memory in form of narratives, songs, poems, written memoirs of individuals were cultivated. The first academic history institution, namely the Institute of National History, was established in 1948 and provided a framework for the modern institutionalized memory culture in Macedonia. However, the study of national histories in socialist Yugoslavia was considered of being suspicious. The author of the Macedonian contribution to this volume stresses that because Macedonia was not directly involved in the ROW research before and after 1991 concentrates on the Eastern Crisis in general. The participation of Macedonian volunteers in the ROW, the Treaty of San Stefano and the consequences of the Treaty of Berlin for Macedonia remain as special points of interest.

Although the involvement of Greece in the ROW was ephemeral or just so, the general perception was that of a traumatic event. In the diplomatic forefield of the war the Greek government was evidently unable to come to a clear decision whether the country should join the Russian army or not. When Greece in January 1878 decided to join it was too late for becoming an actor in decision making. The Treaty of San Stefano was a disaster for the country because of the creation of Greater Bulgaria, which was supposed to include Macedonia. Late nineteenth century historiography blamed the Greek government for its hesitation to join the Russian army or blamed the Russians for playing a pan-Slavic instead of a pan-Orthodox game. Recent historiography argues that during the Eastern Crisis the Greek Kingdom was in a very weak position due its military inability and the lack of diplomatic influence; this was the reason for the inertia of the political elite.

Finally there is the delicate Turkish case. Bülent Bilmez's critical essay on "Memory Politics and Cultures in Turkey" states that academic studies on memory politics and cultures have only begun recently. One reason for this late onset of this kind of research was that it was always linked to taboo topics such as the state's politics against non-Muslim minorities (Greeks and Armenians e.g.) in the Turkish Republic. A second reason for this neglect was that oral history as research method and strategy is still only weakly institutionalized. The third and probably most import reason was the state's monopoly on the creation of collective memory. This and the state's control of historical research what 'national issues' was concerned constituted a serious obstacle for alternative memory research until the previous one to two decades.

The Kemalists' history politics was to cut many ties with the Ottoman Empire, although the continuities to the young Turkish Republic were obvious. If the Empire was memorized then it was the period of its glory and not of its decay. Bilmez concludes: "Although the ROW has (directly or indirectly) taken an important place in the popular memory, neither there is enough (academic or popular) work in the

Turkish historiography on this war and its consequences, nor has it taken any place in the recent discussions regarding the politics of memory in Turkey.”

The research project in general and this volume in particular do not intend to create a shared memory of the ROW, of course. This would be presumptuous and too ambitious. Instead we want to bring together the various national perspectives on the war in one volume, what has never been done before. When some of the contributions put emphasis on the constructability of collective or social memory they do not want to express that these memories are false and the people misguided by their memory constructing institutions but they want only to point at the fact that many of these memories rest on a disputable basis. We think that collective memories have to be re-adjusted and in a certain way corrected, too. This is a permanent process that will never come to an end. The only framework that guaranties the permanence of re-adjustments and corrections is a democratic society, where ideas and research results can freely compete and where a critical civil society constitutes one of various actors in this process. The present volume, hopefully, once will be considered as a valuable mosaic in this process.

¹ See, for instance, Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History*, Oxford, 2004.

² It has almost become redundant to refer to the seminal works of Maurice Halbwachs, Aby Warburg or Jan and Aleida Assmann on individual, collective and/or social memory. See for instance: Aleida Assmann, *Memory, Individual and Collective*. In: Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Analysis*, Oxford, 2006; Jan Assmann, *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, *New German Critique* 65 (1995), 125-133; Maurice Halbwachs, *Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen*, Frankfurt/Main, 1995; Aby Warburg: *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, Martin Warnke and Claudia Brink (eds.), Berlin, 2000.

³ Henry L. Roediger and James V. Wertsch, *Creating a new discipline of memory studies*, *Memory Studies* 1, 1 (2008), 9-22.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Pascal Boyer and James V. Wertsch (eds.), *Memory in Mind and Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁶ In 2007, an exhibition about the creation process of the painting “The Massacre of Batak” in 1892 by the Polish painter Antoni Piotrowski should have been shown in a museum in the Bulgarian capital Sofia. The subject of the painting is related to the massacre of Christian Bulgarians at the hands of their Muslim neighbors in the small Bulgarian town of Batak in 1876, two years before Bulgaria became an independent state as a result of the Russo-Ottoman War from 1877/78. The Bulgarian curator and art historian Martina Baleva wanted to demonstrate how images are used to create a national imagination even they do not represent historical reality, but create its own reality. Bulgarian politicians and the popular media started a campaign against the exhibition and the curator by claiming that the organizers would deny the historical event shown on the painting. Although the curator had never said that the massacre never happened, the exhibition never took place. More about this affair: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13. 9. 2007. More about the academic background: Martina Baleva and Ulf Brunnbauer (eds.), *Batak kato mjesto na pametta / Batak als bulgarischer Erinnerungsort*, Sofia, 2007.

⁷ Rauf Garagozov, “Collective Memory and Memory Politics in the Central Caucasian Countries”. Web. 30 December 2012. <https://www.ca-c.org/journal/2005-06-eng/06.garprimen.shtml>.

⁸ “The Southeast European Joint History Project”. *Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe*. Web. 30 December 2012. <http://www.cdsee.org/jhp/pdf/JHP-Overview-short-October%202009.pdf> and in more detail “The Southeast European Joint History Project”. *The Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe*. Web. 30 December 2012. <http://www.cdsee.org/jhp/pdf/JHP-overview-long-October2009.pdf>.

⁹ James V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge, 2002.

¹⁰ Rauf Garagozov, *Collective memory: Patterns and manifestations* (= *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology* 46, 1 and 46, 2 (2008); esp. his article “Characteristics of Collective Memory, Ethnic Conflicts, Historiography, and the ‘Politics of Memory’: Characteristics of Historical Accounts and ‘forms’ of Collective Memory”, *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology* 46, 2 (2008), 58-95 should be mentioned here.

¹¹ Maria Todorova (ed.), *Balkan Identities. Nation and Memory*, London 2004; an excellent overview is provided by Todorova’s introductory text to this volume (pp. 1-24).

¹² There exists abundant literature about the ROW and its consequences for the Balkan and Caucasus region; see for instance Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The establishment of the Balkan national states, 1804-1920*, Seattle, 1986; George D.C. Argyll, *The Eastern Question from the Treaty of Paris 1856 to the Treaty of Berlin 1878 and to the Second Afghan War*, Vol. II, London, 2005; Matthew. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923*, New York, 1966; Virginia H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700-1870. An Empire Besieged*, Harlow, 2007; William E. D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields: a History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border 1828-1921*, Cambridge, 1953; Frederick W. Kagan and Robin Higham, (eds.), *The Military History of Tsarist Russia*, New York, 2002.

¹³ Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire*, New York, 1983; Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton, 1996.

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History and Memory: A Tendency towards Transdisciplinarity and the Influence of Politics of Memory on the Formation of Historical Narratives

Abstract: *Studies of politics of memory and memory culture are no new phenomenon, but memory studies turn out to be an emerging field, which aims to comprise knowledge from a variety of fields of research. Historians are amongst the most productive experts in elaborating theories on memory, which makes it essential to reflect upon the role of memory within historical research. Equally necessary is it to give some thought to the way politics of memory is conducted and in what way it influences the formation and maintenance of a cultural memory. The paper's first section will take a close look at modern memory studies and the intertwining aspects of both history and memory before highlighting the tendency towards transdisciplinarity. The second part of the present paper aims to shed light on the different manifestations of politics of memory, thereby asking for the production of official narratives and the necessity of giving countermemories a voice.*

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 influenced the development of the regions on both sides of the Black Sea massively. Not only did the political map of Southeastern Europe and the Caucasus region change decisively, but it is politics of memory related to the war of 1877 – 1878 that concerns all involved regions until today. It has been part of the formation and development of national narratives in the Balkans, in the Caucasus and in Turkey not only in the direct aftermath of the war, but throughout the 19th and 20th century up until today. The official politics of memory conducted by the concerning countries has a highly symbolic dimension, aiming at an all-encompassing unity within its population, while memories, initially having been passed on from one generation to the next, are stabilized and checked for contradictory narratives before they are transported from a society's communicative memory into its cultural memory.

The present project "Politics of Memory and Memory Cultures of the Russian-Ottoman War 1877/1878: From Divergence to Dialogue" aims to shed light on the memories and narratives preserved in the different countries in Southeastern Eu-

rope and the Caucasus region. By means of bringing the separated national narratives of the conflict together to comparison and jointly researching the traumatic memories related to the war, a multi-perspective re-interpretation of the memories shall be achieved, thereby transcending ethnocentric images, myths, prejudices and stereotypes. In order to make a revision of conflicting images of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 possible, it is necessary to elaborate on existing theories about memory and politics of memory and to discuss two fundamental issues: 1) Which role do memory and memory studies take in within the fields of historical research and historiography and which tendencies can be observed within the field of memory studies and 2) How does politics of memory influence the formation of national narratives and at what kind of collective memory does it aim?

1. The role of modern studies of memory culture in historical research

Since the 1980s studies of politics of memory and memory culture have been an integral part of cultural studies and are therefore far from being new achievements in Western European literature. But although research on memory has been understood to be a phenomenon, which shouldn't be reduced to the methodology of a singular discipline, various specific concepts of memory and memory cultures have been developed within different fields of research. The same applies to the field of historical research, in which modern studies of memory culture play an important role. Therefore it is necessary to reflect on the intertwining aspects of both history and memory and the discourse of the two concepts being in between compatibility and opposition before broadening the historian's horizon by developing new objectives by the means of transdisciplinary memory studies.

As theoretical approaches to collective memory and memory cultures turned out to be especially insightful when relying on researches from various disciplines, modern memory studies more and more aim to comprise the expertise of different fields of research like psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, history, philology, pedagogy, religious studies and many more. But as fruitful a multidisciplinary cooperation can be, according to James Wertsch and Henry Roediger the bewildering diversity of uses of the term *memory* also implies the danger of miscommunication and misunderstanding interfering with the author's initial objective to encourage memory studies to develop from a currently multidisciplinary field to an interdisciplinary one.¹ At the same time one must reflect on the potential necessity not only to cooperate between different disciplines but also to criticize and reflect critically the interdisciplinary exchange, which would at last lead to transdisciplinary memory studies.

History and memory studies

Of all experts in the various disciplines dealing with memory cultures, historians are amongst the most productive in elaborating theories on memory, which is no surprise, as remembrance and historical awareness are central elements in constituting collective memories. Since memory and memory cultures have been an integral part of modern cultural studies and therefore in historical research as well, the question whether historiography constitutes a form of collective memory itself has concerned historians. Another important aspect for understanding the role of

memory within historical research is the relation between history and memory, as they both represent ways of relating to the past and the pictures they provide are often related in one way or another (see Roediger/Wertsch 2008a: 324).²

The aim to analyze historical processes objectively turned out to be naïve, since historical sources couldn't reflect the past exactly as it happened but would rather be perspective and interpret it. It also has become clear that the thought the past was closed and fixed while the future was open to changes had to be revised, since the past is constantly changing and the future is far from independent from the past.³ Jan Assmann puts it that way that the selection, which past becomes evident in a heritage and which values emerge in its identificatory appropriation tells primarily about the constitution and the tendencies of a society.⁴ Maurice Halbwachs closes his main work about memory with the thought, that societal thinking would solely consist of collective memories, but only those parts of them could remain, which a society in every epoch could reconstruct with its specific and present frame of reference.⁵ The same applies to the historian *per se* who cannot be seen isolated of his personal and historical context. The notion of an independent history, free from all kind of perspectives, has been questioned often by modern historians, thereby noting that the history of an event may be portrayed differently depending on author and surrounding, even when they would rely on the same sources.⁶

Furthermore it is not only the historian embedded in a societal framework, but historiography as well. "Schematic narrative templates", as James Wertsch calls continuous narrations within a single historiography, would dominate the organization of the past and therefore of historical memories of a group respectively of a people.⁷ Consequently the main question arising is, which function historiography does take in within society – Whether historiography aims to reconstruct the past objectively and free from all influences or whether historiography does imply being biased to a certain extent and having the ambition to make a point in the present by using the past. In other words: Does historiography have a purely scientific function or is it predominantly utilized for memory culture? Aleida Assmann puts it that way, that the memorial and scientific function of historiography are connected in a complex manner, while it is *as well* rhetorically written and therefore made.⁸ The debate around history or/and/as memory has been going on for decades and has produced a broad variety of theoretical approaches towards the compatibility of history and memory.

When speaking about memory culture, for modern cultural studies it has become mandatory to refer to the key works of Maurice Halbwachs, Aby Warburg, Pierre Nora or Jan and Aleida Assmann, who coined the studies of memories more than any other scholar throughout the 20th century. While reflections on cultural memory weren't exactly a new phenomenon and can be traced back to ancient philosophers, it was both Maurice Halbwachs' and Aby Warburg's achievement to be the first to analyze them systematically within the framework of modern cultural studies. Independent from one another, Halbwachs and Warburg developed their theories during the 1920s; thereby constructing the theoretical basis scholars would rely on and refer to when working with concepts of collective memory. As their approaches fundamentally differ, Jan Assmann sees the main contribution of the soci-

ologist and the art historian in shifting the discourse concerning collective knowledge out of a biological framework into a cultural one.⁹ As enlightening the seminal works of the named scholars are, they couldn't provide a universal answer to the question to what degree the concepts *history* and *memory* are connected and to what degree they find themselves in opposition.

History and memory between compatibility and opposition

Within the complex of connectivity between history and memory the discipline of Oral History is of special interest and is often topic for discussion within that field, as it consists of both the approaches to aim to reconstruct the past and by that means to use individual memories to do so. The discipline of Oral History both connects the thoughts of Maurice Halbwachs¹⁰ and memory within intergenerational relations and Jan and Aleida Assmann¹¹ and their theories concerning communicative memory. But one should still be aware that autobiographical remembrance is often a construct created in retrospect that tells more about the present than about the past, whereas the lines between them begin to blur.

While Oral History aims to connect and utilize the terms *history* and *memory*, other scholars stress the fundamental difference between them. The most significant approach emphasizing separated discourses for history and memory had been developed by Pierre Nora in his main work "Les lieux de mémoire" (1984 – 1992), who, following the ideas of Halbwachs, declared the two terms opposite in every respect. Nora further elaborates on memory at the end of the 20th century and denies such a concept and rather prefers memory to be reflected on within realms of memory. These *lieux de mémoire* have to be understood as *loci* in the ancient tradition of mnemonics, thereby constituting not only places in their geographical significance but as well historical personalities, buildings and monuments, artworks, philosophical and scientific texts or symbolic gestures.¹² The central idea behind Nora's elaborations is though, that these realms of memory cannot constitute a collective memory, as Maurice Halbwachs thought they would. According to Pierre Nora the *lieux de mémoire* much more serve as a replacement for a lost collective memory, while every individual would choose between the different realms of memory. Nora's theories about memory have been perceived in all disciplines of humanities and were very influential for cultural studies as such, not only but especially in Germany, where many projects about realms of memory have been initiated.

But in respect to the relation between history and memory, criticism of Nora's understanding of memory has come up. Kerwin Lee Klein for instance both criticizes the perception of the theories of Pierre Nora and the American historian Yosef Yerushalmi leading to an opposition of *memory* and *history* and therefore creating a binary view of remembering that would not aim to combine the two concepts.¹³ Astrid Erll therefore prefers to understand historiography as a medium, *history* as a symbolic form of reference to the past while she chooses to superordinate collective memory hierarchically over the latter.¹⁴

National traditions of memory studies and transcultural approaches

A quick look at the dominant approaches within different concepts of memory studies also shows that there are specifics in different national surroundings.¹⁵ The

concepts of *memoria*¹⁶, the *invention of traditions*¹⁷ and the *archive*¹⁸ are three of the most important concepts within the historical research of memory studies and can be assigned towards historical research within German, Anglo-American and French discourses respectively. At the same time within international memory studies one can identify a tendency towards concepts of transculturality and transnational studies, which not only aim to comprise approaches from different national fields of science but as well from different disciplines.

Three paradigmatic publications which clearly underline the tendency towards transculturality and Interdisciplinarity are the handbook "Cultural Memory Studies: An international and interdisciplinary Handbook", edited by Ansgar Nünning and Astrid Erll (2008), "Jenseits von Grenzen. Transnationales, translokales Gedächtnis", edited by Elisabeth Großegger and Moritz Csáky (2007), and the publishing of the first volume of the journal "Memory Studies" (2008) – all projects emerging within the last decade and aiming at a globalized research of memory cultures. These publications and many more clearly underline the tendency within modern memory studies towards transculturality and interdisciplinarity, while James Wertsch and Henry Roediger encourage to create a new discipline of memory studies and to focus on interdisciplinarity within the emerging field of memory studies.¹⁹

From multidisciplinary to transdisciplinarity

Multidisciplinary studies allow scholars to gain an insight into matters from different perspectives but at the same time fundamental questions connected to a broader field appear. As specialists from various fields bring together all kind of sources – written or oral, eyewitness descriptions or manifestation of memories in literature and fiction, analysis of textbooks and educational systems, planning and construction of memorial sites and monuments, processes of intergenerational transmission of culture and memories and many more – it has to be stated that no universally applicable methodology has been developed yet whereas theoretical concepts so far rely on exchanging knowledge between different fields of studies.

As the objective for memory studies to be interdisciplinary ones hasn't been realized yet, some key questions are asked by Henry Roediger and James Wertsch in order to understand the aim of conducting memory studies on a bigger scale: What is memory and what are memories for?²⁰ Given the fact that memories are such a dominant topic in modern cultural studies, one would think that it would be a good starting point to pose these questions but *de facto* the only insight coming from these thoughts is that there is no satisfying single answer, just like it is not possible to find a single model describing the relation between history and memory. According to Henry Roediger and James Wertsch a reason for this is, that the research of memories is split all over different disciplines, who should finally combine their expertise to allow memory studies to be interdisciplinary, while they consider history, literature, philosophy, psychology and education the core disciplines of modern interdisciplinary memory studies, encouraging scholars from other disciplines such as anthropology or law to participate.²¹ At last Henry Roediger and James Wertsch admit that due to interdisciplinary memory studies being a relatively new field and due to the methods of the many disciplines being quite diverse, there has not been any development towards a unique methodology and neither could

they provide any in the present. Therefore scholars from various disciplines will have to cooperate even more in order to achieve the goal postulated by Henry Roediger and James Wertsch – to create a new discipline of memory studies, which transcends from being a multidisciplinary field to become an interdisciplinary one.

That being said, one should be aware that a development towards interdisciplinarity does not have to be the end within new memory studies, as the necessity to criticize and critically reflect approaches from other disciplines will become evident and therefore transcend interdisciplinarity once again. Modern memory studies will have to develop towards transdisciplinarity in order to overcome boundaries limiting awareness and insight.

Developing new objectives by the means of transdisciplinarity

The complex of memory and memories has been a dominant one in cultural studies since the 1980s and has also coined historical research deeply. The main question arising from that has been connected to the awareness that history itself constitutes a form of memory and the two concepts therefore couldn't be separated as strictly as some scholars suggested to do. Nevertheless neither the discussion around memory and history being two of a kind or a potential opposition has been fruitful, nor has it made sense to concentrate on the developed methodology of a single discipline or a single national researching tradition. The tendency within modern memory studies aims at bringing together all kind of expertise from different fields of study and from different research traditions in order to cope with the complexity of the matter as best as possible. To achieve results as insightful as possible, modern memory studies therefore aim to comprise knowledge and methods from different fields and traditions to finally develop them to be a transdisciplinary and transnational field of science.

The present project aims to implement these developments into the research of memories and politics of memory of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and will lead to insights beyond national and one-dimensional boundaries. New memory studies show that relying on knowledge about memory from different disciplines and therefore aiming at analyzing an epoch by transdisciplinary approaches does not only help to overcome limited perspectives but as well to establish a broader horizon of appearing questions, thereby enabling to successfully question existing stereotypes and prejudices. Transcending the boundaries of single disciplines and accepting insights from other approaches is the key for memory studies to guarantee researching results as profound and insightful as possible. The cooperation of scholars from various disciplines and national researching tradition within the project is the logical conclusion and not only allows sharing and comparing the outcomes but as well to thoroughly relate them and to evaluate their significance.

2. The influence of politics of memory on the formation of national narratives

To raise the awareness of the role of memories within historical research and historiography is one important aspect of modern memory studies. Another significant role is played by the concept of 'politics of memory', as it massively influences the way national narratives are formed and in what way the memories are consolidated within the cultural memory of a group. Politics of memory is understood as a top-bottom approach, enabling dominant elites to propagate an official memory. Hence the main question concerning any kind of narrative must be, whether one is remembering on his own or whether he has been reminded. In the latter case the influence of politics of memory looms large and should give an impulse to historians to look out for the role of dominant power elites as well as for counter-memories and alternative narratives and ultimately to give the latter a voice, which may lead to revision and re-interpretation of certain memories. Furthermore it is necessary to give some thought to potential agents of cultural memory, who most likely are dominant in producing official historical narratives. Another related aspect worth looking into is the so-called 'micro-politics of aesthetic form', which significantly expands the possibilities to understand the production of official historical narratives and to consciously include alternative memories, which had been silenced until then.

Remembering or being reminded?

It is not possible to assess memories as such, without focusing on the knowledge possessed by an individual, allowing him to generate a link between any kind of object, its cultural meaning and the memories it may entail.²² The knowledge about the object evokes and at last constructs an emotional and cultural commitment or antipathy towards it, sparking memories in that individual, it could not be aware of if it wasn't for its knowledge about the history and the cultural meaning of the object. As it has become clear that memories are constructed to a certain extent and interpret the past rather than reflect it adequately, the question, whether memories are refreshed by remembering or by being reminded of something is relevant, as the discrepancy hints at the importance of memory as politics. Accepting the difference between remembering on his own and being reminded by somebody of something, it seems obvious to reflect on every single remembrance and whether the attached rituals are celebrated within a local group, sharing the memory through experience, or whether it is a superordinate power or elite, who commands over its preferred version of history and over the way it should be commemorated in public.²³

Thus it is worth reflecting on the concept 'politics of memory', when one focuses on memories of a historic event, since the historical points of reference are no stable fixtures, but taking in precarious and temporary positions within a continuous process of reinterpreting the past.²⁴ As both collective and individual memories are open to changes, they are as well open to processes of distortion, oblivion, manipulation and construction. It is therefore possible to have memories reproduced and stabilized but as well to have them changed and reinterpreted. It is therefore in the interest of different parties to influence the representation of history, both concerning one's own history as well as the history of one's antagonists, and

to decide which aspects of memory better are stabilized and which should be put aside. Hence it is necessary to analyze within a specific discourse which groups respectively which elites have the power to conduct memory politics as such and to what degree they are able to interfere with existing narratives. The power to suppress counter-memories, to control cultural institutions, exhibitions and media as well as the access to archives and to have the command over erecting monuments or displaying rituals in public space all fall within memory politics, and is possibly in the hands of a hegemonic elite, who by that means is not only in control of the named aspects of life, but as well of the collective remembrance.

The role of power elites

The selection and interpretation of sources do not happen within an objective process, free from all influences, but are rather arbitrary, while knowledge about memory and interpretation of historical events are forever in flux.²⁵ Nonetheless it is a high priority for power elites to choose or even create their own narratives and representations, ideally reflecting an axiomatic image of the past and legitimating one's own power. Legitimation by looking at the past in order to find an origin is what Jan Assmann calls the "retrospective side" of the phenomenon, while he contrasts it with a "prospective side" and thereby emphasizes that rulers would focus on the future as well, as they would want to be remembered then and would try to cement their achievements within the cultural memory.²⁶ Reigning elites are furthermore keen to establish clear and secure narratives, far from being multilayered and ambiguous, in order to found and stabilize the basis of its ideological framework. Peter Meusburger points out, that it would be totalitarian systems in particular, who would try to create a present lasting for eternity and who would strive for an immutable canonization of texts and histories.²⁷

One type of information sources collective memories can derive from is thereby strongly connected to the role of power elites within public commemoration. Memories can be imposed on people by the concerning elite, it being state authorities, religious authorities or institutions or any kind of ruling elite, as they would try to indoctrinate the population with their preferred version of history including myths and narratives.²⁸ The medium of indoctrination can be diversely spread onto education, media, national museums and related exhibitions as well as onto all kind of holidays, festivities and celebrations. Especially the latter aspects serving the consolidation of collective memory are usually connected to highly symbolic places and primarily serve the purpose of strengthening the elite's understanding of a specific memory. While counter-memories are excluded from this policy, it does aim at a homogenization of collective memories and thereby aims at the whole population, to create an identity, unified by the commonly shared collective memories.

Such a top-bottom approach is understood as politics of memory and is no new phenomenon at all, as ruling elites of all kind have always tried to have an influence on what is worth commemorating and celebrating and on the opposite what should be forgotten and put aside. Popular manifestations of politics of memory are monuments or memorials, both in the stages of creation and subsequently in the stage of cultural existence, which Amy Remensnyder defines as "physical objects to which a commemorative meaning is attached".²⁹ Another outlet

of politics of memory is public commemoration, being “a calculated strategy for stabilizing collective memories that are otherwise protean and provisional”.³⁰

Although having noticed that politics of memory is far from being new, Peter Meusburger connects the newly emerging nation-states of the 18th and 19th centuries with a boost of meshing of power and collective memories.³¹ It would have acquired a new priority, as the new strategies of commemoration and fabricated traditions, as Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger³² had them in mind, supported the authority of the strengthened nation-states. Now and then politics of memory especially came within processes of nation-building into play, as they had always been accompanied by homogenization and purification of culture and memory, whereas minorities are silenced both in their role within the nation's administration and in their sectional memories, where their voice wouldn't be heard in favor of the general objectives.

It can only be the aim of modern historical sciences to make suppressed approaches and understandings visible in order to allow memories to be multilayered and ambiguous, not only when changes in the elite encourage them to do so, but at all time, as history itself and historical events in particular have to be open to revision or reinterpretation, having in mind that it is politics of memory, that aims to “freeze time into a crystalline image”.³³

Alternative narratives and counter-memories

Aside narratives being supported or even created by ruling elites within their politics of memory, minorities suffering suppression try to establish or preserve their own interpretation of history, which can easily differ from official approaches, thereby constituting counter-memories against official narratives of the political elites. Peter Meusburger stresses that these counternarratives and counter-memories would be able to defy the pressure of publicly enforced memories to a remarkable extent, as they would survive much longer as the elites would admit and would flourish the more a political system aims at imposing official narratives and collective memories on its population.³⁴ He further elaborates on the end of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe being an excellent example of existing counter-memories and their endurance, as it had indicated the existence of divided identities and counter-memories, despite the oppressive communist control of memory politics. Another important aspect of the lasting persistence of counter-memories, being passed on from generation to generation, is the impact of these narratives on recurring conflicts, as they would allegedly historically legitimize oppositions.

For successfully aiming at a critical reinterpretation of history, it is mandatory to be aware of the critical relations between official narratives and counter-memories in order to be able to make the step from divergence to dialogue. Analyzing dominating political narratives about historical episodes is one necessary element within the process of reevaluation, but without giving the neglected and suppressed a voice, the memories become lopsided again. Therefore it is essential to look behind official memory politics and consciously watch out for alternative approaches.

Communicative and cultural memory

It was Aleida and Jan Assmann who emphasized the difference between *communicative* and *cultural memory* as two forms of collective remembrance.³⁵ According to the two scholars communicative memory concerns memories directly related to the recent past.³⁶ A classic case for communicative memory is the transgenerational memory, as that kind of memory would grow historically within the group, developing and ceasing in that time. When the carriers of that memory would finally die, the memory would die with them and make way for a new memory. The space of communicative memory is limited to 3-4 generations. Jan Assmann refers to the Roman concept of a *saeculum*, understanding it as the limit until which the last surviving carrier of the transgenerational memory and with him the specific memory would die, and applies it onto his concept of communicative memory.³⁷

Cultural memory on the other hand relates to certain constants in the past. Still they wouldn't preserve the past as such but in fact become symbolic representations, to which memories would be attached to.³⁸ For cultural memory it is therefore less important to concentrate on factual history but rather remembered history. Jan Assmann puts it that way that within cultural memory factual history would be transformed into remembered history, thereby initiating another transformation; the transformation from history to myth. History would become a myth only through the process of remembering, not meaning that it would become unreal, but on the contrary constitute reality with a formative and normative dimension. Cultural memory therefore constitutes a form of collective memory, which lets people share cultural memory and conveys collective identity to them.³⁹

The two concepts differ in other respects as well. A relevant aspect indicating the difference gets clear when looking at the participation within communicative and cultural memory. The participation in the former concept is diffuse, as there are no specialists or experts as such within the concerning group.⁴⁰ It might be the case that some carriers of a certain communicative memory remember better and longer into the past than other carriers, mostly related to the different age structure of the participants, but nevertheless all members are considered equally competent.

In contrast to the diffuse participation of the group sharing a communicative memory, the members involved in cultural memory are always differentiated. Cultural memory is connected to specific carriers, representing an authority which commands the knowledge connected to the memory. Another difference of the two concepts manifests itself in the way it is spread.⁴¹ While communicative memory is distributed on its own by communication between its sharing members, the cultural memory needs careful instruction, which at last leads to control and regulation both of distribution and access through an elite. It is fair to say that communicative memory is noninstitutional, but cultural memory is very much supported by institutions, which carry out the processes of transmitting and interpreting, cultivating by specialists or summoning and celebrating on adequate occasions.⁴²

While Jan Assmann does not deny the priority of written sources within cultural memory, he emphasized the broad variety of its manifestations, naming dances, games, rites, masks, pictures, rhythms, melodies, food and drink, spaces and places, costumes, tattoos, jewelry, weapons and other.⁴³ Collective respectively cultural memory at last does not exist in something possessing a mind or memory

on its own, but they rather remind their beholder of memories and may trigger such a reaction due to the fact that he would already carry the necessary information.⁴⁴ Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory therefore goes beyond memory *per se*, but connects the terms memory and identity with each other and with politics of memory, thereby defining memory as a symbolic form of expression of the self-conception of a collective.⁴⁵ In that understanding roots the controversy of representations of cultural memory, as they are never neutral but linked to identity politics and therefore often heavily contested.

Agents of cultural memory

As elaborated, cultural memory is understood as an institutional form of collective memory, strongly connected to specific carriers who act as specialists commanding the knowledge connected to the memory, following a strict hierarchy.⁴⁶ The agents aiming to strengthen certain memories at the expense of others can come from different areas, such as churches, modern states and state-related institutions (e.g. universities, ministries or schools), media and many others. Regardless whether the agents of cultural memory are political leaders, priests, journalists, historians or others, they are always experts in carrying a specific tradition. Equally as diverse the agents can be, the cultural memory can express itself in various ways as well, mostly being dependent on the specialty of the respective agent. Modern cultural memory comprises a variety of possibilities, including media, national celebrations, design of public space with the erection of monuments or the renaming of streets and places, liturgy, representation in museums and others. Therefore it seems important to concentrate less on the agent *per se* but to focus on the way the agent was able to have an influence on the development of the cultural memory in order to understand both the objectives and the consequences of the conducted politics of memory.

Production of official historical narratives

James Wertsch points out, that Maurice Halbwachs' starting point was to claim that human memory would presuppose a social framework.⁴⁷ In fact one can invert this idea and say that social frameworks are also able to presuppose memory. A social group, it being religious authorities or institutions, a modern state or any other kind of ruling elite, having the power to enforce their preferred historical narratives, can provide its population the needed accounts of the past. In that case remembering turns out to be an active process, which involves agents and cultural tools, preferably narrative texts, where the creating elite controls both the textual resources involved in the process of remembering as well as the particular uses made of them.⁴⁸

James Wertsch focuses mainly on the role of the modern state in the production of official historical narratives, while the points made by him very much as well apply to other collectives, who seek to control collective remembering. Still it is the modern state which lets one illustrate the production of historical narratives thoroughly, as a state usually possesses all necessary means to conduct such a politics of memory. The key in a state's production of official historical narratives is the sector of education, where the state is able to reach out to its entire population by

means of compulsory education. Within universal education the state is able to pursue its own strategy and to ensure its citizens are on the same page concerning the officially supported account of the past. Furthermore a state holds several other institutions such as museums and may have an influence on media, which also play a decisive role in producing and strengthening narratives just like national holidays do, where the state controls both organization and observation.⁴⁹

The official instruction of historical narratives within mandatory education has a high influence on the formation of a collective consciousness of a group, who at last imagines itself to be a such by sharing a collective memory. In what kind the politics of memory behind that very process manifests itself differs very much from case to case, being strongly dependent on the particular sociocultural context, but there is no denying the importance of the production of official narratives by a certain elite, who has the power to conduct such a policy.

Out of the central role of education within politics of memory emerges the obvious need to analyze school history and textbooks, as they might be related to an official production of historical narratives. James Wertsch calls the genre of school history a reflection of “a combination of collective memory and analytic history” and considers this functional dualism to be a part of all state-sponsored official collective memories.⁵⁰

Micro-politics of aesthetic form⁵¹

Official politics of memory usually leads to well-established narrative templates, but this does not prevent subjective responses to contest these narratives. What matters is which narratives are supported by which agencies and out of which objectives they are adopted by them. Still it isn't always the case that a particular template works out in favor of the dominant narrative but rather is subject to contestation. Analyzing such an approach may bring up questions concerning the choice and reason behind the design of commemoration sites or how forms can be open to contestation both during their construction and afterwards as sites of memory. Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper seek to include new aesthetic forms into the discourse and call such an approach “micro-politics of aesthetic form”.⁵² The advantage of such an approach is obviously that it broadens the horizon significantly and enables the historian to look at the manifestation and contestation of memories within media and arts. Genres such as literature and film also have a high potential of inclusion of alternative narratives and counter-memories, which otherwise are silenced. By that means the aesthetic forms of commemoration can question dominating narratives and highlight existing alternatives. To what extent mostly depends on the particular political context, enabling or prohibiting a diversity of views to exist.

Conclusion

It has been shown that memory has always played a central role in historical research and the question how memory and history are connected to each other still gives an impulse to many theoretical considerations. Modern memory studies clearly turn out to be an emerging field of study though and show a tendency towards transdisciplinarity, ultimately leading to insights going beyond one-

dimensional and ethnocentric approaches. New memory studies will help to overcome these boundaries and the resulting limited perspectives, thereby enabling to successfully question existing stereotypes and prejudices. The same applies to a growing awareness of the role of politics of memory and the necessity to look for alternatives to the well-established historical narratives.

The two approaches combine in the present project, as the politics of memory connected to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 has been a major part in the formation of national narratives in Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region and in Turkey throughout the 19th and 20th century. The official politics of memory in all concerning countries has helped to establish narratives, which are deeply fixed in the cultural memory of the respective population. The memories of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 has been interpreted in contradicting ways and enabled different national ideologies to strengthen different identities. Having gained such importance within the cultural memory, the remembrance of the war plays an important role in the involved countries up until this very day, as newly built monuments follow the same official narratives as many official celebrations do. It is therefore essential for any scholar not to follow well-established narratives only, but rather look for the roots of the narratives and try to highlight how and under what circumstances they had been created. It has to be the ambition to look for alternative memories and counternarratives in order to oppose and compare them to the official narratives and ultimately give a voice to those groups who are excluded from official memories. Again the trend to transdisciplinarity helps to overcome existing boundaries as micro-politics of aesthetic form can broaden a narrow horizon significantly. At last a transdisciplinary approach involving scholars from all involved countries will help to bring insights into other national traditions of memory studies and not only revise ethnocentric images, stereotypes and prejudices but as well emphasize similarity and mutuality in the Black Sea Region and loosen existing boundaries.

¹ Cf. Henry L. Roediger, James V. Wertsch, Creating a New Discipline of Memory Studies, *Memory Studies*, 1, 2008b, 9-22, 9.

² Cf. Henry L. Roediger, James V. Wertsch, Collective memory: Conceptual foundations and theoretical approaches, *Memory*, 16/3, 2008a, 318-326, 324.

³ Cf. Aleida Assmann, Transformations between History and Memory, *Social Research*, 75/1, 2008, 49-72, 57.

⁴ Cf. Jan Assmann, Collective Memory and Cultural Identity, *New German Critique*, 65, 1995, 125-133, 133.

⁵ Cf. Maurice Halbwachs, *Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen*, Berlin, Neuwied, 1966, 390.

⁶ Cf. Roediger, Wertsch, *Discipline*, 1, 12.

⁷ Cf. James Wertsch, Collective Memory and Narrative Templates, *Social Research*, 75/1, 2008, 133-156, 142.

⁸ Cf. Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, München, 1999, 145.

⁹ Cf. Assmann, *Memory*, 4, 125.

¹⁰ Cf. Halbwachs, *Gedächtnis*, 5, 203-242.

¹¹ Cf. e.g. Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume*, 8 or Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, München, 1997.

¹² Cf. Astrid Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen. Eine Einführung*, Stuttgart, Weimar, 2011, 25-28.

¹³ Cf. Kerwin Lee Klein, *On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse*, *Representations*, 69, 2000, 127-150, 133.

¹⁴ Cf. Erll, *Gedächtnis*, 12, 45.

¹⁵ Cf. Erll, *Gedächtnis*, 12, 48-51.

¹⁶ A concept of memory studies predominantly researched in German(-speaking) traditions of cultural science, initially being received in medieval studies and the tradition of research thereby dating back to the 1950s, within the last two decades it has become an important cultural-historical and transdisciplinary concept, which Oexle (1994: 301, in: Erll 2011: 48) calls an absolute and social phenomenon, which comprises all dimensions of life and not only concerns religion, but as well economy, everyday life, philosophy, art, historiography, human relations and social behavior and actions altogether.

¹⁷ The concept of invented traditions was developed by Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983) and with the firstly in 1983 published "Imagined Communities" by Benedict Anderson it turned out to be the coining concept for Anglo-American tradition to research communities for (re-)constructing their past by selective remembering of events, persons or institutions.

¹⁸ A concept predominantly received in French cultural history. First articulated in 1969 in Michael Foucault's "L'archéologie du savoir", while the archive is not to be seen in its institutional function but rather as metaphorical, thereby leading to modern discourse analysis.

¹⁹ Cf. Roediger, Wertsch, *Discipline*, 1.

²⁰ Cf. Roediger, Wertsch, *Discipline*, 1, 10-12.

²¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 14-18.

²² Cf. Peter Meusburger, *Knowledge, Cultural Memory, and Politics*, in: Michael Heffernan, Peter Meusburger and Edgar Wunder (eds.), *Cultural Memories. The Geographical Point of View*, Dordrecht et al., 2011, 51-69, 51.

²³ Cf. *ibid.*, 53.

²⁴ Cf. Heidemarie Uhl, *Memory Culture – Politics of History. Some Reflections on Memory and Society*, in: Andrej Findor, Barbara Lášticová, Sophie Wahnich (eds.), *Politics of Collective Memory. Cultural Patterns of Commemorative Practices in Post-War Europe*, Wien, 2008, 57-65, 61.

²⁵ Cf. Meusburger, *Knowledge*, 22, 57.

²⁶ Cf. Assmann, *Gedächtnis*, 11, 71.

²⁷ Cf. Meusburger, *Knowledge*, 22, 57.

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 53.

²⁹ Amy Remensnyder, *Legendary Treasure at Conquest: Reliquaries and Imaginative Memory*, *Speculum*, 71, 1996, 884-906, 884.

³⁰ Patrick Hutton, *Recent Scholarship on Memory and History*, *The History Teacher*, 33, 2000, 533-548, 537, cit. in: Meusburger, *Knowledge*, 22, 57.

³¹ Cf. Meusburger, *Knowledge*, 22, 57.

³² Cf. Eric J. Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983.

³³ Remensnyder, *Treasure*, 29, 884.

³⁴ Cf. Meusburger, *Knowledge*, 22, 58.

³⁵ Cf. e.g. Assmann, *Gedächtnis*, 11, 48-66.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. *ibid.*, 50.

³⁷ Cf. Assmann, *Gedächtnis*, 11, 50.

³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 52.

³⁹ Cf. Jan Assmann, Communicative and Cultural Memory, in: Michael Heffernan, Peter Meusburger and Edgar Wunder (eds.), *Cultural Memories. The Geographical Point of View*, Dordrecht et al. 2011, 15-27, 16-17.

⁴⁰ Cf. Assmann, *Gedächtnis*, 11, 53-54.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 54-55.

⁴² Cf. Assmann, *Memory*, 39, 18.

⁴³ Cf. Assmann, *Gedächtnis*, 11, 59.

⁴⁴ Cf. Assmann, *Memory*, 39, 17.

⁴⁵ Cf. Uhl, *Memory*, 24, 58.

⁴⁶ Cf. Assmann, *Memory*, 39, 20-22.

⁴⁷ Cf. James Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge, 2002, 67.

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 67.

⁴⁹ Cf. Wertsch, *Voices*, 47, 68.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁵¹ Cf. Timothy G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, Michael Roper (eds.), *Commemorating war: the politics of memory*, London, New York, 2000, 36-39.

⁵² Cf. Ashplant, Dawson, Roper, *War*, 51, 37.

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‘Battles in the Past’ or ‘Battles for the Past’: Bulgarian National Models of Memory and Memory Policy

Abstract: *The article follows the development of the memory culture in Bulgaria since the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 until present days concerning historiography, memory places, celebrations, school textbooks. The transformation of the traditional religious memory about the war into modern memory policies is analyzed in the present article. Thereby three main periods are critically examined: The period after the Liberation until 1944, dominated by the myth of San Stefano Bulgaria; the communist period (1944 – 1989), dominated by the myth of the double liberators; and the post-communist period (1989 until present days), marked by memory conflicts and wars.*

From traditional religious memory to modern memory policies

Politics of memory concerns the battles for the meaning of the past articulated in different forms by different agents – Church, state, citizens, individuals; an unequal battle to install certain memories in the center of the cultural world at the expense of others doomed to marginalization and oblivion.¹

Modern culture of memory, which includes special institutions such as legislation, museums and archives; specialists such as archivists and historians; public celebrations such as liturgy, jubilees and feasts; media and communications or naming streets and other public spaces, arose in Bulgaria out of the commemoration of the Russo-Ottoman War (Russo-Turkish War²) of 1877 – 1878. From the very beginning until today, this war is the most visible and most celebrated historical event. The National Day of Bulgaria is the 3rd of March – the day the war ended with the signing of the Peace Treaty of San Stefano. The streets, quarters and gardens in the central part of the capital city Sofia, in the second biggest city of Plovdiv and many other settlements were named after persons and events connected to the war: ‘Boulevard Tsar Liberator Aleksandr II’, ‘Russian quarter’, ‘Šipka street’, ‘Gurko / Skobelev street’, ‘Hill of the Liberators’, ‘Doctor’s Garden’, and others. Many set-

lements, areas and tourist places owe their historical identity to the events connected to the Russo-Ottoman War. Rising monuments dedicated to the Russo-Ottoman War continues even today. Several years ago a monument to the Bulgarian volunteers (*opālčenci*) was opened by President Georgi Pārvanov in Sofia. During 2009, in the small town of General Toševo a monument to the Russian Emperor Aleksandr II was built by the sponsorship of an Armenian businessman. Until now more than 400 monuments to the Russo-Ottoman War were raised in Bulgaria. A research on recent memory culture in Bulgaria, conducted by Evgenia Ivanova and Evelina Kelbecheva, confirmed the domination of the topics 'Šipka' and 'The Liberation' among the places of memory not only for the Bulgarian ethnic majority but also for the minority groups.³

The first monuments in Bulgaria devoted to the heroes of the Liberating War were built during the temporary Russian Government on the initiative of the Headquarters of the Russian Army on the Balkans. 407 monuments were raised, most of them modest grave stones, which were designed and manufactured in Russia and were sponsored by donations of the army units or financed by emperor Aleksandr II.⁴ At that time a discussion about the need of more grandiose memorials, especially commemorating the fallen warriors at the feet of the Balkan Mountains was going on in Russian society. According to Count Ignat'ev and Ol'ga Skobeleva, the mother of General Skobelev, the aim of these commemorations, imposed from the outside, was "to remind the Bulgarians of the heroic deeds performed in their name by our victorious warriors".⁵ This was the reason Bulgarian volunteers (*opālčenci*) complained that there was not even a wooden cross to commemorate the fallen Bulgarian fighters. The first Bulgarian monument devoted to the fallen Bulgarians appeared only 50 years later and this was the Šipka Memorial.

According to the German historian Claudia Weber, who made a detailed study of memory culture in Bulgaria after 1878, the lack of monuments to the national heroes illustrated an incomplete process of national identity formation. According to her, the memory culture in Bulgaria was a product of both: of the state politics of 'nation building' and of the civil society's activities.⁶ Their efforts were focused on the slogan of "San Stefano Bulgaria" using jubilees, memorials and holydays. This memory culture consisted of state participation on the one side and non-governmental actors like veterans, war widows, priests, teachers and students on the other side. Struggles and confrontations accompanied this development which reflected the different views about the past as well as the regional segmentation of the Bulgarian society.

For the first period from 1878 until 1900, Claudia Weber points out the traditional religious basis of the memory culture and that the first attempts of the new modern state had focused on the memory connected to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. The activities of the "Car Osvoboditel" Committee and the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Šipka Pass in 1902 as well as the erection of the "Car Osvoboditel" Monument in Sofia were the main events in the next period after 1900, which according to Claudia Weber shaped the main trends for the 20th century. In the time after the wars of 1912 – 1918, the state became the main actor in memory culture but still didn't have the monopole on it as it did after 1944. In the 1920s and 1930s, Bulgarian Medieval History and the Bulgarian Revival were

raised as important topics in historical celebrations. The memory culture in Bulgaria in the authoritarian time 1934 – 1944 was characterized as “a cult of memory”.⁷

Historiography, literature and schoolbooks until 1944 created the grand national narrative of Bulgarian history, which was modified politically at different times but preserved its main tropes until today: For five centuries the Muslim Ottoman Empire would have aimed at religious and political assimilation of ‘enslaved unbelievers’ by violent conversion, demanding unbearable taxes, exploitation and political arbitrariness. The Bulgarian people would have fought from the very beginning for religious and national freedom: at first the rebels – hajduks, patriotic priests and educators – then conscious revolutionaries such as Georgi Rakovski (1821 – 1869), Ljuben Karavelov (1834 – 1878), Vasil Levski (1837 – 1873), Hristo Botev (1848 – 1869). They had organized uprisings since the 18th century, relying on the help of the Eastern Orthodox Russian Empire, which fought several wars against the Ottoman Empire to finally free the Orthodox Bulgarians, Romanians and Serbs in the last and victorious Russo-Ottoman War in 1877 – 1878. The poem “An Epopoe of the Forgotten Ones” and the novel “Under the Yoke”, written by the “patriarch” of Bulgarian modern literature Ivan Vazov (1850 – 1921), served as an influential artistic interpretation of the national narrative. In the grand narrative the Russo-Ottoman War is interpreted as a logical final step of the ‘National Liberation’, as an end point to the ‘Bulgarian Renaissance’ and as a beginning of the modern Bulgarian state.

According to Evelina Kelbecheva, the grand narrative about the liberation took the shape of a fairytale about ‘the good Bulgarians’ who were rescued from the “bad Turkish enslavers” by the “Russian Slav brothers”.⁸

Religious memory ceremonies and monuments

Unlike modern secular memory culture, the Church’s religious idea about memory was directed not to the people but to God and to “eternal commemoration at every moment” of the heroes. In her paper about memory culture in Byzantium, the Greek researcher in arts Amy Papalexandrou emphasized the importance of the unity of written texts and their liturgical oral performance for preserving the memory. She quoted a Byzantium theologian from the 12th century, Niketas Choniates, who insisted on the mutuality of both means of expression. That is why the liturgy on important feasts includes pronouncing and glorifying the names of prelates and emperors.⁹ In the Bulgarian Middle Ages, this practice was codified by the Synod of Tărnovo in 1211, when a list of both glorifications for rulers and anathemas for heretics was sanctioned. Additions were appropriated at the end of the 15th century when the Patriarchate of Tărnovo ceased to exist. It is important to mention that with the radicalization of the struggle for an independent church in the 19th century, at the Easter service in 1860 the Bulgarians stopped pronouncing the name of the Patriarch of Constantinople substituting it with the name of the Turkish Sultan. This oral liturgical omission caused the final confrontation with the Patriarchate which led to the separation of the Bulgarian church in 1870. After the liberation and with the establishment of the Russian government, the name of Tsar Aleksandr II was included in the religious glorifications. After his death in 1881 and until today, the eternal memory to Tsar-Liberator Aleksandr II is pronounced in the Festive Liturgy ‘Velikij Vchod’ [‘Glorious Entrance’]. Canonization, writing passions, inclusion in the

church calendar were important tools of religious culture of memory, as well as the building and granting of temples and monasteries.

Following the Orthodox models from the very beginning, the memory of the War of 1877-1878 was shaped and sustained by church-monuments meant for praying to God for peace for the souls of the fallen warriors. Examples are the Russian Monastery in Jambol, the Russian church-Monument at Šipka, the Sv. Aleksandăr Nevski Cathedral in Sofia and the Russian Church (to the Russian Embassy) "Sv. Nikolaj".¹⁰ A central role played the building of the Sv. Aleksandăr Nevski Cathedral. The Constitutive National Assembly decided to build the church on the 10th of February 1879, opting for the proposition of Petko Karavelov (1843 – 1903), who later became the leader of the Liberal Party, to build a church devoted to Sv. Aleksandr Nevskij, a Russian Prince, who led the defense in 1240 against the Swedes (Battle of the Neva) and was celebrated a protector of the Russian Tsars and State. Initially planned to be built in Tărnovo, it was later decided to erect the monument in the new capital Sofia. Prince Alexander von Battenberg, a relative of Aleksandr II, who was elected Prince of Bulgaria in 1879, issued in 1881 a proclamation for gathering donations for building a church dedicated to Aleksandr Nevskij. Furthermore, in 1881 a Central Commission was constituted, which decided that the first stone of the church was to be laid in 1882 on 19th of February (3rd of March) – the day of the liberation. In the decades after 1886, when Alexander von Battenberg had been dethroned, due to the political struggles between Russophiles and Nationalist parties, the project at times advanced and at times stopped. The collected donations from Bulgaria and Russia were not sufficient and the state agreed on granting subsidies. After almost half a century of work, the church was finally consecrated in 1924. Another manifestation of the orthodox religious memory to the War was the Russian Embassy Church in Sofia, which had initially been permitted in 1882, but the following worsening of the relations between Bulgaria and Russia postponed the project. In 1902 when the 25th anniversary of the liberation was celebrated, the building of monuments such as the Mausoleum in Pleven and the church 'Aleksandăr Nevski' advanced. In 1907 a delegation from Russia led by Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovič, son of Aleksandr II, visited Bulgaria to take part in the inauguration of the monument to Aleksandr II in the center of Sofia and to lay down the first stones of the base of the Russian Embassy Church which was finally consecrated in 1914.

The memory culture until 1944

The traditional orthodox techniques of commemoration did not lose their influence in later times when a modern memory culture developed, as through it, the memory of the War could adequately and easily find new secular expressions and forms of an institutionalized commemoration in historiography, museums, monuments, jubilees and other performances.

The first war monuments were started to be built immediately after the war, being considered mostly as gravestones of commemoration to the part of the grateful citizenship.¹¹ Remarkable is the fact that some of those first monuments were in fact built in the Ottoman Empire like in Plovdiv, the capital of Eastern Rumelia, which according to the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 remained part of the Empire until

September 1885. In 1881 a monument to Aleksandr II was built in Plovdiv and so was a smaller monument to the killed and robbed around the city, devoted to the mother of General Michail Skobelev, Ol'ga Skobeleva (1823 – 1880), famous for her charity activities.

In Bulgarian historiography there is still a debate going on about the initiatives of the first monuments of the Russo-Ottoman War, which in fact were the first Bulgarian monuments, and whether they were built on initiatives of civic societies or by state subsidies. This question concerned the agents of the war memory after the liberation, asking whether it was an institutionalized memory or a memory of the citizens. In general, the monuments were initiated and donated by citizens' organizations for several decades while the support of the state also depended on the political relations between Bulgaria and Russia.

Historiography

Institutionalized agents of memory such as state research institutions and historiography turn communicative memory into a historical one. Another important agent of war memory is the national education institution which has the power to define what parts and aspects of historical knowledge would become the so-called common "orientation knowledge" of the cultural memory backed by the history and literary canon of the school curriculum. Monuments, museums, holidays and commemorations play the same cultural role.

Bulgarian historiography about the Russo-Ottoman War developed in close relation to Russian institutes and publications. The studying of the Russo-Ottoman War was included in the curriculum of the Military School in Sofia which opened during the temporary Russian government after the War. Furthermore, the Minister of Defense until 1885 was always a Russian officer. This connection concerns not only the publications in the first years following the war but also the historiography patterns of writing. The first memoirs of the Bulgarian war volunteers were published in Russia.¹² The first researches by Bulgarian historians, mainly military historians, were not based on Russian documents but on secondary sources, namely the Russian military-historians' researches. Important is the fact that the first Bulgarian military historians were Russian graduates. General Radko Dimitriev (1859 – 1918), war volunteer and Russian graduate, in his book about the war operations around Šipka, written by the end of the 1890s and published in 1902, based his research on 17 Russian historiography works, the memoirs of a Bulgarian participant and three French books.¹³ Most of these sources were often quoted over the next decades.¹⁴

With the worsening and finally the termination of the political relations between Bulgaria and Russia after the Unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia in autumn 1885, for the period of 1886 – 1896 the publications of memoirs of the participants in the revolutionary movement and the April Uprising of 1876 became dominant. That way the political change also led to a change in the memory policy to the Russo-Ottoman War. The public interest caused a huge memoir wave in the 1890s, also connected to the change in legislation allowing pensions and other privileges for revolutionaries and war volunteers.¹⁵ By publishing memoirs of Bulgarian revolutionaries and volunteers and by emphasizing their contributions to the

victorious end of the Russo-Ottoman War, mainly in the Battle of Šipka Pass, the emancipation of the Bulgarians from Russia and the ability of the Bulgarians to take their destiny in their own hands were evident.¹⁶ With the improvement of the relations to Russia after 1896 and especially during 1902 – 1903, when the 25th anniversary of the War was celebrated, the memory initiatives changed and increased. The “Car Osvoboditel” Committee, supported by state institutions, managed to spread the idea of the national importance of the war memory and mobilized many teachers, priests and other members of the political and cultural elite in its local units. The numerous places of memory dedicated to the Russo-Ottoman War turned into important national objects for visiting and pilgrimages. In the museum collections guest books, where the visitors could describe their impressions were introduced. To make them accessible to a larger audience, parts of these books were published in several volumes by the prominent revolutionary and memoirist Stojan Zaimov.¹⁷ The images and photographs of the places of memory like Šipka, Pleven and others became part of the popular culture as well. They were published not only in tourist guides and schools books but also in illustrated calendars and other popular publications. That way they became part of the national topography as if they were natural geographical landmarks. ‘Šipka’ and ‘Car Osvoboditel’ were branded as names of hotels, restaurants and cafés in Sofia, Pleven, Ruse and other places and became part of the urban public sphere as well as in the cities’ advertisements.¹⁸

After the Bolshevik takeover in 1917, the new power in Soviet Russia and the USSR did not only break with continuity to the history of Tsarist Russia but even contradicted it. Because of the close relations of the Soviets with the Turkish Kemalist Republicans, which continued almost until the death of Kemal Atatürk, the memory of the Russo-Ottoman War was pushed out further of the public space. Monuments were destroyed and streets renamed. In the period of 1917 to 1921 40,000 Russian refugees arrived in Bulgaria. In 1921 archimandrite Serafim Sobolev¹⁹ came to Bulgaria as a trustee of the Russian Embassy Church, which was put under the government of the Russian Society of the Red Cross Abroad. The Church kept close relations with the Russian monastery ‘Sv. Aleksandăr Nevski’ in Jambol, the ‘Christmas Church’ in Šipka and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. The main Russian agent of the war memory, doomed to oblivion in the USSR, became the Russian church ‘Sv. Nikolaj’, which had close relations to the ‘Council of War Veterans of the Russo-Turkish War’ and maintained that role until 1934 when diplomatic relations with the USSR were established.

An important agent of the memory of the Russo-Ottoman War was the Slavic Society in Bulgaria, which was organized in 1899 and remained very active after 1917. In 1928, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Russo-Ottoman War’s end, the Slavic Society in Bulgaria, with the participation of Russian intellectuals in Bulgaria and Bulgarian Scholars, initiated a Bulgarian-Russian Volume titled “Glorification of the Liberating War 1877/1878”.²⁰

The myth of San Stefano Bulgaria and the Macedonian question

A considerable part of the traditional historiography interpretations related to the signing of the Berlin Treaty (13th of June – 13th of July, 1878) emphasized its

connection with the diplomatic beginning of the so-called 'Macedonian question'.²¹ The organizational network 'Unity', the petitions in Macedonia against the Berlin Treaty and the uprising in the region of Kresna-Razlog (Eastern Macedonia) in 1878 against the Ottoman rule were considered evidence of a resisting population against the decisions of the Congress of Berlin and of its efforts and wish for unification with the newly established Bulgarian state.²²

The borders of Bulgaria defined by the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano between Russia and the Ottoman Empire (3rd of March 1878) included Macedonia but were revised by the Berlin Treaty to include only Northern Bulgaria and the Sanjak of Sofia. Over the next years 'San Stefano Bulgaria' turned into one of the most important aims of Bulgarian foreign policy, which wouldn't change for many decades. The comparison between the two treaties – the Treaty of San Stefano and its revision in Berlin – evoked a social consciousness about a justice of the first and an injustice of the latter treaty, which supported the hope for possible future revisions of the Berlin Treaty and to achieve the borders defined by the Treaty of San Stefano. The idea of the ethnic union was embodied in the image of San Stefano. In this way the heroic memory about the Russo-Ottoman War received a traumatic connotation in respect to Macedonia. The borders of the Treaty of San Stefano, which were not considered realistic even in Russia at the times of the Russo-Ottoman War, turned into a national ideal. This ideal, supported by historiography, school books, literature, art and folklore, was used and misused politically not only until 1944 but until today. Furthermore, having in mind both Russia's engagements on the European scene at that time and its isolation in international relations, the Treaty of San Stefano, elaborated mostly by Count Nikolaj Ignat'ev (1832 – 1908), the Russian ambassador in Carigrad (Constantinople, İstanbul), was later evaluated as an arbitrary and hasty act. The myth of 'San Stefano Bulgaria' shaped the leading visions about the future of the country for a long time and justified both the diplomatic efforts of the foreign policy and the involvement of Bulgaria in the wars 1912 – 1918, which claimed hundreds of thousands of victims.

The theme of the resistance to the decisions of the Congress of Berlin found its place in some general and some specific researches on the history of diplomacy.²³ In the "History of Bulgaria in many volumes" (issued in 1991 but already prepared in the 1970s) it was underlined that the Congress of Berlin was met with "despair and indignation" by the Bulgarian people as it "had torn the Bulgarian nation into pieces" and had provoked "the deepest despair among the Macedonian and Thracian Bulgarians who according to the clauses of the treaty had been left under the unbearable yoke of the Ottoman empire".²⁴

It was Patriarch Kiril's contribution in the 1960s to research the great number of documents about the organized actions in many places against the decisions of the Congress of Berlin. The activity of the organization 'Union' and the uprising in Northern Macedonia (Kresna-Razlog) was later researched in detail by Dojno Dojnov. In Macedonia, the turn towards a resistance against the Congress of Berlin coincided with the change in politics of the Bulgarian Communist Party towards Yugoslavia and towards the 'Macedonian Question' in the 1960s – 1970s.

At the same time, in historiography it was attempted to deconstruct the role of Russia and the European Great Powers in respect to both the content of the con-

tract and its significance for further Bulgarian history.²⁵ According to Konstantin Kosev the reason for Russia to impose this treaty is rooted in its double policy. The Empire aimed at acknowledgement of her strong position on the Balkans and was able to achieve that with all the publicity surrounding the signing of the treaty. On the other hand it accepted the revision of the treaty during the Congress of Berlin because of the pre-war engagements, undertaken with the other European Great Powers.²⁶

1944: The Communist myth of the 'double liberators'

The Marxist historiography tried to promote an alternative to the official narrative of the War after 1891 and the foundation of the Bulgarian Workers Social Democratic Party. The leaders of the Party emphasized "the conquering ambitions of the tsarist Russian policy". In this respect the views of the leaders of the Party, Dimităr Blagoev and Georgi Bakalov became those of Russophobe politicians.

After the takeover of the left powers of the Fatherland Front, dominated by the Communist Party, on 9th of September 1944, this sectional narrative was further elaborated to become a dominant one, thereby marginalizing the previous religious-national discourse. In the new social-class approach to history, as 'enemies of the people' were not only blamed the 'Ottoman enslavers' but also the high Bulgarian and Greek priesthood, wealthy men (*çorbacı*) and 'aggressive Russian tsarism'. As 'liberators of the people' were considered the outlaws, revolutionary republicans such as Hristo Botev, Vasil Levski and others who initiated several 'democratic uprisings against the despotic powers' and the volunteers at Šipka (*opālčenci*). The roles of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Tsar, the nobility of officers and the nurses were silenced to highlight the role of the common Russian soldiers – Slav brothers, who helped the Bulgarians to liberate from the 'Turkish and Fascist yoke' twice. The main tropes of the new narrative became the Monument of Šipka symbolizing the heroism of the common Bulgarians and the church in Batak where remains of the peasants, slaughtered by the irregular army during the April Uprising in 1876, were exposed as a symbol of the 'Turkish tyranny'.

The motive of the 'double liberators' appeared in public discourse immediately after the left-winged "Fatherland Front" took over power. It was centered around the idea of the 'Slav unity', 'eternal friendship' between Russians and Bulgarians as a foundation of the 'Bulgarian-Soviet friendship' which was pointed out as essential for Bulgarians as "sun and air" for every living creature. Following this trend, the book of the Russian and Soviet historian Nikolaj Deržavin "The tribal and cultural connections between Bulgarian and Russian peoples" was published in 1945.²⁷ In 1945 the journal "Historical Review" started and for decades it would dictate the official historiographical conceptions. The main task of the periodical was "to struggle for the Slav union".

Practice established the speeches of the leaders of the Bulgarian Worker's Party (Communists) such as Georgi Dimitrov (1882 – 1949), Vasil Kolarov (1877 – 1950), and later on Vălko Červenkov (1900 – 1989) – who meanwhile came back from their political emigration in the USSR) – as to be taken by the historians as official historiography guidelines. Vasil Kolarov became chairman of the newly elected Parliament (in the end of 1945). In the same year he published in the jour-

nal "Historical Review" the article "The Bulgarian people in the fight for a new Bulgaria" in which he gave some guidelines for the interpretation of Bulgarian history. He pointed at the "eternal tradition of the Bulgarian-Russian friendship", "the belief in the liberating mission of Russia" "Grandfather Ivan" and "the heroism of Russians and Bulgarians at Šipka".²⁸ He quoted Deržavin about the eternal connections between Russians and Bulgarians. Furthermore, in the article he made a connection between the victory of the Bulgarian Communist Party on the 9th of September 1944 and the "double liberating mission of the Russians", emphasizing not only the state continuity in the liberating mission of Russia but the blood relation between the liberators of 1878 and 1944 as well as that the victorious Bulgarian people had enthusiastically met "the grandsons of its liberators from the Turkish yoke, his comrades and liberators from Hitler's yoke".²⁹ Two years later, on the 70th anniversary of the Russo-Ottoman War, again in "Historical review", professor Jacques Nathan (1902 – 1974), a political emigrant in the USSR, Soviet graduate, participant in the communist movement in Bulgaria and later member of the Bulgarian Academy of Science, in his article about the economic and social development of Bulgaria after the liberation repeated the same motive. As an editor in chief of "Historical review" since 1949 and Deputy Minister of Culture he proclaimed: "The great Russian people became our double liberator. The first time, the Russian army liberated us from the Turkish barbarism of the Sultans, the second time from the wild fascist regime and Hitler's yoke. As during the first liberation in the second liberation the Russian army was met as brothers-liberators."³⁰

In 1948, for the first time after the 9th of September 1944, the Russo-Ottoman War was celebrated. It happened in a moment, remarkable for the future of Bulgaria. The time of the limited political pluralism from 1944 – 1947 ended in the autumn of 1947. The political opposition was destroyed, the oppositional press was forbidden. The Iron Curtain between the Eastern Bloc and the West had become reality. On the occasion of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Bulgaria in 1948, Vasil Kolarov gave a speech "The liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke" published in 10,000 copies.³¹ Speaking about "the limitless gratitude to the brother Russian people" he added "To this we add our double gratitude to the courageous Red Army, which by a thunder like invasion on the Balkans drove away the German hordes from the Bulgarian land and gave the Bulgarian people the full possibility, to rise up against the fascist executioners, to take its destiny in strong hands."³² In his speech Vasil Kolarov defined the liberation as a "typical people's revolution"³³ and the war itself as liberating and progressive. Quoting Lenin, he pointed out that "a new era of a bourgeois-capitalist society came on the remains of the old "military feudalism" of the Ottoman Empire".³⁴ Vasil Kolarov related the war to the present political situation: "If I comment this historical fact it is not because I want to insult the Turkish people who I respect because they found their way to liberate themselves from the forces of darkness, oppression and barbarity who had captured them for centuries, but because at present we witness a rabid hate to the Bulgarian people in the Turkish press".³⁵ And later on: "We, the representatives of the Bulgarian working class, of the Bulgarian laborious people, treated by the Turkish press as 'bands of bandits' after the First World War, we took the Turkish revolutionaries who looked for a refuge under our protection and we warmly greeted the

victory of the Turkish national revolution which liberated the Turkish people from the power of the foreign financial magnates and imperialists and their Turkish weapons." Vasil Kolarov who by that time was the foreign minister of Bulgaria, addressed direct accusations to the Turkish ruling circles in Ankara: "To the dreamers from the Bosphorus and Ankara reminding in their fantasies the stupidity of the former 'Danube Vilayet', I will quote a remarkable citation from Marx and Engels about the Eastern Question written in 1853 'the South Slavs were the only bearers of civilization'.³⁶ He was no less critical of the Bulgarian historians, who were stigmatized by him as "pseudo-historians" because they emphasized the imperial goals of Russia during the War. He underlined that "Russia, regardless of the goals of the Tsarist government, acted revolutionary in respect to the decaying Ottoman Empire and became an ally to the Balkan nations revolting against the Turkish yoke, while the Western states made obstacles to the liberating war – even in respect to the Greek struggle."³⁷

Vasil Kolarov drew several other parallels between the events of the Russo-Ottoman War and the 9th of September: Both were revolutions against the Bulgarian supporters of the foreign invaders – wealthy people and "money-lenders" and both were revolutions which made the turning back of the "wheel of history" impossible. Finally Vasil Kolarov concluded: "Let's become stronger the eternal Bulgarian-Soviet friendship – the legacy of our national revolution and support a free, independent, strong and happy Bulgaria."³⁸

In the next years the thesis about the 'double liberators' motivated the title of the monograph "Our double liberators"³⁹ published in 1950 by the famous author of history manuals Ivanka Kepova (the daughter of the famous Bulgarian historian Ivan Kepov⁴⁰). The Liberation of 1878 was presented as a mission of "the great Russian people"⁴¹, which continued until the 9th of September 1944 when "the Soviet army brought liberation to the Bulgarian people from the German fascist yoke and cleared the way for building socialism in Bulgaria."⁴² When by the end of the 1950s the 80th anniversary of the end of the War was celebrated, the motive of the double liberation continued to be well expressed in the publications.

"The liberation of the Bulgarian people from the heavy five century yoke was a result of the victory of the Russian army in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878. That way, this war turned into one of the brightest page in the history not only of the Russian-Bulgarian friendship but of the new history of our people. 80 years passed since the victorious ending of this war and the Bulgarian people did not stop to celebrate and pay deserved respect and gratitude to the great Russian people for the fact that crossing the Danube and Balkans on the peaks of their bayonets brought our freedom paying the price of thousands victims. This gratitude became even more honest when the Soviet army for a second time brought our liberation in 1944, this time from the fascist yoke".⁴³

On the basis of the idea about 'the double liberation', the film "Heroes of Šipka" was elaborated to represent the common fight of Bulgarians and Russians in the Russo-Ottoman War foreboding already in 1877 the future common historical destiny and the second Russian help. To confirm that, at the end of the film a line of Soviet tanks appeared and units of the Third Ukrainian Front presented flowers to the Monument of Šipka.

After the political and ideological stabilization of the communist regime in the 1950s, efforts were made to strengthen its legitimacy. The most ambitious project in that period was the elaboration of a history of the Bulgarians from the Neolithic to communism in a "History of Bulgaria in many volumes". The preparation for writing it at the Institute of History of the Bulgarian Academy of Science started by the end of the 1960s, after a political decision of the politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.⁴⁴ The first volume was published at the climax of the celebrations of the 1,300th anniversary of the Bulgarian state in 1981. In the 6th volume (1987) a special part was devoted to the "Russo-Turkish War and the Liberation of Bulgaria (1877 – 1878)" and elaborated by academic Hristo Hristov.⁴⁵ The narrative about the war was basically structured on the model of the Soviet historical science⁴⁶ and basic researches of Bulgarian authors, published until the end of the 1970s were those of representatives of a Marxist historiography.⁴⁷ That way it confirmed the dominant interpretations as a part of the mainstream national narrative.

The myth about the 'double liberators' found expression in monumental art, museum policy, legislation and celebrations. This policy bound the historical places of the liberating movement and the Russo-Ottoman War to the places of the communist movement. The geographic proximity of Šipka to Buzludža, the place of the first social democratic meeting in 1891 where the decision about founding of Social Democratic Party in Bulgaria (whose left wing turned into the Communist Party in 1919), made the union of the two memory places into the museum complex "Šipka-Buzludža" easy. In 1956 the historical places at Šipka Pass by a decision of the Council of Ministers were proclaimed the "national park-museum Šipka" which in 1964 was combined with the Buzludža National Park, which had been founded in 1959, to turn into the Šipka-Buzludža National Park-Museum.⁴⁸

A similar combination of the memory about events and figures of two distant epochs happened in Batak. In the beginning of the 1960s the "memorial ensemble" in memory of the victims of the April Uprising in 1876 and the slaughter of Batak was united with the Ethnographic House and the new opened museum into a museum complex which had "scientific-educational aims of national importance" and wanted to "educate in patriotism". In the underground of the museum, a crypt with the bones of the killed partisan guerilla fighters from Batak was built, resembling the crypt with the remains of the killed victims of the April Uprising.

The most grandiose memorial to the Russo-Ottoman War was built in the communist era – the Pleven Panorama, also called "symbol-monument of the Bulgarian-Soviet friendship", whose proclaimed aim it was "to work for the education of the Bulgarian people and the coming generations into the spirit of the eternal and non-corruptible Bulgarian-Soviet friendship."⁴⁹ The Panorama "Pleven epopee 1877" was erected on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the capture of Pleven by the Russian army. It was built with considerable participation of Soviet specialists following the Russian pattern of the Panorama in Moscow representing the battle with Napoleon in Borodino in 1812. The Panorama silenced the participation of many thousands of Romanian soldiers in the Pleven battle and the Finnish participation as well.

In 1977 – 1978, around the 100th anniversary of the Russo-Ottoman War, an enormous quantity of publications was issued. One of the bibliography reviews pointed out more than 1,000 titles (934 publications in Bulgaria and 186 foreign ones).⁵⁰ Among them were history researches⁵¹, popular readings⁵² and agitation and propaganda materials⁵³.

On this occasion in Sofia a grandiose scientific conference was organized by the Bulgarian Academy of Science, the University of Sofia, the Bulgarian History Union, the Ministry of Defense, the People's Committee for Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship, the Union of the Scientific Workers in Bulgaria, and the Academy for Social Sciences and Social Management.

These political activities happened parallel to the celebrations of the anniversary. For the official jubilee meeting in Sofia during the spring of 1978, the whole state apparatus was mobilized – members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party ahead with the first secretary Todor Živkov (1911 – 1998)⁵⁴, members of the State Council, the Government, leaders of the National Assembly, social-political organizations, Patriarchy, “prominent activists in science and art”, leaders of the foreign delegations and others.⁵⁵ The speech of Todor Živkov for the 100th anniversary “Eternal glory and eternal gratitude” was published not only in Bulgarian but in a lot of foreign languages also: Turkish, Russian, German⁵⁶, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian and others. The widest scale project for building memorials to celebrate the 100th anniversary was the building and opening of the Panorama “Pleven Epopee 1877”⁵⁷.

The development of new communication technologies provided new possibilities for memory policy. The wide memory campaign “People’s memory is telling”, initiated by the socialist state at the end of the 1970s, also had the potential to turn the previously ideologically archived and edited memory into a staged communicative event of spontaneous oral sharing of life experience of war veterans and their heirs to the youngsters. The campaign also received wide media coverage by TV, cinema newsreels, radio and press.⁵⁸ But the campaign didn’t give the alternative or sectional memories of minorities a voice. The sectional narratives of minority groups about the War were and still are fully marginalized and did not participate in the national debate about the War. The women’s memory takes a peripheral place in this debate: Out of 400 war monuments only two were devoted to women, both in peripheral places.

From the 1960s onwards, with the advanced communicative technologies, TV and cinema, the institutionalized historical memory of archives, museums and libraries was powerfully articulated by the artistic forms of movies, documentaries and newsreels. By the micro-politics of the aesthetic forms the distant and dusty history could be revived into a self-experienced communicative event. For this connection between memory and mass culture Alison Landsberg introduced the term “Prosthetic Memory”.⁵⁹ She argues that this is a new kind of memory which creates new memory communities and social cohesion.

After the democratic changes in 1989

The process of freeing science from ideology after the political changes in 1989, interpreted as rejecting Marxism-Leninism, often took the form of

'nationalizing' the historical knowledge in the new nationalist discourse. The continuity in the historical researches was expressed as a preservation of the nation as a central object of research. It is expressed in the national point of view in historiography interpretations but in the continuation of the descriptive tradition in the spirit of positivism, the domination of the political history, distancing the historians from theory. It can be seen in respect to the researches of the Russo-Ottoman War.⁶⁰ At the same time the 'popular' historiography revived with well-expressed traditional nationalistic orientation.⁶¹ But with the appearance of a variety of historical visions about society the academic science lost its monopoly on interpreting history. In the condition of pluralism, nationalism was criticized from the position of liberalism and postmodern theory. This criticism in certain extent turned into a new 'social order' stimulated by the process of European integration and globalization.

After 1989, specialists of Ottoman Studies such as Vera Mutafčieva, Cvetana Georgieva and other historians critically re-examined the founding postulates of the Bulgarian cultural memory about "five centuries of Turkish yoke" and "violent islamization" providing scientific evidence for more correct historical terms of "Ottoman domination" which, although opposed by the wide public, influenced the critical researches of many scholars. Ivan Ilchev started the discussion about "San Stefano Bulgaria" being one of the main tropes of the Bulgarian national narrative.

Under the influence of Western constructivism and theories of modern nationalism (Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith and others), critical attempts were made to deconstruct the founding "national myths" and the dominant nationalist policy of memory culture. Maria Todorova published the book "The living archive of Vasil Levski", Evgenia Ivanova – "Inventing memory and forgetfulness", Albena Hranova – "Historiography and Literature. About the social construction of historical concepts and Grand Narratives in the Bulgarian Culture XIXth – XXth Century"⁶², and Nikolaj Aretov – "*The first Joy for me. The emotional content of the Bulgarian National Identity: Historical Roots and Modern Dimensions*"⁶³.

Ivan Ilchev defined San Stefano Bulgaria as a "political myth and sacred cow of Bulgarian patriotism".⁶⁴ He questioned the correctness of the Bulgarian territorial claims based on the borders mapped out in San Stefano.⁶⁵ His arguments were that up to 1878 there was no Bulgarian national program to specify the aims of the territorial unification aside the general formulation about the liberation of Thrace, Macedonia and Mizia; that the decisions of the Constantinople Conference (1876), where the ambassadors of the Great powers suggested two autonomous regions including the ethnic territories of the Bulgarians, were the result of a short term policy reflecting the interests of the European powers; that the eparchies in Macedonia, included in the borders of the Bulgarian Exarchate at the eve of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) were questioned by neighboring country states and other Orthodox churches; that in the most of those territories of San Stefano Bulgaria, which were taken from the Bulgarian state at the Congress of Berlin, lived a mixed population in ethnic and religious respect; that until 1878 a considerable part of the Bulgarian speaking population lacked national consciousness and respectively religious and local identities prevailed; and that the Bulgarians lacked in essence a common national market taking into account that the commerce in Macedonia was directed mainly to the South and North (following the valleys of the rivers Vardar and Mora-

va) and the commerce in Mizia and Thrace was directed mainly to the imperial capital and on the river Danube.

The author openly pointed out the negatives of mythologizing San Stefano Bulgaria: After the revision of the borders in Berlin, the Bulgarian society was in doubt about whether it should be grateful or hostile to Europe (Great Powers) and it was trapped between the notion of the Bulgarians as victims and the expectation of a miracle to fulfill the 'ideal' San Stefano Bulgaria; Bulgarian diplomacy was not flexible enough and lacked a policy of compromise in the efforts to solve the national question since any retreat from the San Stefano borders was evaluated as a national betrayal; the possibilities for a mutual understanding between Bulgaria and the Balkan countries worsened and preconditions for a united front against Bulgaria developed because of the fact that the Bulgarian borders of San Stefano contradicted the national programs of the neighbors.⁶⁶

According to Plamen Cvetkov the treaty of San Stefano was not a juridical end to the War of 1877 – 1878 since it was temporary and preliminary. The battle actions of war are usually seized by an armistice – in our case this is the armistice signed in Odrin/Edirne on the 19th of January 1878. The treaty which from a juridical point of view fixed the results of the War of 1877 – 1878 was the Treaty of Berlin. Not San Stefano but the Treaty of Berlin changed the right of internal autonomy which the Bulgarians had until then by an international guaranteed, nevertheless limited sovereignty which saved Bulgaria from Russian power. The Congress of Berlin did not partition Bulgaria into five parts but only confirmed this partition which was agreed upon preliminarily by Russia and Great Britain. That way Russia was guilty for the national disunity of the Bulgarians. But there are historians who, nevertheless they are not sharing the communist dogmas, are convinced that myths like San Stefano are consolidating the nation. Plamen Cvetkov, emphasizing "the imperial ambitions of Russia on the Balkans", considered the Treaty as "one of the most durable manipulations of the historical memory of the Bulgarians since it was a treaty for termless occupation of Bulgaria by Russia". According to him, the date of the reunion of Eastern Rumelia to the Kingdom of Bulgaria on the 6th of September 1885 is the most appropriate date for a National Day.⁶⁷

In the Bulgarian school literature a common cultural discourse about the War was agreed upon, elaborated and imposed as a dominant discourse to form and sustain the official collective identity of the citizens. After the democratic changes, under the influence of the generation of foreign historians liberal critical researchers of the content of the school text books in history and literature initiated to analyze what types of cultural memory and identity they form.

In their analysis of the text books in history from the national revival of the 19th century to the Communist takeover in 1944, Nadja Danova⁶⁸ and Borjana Panajotova⁶⁹ pointed out that up to the 9th of September 1944 the history is a main source of the national self-esteem. The main task of the school is to teach the young Bulgarians a spirit of patriotism and loyalty to the national ideal. On the other side the search of an enemy is always directed outside of the own country and at the neighboring countries. Since the cultural knowledge is usually structured of clear cut dichotomies, by that time the main dichotomy was 'We', the heroic Bulgar-

ians, and 'They', our neighboring war enemies such as Turks, Greeks and Serbians.

The analysis of the history text book for the period of the state socialism done by Nadja Danova and Borjana Panajotova revealed a substantial change in the orientation of knowledge. After the 9th of September the main task of the school literature to teach loyalty to the Communist Party, the historical past was not considered as a source of national pride anymore but as a prove for the struggle of the classes. The enemy is searched among 'Us' – medieval boyars, wealthy people (*çorbaci*) of Ottoman time, capitalists. The main dichotomy of the new cultural knowledge became 'We', the common exploited people of all countries, and 'They', the ruling class exploiters. The school history is related from the point of view of the 'common Bulgarian people', who were in endless conflict with their 'masters' representing the Bulgarian state. The disruption people-state is unavoidable. If the main trope of the school history discourse before 1944 was San Stefano Bulgaria, after 1944 the 'double liberator', common people of Russia and later the Soviets, played such a role.

Historical memory turned into cultural memory. Memory conflicts and wars

As Aleida Assmann⁷⁰ pointed out, race, class and gender have different access to the power of articulating a grand narrative as a coherent, homogeneous memory, it always being concentrated on the idealized figure of a male soldier, thereby forcing women at the periphery of memory. In the case of the Russo-Ottoman War such idealized figures were that of the Russian soldier and the Bulgarian volunteer.

Theoretical models of explaining the construction of modern national memory culture and policy were elaborated by scholars outside of the professional guild of historians – anthropologists, sociologists, specialists in cultural studies. All of them based their research on the theories on Maurice Halbwachs, Jan Assmann, Aleida Assmann, Pierre Nora and Paul Ricœur about collective memory, interaction of historical and cultural memory to relativize and revise the dominant historical narrative which developed after the Russo-Ottoman War and was edited ideologically during the communist regime.

Evgenia Ivanova developed a theoretical framework for researching the policies of the national memory comparing two grand national narratives – the Bulgarian and Serbian narratives. She outlined two kinds of memory – heroic and traumatic, considering traumatic memory as more dangerous since it breeds revision and revenge.⁷¹ In the framework of traumatic memory she differentiated two types – a martyr type of the self-sacrifice in the name of a superior value and a victimization type of the passive objects of violence. Problematic for us is the equalization of the martyr self-sacrifice only with trauma since it has aspects of personal heroism. According to the author, the Bulgarian national narrative did not contain an in detail elaborated discourse about the conquering of the Bulgarian Kingdom by the Ottomans like the Kosovo myth for Serbians does, which might be the case because "the struggle for independence from the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which ended with the proclamation of the Bulgarian Exarchate (1870) and the following

schism (1872), became the center of imagining the Bulgarian nation". The essential difference between the Bulgarian and the Serbian narratives is that the Serbian narrative is oriented towards the trauma of the defeat at Kosovo while the Bulgarian one is oriented towards the heroic myth of Šipka and the Liberating War. E. Ivanova gives an account of the ambiguity and overlapping of the traumatic and heroic aspects but in the Serbian case the traumatic prevails over the heroic, while in the Bulgarian case the heroic prevails. According to her, Batak, where half of the population was massacred during the April Uprising of 1876, has the potential of turning into a traumatic myth but since in the case of Batak the passive victimization prevails over the self-sacrifice it is forced to the periphery of the dominating heroic memory.

Ivanova and Kelbecheva in their inquiry into the most important places, events and figures of memory for the Bulgarians tested both – the prevailing of a heroic memory and the degree of the fragmentation of the grand national narrative.⁷² The inquiry had to answer to three main questions: Does a coherent and dominant narrative that founded and institutionalized as it is the case with the formation of the Bulgarian nation still exist? Did any sectional narratives develop to articulate marginalized memories of minorities and other groups? Does the past rest in memory institutions – museums, archives, libraries, conferences – as a historical memory or does it have a communicative power in the present? As it was mentioned above, their inquiry pointed out that "Šipka", "Vasil Levski" and the "Liberation" are still the main tropes of the national narrative. The main agent of memory is still the institution of school promoting literary and history canons. The knowledge of the past differs from the cultural memory of the past. They explained the results with the fact that "the modern Bulgarian history memory is not founded on the modern historiography and the achievements of science but on the consciousness of the Bulgarians folklore beliefs about the heroic struggle between the power of good and the power of evil (Bulgarians and Turks) and the happy deliverance from the slavery with the help of Russia, which are deeply engraved in society".

The Batak Scandal in 2007⁷³ posed urgent questions to the Bulgarian researchers of memory policies. The scandal was provoked by a joint project of the Bulgarian scholar Martina Baleva and Austrian and German scholar Ulf Brunnbauer⁷⁴, who were researching on the discrepancies between the facts of the historical past and the cultural memory. The authors were blamed to reject the slaughter of Batak and desecrating this "holy place of memory". In fact the authors aimed at proving that the slaughter was a result of a local social conflict and not a political punishment for the participation in the April Uprising. They critically examined also the aesthetic forms of interpretation of the event which became essential for the ways of commemorating it. The scandal attained an international significance since it was financed by a German foundation. Since the time of the scandal was just before the affiliation of Bulgaria to the EU, according to Ivanova it was an expression of the popular fear of losing its national identity. Representatives of the Academy of Science, the University of Sofia, Presidency and nationalist parties accused the scholars of incompetence and national betrayal. Blagovest Njagulov⁷⁵ considered the case with the "myth of Batak" in 2007 as a demonstration of how a tragic historical fact which had acquired the mythic dimension of a national trauma could

provoke conflicting meanings and social tension to be appropriated as an instrument of political propaganda.⁷⁶ The author tried to deconstruct the other “central myth” of Bulgarian nationalism – San Stefano Bulgaria (1878), popularly considered as an unrealized perspective for the unification of the Bulgarians in their “ethnic boundaries”. After the revision of the Treaty of San Stefano at the Congress of Berlin, many of the temporarily acknowledged territories stayed parts of the neighboring countries. According to the author San Stefano Bulgaria breeds mythologized notions of lost but as national aspirations preserved territories – Bulgarian Macedonia.

In June 2004 the Committee for restoration of the soldier monuments in Bulgaria made a proposal for installing a plaque commemorating the killed Ottoman soldiers from the army of Süleyman Paşa (1838 – 1892) in the Battle of Şipka Pass in 1877. The idea was opposed massively in the press and in internet forums and the proposal was withdrawn. The Bulgarian society was not prepared to allow official articulation of an alternative memory to the war.

Most of the modern Bulgarian historians did not question the date of the 3rd of March as a symbol of the “rebirth of the Third Bulgarian state”. According to Stoyan Raychevski the treaty is not a myth but “a real fact and synonym of the Bulgarian national ideal which was unfinished, sold, betrayed and defeated”⁷⁷.

The cultural memory, according to Assmann, spans to the past as far as this past can be recognized as ‘Our’. This historical consciousness he calls ‘memory’ which is deferent for the knowledge of the past since this consciousness of ‘Us’ is the core of our identity. To belong you have to remember! Most of the people consider this type of memory as an orientation knowledge which serves as connection and solidarity. If the memory narrative disintegrates the relations between people in the society risk uncertainty and isolation since this narrative provides orientation points and an order of emotional, spiritual and cultural connections to sustain the society. The orientation knowledge⁷⁸ does not need scientific approbation since people believe it is true, and often it is represented with religious and quasi-religious terms. This is the reason any scientific criticism of the cultural knowledge is opposed by society, which fears disintegration and a loss of identity. In order to deconstruct ‘the myths of the past’, we have to be cautious to provide new perspectives of commemoration and identity.

¹ Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson, Michael Roper (eds.), *Commemorating War*, London, 2009.

² The term “Russo-Turkish War” is used in historiography as well as in public discourse in Bulgaria.

³ Evgenia Ivanova and Evelina Kelbecheva, Consensuses of the Bulgarian Historical Memory, *Balkanistic Forum*, 2011/3, 203-221.

⁴ Иван Христов, Руските паметници в България, издигнати в памет на загиналите по време на Освободителната война /1877 – 1878 г./ [The Russian monuments erected in memory to the fallen soldiers during the Liberation War 1877 – 1878], *Известия на държавните архиви*, София, 1981, 42, 59.

⁵ Храм-паметник у подножия Балкан [A church-monument at the foot of the Balkans], Санкт-Петербург, Военный сборник, 1902, 6, 15.

⁶ Claudia Weber, *Auf der Suche nach der Nation. Erinnerungskultur in Bulgarien von 1878 – 1944* [In search of the nation. Memory culture in Bulgaria from 1878 – 1944], Berlin, 2006.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Евелина Келбечева: *Минало несвършващо* [The Past continues], София, 2011.

⁹ Amy Papalexandrou, *The memory culture of Byzantium*. In: Liz James (ed.), *A companion to Byzantium*, 2010, 108-122.

¹⁰ Румяна Радкова, *Храм-паметник “Св. Александър Невски”* [The church-monument “Sv. Aleksandăr Nevski”], София, 1999; Олга Решетникова, *Руската църква в София* [The Russian Church in Sofia], София, 2010.

¹¹ Радкова, *Храм-паметник*, 10.

¹² *Сборник военных рассказов, составленных офицерами-участниками войны 1877 – 1878 г.* [Collection of military stories of officer-participants in the War of 1877 – 1878], 6, Санкт-Петербург, 1879.

¹³ Радко Димитриев, *Боевете и операциите около Шипка във войната 1877 – 1878 години* [The struggles and the military operations around Šipka in the War of 1877 – 1878], III-IV, София, 1902.

¹⁴ Кирил Янчулев, *Руско-турската война 1877 – 1878 г.* [The Russo-Turkish War 1877 – 1878], В. Търново, 1931, второ издание 1941.

¹⁵ Cf. Галина Гончарова, „Поколения, поколенчески дискурси и колективни времена. Употреби на генерационните деления в България през втората половина на XIX и началото на XX век“ [Generations, generational discourses and collective times. The uses of the generational divisions in Bulgaria in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century], Дисертация за присъждане на образователната и научна степен „доктор“, СУ „Св. Климент Охридски“, 2011.

¹⁶ Янчулев, *Война*, 14, 3.

¹⁷ Стоян Заимов, *Светите места на признателна България* [The holy places of grateful Bulgaria], София, 1912.

¹⁸ In a touristic guide from the 1930s several hotel named “Car Osvoboditel” were advertised. See for example the advertisements about the Hotel and Restaurants named “Car Osvoboditel” in the touristic guide “Vodač za Bulgaria”, second edition, Sofia, 1938: in Pleven: “Hotel “Car Osvoboditel...running hot and cold water in every room, local and European kitchen” (p. 182), hotel “Car Osvoboditel” – Stara Zagora – “excellent restaurant” (p. 150), Restaurant “Car Osvoboditel” – health resort Văršec (p. 37).

¹⁹ Андрей Кострюков, *Жизнеописание на архиепископ Серафим (Соболев)* [The biography of the Bishop Serafim (Sobolev)], София, 2011.

²⁰ *Сборник „Прослава на освободителната война 1877/1878. Руско-български сборник”* [“Glorification of the Liberation war 1877/1878. Russo-Bulgarian collection”], София, 1929.

²¹ Cf. Тодор Икономов, *Протоколите на Берлинския конгрес* [The protocols of the Congress of Berlin], София, 1885; Симеон Радев, *Строителите на съвременна България* [The builders of contemporary Bulgaria], 1, София, 1911, 1990.

²² Кирил, патриарх български. *Съпротивата срещу Берлинския договор. Кресненското въстание*. [The resistance against the Berlin treaty. The Kresna uprising.], София, 1955; Дойно Дойнов, *Кресненско-Разложкото въстание 1878 – 1879* [The Kresna-Razlog uprising 1878 – 1879], София, 1979; *Кресненско-Разложкото въстание и помощта на населението от освободените територии Кресненско-Разложкото въстание 1878* [The Kresna-Razlog uprising and the help from the population of the liberated territories], София, 1970, 51-70; Христо Христов, *Българската национална революция и Кресненско-Разложкото въстание* [The Bulgarian national revolution and the Kresna-Razlog uprising], В: *Кресненско-Разложкото въстание 1878*, София, 1970, 17-28.

²³ Иван Гешов, Спомени из години на борби и победи [Memories about the years of struggles and victories], София, 1916; Павел А. Матвеев, България после Берлинския конгрес [Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin], Санкт-Петербург, 1887; Вогдан Кесяков, Принос към дипломатическата история на България. 1870 – 1925 [A contribution to the diplomatic history of Bulgaria], София, 1925; Георги П. Генов, Източният въпрос [The Eastern Question], II, София, 1926; Кръстьо Крачунов, Разлом на Сан-Стефанска България [The parceling out of the San Stefano Bulgaria], София, 1930, 10, 64-86.

²⁴ История на България [History of Bulgaria], 7, София, 1991, 44.

²⁵ Константин Косев, Зад кулисите на Берлинския конгрес и родилните мъки на Третата българска държава [Behind the curtains of the Congress of Berlin and the birth pains of the third Bulgarian state], София, 2008.

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³² Ibid., 4.

³³ Ibid., 5.

³⁴ Ibid., 6.

³⁵ Ibid., 7-8.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 11-12.

³⁸ Ibid., 22.

³⁹ Ивана Кепова, Нашите двойни освободители [Our double liberators], София, 1950. It was not her first book on this topic. She published a popular book “The Bulgarian liberation” at the beginning of the 1930s. See Ивана Кепова, Освобождението на България. С 21 картини и образи [The Bulgarian Liberation with 21 pictures and images], София, 1932.

⁴⁰ Cf. Кепова, Освобождението, 39, 31-32.

⁴¹ Кепова, Освободители, 39, 7.

⁴² Ibid., 25.

⁴³ Анчо Анчев, Освободителната война през погледа на съвременници [The Liberation War from the point of view of the contemporaries], София, 1958, 3.

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⁶⁶ Ibid.

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⁷³ Ibid.

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The Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) In Russian Historiography

Abstract: *The purpose of this article is the analysis and classification of the variety of historical and historiographical sources regarding the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. The authors compare three different kinds of war-study methodology used in pre-revolutionary, Soviet and post-Soviet periods. One of the aims of this article is to present socio-political and ideological reasons which might explain a special attitude towards the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) at different times in Russian history. The main problems of the Russo-Ottoman War itself as well as political aspects of it have been deeply studied by Russian and Soviet historians and are presented in this article. An extended pre-revolutionary, Soviet and post-Soviet bibliography of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) has been attached to the article.*

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 is one of the important events of the political and military history of the 19th century. From the viewpoint of the world policy this war became a high tide in the solution of the oriental question when its results and consequences had an influence on the historic fate of the Balkan nations. From the viewpoint of Russian policy this war considerably differed from the former conflicts with the Ottoman Empire. There was a time of 'Great reforms' and one of the substantial reforms was the military reorganization. Russia entered this war with an army which already had been reformed. Reforms had a great influence both on Russian society, which was disappointed by the failures in the Crimean War, and on the sphere of foreign policy doctrines. That is why the Russo-Ottoman War always attracted rapt attention of researchers. The national historiography of Russia is very extensive on this problem.

Traditions of military and journalistic historiography in the framework of the official ideology ('struggle for an idea') were taking shape in the process of its formation. At the same time some independent scientific trends of research were formed. For example, the investigations of 'civil historians' and columnists who illustrated the evolution of the Russian society's interest in the war from their point of

view.¹ For the Soviet historical science, a high influence level of ideological factors was typical and per contra, at the turn of the 20th century some tendencies of a new historiographical culture, including an 'ethic approach' as an important feature, were outlined.² It focused on the changing socio-cultural situation in the world and historians started to pay attention on the diversity of cultural forms of human activities³ as well as they started to show interest in forms of cultural memory, it being closely connected to history itself.⁴

We intend to offer a periodization of Russian historiography based on the alteration of different methodologies used in the historical analysis of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. Therefore we can mark out the following stages in its development:

- The pre-revolutionary stage (end of the 1870s – 1917): Scientific studies conducted in this period were based on the prevailing philosophies of positivism and Neo-Kantianism.
- The Soviet stage (1917 – 1991): Scientific studies were based on Marxist theories. However, it is necessary to note that the theoretical approach wasn't consistent in the course of all this time. Therefore it is expedient to divide this stage into two sub-periods which are determined by the development of historical sciences in the Soviet Union:
 - a) Formation and domination of the totalitarian regime (1917 – 1953)
 - b) Chruščëv's thaw, Period of Stagnation and *Perestrojka* (1953 – 1991)
- The contemporary stage (1991 – today): Scientific studies aim at a re-comprehension of the different plots of the war in the light of the 'memorial paradigm', it being connected to notions such as 'memory', 'remembrance' and 'oblivion' understood as socio-cultural phenomena.

Let's examine each of the stages mentioned above in detail:

Pre-revolutionary stage

It is notable that Russian researchers started studying the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) shortly after it ended. Their studies were based on two fundamental concepts: Positivism and Neo-Kantianism. In the first case the authors concentrated their attention on the image of the Russian warrior – the liberator of the Balkan nations from the 'Ottoman yoke', and on the search of general regularities of events and images connected to the war. In the second case they analyzed single, individual war events and considered the effect of religious philosophical ideas. At that time a new style of historical investigation in form of monographs became consolidated.

It is possible to define the main trends of the national historiography dealing with the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 during the pre-revolutionary stage. They are the following:

- Military historiography of Russian generals and participants of the 1877 – 1878 campaign and military historians, who, on the basis of rich factual material, in detail described the main events which took place at the Balkan and Caucasus battle-fronts and analyzed the status and the role of Russian army as well as some features of the Russian strategy and tactics.⁵

- The first attempts of a philosophical-sociological approach to war as a public phenomenon were undertaken by theoreticians who analyzed the impact of the war and its consequences on different spheres of social life.⁶
- Several works of military historians, destined for mass readership, were published with the intention to popularize the theme of the Russo-Ottoman War. The authors paid attention to the religious factor of the war⁷ and they analyzed the history and the role of the Bulgarian home guard.⁸ Images of war heroes with detailed biographies and description of remarkable war events also took place.⁹
- Materials of the Military-Historical Committee, which had been established in 1879 at the central headquarters in order to compose an official history of the war, had become an essential part of the military historiography. The description of the war in the Caucasus theatre was transmitted to the Military-Historical Office of the Caucasus military district headquarters and as a result the work "Description of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan peninsula" with an atlas¹⁰ was published in many volumes as well as the secret "special supplement"¹¹, diplomatic documents, the tsar's correspondence with the commander-in-chief, secret materials on war plans, reports of war agents and more.
- A small part of the military historiography concerned the mountain-dwellers participation in the war and only factual material regarding the actions of the Caucasus units in the war operations was supplied.¹²

The traditions of the military historiography were formed in full conformity to the official Slavophil perception of how to realize the Russian historic mission. The interpretation of the different aspects of the campaign by military history was under pressure of imperious clichés and stereotypes. The journalistic historiography was presented by the investigations of 'civil historians' as well as by the information and memoirs of Russian war correspondents. The definite part of the civil historians' investigations generated independent scientific trends in the study of the Russo-Ottoman War. The authors had an opportunity to express opposite opinions in respect to the official concepts. They criticized the idea to solve the Eastern Question by means of an armed conflict.¹³

The traditions of publications in the 1870s were formed under the influence of the Slavophil concepts, defining both the aims and reasons for the war ('independence and unity of Slavdom', 'people's war', 'great liberation war' and others) and the society's attitude to it ('sympathy of Russia's society', 'patriotism', 'charity').¹⁴ The most part of the journalistic historiography consisted of materials of Russian correspondent-columnists and artists who were in the army as either observers and/or participants in the war actions. They cooperated with 14 newspapers and magazines using official information (orders, headquarters reports etc.) as well as stories of participants and eyewitnesses of the described events or personal observations to write about different aspects of the war.¹⁵ Just in the period of the war campaign in 1877 – 1878 the Russian war journalism originated.

Russian War Journalism in 1877 – 1878¹⁶

№	Periodical	Correspondent
1.	“Government bulletin”	Krestovskij V.
2.	“St. Petersburg News”	Modzolevskij, Komarov
3.	“The new time”	Suvorin A., Fëdorov M., Burenin V., Karazin N., Ivanov A., Rossolovskij N., Maslov Nemirovič-Dančenko V.
4.	“The Russian invalid”	Fëdorov M., Suhotin
5.	“The world illustration”	Fëdorov M.
6.	“Voice”	Sokal'skij P.
7.	“Northern Bulletin”	Girs D., Bajkov
8.	“Russian world”	Rapp E., Georgievič
9.	“Moscow News”	Šachovskoj I., Mec M., Ilovajskij D.
10.	“Russian News”	Teocharov A.
11.	“Stock News”	Maksimov N.
12.	“Our century”	Nemirovič-Dančenko V., Stambolov G.
13.	“Odessa Bulletin”	Sokalskij P.
14.	“Tiflis Bulletin”	Nikoladze N.

Depending on the mode of presentation of the material, its emotional coloring, the richness of its content and the ideological orientation of the newspapers and the journalists, the journalistic sources can be divided into two groups: The first one covers those who wrote in the rear services and stayed in the headquarters, while the second one covers those who directly took part in the battles. The correspondents from the first group often used unchecked information based on the stories of eyewitnesses and the reports of official sources.¹⁷ The descriptions of the external part of the war (battle descriptions, progress of separate regiments etc.) focused on the demonstrative practices aiming at proving good spirit and support for the troops by the public opinion, while a lack of evaluation of personalities and the main war events was typical for them. The written testimonies of the correspondents from this group, limited by a framework of instructions and censorship, were products of the ideological arrangements of the official authorities. They presented the war as a field of heroism and boldness. It is notable that they introduced the mode of describing the war in pictures in order to approach the course of the war step-by-step.¹⁸

The second group of journalists consisted of creative people such as famous artists, scientists, doctors and priests.¹⁹ They gave detailed and truthful information about the inner side of the war conflict by writing about the war life, the characteristics of the relations between people and of their behavior as well as by writing about advantages and disadvantages of the Russian army. In their letters, diaries and telegrams they described the war as harmful and hard work for soldiers and officers – there were death, crippled lives, incompetence of higher military officers, corruption, larceny and drunkenness.

Artists working as war correspondents such as E. Makarov, V. Vereščagin, V. Polenov and others revealed in their splendid paintings, canvas and sketches the atmosphere of the war's everyday life, the terrible sufferings and disasters of the war by using their personal experiences of the war.²⁰ They managed to avoid the imperious discourse in their written testimonies, researching the war as a socio-historical and psychological phenomenon.

The events of the Russo-Ottoman War favored the development of satires in the press. The activity of the magazine "Alarm Clock" was a bright example of this kind of press where different cartoons, poems and satirical articles were published.²¹ The sources of the jokes were important international subjects like the diplomatic war with England, the Congress of Berlin, the political and military situation in Turkey as well as everyday life situations connected to the war. Even today, the dialogue between a merchant and a doctor, who takes a bribe to save him from the call-up to the war with the *Başıbozuk* is very topical. The magazine illustrated the attitude of a certain section of Russian society to foreign policy and war events exposing the customs of the epoch.

The literature of cheap popular prints (*lubok*) was of great interest for the researchers because this cheap propaganda literature was intended for mass distribution.²² The unity of graphic arts and texts was very important for it. The latest news pictures were guided by the official ideology because they were supposed to transfer information from a certain standpoint to influence the public opinion. During the period of the war of 1877 – 1878 the tradition of publishing patriotic popular prints was held up. These prints presented war events and their main task was to support the confidence of the society in the Russian victory. They played a significant role in promoting an image of the enemy (for instance by presenting the enemy as an animal or as a foolish and cowardly opponent). Features such as narration, attention to details, concreteness, emotional coloring, and humorousness were typical for the language of the prints. Cheap popular print literature intended to popularize the war in broad groups of the society, to mobilize it to take part in civil actions and to raise the courage within the population.



Turkish cowardice, Russian boldness

Москва, Товарищество типографии И.М. Машустова. 1914 г.²³

The analysis of the vast pre-revolutionary historiography on the Russo-Ottoman War allows us to outline the following regularities:

- The interpretation of the different aspects of the war was under the pressure of the imperious clichés and stereotypes based on Slavophil ideology ('independence and unity of Slavdom').
- The assumption of the desire of the Balkan nations to escape the 'Ottoman yoke' ('People's war against Turkey') was a common principle for all historiographical genres.
- The aggressive character of the Western States plans to approach territories of the Ottoman Empire was stressed.

Soviet stage

The Soviet historiography, based on the dominant Marxist paradigm, emphasized different aspects of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878). The historical process was considered from the standpoint of class conflict while foreign policy was presented as an expression of the ruling class interests and the role of the personal factor in epochal events was ignored. For the different periods of the Soviet history the level of interest to the events of this war had been changing because of the political evolution in the country and some changes in foreign policy. As a result the evolution of the Soviet historiography on the war of 1877 – 1878 can be divided into two periods:

The first period (1920 to 1953)

A number of fundamental works on the history of the Russian military art appeared in the twenties. The authors only partly mentioned the events of the Russo-Ottoman War.²⁴ The memoirs of the Russian diplomat V. Lamzdorf, who accompanied Prince Gorčakov to the Congress of Berlin, were published.²⁵ A series of articles by M. Pokrovskij investigated the war on a larger scale.²⁶ The historian paid attention to the military operations and the Slavic committee's activities, criticizing the tsar's government policy. Influenced by the ideological factor, the author negatively evaluated the tsarist policy as reactionary. The progressive consequences of the war weren't appreciated properly; however this part of the Soviet historiography on the Russo-Ottoman War was characterized more or less by a tendency of honest investigations. The strengthening of the totalitarian regime and Stalin's personal power in the 1930s had an influence on all historical investigations. On the one hand, historiography was formed in a direction to please Stalin which led to a culture of concealment or falsification of 'disagreeable facts' ('policy of oblivion'). On the other hand the conferment of the title "people's leader" to Stalin, who had been ruling "a great country", lead to an increase of historical investigations. The propaganda of historical knowledge aimed at boasting patriotic feelings using the theme of heroism and some smaller-scaled researches on the Balkan conflict in 1877 – 1878 appeared.²⁷ Thus, until the 1940s due to the complicated home policy situation and the Great Patriotic War the interest in this topic decreased.

Only after the liberation of Bulgaria by the Soviet army the interest in the events of 1877 – 1878 renewed and as a result a number of investigations appeared where great attention was paid to the specific character of the war, calling it a "struggle for national independence" and emphasizing the "Russo-Bulgarian community".²⁸ The war of 1877 – 1878 was studied actively in the military academies in the framework of war art history courses.²⁹ The most serious and interesting investigation of the war in that period was conducted by P. Fortunatov.³⁰

The second period (1953 – 1991)

A vigorous process of investigating the Balkan conflict started in the time of Chruščev's thaw. The number of sources the investigations were based upon was considerably enlarged which created new opportunities for dissertation studies.³¹ Researches on the public movement in Russia, on the overall results of the Berlin congress, on the problems of the mountain-dwellers participation in the war, and on the development of mass media also appeared.³² The fundamental investigation by the Russian historian N. Beljaev concerning the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) was published in 1956 and focused on military problems such as the analysis of the conditions and preparations of the opposed armies, the course and the results of the battlefield actions as well as the forms of its perception by the Russian society³³. Until present time this work is the most comprehensive description of the war events.

In the 1970s and 1980s the financing of historical sciences, archives and libraries increased despite the crisis in Soviet society. This allowed new research approaches to the Russo-Ottoman War and a newly acquired focus on the attitudes of the Russian society to the Balkan events, the history of the Russian press, the

relation of the state economy to the technical conditions of the army, the interpretation of the war in the national historiography and others.³⁴ A significant increase of the research interest in the Balkan conflict was connected with the symbolic date of the 100th anniversary of the war, which in Soviet historiography was entitled “100 years of the Balkan nations’ liberation from the Ottoman yoke”. The summarizing works of I. Rostunov, V. Vinogradov, L. Naročnickaja were published in scientific journals³⁵ as well as in a number of other publications.³⁶ It is remarkable that the problems of the mountain-dwellers’ participation in the war, especially of Ossetians, Ingush, Chechens, Kabardians and several peoples from Dagestan and Transcaucasia, were researched.³⁷ Such investigations in the Soviet historiography had great scientific value despite the biased class conflict approach.

The works devoted to the war were discussed by scientific associations and were reviewed by famous scientists who evaluated their scientific validity. Soviet historians studied the motives of the war in detail but in the interpretation of the war activities and the following results they contradicted themselves, equally emphasizing both the aggressive goals of Tsarist Russia and the liberation mission of the Tsar’s army.

The Soviet historiography on the war of 1877 – 1878 was characterized by the following features:

- The Marxist paradigm strictly set the limits for the interpretation of the different aspects of the war.
- The level of interest in war problems depended on the situation of Soviet domestic policy and on the climate of the international relations.
- The extensive accumulation of factual material allowed the development of scientifically substantiated researches.
- Special attention was paid to the meaning and to the ideological character of the war such as ‘tsarist aggression’, ‘liberation mission of the Russian army’, ‘Russian glory’, and ‘historical deeds’.

Contemporary stage

This stage of the Russian historiography is defined by a great interest in the different aspects of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. For this stage the re-evaluation and re-comprehension of the historic processes and phenomena linked to Russia’s interests in the Balkan region is typical. The crisis of the Marxist concepts and the theoretical interest in historical memories led to a change in the historiographical situation. The new trends of studies are defined by the ‘memory paradigm’ related to notions such as ‘memory’, ‘oblivion’, ‘remembrance’, and ‘collective memory’. On the other hand the modern Russian researchers are trying to emphasize their ethic viewpoint of the military past and the war in 1877 – 1878.

A number of researchers of the military-cultural heritage of the Cossacks and the North Caucasus mountain-dwellers, who took part in the war operations (1877 – 1878), arose in connection to the new historiographical culture. The works of O. Matveev deserve special attention, as he studied the impact of the war on the society of the Cossacks as well as the Cossacks historical memory and the military mentality of the Kuban Cossacks.³⁸ Other attempts in this direction were undertaken by scholars researching the mountain units’ participation and interpretation of the

war, paying special attention to the culture of the North Caucasus mountaineers and their ethic notions such as courage or bravery.³⁹

A real turning point in modern war historiography occurred in the middle of the 1990s. It was marked by the studies of E. Senjavskaja who, in the theoretical framework of the armed conflicts of the 20th century, reconsidered this phenomenon as not only a historical but as well as a socio-psychological one.⁴⁰ In the center of her studies she put mankind into extreme war conditions and focused on his thoughts, feelings, behavior, heroism and panic, soldier's superstitions, features of front life, formation of enemy image and on the phenomenon of the women participation in the war. The investigation was conducted by using methods of adjacent scientific disciplines, namely military sociology and military psychology.⁴¹ These investigations were groundbreaking in opening up a new field in the study of Russian military history – the study of the 'fighting man', the activities and properties of the so-called 'combatant'.

The process of modern historiography research developed into studies of the human factor in the armed conflict of 1877 – 1878. The authors tried to examine the behavior, feelings, thoughts and destinies of individual war participants, both civilians and soldiers, the notions of duty and honor⁴², the role of ideology and propaganda⁴³, the role of women and medical nurses ('guardian angels')⁴⁴, the courage and charity of the military priests⁴⁵, and the images of the war created by artists⁴⁶. The increasing interest of modern historiography in the socio-psychological aspects of the Russo-Ottoman War favored the appearance of scientific bibliographical studies.⁴⁷ The authors used archival materials, memoirs, letters, and diaries which allowed creating a lively image of famous statesmen and military figures and to re-establish the psychological background of the pre-war events and of the war events itself.

The re-comprehension and re-evaluation of the Russo-Ottoman war favored the appearance of basic works on this problem.⁴⁸ Special attention should be paid to the studies of V. Zolotarev,⁴⁹ who elaborates on the features of the Russian army along the military problems of the Russo-Ottoman conflict. Different aspects of Russian foreign policy on the Balkans are also discussed in modern historiography.⁵⁰ Pointing out the positive tendencies of the new historiographical culture in Russia concerning the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) we have to admit that there is still a lack of a fundamental investigation of this war as a historical and socio-psychological phenomenon.

It would be interesting to take a closer look at the interpretation of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 in the school history textbooks, to be able to understand how they were influenced by the changes in state policy and the political preferences of the ruling elite. School literature aims at shaping understandings approved by the ruling class and at guiding younger minds into the "right direction" along political changes.

In pre-revolutionary Russia textbooks were under strict control of the government. In general these school textbooks presented the war according to a certain pattern: Russia would have been trying to protect the Slavonic brothers against the Ottoman enslavement while the Western empires allegedly tried to interfere and grab the territorial heritage of Turkey.⁵¹ The decision to start the war against the

Ottoman Empire was on the one side explained by Aleksandr II's idea to help the Slavonic peoples and on the other side justified by the motivation to stop Turkish atrocities on the Balkans, thereby following such demands of the Russian society. The pre-revolutionary Russian textbooks referred to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 as a 'liberating war', while Aleksandr II, who granted freedom to his own people, was considered the liberator of the Balkan Christians as well. Some textbooks referred to religion as a driving force urging Russia to start the war and help the "coreligionist brothers".⁵² The scientific literature of that time generally reflected the official view on the war, i.e. the Slavophil concept of Russia performing its historical mission.

One of the first textbooks of the Soviet time was "The Russian History for secondary education and self-education" by N.A. Rožkov who criticized both Aleksandr II's actions and Russia's foreign policy. It explained the motivation of the war against the Ottoman Empire with the Russian government's idea to have the Empire's stronghold on the Balkan Peninsula.⁵³ As for the rest of the Soviet pre-war textbooks, they all reflected the views of the Bolshevik historian Pokrovskij and his followers.⁵⁴ The latest war against the Ottoman Empire was mentioned only indirectly and without a detailed description of the military actions while it was considered as one of the Emperor's unsuccessful idea. At the same time the failures of Russia in the war were explained by the poor social development of the country.

The Second World War changed the attitude towards the Russo-Ottoman War. 1944 witnessed another help granted to the 'Slavonic brothers' when the Red Army liberated Bulgaria. Soon after Bulgaria had a new regime (supported by the Soviet Union), Soviet textbooks referred to it as a "people's democracy".⁵⁵ The new political reality was immediately reflected in the history textbooks teaching the youth internationalism and world solidarity. Furthermore the textbooks not only gave information about the reasons and consequences of the war of 1877 – 1878, but the chronology of the military campaign along with the names of the commanders and other military personalities were published in them. However, the authors of those Soviet textbooks faced a complicated task. On the one hand they had to emphasize the aggressive aims pursued by the Emperor's regime, while on the other hand they had to emphasize the liberating mission of the Emperor's army.

The content of the post-Soviet history textbooks depended on the methodological views of the author and the political situation. Yet this had a little influence on the presentation of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) in the school textbooks. Usually there is only one sub-chapter traditionally allocated to the 'liberating war'.⁵⁶ The modern scientific literature generally reflected the common historiographical trends in the presentation of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878.

¹ Сергей А. Кочуков, *Общество, правящая элита, армия российской империи и русско-турецкая война 1877 – 1878 гг.* [Society, the ruling elite, the army of the Russian Empire and the Russo-Turkish War 1877 – 1878], Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени доктора ист. наук, Саратов, 2012, 5-6.

² Сергей И. Моловичко, Новая локальная история в России: рефлексия о коммуникативной открытости, Междисциплинарные подходы к изучению прошлого: до и после 'постмодернизма' [A new local history in Russia: A reflection on communicative openness. Interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the past: before and after 'postmodernism'], Москва, 2005, 132.

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“There is no single dominant ideology in the memory culture in Russia today, which is good...”

Interview: *Tat'jana Aleksandrovna Nevskaja, doctor in history (doktor istoričeskich nauk), works as a professor at the department of History of Russia and the North Caucasus Federal University, Stavropol. In 1977 she graduated from Stavropol' State Pedagogical Institute. In course of her doctoral dissertation she researched the historical-ethnographic features of the Slavonic population in the North Caucasus. She became full professor in 1998 with "The Implementation of Stolypin's reforms in the Northern Caucasus". She is the author of about 150 researches on the history and culture of the peoples of the North Caucasus in the 19th and 20th century. She is interested in agrarian history, history of the Caucasus region, ethnography of the Caucasian peoples, history of the Cossacks, reforms in the imperial period and the common law of the Slavonic population of the North Caucasus.*

Petar Vodenicharov: From where comes your interest in the history and culture of the Caucasus region?

Tat'jana Aleksandrovna: It was already in my childhood when an interest in the history of the Caucasus arose in me, thanks to the tales of my mother – Valentina Pavlovna Nevskaja. She was working on Antiquity, the Byzantine Empire, but she had to leave Moscow for the Caucasus since her mother, my grandmother, came back from a Stalin camp and was not allowed to live in Moscow or in any other bigger city. Then for my mother – the daughter of an 'enemy of the people' – it was not easy to work in the capital either. I was born in the Caucasus. My father came here from the Volga region to save himself from the repressions for being the son of a priest. In the North Caucasus my mother had to switch her scientific interests to the history of the peoples of the Northern Caucasus, only to become one of the most prominent specialists in Caucasus studies. As a child I used to join my mother in her study trips and became acquainted with Caucasian antiquity and monuments of its history.

P. V.: How do you consider the Russian expansion to the North Caucasus – was it colonization or modernization?

T. A.: It was both. But when we speak about colonization, we have to specify what we mean by colonization. Russia came to the Caucasus not as an invader, not as a colonizer in the European meaning of the word. Russia did not need these lands as a territory as Russia had enough territory, but it had to fortify its southern borders against the permanent raids of the Crimean Khans and the anti-Russian influence of Turkey on the nations of the region. The annexation was not a big one

(according to Russian measures), having a piece of land was not a main goal of the Russian policy. In a certain sense Russia was an anti-empire – it did not extract sources from the annexed periphery but invested money and not a small amount of money. Unlike the European colonies, where the local population had to deal only with the army and the colonial administration, Russia settled Slavic peasants and Cossacks at the periphery who established commercial, economic and cultural relations with the local peoples. Of course there were wars and violence in the relations between Russia and the Caucasus, but also as a result of the union with Russia, the internecine wars stopped and so did the slave trade. Slavery and serfdom were abolished, economy developed. For certain Russia played a civilizing role in the Caucasus.

At the beginning of the 20th century the North Caucasus became one of the most dynamic developing provinces of the Russian Empire. The economy of the region played an important role in the economic potential of the country. In Chechnya and Kuban a petroleum industry was built up, in Novosibirsk a cement industry developed, at the sea coast new ports were built and railway transports were established. Stavropol' and Kuban became main suppliers of high quality bread, not only for the Russians but for the world market.

P. V.: So many poets, writers, composers or painters devoted their works to the Caucasus. Why did the Caucasus play such an important role for Russian culture?

T. A.: In the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th century the territory of the present Caucasus was a distant periphery of the empire but in respect to culture the region was not at the back of beyond. On the Caucasus line a system of strongholds was built with villages between them, redoubts and posts. For several decades there was a war and the elite of the Russian army settled here. Also dissident officers including some Decembrists were exiled here. Many travelled to the Caucasus by themselves expecting a quick career while others were attracted by the romanticism of the mountain region. In this period the Russian society lived with the Caucasus. The events and problems of the Caucasus war were discussed on the pages of serious journals and fashion salons, within the working class and aristocracy. The Caucasus theme pervaded Russian art. The magnificent nature of the Caucasus, the wild events of the Caucasian War and the meetings with the virile mountain warriors were inspiration sources for many writers, poets and composers. The towns of the North Caucasus, losing their role as military strongholds, turned into centers of government, commerce and culture. On the Caucasus line two centers of social life developed: Stavropol' and Pjatigorsk. For a certain time the poets A.S. Puškin, M.Ju. Lermontov and L.N. Tolstoj lived there. In Kislovodsk A.S. Puškin listened to a tale about a Cherkessian girl who helped a Cossack prisoner to escape. The tale was the basis for his famous poem "The Prisoner of the Caucasus". Thanks to this poem the Russian readers became acquainted with the way of life of the mountain people, their costumes and the romanticism of the turbulent Caucasus.

The best works of M.Ju. Lermontov were based on Caucasus plots. In his early verses and poems devoted to the Caucasus, not only the beauty of the nature was praised but the human tragedy of the war and the deep understanding of the

Caucasian way of life were represented. M. Ju. Lermontov visited the Caucasus for the first time in 1825, when he was still a child. The trip was full of impressions and turned out to be unforgettable for him. The boy was shaken by the beauty of the mountain landscapes; he saw tents and fancy horseback riding, and listened to the songs of the mountaineers. The memories about this unique experience found an artistic expression in his adolescence works: "Morning in the Caucasus", "The Prisoner of the Caucasus", "Izmail-Bej", "Chadži Abrek" and others. In 1840 the novel of M. Ju. Lermontov "A hero of our time" was published and revealed the way of life in the Caucasus to the Russian readers. The experience of mineral water healing provided him enough material for one of the novellas. In "Princess Mary" Lermontov delicately described the temper of the officers, the ways of drinking and healing by mineral waters, the balls in the restaurants and the health resorts. Tolstoj noted in his diary that in Pjatigorsk he formed his view of life. During the summer of 1853 Tolstoj wrote his "Boyhood", "The Wood-Felling", "The Degraded", "A Billiard-Marker's Notes" and the early version of his "The Cossacks".

The romanticism of the Caucasus inspired not only poets but composers as well. In 1823 the young M. I. Glinka settled down in Kavkazskie Mineral'nye Vody. Here he got acquainted with the unique culture of the mountaineers, with the melodies of the Caucasus. Based on the impressions of his adolescence he created the "Eastern Dances" and "Lezginka" of his opera "Ruslan and Ljudmila". The prominent romantic composer A. A. Aljab'ev visited the Caucasus twice – in 1816 and 1832-33. Here he was attracted by the music of the Caucasus nations and created many works based on Caucasus themes. About the role of the Caucasus for the Russian culture I could speak for hours.

P. V.: We visited North Ossetia and were impressed by the hospitality and the culture of the people – an interesting mixture of Zarathustrian folk beliefs, Christianity and Islam. Ossetians fought not only in the Caucasus but also on the Balkan front during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. When and why was Ossetia annexed by Russia?

T. A.: The relations between Russia and Ossetia have a very long history. In the Middle Ages the Russian princes were happy to get married to Ossetian princesses, they kept friendly relations with Alanija. The strategic geo-political position of Ossetia at the crossroad of very important roads to the Southern Caucasus made this region very important for Russia. In the middle of 18th century the people of Ossetia sent ambassadors pleading with the Russians for citizenship but only after the signing of the Küçük Kaynarca peace treaty with Turkey in 1774 this territory officially became part of Russia. The town of Vladikavkaz which was established in 1784 became an important administrative center. The Georgian Military Road to Tbilisi was built.

Ossetians have always been excellent warriors, in the 19th and 20th century for honor's sake they defended the interests of the fatherland. In the 19th century Ossetians served in the irregular horse regiments which did their best in the battles during the Russo-Turkish War (1877 – 1878). In this period many Ossetians served as volunteers in the Russian army. Many cavalymen bought uniforms and arms by themselves, the equipment costs were very high – up to 200 silver rubles. That is why mountain volunteers had to spend a lot of money and sometimes they even

pawned their homes. The Tersk-Mountaineers Irregular Cavalry Regiment joined the Russian army on the 25th of November 1876. It consisted of Ossetian and Ingush divisions. Aslan-Murza Esiev became the commander of a company. The division kept its colors of honor, which they had received in 1845 for fidelity and loyalty to Russia. As a part of the Russian army, the regiment was sent to the Balkans on the 7th of December 1876, 6,330 people from the Tersk Region took part in the military actions (1877 – 1878), more than 20,000 volunteers from the North Caucasus took part in the Russo-Turkish War. From the very beginning of the war the Caucasian cavalymen were located at the very front line of the battles. The Ossetian division took part in many battles in the Danube region. The Ossetian soldiers manifested a miracle of courage and virility. "This people deserve a prize for their unquestionable bravery" – said Colonel I.F. Tutolmin (1837 – 1908). The Ossetian soldiers fought for the liberation of Sofia and Philippopolis. "The Ossetian cavalry provoked panic in the battle arrays of the Turkish army", an eyewitness wrote. 46 warriors of the Ossetian division were granted the St. George banner of arms with the inscription "For distinction in the Turkish War of 1877 – 1878" on it.

P. V.: How would you explain the strange collage of monuments and memory places in Russia today? In Stavropol' we saw a monument of the Bolshevik atheist Lenin on the main square and a monument of an angel with a cross (which has given the town its name) on the next square. In the town of Ėlista (Kalmykija) and Archyz (Karačaevo-Čerkessija) we attended the monuments commemorating the Stalin deportation of these nations during World War II, but in Ossetia we were surprised to see bust monuments of Stalin. In Stavropol' there is also a monument of the millions of victims of the Stalinist regime. It seems that the Russians have not reached a consensus on their history.

T. A.: That's correct. Many monuments in our town and in the country as a whole are contradictive. Today one can see monuments from the Bolshevik epoch, monuments of tsars and tsarist generals and religious monuments right next to each other. Obviously this situation reflects the contradictions of memories in contemporary Russia, where the population pays tribute to different ideals. There is no single dominant ideology in the country today, which is good, but there is no general national idea as well. The world view of the younger population is very different from the point of view of the older generation. The different social strata differently reflect the present social reality and this demands distinguished interpretations of the past. There are memory wars and monuments are often turned into objects of struggle. Periodically both monuments of Lenin and monuments of tsars are demolished. At the time of the Chechen War, in the capital Nal'čik of Kabardino-Balkarija it was, fortunately unsuccessfully, attempted to blow up the monument "Gorjanka"¹, by the common people called "Maria", which had been erected in honor of tsar Ivan Groznyj and symbolizes the unity of Russia and the Caucasus through the inscription "Forever together".

P.V.: The North Caucasus is a region of interaction and clashes between different religions – Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Lamaist Buddhism. What is done in the sphere of education to teach tolerance and avoid religious extremism?

T.A.: Such work is permanently done. At our university courses on the history of the Caucasus nations, on the history of Islam in the Caucasus and on the culture

of the Caucasian nations are taught at all faculties. It is important to show the long history of the nations in this region, to emphasize the character of the relations between them, as they were not only tolerant but friendly. At our university we publish a volume with students' researches on tolerance every year. I think it is important for the youth to get acquainted with the moral values of all religions. The Caucasian youth often has a very superficial knowledge about Islam, which is limited to official forms and customs and lacks an insight into the spiritual potential of this religion – the ideas of goodness and justice.

Unfortunately printed volumes and websites with extremist content are also easily accessible. Materials fostering nationalist hatred often got published on official websites of social and cultural-educational organizations. Religious extremism in the North Caucasus is also backed by various historical myths, which praise the national uniqueness, reason by incorrect analogies and project today problems into the past.

¹ The monument "Gorjanka" (mountain woman) was opened in 1957 to honor the 400th anniversary of the Union of Kabardino-Balkarija with Russia. It represented the Kabardian Countess Marija Temrjukovna (1546 – 1569), the Caucasian wife of the tsar Ivan Groznyj, holding the unifying contract with Russia in her hand. In 1997 an attempt to destroy the monument was made.

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The Armenian Historiography about the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 (A concise Overview)

Abstract: *The present article aims to analyze and classify the variety of approaches towards the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 in Armenian historiography. A special emphasis is put on the difference between the three main periods: Pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet historiography. The paper as well takes a look at the intertwining topics of the ROW itself and the Armenian question and both its perception or whether it was tabooed in Armenian historiography. Finally the article sheds some light on the present situation and the role of the ROW in Armenian historiography throughout the last two decades.*

The Armenian socio-political and historical thought has always considered the period of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. Sometimes the scholars addressed the topic and especially the consequences of the war more actively and at other times in a more reserved manner. In the Armenian historiography, it is basically accepted that the Armenian question is a subject of international politics. Diplomacy was established due to the consequences of the war and more specifically after the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano and the concluding protocol at the Congress of Berlin by the Great Powers. Since the Armenian question turned out to be one of the main themes provoking the Armenian socio-political thought of all trends in modern and recent Armenian historiography, directly or indirectly it has always considered the topic of the War of 1877 – 1878 and the following diplomatic collisions. It is well accepted to relate to a certain degree the rising wave of the national-liberating movements in Western Armenia in the last quarter of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (in 1639 after prolonged Persian-Ottoman Wars, Armenia was divided between the Ottoman Empire and Persia: Western Armenia was annexed by the Ottoman Empire and Eastern Armenia became part of Persia until the Treaty of Turkmenčaj in 1828, which united that part with the Russian Empire) to the echo of this war.

The Armenian historiography on the War of 1877 – 1878 and especially on the Armenian question can be divided into three periods – pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet. This division is conditional since in these frames one can hardly locate the historical and journalistic researches carried out in the Armenian diaspora by the efforts of semi-professional historians, who are basically repeating the theses of the Armenian historiography in the pre-Soviet period. Considering this, one should remark that the researches published in the diaspora include well expressed political party influences and to our opinion this part of the historical research cannot be assigned to a special group but should be considered only in the context of the pre-Soviet historiography.

Pre-Soviet historiography

Yet in the course of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 the Armenian periodical press (especially the Eastern Armenian since the Western Armenian one was basically published in Istanbul under the severe pressure of the censorship of the Ottoman Empire) and all trends of the Armenian socio-political thought without any exception – conservative and clerical, liberal and revolutionary – followed the vicissitude of the war with great attention. The Armenian society and especially the intelligentsia had big hopes for that war. The Eastern Armenians and particularly the Russophile majority supported by the tsarist propaganda believed that with the help of Russia they could liberate their brothers living in terrifying conditions and suffering from the ‘Ottoman Yoke’. In the days of the war, apart from the war correspondence from the both fronts, prominent Armenian figures in science and culture such as scholars, writers, journalists and socially active men published articles in the Armenian periodical press. The editor of the famous liberal issue “Mshak” (meaning “the Tiller” in Armenian) Grigor Artsruni, the mentor to the Armenian historical novelist Raffi, and others printed analytical and journalistic articles endeavoring to foresee the consequences of that war for the Armenians and especially for their Western brothers. The Armenian authors promoted as an example the heroic fight of the Balkan nations and particularly of the Bulgarians and encouraged to follow the example of the Bulgarian rebels. The appeal for taking arms was especially answered by the Eastern Armenians and thousands of Armenians living in different parts of the Russian Empire enlisted in the army as volunteers. In the course of the military actions, the inhabitants of the battle fields who assisted the advance of the Russian army provided enormous help to the Russian troops, while others enlisted in the volunteers units. The war and the outlined positive tendencies of its outcome even united the entire Armenian intelligentsia for some time, as if they had forgotten all ideological debates for a while. In fact the Armenian historiography about the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 was born in the course of the War and the connected events, coining all of the following evaluations and conclusions of the historical thought. On the fresh impressions of the War the historical novel “Khent” (“the Fool”) was written by Raffi. The prototype of the main character Hent Voardan was a real historical and heroic person – Samson Ter-Pogosjan, who succeeded in marching through the Ottoman military trenches to inform the commander of the Erevan unit – Arshak Ter-Gukasov about the miserable condition of the defenders of the occupied town of Beyazit.

The severe reality outlined in the course of the Congress of Berlin and the approved documents gradually, year by year, the illusions of the Armenian socio-political figures faded. The appeal for an 'iron ladle' by the leader of the Armenian archbishop Mkrtič Khrimjan (later 'Catholicos-Patriarch' of all Armenians Mkrtič the First), who was not even allowed to attend the session of the Congress of Berlin, influenced the following thoughts and expectations of the Armenians fundamentally. In fact, coming back from the unsuccessful tour to the European countries and Berlin, at the question why he had not been able to raise the question of the Armenians, Khrimjan figuratively answered that in Berlin *harisa* (an Armenian dish of wheat and meat mess) was served and that all nations came with iron ladles to take their portions while he did so with a paper ladle which sank into the thick mass. The majority of the Armenian society interpreted this metaphor as an appeal to arm themselves and gradually the conviction spread that only by an armed uprising they could liberate themselves from the Ottoman suppression. One should remark that within a short time after the War of 1877 – 1878 and the Congress of Berlin, the Armenian political parties were born one after another, whose final programs aimed at solving the Armenian question i.e. the liberation of Western Armenia from the 'Ottoman yoke'. It is remarkable that the most powerful political parties – the Social-Democrat Party "Gnchak" and the "Dashnaktsjutun"-Party (both socialist in essence) were established by the efforts of the Eastern Armenians. After the creation of patriotic secret and semisecret societies and political parties in the last quarter of the 19th century, the Armenian socio-political thought and the historiography as its product diverged radically. In line with the fundamental views in which the appeal for an armament runs like a scarlet thread, a considerable place of the Armenian socio-political horizon was occupied by both conservative (Karapet Ezov, Spandar Spandarjan) and liberal (Grigor Artsruni) tendencies.

By the same time the *fedai* movement (mountain rebels) arose in Western Armenia and Western Armenians were in a hurry to join it. A part of the Armenian society, which started to realize that the Great Powers – Britain, Russia, France etc. considered the Armenian question only as an instrument of putting pressure on the Ottoman Empire with the aim of achieving more concessions from the 'Sick man of Europe' (by this expression Tsar Nikolaj I defined the Ottoman Empire), started to rely only on its own forces and it chose the course of armed fighting and national uprising.

It should be noted though that even the passionate adherents of the national armed uprising did not fully reject the delusion that the diplomatic intervention of the Great powers would somehow help the Western Armenians, or at least would restrain the Ottoman power from punitive actions. In fact the Treaty of San Stefano and especially article 16 clearly defined the obligation of the Ottoman power to implement reforms on the territory of Ottoman Armenia to alleviate the conditions of the Armenians as a whole. This article was in fact rejected by the concluding protocol of the Congress of Berlin where the Armenian theme was concerned only by article 61 and the word Armenia was not even mentioned. This article very unclearly asked from the Ottoman power to carry out reforms in the Eastern districts, while guarantees of the supposed reforms had to be given to the Great powers. Even

such a non-obliging article inspired the conservative and liberal parts of the Armenian intelligentsia.

In pre-Soviet Armenian historiography, after all general works on the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and the Armenian question, the famous Armenian historian and publicist Leo (Arakel Babakhanyan) in his articles and publications directly or indirectly considered these themes, especially in his booklet-portraits of prominent figures of the Armenian socio-political thought and military leaders. But it should be noted that these publications were very biased and reflected the liberal views of the author. After the Sovietization of Armenia Leo radically changed his views and in the 1960s he tried to become a Marxist historian following the theory of the vulgar sociology of the Soviet academician M.N. Pokrovskij.

The first scientific and analytical articles devoted to the Armenian question were written by the prominent Armenian historian Nikolaj Adonc, a professor at St. Petersburg University. At the time when the First World War was still in progress and he was still living in Russia (by the end of 1918 Adonc emigrated to Europe and became professor at Brussels University) Adonc published two articles “The historical basis of the Armenian question and the fall of Turkey” and “The segmentation of Turkey”. He wrote a third article in London in October 1920 when the Treaty of Sévres was signed.¹ Despite the fact that these articles were written at different times and with different political backgrounds, they are organically interconnected and represent the logically defined chain of thoughts of the author.

Based on non-questionable historical facts professor Adonc with confidence criticized the in Europe widespread false opinion that the Armenian question was a result of the diplomatic intrigues of tsarist Russia and proved the deliberate character of this opinion. Adonc demonstrated that the European states wished to prolong the life of the Ottoman Empire with the help of such political tricks, not willing to realize the obvious fact that the Ottoman Empire for a long time already was declining. Undertaking deep historical explorations (Adonc was a prominent expert in history and culture of the Byzantine Empire and chairman of the World Scientific Society of Researchers of Byzantium) professor Adonc outlined the reasons of the rise and fall of the Ottoman Empire. “The Ottomans collected the fruits of the work of other nations” – justly wrote Adonc – “they used the wealth accumulated for centuries and inherited from these nations, who created the great monument of civilization called Byzantium. Both neither the military glory nor the power of the Turks would have been possible without the accumulated money, wealth and production forces of the nations which represented the native Christian population”.²

During the course of the history of the Ottoman Empire and despite the inhuman persecutions and calamities of the rulers of this country, the Christian nations remained the chief actors of civilization and progress. Some sultans and high political figures tried to implement reforms but these attempts remained only on paper since they were confronted by a wall of blind religious obscurantism and ultimately failed. This religious obscurantism and intolerance, according to Adonc buried the last chance of the salvation of the Empire as a whole formation and subsequently in the 19th century the Empire lost its European parts. After such big losses harsh religiously motivated attacks turned at Armenia and the Armenian people. The whole punishing machine of the Ottoman Empire went after the Armenians,

seeking to destroy them and to deprive them of their historical homeland as a final solution of the Armenian question. In regard to this question the Great Powers and especially England, which pursued the preservation of the status quo in the Near East, stretched a helping hand to the Turks. The confrontation between Great Britain and the Russian Empire led to such misconceptions like the substitution of the name Armenia for Kurdistan and the most terrifying was that both countries eagerly started to use this non-existing name, not forgetting in a hypocrite and pharisaic manner to use the theme of the Armenian reforms as an instrument of diplomatic and political pressure on the Porte. This false pro-Kurdish policy was also used during the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres. Not going away from the main theme, we should remark that this famous Kurdish question is actively in use in the West nowadays. Adonc, by revealing the hypocrite essence of the European policy in the question of the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire, noted that in the eyes of the Europeans Armenia was represented as a poor beggar and that one-two vilayets could be torn out from Turkey as a donation to this nation. After the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres Adonc wrote that the solution of the Armenian question was again postponed but history proves that any postponement of this question would lead to irretrievable disasters.³

Soviet historiography

In the first years of the Sovietization of Armenia, in Armenian historiography a priority was given to the question of the periodization of the history of the Armenian nation and the reconsideration of history by following the so-called Marxist-Leninist theory or the historical materialism. In the condition of a lack of new cadres of professional historians in the 1920s – 1930s, in the foreground appeared historians who formed themselves as scientists and thinkers in the pre-Soviet period but ultimately reshaped their conceptions and became Marxists. In this endeavor the majority of them went too far and paid tribute to the vulgar-sociological school of the academician Michail Pokrovskij whose theory since 1934 was definitely criticized even by Josif Stalin.

Among the old part of the Armenian historians, among the adherents of Pokrovskij's theories especially prominent was Professor Leo who directly and indirectly addressed both the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and the Armenian question in his books "The revolutionary ideology of the Turkish Armenians" and "From the past".⁴ Leo, who up to the Sovietization considered the Armenian intelligentsia as the main accumulator of the national force and the nation's pride radically changed his conceptions and affirmed that all the calamities suffered by the Western Armenians were the result of the short sighted activities of the Armenian intelligentsia living in the Russian Empire. Leo severely condemned all demonstrations of the national-liberation movement against the Ottoman power and affirmed that in the years of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and after the war the Armenian intelligentsia turned to a blind weapon in the hands of the Russian imperialists, not realizing all the burdens of the consequences for the Turkish Armenians rising against the enormous state with its punishing machine and the units of volunteers from the Muslim tribes of Eastern Anatolia, who with the blessing of the Sublime Porte massacred the armless Armenians. According to Leo the Arme-

nian intelligentsia was not able to soberly evaluate the geopolitical situation and to please the Russians pushed their nation to insanity. In his delusion he went so far to blame the victims instead of the persecutors.

We should remark that the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and especially the Armenian question was severely tabooed in the 1920s and 1930s. In the Russian-Soviet historiography and the Armenian copied variants of it, the War was mostly presented as an expiration of Russian tsarism on the Balkans and the Near East covered under slogans for helping Christians and Balkan Slavs. In the Armenian historiography until World War II, it was forbidden to mention the heroes of the War of 1877 – 1878 and especially the Armenian generals of that epoch. Only after in Moscow praise, elevation and even the constitution of orders and medals named after A. Nevskij, A. Suvorov, F. Ušakov, M. Kutuzov and others were started, the Armenian historians were allowed to write about the Armenian generals and admirals in the Russian army. In the wartime the works of V. Parsamjan⁵, G. Ėičibekjan⁶ and Ch. Momdžjan⁷, devoted to the Armenian military leaders, were published. In 1945 – 1946 when the Soviet diplomacy initiated a political game related to the non-stated ally of Hitler-Germany, Turkey, a directive was issued to the Armenian historians to start working on the topic of the Armenian question. Besides that, in these years a wide-scale repatriation of Armenians was planned and to “sweeten the dish” it was allowed to speak openly on such a question which united all the Armenians in the world and bothered the thoughts of all classes of Armenians. After the genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the patricide of the Armenian nation, part of the Armenians who succeeded to escape the sword of the Young Turks settled in the Near East, Europe and USA. In 1946 the article of V. Parsamjan devoted to the Armenian question was published.⁸

The situation changed drastically after the death of Stalin and the beginning of Chruščëv's thaw. In the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s the work of the chairman of the Department of World History of Erevan State University Ch. Badaljan⁹ was published, in which he, using archive materials, press and memoirs, sought to demonstrate the appearance of the Armenian question as a subject of international diplomacy, thereby not forgetting to affirm loudly and determined that this question was already resolved because in Eastern Armenia the Soviet power and socialism had won. The author took this thesis from an article of Iosif Stalin, published in the communist newspaper “Pravda” on 4th of December 1920 i.e. five days after the forced Sovietization of Armenia. Concerning the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 the author repeated all prints and clichés of the official Soviet and Stalinist historiography, sometimes considering the desired as real and sometimes deliberately omitting important topics not even mentioning the commander in chief of the Caucasus front and what is most important he misrepresented the figures of prominent Armenian generals such as count M.T. Loris-Melikov, General-lieutenant A. Ter-Gukasov, General-major I. Lazarev and others. H. Badaljan, in the spirit of Soviet pseudo-internationalism, sought to represent the non-existing friendship of the Caucasus nations and their supposed common fight against the Turks.

A in a historiographical sense more balanced and precious work was published by academician M. Nersisjan.¹⁰ The author, on the basis of rich historical

sources and literature, briefly represented the course of the military actions on the Caucasus front and the role of the Armenian generals and volunteers in the war. Academician Nersisjan more objectively than Badaljan described the course of the war and tried to avoid Stalinist clichés and vulgar-sociological evaluations of the Russian policy on the Balkan and Caucasus and the activities of the Russian political figures and military leaders.

In the 1950s – 1960s the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 was covered by the “University manuals of the History of the Armenian Nation” in a proper volume. In the Soviet Armenian historiography the manual of modern and recent history for university students written by the professors V. Parsamjan and Š. Arutjunjan had a special place. The last reprint of this manual was issued in 1979.¹¹ With impartiality and historical authenticity the authors commented all the obstacles, reasons and motives of the war, especially emphasizing the liberating struggles of the Balkan nations and the role of these struggles for the development of the Armenian liberating movement. Of great scientific and cognitive value was the academic issue in six volumes “The History of the Armenian Nation” in which the Russo-Ottoman War, the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin of the Great powers were presented.¹² Up until now this publication is considered unique in regard to the quantity of the used sources and its bibliography.

In Soviet times the topic of the Russo-Ottoman War and the Armenian question were directly or indirectly addressed by prominent Armenian historians such as A.G. Oganisjan, R.P. Oganisjan, L. Huršudjan, Dž. Kirakosjan, G. Kazarjan and others. It should be noted that the Armenian historiography of the Soviet period addressed the topic of the struggles of the Balkan nations against the ‘Ottoman yoke’ and in this respect we should outline the work of A. Nersisjan¹³ in which the author on the basis of Russian and Bulgarian sources and bibliographies sought to demonstrate the reasons and motives of the Bulgarian uprising in 1876, the reaction of the Russian official circles and intelligentsia emphasizing the great influence of this heroic event on the thoughts and aspirations of the Armenians.

Post-Soviet historiography

By achieving independence in 1991 the first task to be done in historical science and in all spheres of humanities in Armenia was freeing them from Soviet ideological prints and clichés. The foundation of the newest historiography coincided with the Karabakh-movement and the new rise of the national liberation-movement. The reconsideration of many periods and events in the Armenian history became the main task of the newest historiography. We should especially point out the fact that from the events of the modern and recent history quite naturally most of all researched topics were related to the Armenian question and the genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

Not earlier than during the last years, together with the above mentioned topics, also not so important topics started to develop. We should note that the topic interesting to us, the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, was more generally represented in the new manuals of the “History of the Armenian Nation”. We mean the school and university text books. The new achievements of the modern Armenian historiography are well reflected in the last editions of the manual of the “History of

the Armenian Nation” developed by a collective of authors from the Erevan State University.¹⁴ It is already ready for printing the corresponding volume from the six-volume academic edition of the “History of the Armenian Nation”, in which, according to the words of the authors and editors, the topic of the War of 1877 – 1878 is extensively and deeply represented.

Among the biggest achievements of the post-Soviet Armenian historiography we should outline the cardinal work of the academician H. Avetisjan “Armenian generals in the Russian army (1873 – 1917)”¹⁵ in which he portrays more than 150 Armenian generals, whose heroism and gratuitous service to the Russian arms were deliberately erased from the national memory. Academician Avetisjan with impressive historical scrupulosity and authenticity presents such prominent Armenian military-leaders and heroes of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 such as count M.T. Loris-Melikov and the Generals A. Ter-Gukasov and I. Lazarev. In the last years the young Armenian historian V. Krbekyan published a book about the “Participation of Armenians in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878”.¹⁶ He presents the role and the contribution of the Armenian officers in the Russian Army as well as the situation of the Armenian civil population during the war.

To summarize our brief article we should note that the Armenian historiography about the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, regardless of the considerable achievements, needs a new reconsideration and evaluation of the events which played such an important role for the destiny of the Armenian nation.

¹ Николайос Адонц, К решению Армянского вопроса [At the solution of the Armenian question / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1989, 3.

² Ibid., 4.

³ Ibid., 10.

⁴ Шмавон Р. Арутюнян, Развитие исторической науки в Советской Армении (1920 – 1963 гг.) [The development of historical sciences in Soviet Armenia (1920 – 1963) / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1967, 302.

⁵ Вардан Парсамян, Генерал-лейтенант А. Тер-Гукасов [General-lieutenant A. Ter-Gukasov / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1942; The same, Генерал В. Бейбутов [General V. Bejbutov / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1943.

⁶ Геворг Элчибекян, Генерал Лорис-Меликов [General Loris-Melikov / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1943; The same, Генерал-майор Шелковников [General-Major Šelkovnikov / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1944.

⁷ Хачик Момджян, Генерал-адъютант И. Лазарев [General-adjutant I. Lazarev / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1943.

⁸ Вардан Парсамян, Исторические пути развития армянского вопроса до Берлинского конгресса [Historical paths of development of the Armenian question until the Congress of Berlin / in Armenian language], «Известия» Академии наук Арм.ССР, 11-12, Ереван, 1946.

⁹ Хачатур Бадалян, Армянский вопрос в Сан-Стефанском договоре и Берлинском Конгрессе в 1878 г. [The Armenian question in the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin in 1878 / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1955; The same, Армения в Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг [Armenia in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1959; The same, Из истории совместной борьбы народов Закавказья против Турции и западных колонизаторов во второй половине XIX века

[From the history of the common struggle of the people of the Southern Caucasus against Turkey and the Western colonizers in the second half of the 19th century], «Известия» Академии наук Арм.ССР, 2, Ереван, 1961.

¹⁰ Мкртич Нерсисян, Участие армян в Русско-Турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. [The Participation of Armenians in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878] / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1958.

¹¹ Шмавон Р. Арутюнян; Вардан Парсаян, История армянского народа (1801 – 1978 гг.) [The History of the Armenian Nation (1801 – 1978) / in Armenian language], Ереван, 1979, 214-224.

¹² История армянского народа [The History of the Armenian Nation / in Armenian language], изд. АН АрмССР, Ереван, 1981, VI, 97-123.

¹³ Андраник Нерсисян, Борьба болгарского народа против османского ига (1876 – 1878 гг.) [The Struggle of the Bulgarian Nation against the Ottoman Yoke (1876 – 1878)], изд. ЕрГУ, Ереван, 1976.

¹⁴ История армянского народа [The History of the Armenian Nation / in Armenian language], под ред. Профессора Гранта Симоняна, Учебник для ВУЗ-ов, Ереван, 2012, 338-350.

¹⁵ Грант Аветисян, Армянские генералы Российской армии (1873 – 1917 гг.) [Armenian generals in the Russian army (1873 – 1917)], Ереван, 2002.

¹⁶ Ваагн Геворкович Крбемян, Участие армян в русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 годов [The Participation of Armenians in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878)], Ереван, Антарес, 2004.

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Georgian Memory Culture of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878)

Abstract: *The way society is building its current existence and the way it will be in the future largely depends on apprehending the past cultural experience, which is the main prerequisite of the ethnical identity. In the course of the total globalization and a problem of the national identity and in the context of the redrawing of the political map of the modern Europe, realization of the socio-humanitarian memorial paradigm, reconsideration of the own cultural memory, reconsideration of the own totalitarian past contributes to the democratization process, sustains building of the active and responsible civil society. The analysis of the Georgian historiography, political newspapers, archive materials, and fiction related to the Russo-Ottoman War witness dramatic changes in the memory culture. After Ajara reunited with Georgia a long period of intensive ruin of stereotypes began: first as part of the Russian Empire, then at the time of the revolution, the Soviet and post-Soviet period. Although the material traces of the war memory are not well preserved in Georgia, the wound of Muhajirism still remains in certain families, and 'the image of the enemy' as reflected in the Georgian folklore and language is still in power.*

Background

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 had a huge impact and in the 1870s it was in the center of the attention of the world. The result of this war changed the geopolitical reality in Europe and Asia: Tsarist Russia gained back the lost position on the political stage, new countries like Serbia, Montenegro and others emerged and Russia conquered and appended both Georgian and Armenian provinces that had been part of the Ottoman Empire.

It is clear that the countries participating in the warfare had their own goals and reasons. Russia was seeking to gain the access to the Mediterranean Sea and to conquer the Balkan Peninsula. The Ottomans on the other hand were planning to eliminate ongoing uprisings and started an offensive against Russia which turned out to be as successful as the one in Crimea.

Despite the fact that the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 has been studied for more than hundred years, it was always presented from only one point of view. For example, in the former Soviet historiography the biggest attention was dedicated to Russia's wish of gaining back Georgian and Armenian provinces from Ottoman rule and the imperial and concurring politics of Tsarism were almost ignored. When in fact the warfare from the both sides was mainly concurring and unjustified, these elements were neglected in historiography. Considering that, a new approach and research of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 is very important.

Historiographical periodization

The studying of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 began right after the end of it. The researchers never considered their historical and political biases though. The issue of the war was constantly discussed during the Tsarist period in Russia. On the early stages the Soviet historiography lost interest in the topic because of the improved political relations between Lenin and Atatürk. By the end of the 1930s and the 1940s the topic became timely one more time. Stalin's propaganda was working in order to bring the idea of gaining back the Georgian and Armenian provinces from the Turks. After Georgia gained independence from the Soviet Union, Turkey wasn't considered a historical enemy anymore. An ideological war against Russia was launched. A number of monuments dedicated to the warfare were destroyed.

Considering the cultural memory of the war we think that a periodization of the research should be conducted in certain timelines and subcategories:

- I. 1878 – 1918 – Historiography in period of Tsarism
- II. 1918 – 1921 – Historiography in the period of democratic Georgia
- III. 1921 – 1991 – Historiography in the period of the Soviet era
 - a) 1922 – 1935 – Historiography of the improved relations between the USSR and Turkey
 - b) 1935 – 1940s – Historiography of the Stalin's Soviet period
 - c) 1940s – 1991 – Historiography of the Soviet Union dissolution period
- IV. 1991 – 2012 – Historiography of modern, independent Georgia
 1. Social, economic, and political situation in Caucasus before the war.
 2. Intergovernmental relations between the countries participating in the war.
 3. Importance of the Caucasus. The interest of the fighting sides in the Caucasus.

The Balkan front

The warfare began on two fronts – the Balkans and the Caucasus. By that time, the Ottoman army enlisted 450,000 soldiers. 338,000 were stationed on the Balkan front and only 70,000 in the Caucasus. In April 1877 the Russian army had crossed the river Prut and entered the territory of Romania. In May and June 1877, after fierce fighting, the Russians and Bulgarian forces managed to cross the river Danube. Afterwards, the Russian army was divided into three parts: the corps of general Gurko had to cross the Balkan mountain and in the area of Adrianople Rus-

sians started offensive from the rear against the Ottoman army. The corps of the general Crider had to operate on the right flank of the Russian army and capture an important height – Levba. The corps of the heir to the throne Aleksandr had to operate on the left flank of the Russian army and capture the height Ruse.

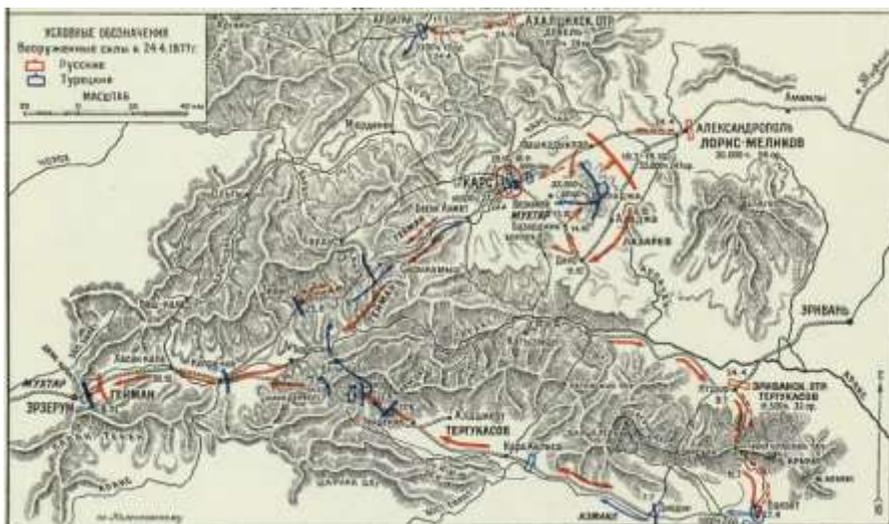
The warfare was going in favor of the Russian army. The corps of general Gurko held the old capital Tărnovo. In the summer of 1877 the Ottoman army led by Süleyman Paşa began an unsuccessful offensive against the Russians stationed on the mountain pass of Şipka. Everything went to worse in November of 1877 when the commanders of the Pleven garrison capitulated. The loss of Pleven had a huge impact on the war. In January, 1878 the corps of Gurko captured Sofia. In two days general Gurko defeated the Ottomans near Philippople. The second corps of the Russian army captured Adrianople on January 8th, 1878.

The Caucasus front

The Georgians hoped that by the war Ajara and the whole southwestern parts of Georgia would be reunited with the country. That was the reason Georgians volunteered as a militia to fight for their lands.

The warfare in the Caucasus started on April 30th, 1877. The same year, Russian captured Beyazit and Ardahan. They did not use the advantageous moment and instead of starting offensive towards Batumi, the army moved in the direction of Kars. Although, they started offensive towards Batumi from Ozurgeti, the moment was lost. Russians failed to capture Kars, the siege took more time than planned. Ottomans used the time to regroup and mobilize the army. The Russian army realized its mistake and began offensive towards Erzurum. But again they were late and the moment of surprise was lost.

In 1877 the Ottomans crashed the Russian army, who started their offensive



Atlas of Maps and Charts of Russian Military History, L. Beskrovny, USSR military edition, 1946

from Yerevan in direction of Beyazit. After the defeat in the battle for Zivin on June 25th, 1877 the Russians left the positions they captured in the beginning of the war. Before June-September of 1877 the Russian army was in a difficult situation. They were defeated in battles in Ajara, Abkhazia. In 1877, the Ottomans deployed the troops near Gudauta and started their offensive in direction of Sokhumi. The Russians left the city without a fight. The Turkish army had captured almost the half of Abkhazia by that time. Russian commanders have sent additional forces led by General Iakob Alkhazishvili (1826 – 1896). The critical battle took place near Sokhumi where the Russian forces with the help of the Georgian militia crushed the Ottoman army. On September 2nd, 1877 the Russian troops captured Sokhumi. Soon enough the Ottomans had to leave Abkhazia.

After this battle the situation drastically changed. The initiative was on the Russians side and they began their offensive in direction of Erzurum-Kars. On November 18th, with the help of the Georgian militia, they captured Kars, which was considered as a huge defeat of the Turks. In December 1877 they captured Khertvisi and starting moving in direction of Batumi. Before considering the situation Ajarian Begs were hesitating to join the fight. In this situation, the Beg of Zemo Ajara [Upper Ajara], Sherif Khimshiashvili asked the Russians to enter Ajara, which they immediately did by sending troops from Akhaltsikhe.¹

The success of the Russians agitated the European countries. They suggested the Sultan to make an agreement with Russia. Not to worsen the relations with European countries, Aleksandr II agreed with the Sultan's request and on January 19th (31), 1878 both sides signed a temporary pact in Adrianople.

The Russo-Ottoman War in Georgian historiography

The history of the research of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 counts more than hundred years. This war has drastically changed the geopolitical situation in Europe. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the national liberation movement on the Balkans was the cornerstone in the creation of new countries in Europe.

The details and aspects of the war were always presented in historiography with different spectrum. On the one hand it was considered as a liberation movement (Bulgaria) and even today it is referred to as a 'war for Christianity', on the other hand others considered it as an aggression from the Russians. This dual approach to the topic was also evoked by ideology. All the researches were lacking complexity. For the liberated Slavic countries this war was no doubt a 'saint war', as for the Russian and Ottoman Empires – it was a demonstration of their imperial strength and politics.

A lot of scientific works have been published about the war. These are chronicles of the war, witness's diaries, and other scientific researches. It must be mentioned that a lot of materials were gathered by Russian historiographers during Tsarism. Remarkable is the one published by the Department of the General Staff of Russia: "Описание Русско-турецкой войны 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полуострове" [Description of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula]², which was complimented by other publication: "Атлас карт, планов и схем к описанию Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полу-

острове” [Atlas of maps, layouts, and plans for description of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula].³

The Military historical commission has done archeographic works and published a collection “Сборник материалов по Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полуострове” [Collection of the Material on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula].⁴ This collection contains all the documents, warfare journals, reports that were used by the general staff and other units. All the works mentioned above mainly cover the warfare topics and offer little information about the diplomatic relations or about the liberation movement of the South Slavic people.

In the 19th century Georgia was a colony of Tsarist Russia. The country was in favor of the national liberation movements on the Balkan Peninsula, besides, this war was considered as a chance to take back the historical Georgian territories from Ottoman rule. In religious sense this war was also considered a ‘war for Christianity’.

The first work covering the warfare in the Caucasus was published by the same historical military commission and was titled: “Сборник материалов по Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Кавказско-Малоазиатском театре” [Collection of the Material on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Military Arena of the Caucasus and Asia Minor].⁵ Unfortunately, this collection covered only warfare aspects, whereas other crucial issues like the attitudes of the Georgian society or other war-related ones were simply ignored.

Despite the importance of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 to Georgia, we do not have monographs which would describe in detail the role of the Georgians in the warfare on the Balkan and Caucasus front, which would enable analyzing the attitude of the Georgian society to the war and Muhajirism (the migration of the Muslims), and other important issues. In their researches the historians were mainly covering the pre-war processes in Southwest Georgia and only touched after-war topics (Muhajirism and others). For example, we find brief information about the participation of the Georgians on the Balkan front. Even the article of Aleksandre Bendianashvili as a part of the fundamental collection of the Georgian history, dedicated to the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878), does not entirely cover all the aspects of the involvement of the Georgians in this campaign.⁶

Considering this, the best work that has been published yet can be considered the publications of Shamshe Megrelidze: “Liberation of Ajara from Turkish ruling”, “From the history of the South-West Georgia”, “From the past of Ajara (Muhajirism 1878 – 1882)”, “Georgia in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1877”, “Transcaucasia in the history of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878”, “Georgia in the Eastern wars”. In his works, Megrelidze mainly describes the attitude of the Georgian society to the war of 1877 – 1878, the warfare on Caucasus front, peace negotiations, and other issues.

Many dissertations were written on the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, some of them are worth to be mentioned:

1. Mamuka Gogitidze – “Georgian officers in the army of the Russian Empire in the XVIII and the beginning of the XIX century” (Tbilisi, 2006). In general, it presents biographies of some Georgian generals who were on duty in the

- army of the Russian Empire in the period of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878.
2. Ivane Urushadze – “Georgia and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878” (Tbilisi, 1947). The thesis analyses the attitude of the Georgian society towards the war.
 3. Giorgi Khokhlenko – “The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and the fight for liberation of South-West Georgia” (Tbilisi, 1953). The thesis covers the topic of the peripety of the battles in Southwest Georgia and the liberation of Ajara.
 4. Mikheil Mikadze – “South Georgia in the 1830 – 1870s” (Tbilisi, 1990). The dissertation briefly covers the war of 1877 – 1878 between Russia and Turkey.
 5. Nugzar Moseshvili – “Georgian army in the 19th century and their part in the Russo-Ottoman Wars” (Tbilisi, 1998). The work describes the role of the Georgian militia on the Caucasus front. The same topic is covered by the work of Khatuna Todadze – “Militia in the XIX century” (Tbilisi, 2005).
 6. Zaza Tsurtsunia – “Abkhazia in the Russo-Ottoman relations (late 19th century, first quarter of the 20th century)” (Tbilisi, 2009). The dissertation describes one of the regions of West Georgia, namely the removal of the Abkhazia’s principality and the Muhajirism of Abkhazians during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 in Abkhazia.
 7. Zurab Chitadze – “The liberation of Ajara from the Turkish-Ottoman rule and the Russian governance” (Tbilisi 1978). The thesis describes the battles in Ajara and the Congress of Berlin.
 8. Madona Gogitidze – “The Ottoman Empire and Russia’s eastern politics at the end of the 19th century” (Tbilisi, 2004). The dissertation describes the Russo-Ottoman confrontations during the tsarist period.
 9. Djumber Vardmanidze – “The Muhajirism in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Ajara” (Tbilisi, 2002). It describes the migration processes from Georgia to the Ottoman Empire in the 1830 – 1880s and also the role of Russia and Turkey in Muhajirism.
 10. Alexandre Chkhaidze – “Ajara in the middle of the 19th century” (Batumi, 2006). The thesis describes the pre-war period in the region.

The attitude of the Georgian society towards the Russo-Ottoman War was better revealed in the press published in the 19th century. For example in the letter of Niko Nikoladze, published in the newspaper “Droeba” [Time] with the title “Georgia – if the war will start”, the author writes: “If the war starts in the East, it won’t stay between the Russian and Ottoman Empires... Ottoman supporters in Europe will join and the war will cover the whole Europe... Our country will have a huge strategic and political importance in the war of the East. By Georgia Russians could gain direct access to the Ottomans...”¹³

The position of Nikoladze about the war was clear, he writes: “The name of our country, prosperity and future depends on our deeds. Let us not shame our name... Let us not hide in the burrow. Our wise, righteous, and fair deeds will glorify the name of Georgia, and we should prove to our enemies and our friends that our people deserve love, respect, and prosperity.”¹⁴

The beginning of the war and the attitude of the society to the war was also presented in the newspaper 'Iveria': "We too have to take the swords in our hands and bleed together with our brothers".¹⁵ The quoted parts of the letters present the prevailing attitude of the Georgians to the war in that period. It is a fact, that the publishing of the warfare news in the newspapers increased the national identity of the Georgians.

The results of the war

Later on February 19th near Istanbul, the San Stefano treaty was signed stating that Serbia, Montenegro and Romania would become independent countries; Bulgaria would unite Macedonia and stay an autonomous part of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman army had to leave Bulgaria and destroy all the fortresses. Despite the fact that Bulgaria stayed within the Ottoman Empire until 1908, Bulgarians managed to govern the country with a sort of independence. As a result of the war, the ethnical cleansing of the Muslims from the Balkans and Caucasus began.

The same pact gave Southern Bessarabia to Russia. As for the Caucasus, Ardahan, Kars, Beyazit and Ajara including Batumi became part of the Russian Empire.

Muhajirism

Muhajirism, the migration of local Muslim populations to the Ottoman Empire, was the logical continuation of the 19th century Russo-Ottoman Wars. Poor economic conditions and the policy of the Tsar resulted with the mass migration of the local population to the territories of the Ottoman Empire. Muhajirism included the people from Caucasus region (Abazins, Circassians, Ubykh, Ossetians, Abkhazians and others) including the Muslims living in the southwestern part of Georgia.

Both, the Russian and Ottoman Empires were using this situation in their favor. Namely, the Ottomans were trying to settle these Muhajirs in non-habitable territories of the Empire. The Russians on their behalf were using the freed territories for mass Slavic colonization. We have to mention that the idea of Muhajirism was supported mainly by the higher social class of the Muslims. In order not to lose their social and political privileges, they supported mass migration; they expected they would preserve them in the new lands. In addition to that, the Turkish emissary was spreading the idea that because of the same religion the migrated people would be offered better living conditions.

Muhajirism in Upper Georgia scaled after the war of 1877 – 1878. Two main stages of Muhajirism existed: 1) The period of Muhajirism conditioned by the Treaty of San Stefano 2) The period conditioned by the Pact of Constantinople in 1879. Thereby, the official dates of Muhajirism from the Georgian provinces span from 1879 to 1882. As a result of Muhajirism, the canyon of Murghuli got almost empty; a lot of people have migrated from Guria, Gonio district, the Zemo Ajara. Unfortunately, we do not possess official data that would show the number of people who left the country and moved to the territory of Turkey.

The same situation was in Abkhazia, where during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, approximately 50,000 had to leave. As a result, most of the territories were deserted. The majority moved and still lives on the territory of Turkey;

some of them live in Jordan and Syria. The migration of the Muslims to Turkey was unprepared and disorganized. As usual they were transported by ships from the Black Sea ports or with the carriages by land. A lot of them died during the journey from hunger, diseases and other factors. The Turkish government assigned poor lands to them; many of them were left without land or house to live in. Soon enough they realized their mistake and tried to return to the homeland; however the Russian government denied them entry permit.¹⁶

The Georgian society immediately started a fight against Muhajirism. For the return of some Muhajirs to the homeland a lot was done by G. Tsereteli, S. Meskhi, G. Gurieli and others. After that the process slowed down and part of the Muhajirs managed to get back to their homeland. Some of them settled on the Black Sea shore (territory of Chaneti), on the shore of the Marmara Sea, Istanbul and other cities. Part of them kept their native language and maintained some of their traditions.

Archives

Materials considering the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, are richly preserved in the archives. The majority of data is kept in the archives of Russia, the Balkan countries, Turkey and other countries involved in the warfare. As for Georgia, little data is maintained within the country's archives. The reason is that by the time of the conflict, Georgia was a part of the Russian Empire, and most of the materials were sent to St. Petersburg. By agreement, made after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878, all the archive data had to remain in Batumi; however, the Ottomans neglected that agreement and most of the archive was taken by them, the rest was sent to St. Petersburg. This is the main reason why the national archives of Georgia contain so few documents about the conflict. Though, there is still some information preserved that is of great value to us. The documents about the Russo-Ottoman War are preserved in the funds 17 and 1087 of the national archive of Georgia in Tbilisi. Most of them represent the correspondence to the military echelon about the situation on the Turkish front (Fund 1087, abstract 1, case 545). A document describes the offensive of the Russian army towards the direction of Buga-Tapak-Kars. It indicates that General Devel had seven battalions under his command. It also mentions that the Ajarians were planning to start an offensive against the Turks in the direction of Akhaltsikhe.

In the same archive the letters of Chavchavadze himself to General-adjutant Loris Melikov were preserved. One of the letters is dated with May 14th, 1877. It describes the armory of the enemy, it is mentioned that only light equipment and arms could be transported on the local roads, that the weather worsened and that the Russians would not be able to transport equipment by carriages. Certain rumors were spread in order to scare and psychologically pressure the enemy (in some cases these rumors had a ground).

The same archive contains fund materials for publishing a history of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. It focused on the battles that took place on the Eastern shore of the Black Sea, where the divisions of Enguri and Marukhi were presented. According to these materials, the Enguri division was formed on the basis of the Kutaisi and Sokhumi divisions. It also describes the military operations

in Kobuleti which had a significant impact on the general success of the Russian forces. It states that in case of failure it would be necessary to increase the defensive forces along the border of the Guria region. The materials also describe the battles that took place in Tsikhisdziri and Sokhumi, about Muhajirs, and about the capture of Mokvi and Kvitauri settlements by Abkhazians.

Among the documents we found the history of the 14th Georgian regiment of the grenadiers¹⁷, 1st Caucasus grenadiers regiment's, and the 19th ground force unit's participation in the military actions¹⁸; correspondence between the military staff and the government about the necessity of supporting the families of deceased soldiers. The document states that an organization was established to help the families of the deceased soldiers and the amount of the raised money was also mentioned¹⁹.

There are more materials about the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 78 in the National archive of Georgia, such as: maps, layouts, plans²⁰, also a temporary statute of governance of Batumi, which at that time was divided into: one – seaport Batumi, and three districts of Batumi, Artvin, and Ajara.²¹ From the same documents, we discovered that the Russian side was considerate of the Ottoman way of ruling that is why two types of courts (majlises) were established: imperial and local.²²

It is important to mention that the Russian Empire started its colonization of newly obtained territories right after the Muhajir movement began. In the correspondence of General-adjutant Svjatopolk-Mirskij we found:

“The Muhajir movement is of great importance to us in the sense of creating stronger border with the Turks and improving our political situation in the Caucasus region... And for that we should: 1. Not prevent (in direct or indirect way) the Muslims from migrating to Turkey; 2. The property left by the Muhajirs must be transferred in possession of the government... even if expenses will reach a million, it is worth of it. The most important is to enhance the settlements with Russians, otherwise we can forget about populating the Caucasus with Russian people. It is of political, economic and military importance. Populating the area with Russians will lead the locals to willingly move to Turkey.”²³

Indeed, soon new Russian colonies were established in the region: Smekalovka, near Kobuleti (in the name of the General-governor Smekalov), Komarovka (in the name of the first governor of Batumi region Komarov), Romanovka, Cholodnaja Sloboda (nowadays – Boni), Stepanovka, Gorodok, Alekseevka and others. Nowadays, in the area of river Čoroči, we find toponyms such as Sinicyn, Bikov, Sacharov and others.

After the Russo-Ottoman War, Ajara was under the governance of the Kutaisi province. That is why we found some information about the war in the national archive of Kutaisi. The documents show that Georgians were well aware of the new political situation and paid attention to the necessity of reuniting with the motherland. One of the documents states: “No matter what was the reason of the war, it was necessary and of a big importance to Georgia.”²⁴ The Kutaisi National Archive preserved some remarkable documents that have never been researched, namely the so-called “military service list”. It describes some of the servicemen that were on active duty during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878.

Giorgi Agiashvili – captain of cavalry of the Caucasus military region life-guards; born in 1831; participated in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1853 – 1856 (Crimea) and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878; on September, 13th received the rang of junker (cadet), in 1861 – warrant officer, in 1868 – the rang of second lieutenant and was transferred to the life-guards; he was married to a noble man's daughter Natalia Dadiani, with whom he had two children – a boy and a girl: Nikoloz and Elizaveta; for his courage he was awarded with the 4th degree order of St. Vladimir bronze medal.²⁵

Levan Chichua – staff captain; born on April 16th, 1847; he studied in the Kutaisi gymnasium and Tbilisi cadet school; he participated in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878; he was wounded in a battle and was sent for recovery to the hospital of the 12th military unit; for his courage he was awarded with the 4th degree order of St. Valentin, bronze medal - on August 25th, 1877.²⁶

Ivane Gotsiridze – captain; born on February the 8th, 1943; he studied in a private school; on 5th of December 1864 he was granted the rang of non-commissioned officer for good scores in military studies, in 1866 he was promoted to the rang of junker (cadet); in 1877 he was transferred to the second headquarter of Guria; on November 26th 1877, for his courage in the battles against the Ottomans he was awarded with the third degree order of St. Stanislav and a sword; later he was assigned as a commander of company; he participated in the battles of Mukhaestate, Khutsubani; during his service he was in contact with the general-lieutenant Oklobjho, General-major Djanibekov, and the colonel of the general headquarters Kazbegi and others.²⁷

The Kutaisi State Archive also contains documents covering the rivalry between Russia and Turkey before and after the war. One of the documents states that the Ottoman crewing bureau in Batumi had misappropriated the real estate which was in the possession of the customs at that time. In a document the ex-governor of Batumi, Mahmut Ağa, expressed his disappointment on the fact that the local police had detained the property of the Turks; after the Russian forces had been deployed to the area, all the property of the Turks was confiscated and transferred to Russians.²⁸

We found a few materials concerning the Russo-Ottoman War in the national archive of Ajara. However, some materials which directly or indirectly are related to that topic could be found in the British collection.²⁹ The third part of the first volume of copies covers the historical period dating 1853 – 1877 and is mainly about the Crimean war. We find the reports of the Consul of Bagdad and the political agent of Arabic countries H. Roulinson, A. Ketguard, Simons and Polgreavs. They discussed mainly the economic and political situation of Batumi and Ajara. The fourth part of the first volume covers the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 78. The reports belong to H. Layard, who on his behalf discussed the letters of Dickson, Campbell, colonel Lenocks, captain Pipe, Grandphil, and the vice-consul Dephus. Documents concerning the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin can be also found.

Archive materials, press articles, and also folklore tales speak about the efforts of the Turks to use the local Islamic forces to prevent Ajara from reuniting with Georgia. According to the document³⁰ the local pro-Turkish forces were armed with

axes and knives and threatened the Russians that they would defend their land till the last drop of their blood and that the Turkish forces would back them up.³¹

Ottoman propaganda declared the patriot Sherif Khimshiashvili a traitor. Afterwards, they organized a small armed force of local pro-Turkish residents led by Derviş Paşa. They burned down the property of Khimshiashvili. A telegram sent by Svjatopolk-Mirskij to the headquarters, stated: "There are riots in Ajara, Ajarians have destroyed the house of Sherif Khimshiashvili". Later, when the people of the local force found out about the real plans of the Ottomans, they turned back to help Sherif Khimshiashvili.³²

In the first volume of the Fund i-83³³ we found a letter of vice-consul Gardner dated with September 2nd, 1878. It was addressed to Solsberg who received it on September 27th of the same year. It described certain events of the war, namely: "Dear sir, I'm honored to inform you that 15 cannons have been unloaded on the bank of the river Rioni. They will be transported further to arm the battery which is located about 5 miles to Poti. Short railroad has been installed between the port and the city." The Turkish troops that have been located near the river had been given an order to move in direction to Tsikhisdziri and Batumi. They had to help in loading the arms and equipment on to the ships in the port.

Neid Paşa and Hasan Beg had stayed for an additional day in Kutaisi and were discussing the issue of the evacuation from Batumi, which had to be handed to the Russians on the 7th day of the month, but later the dates were changed to the 12th/24th. The Russian corvette currently lied out and was ready to enter the port on the deadline. They thought that there would be no resistance. The majority of the Laz people had already moved from the river Čoroči area to the Turkish territory. The head of the railway had ordered to prepare the carriages for transportation of 5,000 troops from Tbilisi to Poti. In the case Batumi got yielded, four battalions, stationed in camps, would be dislocated to Odessa and Sevastopol.³⁴

On September 7th 1878 Gardner in his letter to Solsberg wrote that on the one year anniversary of the Emperor's wedding the city of Batumi was formally taken over. After 20 fires of volley the Turkish flag went down with no incidents, and on the 21st fire of volley the Russian flag had been risen up. Gardner also described the terrible economic situation of the city, namely the Russians witnessed poverty and famine. That is why he requested the sending of provisions immediately. Several projects were presented for connecting Tbilisi, Poti and Batumi with the railroad. Despite the fact that the railway through Borjomi from Tbilisi to Batumi was expensive and complicated, it was favored by the headquarters.³⁵

British documents commented the returning of Ajara to Georgia. They also described the negative sides of this fact, namely, a lot of people were exiled from the old Georgian regions. Population, targeted for exile, were Ajarians, Laz people, and other ethnic groups of Georgians, also Abkhazians, and population from the North Caucasus. The issue of the Laz people was discussed more thoroughly. The issue was also discussed on the Berlin congress. The British were against the reunification of Batumi with Georgia since the Russians would get control of it. That is why they suggested a Lazistan khanate to be established. It seems that they intended to use the Laz people against the Russians.³⁶

In the letter, dating August 21st, 1878, which was addressed to marquis Solsberg, we found out that the Turks were in favor of moving the native population to the Turkish territory. Derviş Paşa ordered to inform the local people that the Russians will enter Batumi on the 27th, and the ones who wanted to emigrate had to do that before it. It was suggested that ships should be used for transportation of the emigrants and their belongings.³⁷ After the defeat of the Turks local population believed that if some people did not want to migrate at this stage, they would be able to do that any time for the next three years. Before the migration they would stay under the control of the Russians. Turkish agents were actively working to assist the Muhajirs. This is the time when the Ottomans still believed that with the help of the Britain they would gain back the territories that were lost during the war. A document of September 18th stipulated that Batumi was ready for evacuation, the Russian army was stationed in Tsikhisdziri, and that they were planning to enter Artvin.³⁸ According to the document Ali Paşa insisted that the Russians were forcing Ajarians and Laz people to migrate to Turkish territories, on the other hand, the Turkish consul thought that Russians were asking them to stay where they were.³⁹ The fact is that the migration of the locals to Turkish territories was advantageous for the both sides: The Russians would gain free land for colonization and the Turks would populate unsettled territories with people hostile to Russians to be used in future conflicts.

In a letter the general adjutant Svjatopolk-Mirskij wrote:

“Muhajir movement is of great importance in terms of creating stronger border with the Turks and improving our political situation in the Caucasus region... And for that:

1. We should not prevent (in direct or indirect way) Muslims from migrating to Turkey.
2. The property left by the Muhajirs must be transferred in possession of the government.

The most crucial thing is to enhance the settlements with Russians, otherwise we can forget about populating the Caucasus with the Russian people. It is pity that rich lands of Akhaltsikhe and Alexandrepoli were populated not by Russians, but by Armenians, Greeks, and migrants from Turkey. Mistakes like that should not be forgiven. All we know how advantageous would be if we had Russians settled in different parts of the Caucasus. It is of great political, economic and military importance.

The population should be formed under the principle of religion and it should be Christian. The majority must be represented by Russians. The existence of Russian settlements will make Turks to migrate to Turkey. For consideration, on the first stage, 18,000 Russians could be settled, also Greeks and Armenians evenly, but not exceeding 6,000 people.”⁴⁰

According to archive documents, the loss of Georgian provinces and the defeat in the war with Russia was a tragedy for Yusuf Paşa, the governor of Trabzon. He left the city of Batumi the day before it was ought to be handed over to the Russians. “I would become ill if I have to stay in the city for few more days”, said the Governor.⁴¹

The British had a very practical approach to the idea of Muhajirism. The creation of a Lazistan khanate was supposed to stop handing over Batumi to the Russians. Also, the great-power policy of Russia towards newly occupied territories was obvious.

In the national archive of Ajara we found documents describing the history of the relationship between Bulgaria and Georgia. Georgian nationals participated in the fight for independence of Bulgaria. Alexandre Tsereteli for example held the post of secretary of the general consul of Russia in Bulgaria. During the time of the uprising in Bulgaria in 1876, Tsereteli was appointed the vice-consul in Plovdiv, and during the war he was actively participating in the warfare. Later, because of his achievements, a street in Plovdiv was named after his name and one of the villages near the city as well.⁴²

We also found information about the volunteers who fought on the side of the Bulgarian patriots, and about the bravery of Chavchavadze, Amilakhvari, Chkheidze, Natishvili, Phanchulidze, Kavtaradze, Tumanishvili, Gurieli, Gogvadze, Egadze, Shaverdnadze, Tavartkiladze, and others.⁴³ Under the leadership of Aleksandre Imeretinski (Bagrationi) several towns were freed from Turkish occupation. He contributed a lot to the liberation of the town of Plevna. In Loveč a statue was built in his honor, and one of the main streets was named after him.⁴⁴

In the archive of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, we found materials that were used for publishing the journal "Батум и еро окрестности" [Batumi and its suburbs]. It was issued to celebrate the 25th anniversary of handing over Batumi back to Georgia.⁴⁵

The Russo-Ottoman War and its aftereffects

At the time when the city of Batumi was reunited with its motherland Georgia, there were no secular Georgian language schools at all in the southwestern part of the country. In the schools of the other parts of the country the war was taught as an example of the Russian military superiority. Reuniting Ajara with Georgia was important for both Russia and Georgia. The same ideas were presented in all the textbooks that were published in the Soviet period. They stated that Georgia got united because of the victory of Russia over Turkey and how important this victory was for the country. However, many factors that made the victory of the Russian over the Ottoman Empire possible were ignored. Namely the heroism and the contribution of the Georgian military forces in the warfare; the popular anti-Ottoman movement in the country, Ajarians refused to join the Ottoman army and started a fight for independence instead. These aspects were corrected in the post-Soviet publications. Also, the two points of view on the war – Russian Empire trying to extend its borders and the reunion of Ajara with the motherland Georgia were separated.

Alternative Form of Memory

Apart from the institutionalized war memory, alternative forms of memory were voiced. In some parts of Southwest Georgia, people still hold a traumatic memory about both the Ottoman rule and the tragic events of the war. In the collective memory the war and its consequences were also perceived as a tragedy. The

Soviets were implementing a policy to shape the collective memory in a way that would represent Turkey as an 'enemy'. On the anniversaries dedicated to the union of Ajara with Georgia the past separation was always reminded to form a national identity hostile to Turkey.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union the policy of Georgia towards neighboring Turkey drastically changed but the collective memory for the period of the Ottoman rule is still associated with tragedy and suffering. It is well known that by using economic pressure the Ottomans have managed to convert part of the population of Ajara to Islam. For the Georgians, Islam was associated with the Tatars, who on their behalf were associated with cruelty, as Georgia had always to defend itself against Muslim aggression. Before, during and after the war, the population of Ajara was also branded with this term. Despite the fact that the population of Ajara became Muslim (although ethnically Georgian), the Turks did not accept them as their own. Russians were not considering them as Georgians and simply labeled them with the insulting term 'Tatars'. The Georgian Muslims considered themselves insulted. The situation did not change even after creation of the Soviet Union. Namely, during the first register of the population in the USSR, the Ajarians were considered as a different ethnos from the Georgians. Even today we witness some cases of relict of this type of attitude towards them. The similar attitude resulted with Muhajirism, when part of Muslim Ajarians migrated to the provinces in Turkey. It is obvious that the Russians were in favor of this fact. They had a chance to populate the emptied lands with people they preferred. The Turks on the other hand had ethnic Georgians who would populate unsettled territories and would have a negative attitude towards the Russians. We have to consider the memory of the Muhajirs as a form of an alternative memory. Nowadays, Muhajirs consider living on the territory of Turkey as something natural, which could be explained by the lack of knowledge of historical events that happened in that period. On the other hand, the local Ajarians still remember the results of the Russo-Ottoman War and the rule of the Ottomans. Their memory is, on the one hand, connected with the tragedy of their ancestors, and on the other hand, with the joy of reuniting Ajara with Georgia. In our opinion, a part of the population in Ajara thinks that forgetting these historical events could cause a similar situation in the future. Despite the good neighboring relations with Turkey, this is the reason of disbelief and cautiousness among the locals concerning the tendency of Turkish nationals to settle in Batumi. This is one of the cases when the attitude of the locals and the government does not collide.

The Russo-Ottoman War in Georgian political journalism and visual materials

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 was widely covered by the Russian historiography: official reports from the battlefields, theoretical researches of the war as a social phenomenon, war memoirs and newspapers. It has to be noted that due to the extreme politization of the official historiography, the limited access to Turkish resources, and the obvious edition done by the Russian military commanders, the publications of that period are not fully accurate in respect to historical reality.

As for the Georgian newspapers they were not welcome on the territory of the Turkish vilayet – Adjaristan. In Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, the political and literary newspaper “Droeba” was issued by the united efforts of the progressive Georgian elite. For the period 1866 – 1885 it was published in Georgian language. Initially it was a weekly publication, but during the war period (1877 – 1878) it became a daily newspaper. The editor of “Droeba” was Sergei Meskhi (1869 – 73, 1874 – 79, 1882 – 83) who managed to unite great Georgian writers and thinkers to reflect objectively the advantages and disadvantages of the Russian Army on the Caucasian front and the actions of the Kobuleti quarter of militia officers. In 1885 the newspaper was closed being accused of an anti-government approach.



Group of Georgian officers, Tsikhisdziri 1878

Photo archive of the Central State Archive of Ajara, number 2012-09-25 15-52-18_0002

Especially interesting are the essays of the Georgian war correspondents who worked for the Russian newspapers. For example in 1877 – 1878 the editor of the Russian political and literature liberal magazine “Golos” [Voice] published in St.



Volunteers from Guria, 1878

Photo archive of the Central State Archive of Ajara, number 2012-09-25 15-52-18_0002

Petersburg from 1863 to 1883 (Editor Andrej A. Kraevskij) sent the Georgian correspondent Giorgi Tsereteli to West Georgia for covering the military actions on the Caucasus front. Tsereteli provided correspondence from Batumi, Abkhazia, and even Trabzon, describing the actions of the Russian Army and the Georgian Militia (approximately 22,000) against the Ottomans. Especially detailed was the description of the Ozurgeti division which was moving towards Batumi and was later renamed as Kobuleti Division.

The information was published in “Droeba” and in the newspaper “Tifliskij Vestnik” [Tbilisi newspaper] published in 1873 – 1882 by K.A. Bebutov. Considering the fact that the most crucial issue for Georgia – the return of the initially Georgian land Ajara to Georgia, it is not surprising that the Russian patriotic publications complied with the Georgian publications in terms of information and ideology.

The attitude of the Georgian society towards the 1877 – 1878 war was well expressed by Sherif Khimshiasvili: “May it be the war to start soon. I am ready to join the Georgian children of my motherland immediately...”⁴⁶ The same attitude was expressed by Gulo Kaikatsishvili, Dede Nizharadze, Akhmed Khalvashi, and others. There were local pro-Islamists though, for example, the brothers Osman and Ali Tavdrgiridze from Kobuleti, who remained devoted to the Sultan. However, the majority of the Muslim Georgians did not share their position.

Fiction

The change of the thousand year old Georgian culture by foreign Islamic customs and rules was very painful for Georgian people. The cultural development of the country - a homeland of many famous writers and scientists - dropped dramatically. For three hundred years not a single piece of literary or scientific work was created in 'Ottoman Georgia' and due to this fact there are almost no written sources about the Ottoman held Georgian lands in Georgian Language. Education in Georgian language was prohibited and this had a tragic impact on the local society and on the Georgian way of thinking. Ilia Chavchavadze, the greatest Georgian public figure, wrote in 1877 about Ajara: "Our past life first bloomed in here, our life used to run as a stream in here, the power of our spiritual life hoisted its famous flag in here, this is almost the cradle of our spiritual predominance and this tends to be the grave of our thy past humanity."

After the completion of the Russo-Ottoman War the Georgian writers in their literary and publicistic works responded to the vital problems of the epoch and tried to find ways and means for their solutions. The process of the national awakening was mainly led by volunteer charity societies. The leading role played the 'Society for spreading literacy among Georgians' led by Giorgi Kazbegi after Ilia Chavchavadze's death. Giorgi Kazbegi (1839 – 1921) fought in the Russo-Ottoman War. He was the commandant of Warsaw and then Vladivostok. Under his leadership the 'Society for spreading literacy among Georgians' implemented essential activities in the field of education and culture.

On the 20th of September 1907, the 'Society of History and Ethnography' was founded in Georgia. The society had enthusiasts in every part of Georgia who used to collect materials about the historical past, folk traditions and contemporary life of Georgians. "Three Months in Turkish Georgia"⁴⁷ by Giorgi Kazbegi was the most prominent early historical and ethnographic work. It should be noted that his journey to the historical provinces of Georgia was linked to military strategic and reconnaissance missions preceding the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. "In the spring of 1874, I used the possibility to travel in Turkish Georgia" – wrote (said) the author hiding his real intentions, the reconnaissance mission ordered by Russia. The traveler's notes of Giorgi Kazbegi were very important, since by that time the West Georgian provinces were not mapped at all or registered with mistakes. Those maps were fundamentally revised after Giorgi Kazbegi's visit there.

Dimitri Bakradze (1826 – 1890) travelled in Southwest Georgia in 1874. His travel notes served as the basis for his historical work "Archaeological Journey to Guria and Ajara"⁴⁸. The work includes the vivid impressions of the author, rich factual materials related to Ajara under foreign rule. The book was printed in 1878 in St. Petersburg upon the request of the Emperor's Academy of Science.

After the end of the Turkish dominance Tedo Sakhokia (1868 – 1956) was the first one who travelled in Ajara when it was still influenced by the Ottoman culture. This journey resulted in a very interesting work called "Journeys"⁴⁹, where the author studiously described the economical conditions, the culture of the region and recorded the facts of the development of new life in this part of Georgia.

During the next period, for the whole 20th century, literary works dedicated to the Russo-Ottoman War and its impacts were systematically published. The most

important role played Pridon Khalvashi who created a whole cycle of works related to the war. Among them most remarkable was his historical novel "Omri".⁵⁰ In other works he used the genre of letters⁵¹ and essays. The most interesting letters are "Word for Ajara", "Survived Word", and "Several Days in Turkey".

Iusuf Paghava (1912 – 1982), a writer of national importance, wrote about the unification of Georgia. Almost all his works like "Ancestors' Ghosts"⁵² and many others were devoted to the brave fights of the Georgian people to maintain their nationality and to unite Ajara to the motherland Georgia.

The poetic works of Mamia Varshanidze (1916 – 1999) were dedicated to the hard but brave past of Ajara. His attitude towards the native land and the home country were vividly expressed in his poems.⁵³ Zurab Gorgiladze (1937 – 2006) was one of the most remarkable representatives of the 20th century Georgian poetry. The refrain of all his poetic works such as "Flaming Candles" or "Alipasha" was the severe pain experienced by the southwestern part of Georgia still remaining wounded. The historical novel "Muhajiri"⁵⁴ (1928) by Jemal Jakeli commented the issue of being a muhajir, which he considered as the greatest tragedy in Georgian history. The historical novel "The legend of Lazeti" (1933) of the famous Georgian public figure Ramaz Surmanidze was related to the Russo-Ottoman War and its impacts on the country. The author interpreted the hardships of the past from a present point of view.

Folklore

One of the basic motives of the Georgian folklore was patriotism. The topic of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 was maintained mainly by the folklore of southwestern Georgia. The heroic folklore of the Ajara region expressed and maintained up to nowadays the great love for the homeland, the commitment to the patriotic ideals, the national awakening in the times of difficulties and despair. In the folklore the topic of the Ajarian Muhajirs and the Russo-Ottoman War also found its expression. The folklore material recorded by Iason Natadze, a collaborator of the newspaper "Droeba", was of utmost interest, the poems clearly expressed the negative attitude of the local people towards the Russians as well as towards the Turkish conquerors.⁵⁵ Folklore materials devoted to the last stage of the Russo-Ottoman War, when the future of Ajara was obvious and the Muhajir movement started, voiced the unspeakable tragedy of the local people caused by the colonial interests of two invaders being opposed in the oldest part of Georgia. The folklore of Ajara preserved the names of those noblemen, who lacking national awareness, betrayed their own people serving the Turks or the Russians. The folklore clearly expressed the civil ideals of the Georgian people: patriotism and freedom that were justified by their bravery and heroism in the condition of 300 year dominance of the Turks.

Music

The Russo-Ottoman War found an expression in music as well. Georgian people used to sing even in the times of hardship and difficulties. These songs voiced the national awareness of the Georgian people, their commitment to the country and readiness to die for the sake of the country. The songs related stories

of pain and suffering, of loyalty and betrayal in the condition of foreign dominance. The main theme of the Muhajirs' songs was the sorrow and pain of the ones who had to leave their home country and people.

Public and ecclesiastical celebrations in memory of deceased heroes of deceased heroes of the Russo-Ottoman War

In Georgia there is a tradition of ceremonial commemoration of deceased soldiers who died defending their country. After the victory over the Ottomans and reuniting Ajara with Georgia all the churches in Georgia were conducting the ceremonial requiem masses, although no official commemorations were initiated. After declaring Georgia a part of the USSR the majority of churches was closed and the names of the heroes deceased in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 were forgotten.

In 2002, in the village Skhalta a museum dedicated to Sherif Khimshiashvili was established. He was a major general of the Russian Army and one of the leaders of the liberation movement in Ajara. An obelisk was erected on his grave.



Obelisk after Sherif Khimshiashvili in the village Skhalta

Photo from the website of the museum

<http://www.adjaramuseums.ge/ge/?page=showmus&mid=11>

In 1909, in the village of Khutsubani a memorial was erected to commemorate the soldiers who died on January 18th 1878 near Tsikhisdziri. The memorial was built by the union of officers from the 164th 'Zakatal'sky' infantry regiment. This regiment was a part of the Kobuleti complement led by Lieutenant-general Oklobjho. The memorial itself represents the monument for the officers, a stone hill, a cross, and an epitaph on the mass grave for the soldiers of the lower rank. The memorial is fenced.



Memorial after the officers of the 164th "Zakatal'sky" infantry regiment Khutsubani village, Ajara, Georgia
Photo was taken by researchers from Shota Rustaveli State University during the field expedition conducted in the framework of MEMORYROW



Gravestone on the mass grave after the soldiers of the low rank of the 2nd Caucasus infantry battalion, deceased on the January 18th, 1878 Khutsubani village, Ajara, Georgia
Photo was taken by researchers from Shota Rustaveli State University during the field expedition conducted in the framework of MEMORYROW

Conclusion

The analysis of the Georgian historiography, political newspapers, archive materials, and fiction related to the Russo-Ottoman War witness dramatic changes in the memory culture. After Ajara reunited with Georgia a long period of intensive ruin of stereotypes began: first as part of the Russian Empire, then at the time of the revolution, the Soviet and post-Soviet period. Although the material traces of the war memory are not well preserved in Georgia, the wound of Muhajirism still remains in certain families, and 'the image of the enemy' as reflected in the Georgian folklore and language is still in power.

¹ Cf. Khariton Akhvlediani, *sakhalkho-ganmatavisuflebeli brdzolis istoriidan samkhret sakartveloshi* [From the History of National Liberation War in South Georgia], Batumi 1956.

² Cf. Описание Русско-турецкой войны 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полуострове [Description of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula], 1-9, St. Petersburg, 1901 – 1913.

³ Cf. Атлас карт, планов и схем к описанию Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полуострове [Atlas of maps, layouts, and plans for description of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula], 1-8, St. Petersburg, 1901 – 1914.

⁴ Cf. Сборник материалов по Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Балканском полуострове [Collection of the Material on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Balkan Peninsula], 1-97, St. Petersburg, 1898 – 1911.

⁵ Cf. Сборник материалов по Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878 гг. на Кавказско-Малоазиатском театре [Collection of the Material on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878 on the Military Arena of the Caucasus and Asia Minor], 1-4, St. Petersburg, 1893.

⁶ Cf. Alexandre Bendianashvili, *Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 and Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1970.

⁷ Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *acharis gatavisufleba turkta batonobisagan* [Liberation of Ajara from Turkish ruling], Batumi, 1956.

⁸ Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *samkhret-dasavlet sakartvelos istoriidan* [From the history of South-West Georgia], Tbilisi, 1963.

⁹ Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *acharis tsarsulidan* [From the past of Ajara], Tbilisi, 1964.

¹⁰ Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *sakartvelo ruset-turketis 1877 – 1878 tsebis omshi* [Georgia in the Russian-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878], Batumi, 1955.

¹¹ Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *Закавказье в Русско-турецкой войне 1877 – 1878* [Transcaucasia in the history of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 – 1878], Tbilisi, 1969.

¹² Cf. Shamshe Megrelidze, *sakartvelo agmosavletis omebshi* [Georgia in the Eastern wars], Tbilisi, 1974.

¹³ Cf. Niko Nikoladze, *Georgia – If the War Starts*, Droeba, 36, April 3, 1877.

¹⁴ Cf. Nikoladze, *Georgia*, 13.

¹⁵ Cf. *Iveria*, 7, April 16, 1877.

¹⁶ Cf. Mikheil Svanidze, *kartvelebi turketshi* [Georgians in Turkey], Tbilisi, 1996.

¹⁷ Cf. Ajara Archive Department, Central State Archive (AADCSA), Fund 1087, File 1, Case 76.

¹⁸ Cf. AADCSA, Fund 1087, File 1, Case 559.

¹⁹ Cf. AADCSA, Fund 17, File 1, Case 189.

²⁰ Cf. AADCSA, Fund 1087, File 1, Case 1295.

- ²¹ Cf. Central State Archive of Georgia (CSAG), Fund 229, File 1, Case 48, 1-a.
- ²² Cf. CSAG, Fund 545, Case 1677, 1-3.
- ²³ Cf. CSAG, Fund 416, File 3, 9-19.
- ²⁴ Cf. Giorgi Chipashvili, *iase rachveli turqetis sesaxeb* [Iase Rachveli about Turkey], Tbilisi 1996, 24.
- ²⁵ Cf. Central State Archive of Kutaisi (CSAK), Fund 1, Case 1715, 30-33.
- ²⁶ Cf. CSAK, Fund 1, Case 4985, 21-27.
- ²⁷ Cf. CSAK, Nobleman's Union of Kutaisi, Fund 1, Case 4498, 11-17.
- ²⁸ Cf. CSAK, Fund 18, Case 92, 21-22.
- ²⁹ The copies of the documents were preserved in the British archives; these materials were obtained by Georgia in 2006; National Archive of Ajara A.R., fund i-83.
- ³⁰ Cf. Fund I-83, Case 592, Document 195.
- ³¹ Cf. Fund I-83, File I, Case 592, 195, 300.
- ³² Cf. Akhvlediani, *History*, 1, 131.
- ³³ Fund I-83, Case 21, 356.
- ³⁴ Cf. Akhvlediani, 1, 141-142.
- ³⁵ Cf. Central State Archive of Ajara (CSAA), Fund I-83, File 1, Case 1, 348-349.
- ³⁶ Cf. CSAA, Fund I-83, File 1, Case 1, 348.
- ³⁷ Cf. CSAA, Fund I-83, File 1, Case 1, 353.
- ³⁸ Cf. CSAA, Fund I-83, File 1, Case 1, 353.
- ³⁹ Cf. Fridon Kardava, *British Correspondence of Deportation of Laz People in 70-es of the 19th Century, South-West Georgia (history, archeology, and ethnology)*, CSAA, data from the 2nd International Conference, Tbilisi 2012, 28-29.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. CSAA, fund 416, File 3, 9, 12, 18, 19.
- ⁴¹ Cf. CSAA, Fund I-83, File 1, Case 1, 354-355.
- ⁴² Cf. CSAA, Fund R-2, File 1, Case 6518, 12.
- ⁴³ Cf. CSAA, Fund R-2, File 1, Case 6518, 12.
- ⁴⁴ Cf. CSAA, Fund R-2, File 1, Case 6518.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. CSAA, Fund I-6, File 1, Case 3, 1-19; Fund I-6, File 1, Case 250, 1-46.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Zakaria Chichinadze, *History of the Former-Ottoman Georgia*, Batumi, 1912.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. Giorgi Kazbegi, *Three Months in the Turkish Georgia*, Batumi, 1995.
- ⁴⁸ Cf. Dimitri Bakradze, *Archaeological Journey to Guria and Ajara*, Batumi, 1987.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. Tedo Sakhokia, *Journeys*, Batumi 1985.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. Pridon Khalvashi, *Omri*, Tbilisi 2007.
- ⁵¹ Cf. Pridon Khalvashi, *Word and Work*, Batumi 1985.
- ⁵² Cf. Iusuf Paghava, *Batumi* 1980.
- ⁵³ Cf. Mamia Varshanidze, *Lyrics, Lyrical Poems*, Batumi 1976.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. Jemal Jakeli, *Muhajiri*, Tbilisi 1997.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. Tamar Shioshvili, *Moral World of Georgian Folklore*, 1, Batumi, 2002.

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Exploring the Russo-Ottoman War (Macedonian Memory and Presentations)

Abstract: *The article is focused on the Macedonian memories of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) and the Peace treaties of that period. Several historical points are concerned such as the participation of the Macedonian volunteers in the war; the activity in Macedonia after the end of the battles; the reaction to the Peace treaties and the emigration of the Macedonian population. We present the historical events related to the period of the Russo-Ottoman War as reflected in the Macedonian memories, the perception of the results of the War and its consequences for the Macedonians.*

Exploring the Russo-Ottoman War in relation to the Macedonian history

Analysing the history of the Balkans at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, our discussions are focussed on three main topics: the efforts of the Ottoman Empire to survive; the intentions of the Great powers to resolve the so-called “Eastern Question” according to their own interests and, finally, the national movements within the Empire aimed at establishing their own national states. In fact, the national problem in this multi-national state became one of the key reasons for its disintegration. From the point of view of the non-Turkish population, it was an epoch of national liberation movements on the Balkans. The Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) represented just another series of motives and outwitting games the Great powers played for assigning the spheres of influences. Each of the actors involved, as well as the countries that indirectly felt the consequences of the war, had built its own version of the historical events.

Participation of Macedonian volunteers in the Russo-Ottoman War

Speaking of the 19th century and the general tendencies among the Balkan Slavic peoples, when they were led by the anti-Ottoman liberation movement, the strongly expressed idea of belonging to the Slavs and Orthodox Christianity and therefore with a sense of explicit affection towards Slavic Orthodox Russia as their flagship and patron, Macedonians were involved as volunteers in almost all military conflicts on the Balkans, supporting the liberation aspirations of the Balkan peoples.

At the time of the preparation of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) Russia acceded to activities for getting information about the general situation on the Balkans. A commission was appointed including also members from Macedonia: Vasil Mišajkov from Bitola (graduated at the Faculty of Law in Moscow), Georgi Stamenov from Voden (a philologist and professor in the First Moscow Gymnasium) and Konstantin Stanišev from Kukuš (a professor at the University of Moscow, a member of the Moscow Slavic Committee).¹ These steps, as well as the declared willingness of Russia to assist the liberation efforts, were a great encouragement and contributed to the activation of a large number of Macedonians in the later anti-Ottoman campaign.

When the gathering of volunteers began, the first volunteer units formed in April 1877 were composed primarily of participants who had taken part in the previous military actions on the Balkans. An important role in the formation of volunteer companies played the Russian Consul Michail Chitrovo and Stojan Vezenkov (1828 – 1897) from Kruševo, who called on the Macedonian fighters (Voivodes) from Serbia and Romania (participants in the Serbo-Ottoman War). The town Svištov in Bulgaria was designated as a place of gathering for the volunteers coming from Serbia and Romania. Later on, they participated in some of the most important military actions (Trojan Passage, Stara Planina, Kjustendil etc.), namely by observing and protecting the crossings, and by mounting heavy Russian weapons on high mountain positions. The detachments acted on the side and at the head of the Russian army, fighting with *başıbozuk* and the regular Ottoman army, delivering information on their movements, numbers and positions. Many Macedonian volunteers became part of the Bulgarian Volunteer Corps, the folk volunteer detachments, and provided reports or other services.² During the war many of them were killed, some of them were rewarded with Russian military medals for their merits in the battles.



Ġorġija M. Pulevski (1822/23 – 1893) – a revival activist, lexicographer, poet, folklorist, author of grammar books, historian, ethnographer, komitadji, a volunteer in the Serbo-Ottoman War (1876) and the Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878), a participant in the liberation actions in Pijanec and the Kresna Uprising (1878 – 1879).

In the photograph: dressed in a folk costume, decorated with a “St. Georgi” medal awarded for bravery during the Russo-Ottoman War and a sabre from the Russian Emperor³

Activities in Macedonia after the war

The Russo-Ottoman War ended with the signing of the armistice of Edirne (19th January 1878). The victory of the Russians was used by some voivodes from Macedonia (Trifunov, Ognenov, Robev, Pulevski, Cvetkov, Antonov etc.). Not provided a prior permission from the Russian command in Kjustendil, they crossed the demarcation line and, headed by Iljo Maleševski (1805 – 1898), entered the Pijanec region where they carried out a disarmament of the Turkish population and established a rebel authority. Some leaders of the Macedonian volunteers from the Serbian army did the same in Kumanovo and Kriva Palanka. The rule of the insurgent authority was interrupted by the news about the protocol signed in Vranje in the second half of February. In accordance with it, the liberated regions remained under Ottoman rule and, following the Russian orders, Iljo Maleševski and Dimitar Berovski (1840 – 1907) and their detachments moved back towards Kjustendil. The local authority remained in Pijanec up to the 9th of March 1878. Following the conclusion of the Preliminary Treaty of San Stefano (19th of February / 3rd of March 1878), any further actions were delayed and the liberated territory was abandoned. The local administration in Pijanec lasted until the 29th of March 1878. Due to the news that the Ottoman army was approaching, there was a widespread panic and the majority of the population migrated.⁴

Reaction to the Treaty of Berlin and the status of Macedonia

After the Russo-Ottoman War and the Treaty of Berlin, according to which Macedonia remained within the Ottoman Empire, the position of the Great powers became clear – to delay the resolution of the Macedonian Question by creating favorable conditions for the realization of their own interests. As a result of the political and territorial changes made after the Congress of Berlin, Macedonia was returned under the authority of the Sultan. The increased violence, the frequent attacks and looting by various armed gangs, the migration of Muslim refugees from Bosnia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, and the instability of the Ottoman state as a whole, led to the increase of the combative mood in Macedonia and an organized armed resistance developed. This popular movement spread to almost all regions.⁵ It was taken seriously by the Ottoman authorities and several times military forces were sent to suppress the uprisings. Activities carried out by multiple detachments or groups of detachments were observed in the regions of Maleševo, Pijanec and Kriva Palanka. They were composed partly of former participants in the Russo-Ottoman War. These combat formations collided, occasionally, with the Ottoman army and the *başıbozuk*. The formation of detachments throughout Macedonia grew and Kresna Uprising began on the 5th / 17th of October 1878, by attacking a Turkish garrison in the village of Kresna. The number of soldiers in all the uprising groups was constantly growing, but because of the instruction of the Russian authorities against such activities on the territory of Turkey, there was a feeling of disappointment among the rebels. In May 1879 the uprising officially aborted.⁶

Emigration from Macedonia as a consequence from the war

In Macedonia the end of the 19th century was a time of poor security situation, rebellions, propaganda and international agreements unfavorable. The complex situation, developed after the unsuccessful liberation activities and the remaining of Macedonia within the Ottoman Empire, resulted in a large wave of emigration towards other Balkan countries and Russia. Because of the fear of revenge, the population moved towards the demarcation line and beyond, mostly towards Bulgarian territory. There were several refugee waves: towards Gorna Džumaja and the Kjustendil region; towards Dupnica, Loveč, Pleven, Lukovits region, Sofia and Čepinsko river valley; from the eastern slopes of the Pirin Mountain towards the Gorna Džumaja region. A part of the population that had fled, later returned to the abandoned villages, but another part settled there permanently.⁷

Macedonian memory and presentations

Understanding culture as a system of values uniting the creative activities of people (folklore, literature, music, art, etc.) and providing identity it is interesting to note how the identity of the nation was built by various cultural elements and how the whole culture reflects the experience accumulated over many generations.⁸ Thus collective memory acquires special importance as a cradle of knowledge, experience and identity. The memory store develops and shapes the emotional and rational representations of historical events and persons. It is deposited in the popular and artistic creation, binding the past with the present. However, unlike what was a common historical development of the European nations (creating national state institutions, development of education and science, etc.), not a state but the culture served as a unifying framework for the Macedonians. In this regard, the folk oral traditions functioned as a guardian and transmitter of popular knowledge and memory. Collecting and nurturing the cultural heritage was an important task, particularly in view of the fact that neither own state nor institutions existed at that time. This was aptly expressed by Vasil Ikonov (1848 – 1934) from the village of Lazaropole, a collector and publicist who wrote: “But our folk life is mostly described in our folk songs and customs. Under the pressure of circumstances and the positions in which our people has often found itself – losing own scholars and their works, there was no one left but the folk singer to preserve the threads of our way of life from ages past. As a result, collecting and printing our songs and customs is of the greatest necessity, and is the only source in studying our past as a people.”⁹

Concerning the period when Macedonia was part of the Ottoman Empire a distinctive type of folklore with characteristic motifs was created.¹⁰ Researching how the Macedonian memory refers to the period of the Russo-Ottoman War and afterwards, we should take into consideration the traditional perceptions and representations as the people's insights and notions of the results of the War and its consequences for Macedonia. The records of contemporaries (authors and local writers) testify to the way they felt in the context of the historical events and the political situation, as the most immediate form of expression of those involved in the historical events.

After defining the historical facts and circumstances in which the memories concerning the period of the Russo-Ottoman War occurred in Macedonia, the main

task is to examine the possibilities for determining the communicative memory and to set the basis for a profound examination of the cultural memory,¹¹ i.e. how and in which form did the actual history remain remembered over time up to today – losing significance or gaining new content and explanatory power.

Memory and narratives about the Russo-Ottoman War and the treaties

Given that the events during and after the Russo-Ottoman War (which was not fought on the territory of Macedonia), including the agreements from San Stefano and Berlin, occurred rapidly, in a short time interval and were mutually contradicting, it becomes understandable why they did not leave significant traces in the memories and traditions in Macedonia. However, when talking about the *traditional expression* of folk singers who sang about their contemporaneity, then few registered songs with text and melody, which are directly related to the Russo-Ottoman War and the time after the signing of the peace agreements, should certainly be mentioned. Thus, the “Song for the Liberation of Bulgaria (The Siege of Pleven)”,¹² obviously refers to the war between the Russians and Ottomans (“blood flows through Bulgaria / around Pleven and Sofia”). The singers expressed affiliations toward Russia and symbolically indicated the Russian supremacy in the war (“The Russians crossed the Danube / they have already arrived in Trnovo / around Pleven and Sofia”).

In the context of recorded testimonies of the living generation who shared their personal life experiences in an informal communication, we find the “Song for the Liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish Slavery”.¹³ It is sung in the first person singular, and contains the singer's personal experiences and memories. It seems that the creator of this song was a direct participant in the military actions at Danube, admiring the Russian army. Thus, the *nišandžija* (one who takes aim with weapons) is the main character in this song, a man with a mustache to his shoulders and a beard down to his knees, holding the reins of the horse in his left hand, and the cross and flag in the right. He sings about his courage in fighting for the liberation of Bulgaria.

The song “The Cries of Macedonia”,¹⁴ deals with the time after the Congress of Berlin, the rage the people felt because Macedonia remained within the Ottoman Empire, as well as their indignation and anger towards Europe, naming it a *mistress* („блудница Вавилонска“):¹⁵ “Damned and thrice damned, / Europe be you, / harlot of Babylon, / Macedonian executioner”. In the same sense some of the most powerful nations of the time are also mentioned (“Russia, sister dear, / come help me, / lest I perish, / Englishmen and Germans, / Italians and French, / want us under Turkish yoke.”). As we can see, at the same time the singer turns to Russia with fondness, calling her “Russia, sister dear” and expressing the Slavophil idea and belief in Russian support. We find the same motifs in many other presentations where people refer to the European policy concerning some historical decisions regarding Macedonia at different times later on too.

In an attempt to understand the perception of the historical events in Macedonia at the time, it would perhaps be more adequate to analyze the *memories of certain individuals* expressed in their written texts. Thus, the events from this period were presented in the poetry and publicist works of Ćorĳija Pulevski, who lived and died as an emigrant in Sofia. At the end of 1878 or early the following year, he pub-

lished the political poem “Samovila makedonska” (“Macedonian Fairy”).¹⁶ In regard to the details concerning its publishing, its distribution, and its perception we find information in an account by Kuzman Šapkarev published in the newspaper “Marica” (Plovdiv, 1882). According to him, the poem was designed for singing and it was very popular among the Macedonian emigration in Sofia.¹⁷

Written in an epic style, it is the only poem in Macedonian literary history dedicated to the Treaty of San Stefano and the Treaty of Berlin. The poem expressed views on the situation and position of Macedonia after the Congress of Berlin, as well as what steps should further be undertaken. It was a reflection on the people’s motives for mass participation in the Kresna Uprising. Pulevski began his poem by depicting the darkness that prevailed at the time (“Everyday’s dark above the Macedonian mountains / Is it covered by a dark fog or a dark cloud?”), then recalled the glorious past, and ended it with a call for a liberation struggle.¹⁸



**“Macedonian Poetry-Book”
 (Sofia, 1879), written by
 Ćorgija Pulevski**

Pulevski also published a collection of poems “Makedonska pesnarka” (“Macedonian Poetry-Book”) in Sofia (1879). Significantly, the collection contained some actualized folk poems as well as three poems written by himself (“The Weep of Macedonia”, “In Favour of the Macedonians” and “Macedonian Sorrow”)¹⁹ graphically differentiated from the others. In his songs Pulevski acted in accordance with the time and events he lived in. He probably wrote them during the Kresna Uprising, although they were published in 1879 in Sofia. If one carefully reads his poems, (s)he would find three distinct basic motifs in the following chronological order: a noticeable anger towards Europe and its decision that Macedonia would remain within the Ottoman Empire; celebrating the fighting spirit of the Macedonians against the decisions of Europe (the organised uprising); a call to all Slavic nations to help Macedonians, in particular the hope that Russia and the Russian Tsar would help them.

The ideology of the participants in the Kresna Uprising was actually reflected in his poetry.²⁰ In fact, Pulevski was the only known revolutionary poet of the Kresna Uprising. In the song “For Macedonians in Favor”, he expressed his anger and

strong disagreement with the decisions of the European countries regarding Macedonia. He cried out in revolt: "Hear us, brothers, European Christians, / We have had it with our destiny / And we want a homeland of our own".²¹ His songs were probably sung by the revolutionaries to whom they were devoted. In fact, in the published books the author himself gave instructions as to the melodic line, i.e. he tried to note it by repeating certain vowels, by using punctuation marks, and so on.²²

Searching for testimonies of the War and its consequences, we could also refer to memoirs written afterwards. For example, Ivan Hadži Nikolov (1861 – 1934) recalled: "We all rejoiced the Russian successes. When the Russians liberated Plevna, Edirne and the war drew to its successful conclusion, we had already started preparing to welcome the Russian army, which was supposed to come to Macedonia and liberate it".²³

The Russo-Ottoman War and especially the developments that followed were to be narrated by the following generations, losing or gaining some additional elements. We find traces of *trans-generational memories* concerning this period in some works created several generations later. The authors of memoirs, collections of folklore and ethnographic materials, family genealogies and histories etc., had passed on the information they had heard (not experienced) about historical events and figures of the recent and distant past.²⁴

In his work "Galičnik and the Mijaks", Rista Ognjanović-Lonoski recorded, amongst other things, the genealogy of some of the families from his village of Galičnik and, at the same time, provided several specific data related to our topic. Thus, writing about Pulevski, whose origins were from the same village, Lonoski wrote: "He lived in Belgrade and offered to be a volunteer against Turkey, but because Serbia had remained peaceful in 1878, he went on to the Danube with the Russians and participated in the siege of Plevna. Many elderly people remembered him walking around with a Russian sabre hanging over his shoulder according to the Russian manner. His heroic deeds were heard of here, up to Debar..."²⁵

The accounts in some other similar works can be completely different in terms of character and content, but if we try to summarize, the strong emotions of the writers and their motives for writing these works were common for all of them. The authors intended to leave a trail for future generations, who would take a look at the successes and memories of their ancestors.

The modern (institutionalized) memory culture in Macedonia

As a system of remembering, recollection, and oblivion, memory is the link between the past which tends to occur in the present through some remembrances and the present which is predetermined to become the past.²⁶ Collective memory appears as the essence of the people's notion of self, creating the picture of their history as well as verifying the politics of memory. However, it is subjected to interventions made at certain historical moments or over time. What appears to be an interesting question is whether the different experiencing of historical events could influence the transmission of events through tradition, or how the different emotions have determined the traditional images in the folklore of the people and their reflection in the modern institutionalized memory culture.

The institutionalized representatives of the memory — state-organized scientific and research institutions

Concerning the period before the establishment of the modern Macedonian state, we should point to the founding of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje (1920) which was among the first official institutions that regulated the institutionalized development of history studies. However, the development of the research institutions and professional historical science began to be practiced after the foundation of the state:²⁷ at the Department of History and History of Art at the Faculty of Philosophy, which was established in Skopje (1946) as a first high-educational institution of the future “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University;²⁸ The Institute of National History, established as a first specialized institution for history in Macedonia (1948)²⁹; the supreme scientific and scholarly institution – The Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, established in 1967;³⁰ the Historical Society of People’s Republic of Macedonia was founded as a civil organization (1952).³¹ The organized research in history especially intensified in the years since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia (1991). History studies developed through a series of new public and private higher education and research institutions and associations.

The historical memory for the period of the Russo-Ottoman War as presented in historiography and textbooks in Macedonia

We refer to all known non-institutionalized individual historical endeavors as a basis for the development of the Macedonian historiography today. In this sense, we believe that it is important to analyze the “Slavic-Macedonian General History” from the end of the 19th century, written by Ćorĳija Pulevski, as the first comprehensive Macedonian historical book.³² What is particularly important for our research topic is that the author wrote about the Russo-Ottoman War, in which he actively participated. He presented this period in a separate section entitled “On the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II from 1876 to 1889” commenting the reasons for the War and the circumstances at the beginning of the War in 1877.³³ According to him, Russia declared war to Turkey on the 12th April 1877 and “The Russian-Turkish battles went on for ten months”.³⁴ He provided an account of the transfer of the Russian army across the Danube. The most expressive he was when describing his personal experience and especially his participation in the battle of Šipka in a small detachment that provided defence for eight days and nights and withstood the attacks in the conditions of unbearable winter cold.³⁵ The detailed narrative of the fighting and the siege of Plevna is a confirmation that Pulevski participated in the siege. He described also other struggles, and especially the movement of the Russian forces at Stara Planina, Balkan, Stredec, Trojan etc., equally important. As a direct participant in some of the military actions during the War, the military activity of the Russians against the Ottoman army in the campaign for liberating Bulgaria were central, but he also wrote about “The Serbian Activity in 1877 and 1878”, as well as “The Kara-Vlachian Activity in 1877 and 1878” and “The Russian Conquests in Asia Minor in 1877 and 1878”.

The author referred to the Treaty of San Stefano, stating that “it caused a great discontent in Western Europe”, and he briefly described the situation up to the

Congress of Berlin in the chapter "The Congress of Berlin from June 13th to July 13th 1878" and the Treaty of Berlin"³⁶. He put a special emphasis on the part of the Treaty that recommended various measures according to which the Ottoman Porte was to make improvements regarding the situation of the Christians within the Empire. However, as a direct consequence of the Ottoman Empire not fulfilling this obligation, the situation in Macedonia began to radicalize and the author became one of the protagonists in the Kresna Uprising (1878/79). The author noticed the dependency of the Balkans on the European policy towards the Ottoman Empire by the end 19th century.

In the period up to the establishment of the state (1944), we follow a whole set of individual historical and historiographical attempts.³⁷ However, the organized institutional study of history in Macedonia began after the formation of the modern state. The development of the historiography followed the phases of the social-economic and political development in general: communist/socialist and post-socialist/transitional period, with other words the period of living within Yugoslav Federation and the period of independent Macedonian state. In the period from 1944 to 1991, the interest of the historiography (especially during the early socialist period), was focused on the study of history of the formation of the Yugoslav state and military-political aspects of World War II. Research on national history within the Yugoslav Federation was marginalized. Moreover, the emphasis on 'brotherhood and unity' of the nations of the Federation had been the recommended focus of historical interpretations. The study of the national histories was limited and treated with great caution (in the terms of self-censorship by authors). In the period of the so-called transition (after 1991), new processes started in the direction of breaking ties with the previous system, reconsidering the mainstream historiography and redefining some historical interpretations. After rejecting the control over the historiography, the freedom of expression raised many questions.

Since the establishment of the modern historical science in Macedonia, the Russo-Ottoman War has been researched by many authors in monographs, articles, and new archive publications³⁸ and by organizing conferences. The dominant narratives concerned the reasons for the War and its results (interpretations of the Peace treaties and their consequences). Because of the fact that Macedonia was not directly affected by the War, the topics of interest were mostly related to the period of the Eastern Crisis in general.³⁹

The Preliminary Treaty of San Stefano was mostly considered as non realistic with regard to the international relations between the Great powers at the time. However, the Treaty left a trace in the popular memory and history interpretations, causing questions such as whether it was an accumulator of further political problems or a possibility to resolve the question of the liberation of Macedonia in the 19th century. These questions were treated in various publications and in a special book.⁴⁰ Since, according to the Treaty of Berlin, Macedonia remained within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, the Congress in Berlin became an important historical marker. Moreover, its decisions were a turning point in the politics of the Great powers and defined the political changes that followed in the Balkans, so they were questioned in the period afterwards.⁴¹ All the issues related to the Macedonian Question from the end of the 19th century, especially the Kresna Uprising (as a di-

rect reaction to the decisions of the Treaty of Berlin)⁴² and the historical personalities of Macedonian fighters and commanders involved in the military actions, were frequent topics, elaborated in publications and celebrated at jubilees and anniversaries.

The dominant narratives in the school literature usually follow the development of the mainstream historiography. Up to 1991 history was taught in schools according to the concept in which the study of the unity of the nations of Yugoslavia was dominant, with some ideological interpretations and terminology characteristic for the socialist discourse. After the 1991 a reform of the educational system began. One of the main tasks was to improve the curriculum in history teaching and school literature for primary and secondary schools, in accordance with the new social and cultural trends. The difference in content is particularly noticeable in terms of better representation of the national history and the proportional representation of all other Balkan national histories. Regarding the presentation of the Russo-Ottoman War, the participation of Macedonian volunteers, Treaty of San Stefano, consequences for Macedonia with the decisions at the Congress of Berlin and Kresna Uprising as an expression of resistance, remain the special focus of interest.

The preservation and presentation of the historical memory in archives and museums

The system of organized collecting, filing and presenting archive material by the official institutions in Macedonia was introduced after the establishment of the *State Archive* in Skopje (1929 – 1941). But, the modern organized and institutionalized archival activity began after the establishment of the *State Archive of the People's Republic of Macedonia* (1951).⁴³ The classification scheme in the archives covers the archive funds and collections of the state units; social-political organizations, political parties; religious organizations and other organizations; personal and family funds.

Speaking of the public presentation of history, it is mainly organized by the museums. We find the first opened museums in the period between the two World Wars. Institutional organized museum work in Macedonia began in 1924 with the establishment of the first museum. But the enhanced museum activity occurred after the Second World War with the establishment of more specialized museums, including national museums (Historical, Archaeological and Ethnological) and the National Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage. The museums have been established as centres for collecting, preserving and researching of the mobile historical heritage. The *Historical Museum of Macedonia* in Skopje later became a part of the complex of *Museums of Macedonia (Archaeological, Ethnological and Historical)*. Recently, thematically organized museums have been established, such as *The Holocaust Memorial Center of the Jews from Macedonia* in Skopje (2011)⁴⁴ and *The Museum of the Macedonian Struggle for statehood and independence* (2011),⁴⁵ arranged according to modern standards for museum presentation.⁴⁶

Regarding museum exhibitions related to the period of the Russo-Ottoman War, we find some representations concerning historical events and figures of that period. As for the monuments, memory places and historical sites we have to keep in mind that during the socialist time construction of monuments in Macedonia was

much reduced as a result of the then restrictive policy towards the historical memory of the nations in Yugoslavia in general. The situation has changed after the independence of Macedonia and especially in recent times.

Today's view on history is a result of all political and cultural developments by which the complex of accumulated experiences has shaped the cultural memory and received an institutional verification. Historical truth is often elusive and dependent on those who promote it, so a more correct picture of the history sometimes could be found in the stored popular memory. It reports the folk understanding of history, its changes and its cultural meanings. Actually, if we marginalize the discourse of high politics, the interpretations of history in the popular memory of the different nations remain to be analyzed in order to comprehend the discrepancy between the various dominant national interpretations – with no obligation to reach an agreement, but as a necessity for mutual understanding and better communication.

¹ Ристо Поплазаров, Ослободителните вооружени борби на македонскиот народ во периодот 1850 – 1878 [Armed Struggles for the Liberation of the Macedonian People in the Period 1850 – 1878], Скопје, 1978, 304-305.

² Атанасъ Бендеревъ, История на българското опълчение и освобождението на България 1877 – 1878 [History of the Bulgarian Volunteer Corp and the liberation of Bulgaria 1877 – 1878], София, 1930, 62-67, 350-353; Манол Пандевски, Учеството на Македонците во вооружените ослободителни борби на бугарскиот народ во 60-те и 70-те години на XIX век [The Participation of Macedonians in the Armed Liberation Struggles of the Bulgarian People in 60s and 70s of the 19th Century], *Гласник*, XV, 1, Скопје, 1971, 52; Дойно Дойнов, Българското опълчение – състояние на проучванията и някои неизяснени проблеми [Bulgarian Volunteer Corp – State of researches and some unknown problems], in: Освобождението на България. Материали от юбилейна международна научна сесия в София, София, 1983, 62; Александар Трајановски, Нови сознанија за животот и дејноста на војводата Иљо Марков-Малешевски (1805 – 1898) [New Data on the Life and Activity of Voivode Ilijo Markov-Maleševski (1805 – 1898)], in: Војводата Иљо Марков-Малешевски и неговото време, Берово, 2002, 16-19.

³ According to the certificate by Field Headquarters of the Active Army and the certificate by the Russian agent in Bulgaria M. A. Heathrovo, Ćorĳija Pulevski was awarded a Military Order of the 4th degree (No. 69707) on the 15th April 1878, and by a military command dated the 17th April (No. 107), he "has the right to wear bright-bronze medal, established in a memory of the Turkish war of 1877 – 1878" (Блаже Ристовски, Портрети и процеси од македонската литературна и национална историја [Portraits and Processes from the Macedonian Literary and National History], I, Скопје, 1989, 264-265). The photo was published in: „Македонскій Голосъ (Македонски глас)“, I, 1, Санкт-Петербургъ, 9.VI 1913, 16; „Славянинъ“, I, 33, 23.VI 1913, 1. See: Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Ćorĳija M. Пулевски – револуционер и културно-национален деец [Ćorĳija M. Pulevski – Revolutionary and Cultural-National Activist], Скопје, 2008.

⁴ Поплазаров, Борби, I, 314-316; Славе Гоцев, Национално-револуционни борби в Малешево и Пиянец 1860 – 1912 [National-Revolutionary Struggles in Maleshevo Region and Pijanec 1860 – 1912], София, 1988, 100-104; Благој Стоичовски, Двомесечната слобода на Пијанечката Република [Two Months of Freedom of the Pijanec Republic], in: Војводата Иљо Марков-Малешевски и неговото време, Берово, 2002, 36-47.

⁵ Поплазаров, Борби, I, 322-342.

⁶ Михајло Миновски, Борбата на месните македонски водачи за зачувување на самостојноста во раководењето со Кресненското востание [The Struggle of Local Macedonian Leaders to Preserve Autonomy in Managing the Kresna Uprising], *Гласник*, 1, XVII, Скопје, 1973, 87-110; Ванче Стојчев, Воена историја на Македонија [Military History of Macedonia], Скопје, 2000, 368-389.

⁷ Марија Пандевска, Присилни миграции во Македонија во годините на Големата источна криза (1875 – 1881) [Forced Migrations in Macedonia during the Years of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875 – 1881)], Скопје, 1993, 27-85; Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Миграциите низ документација и традиција (врз примери од Русе, Варна и областа Тузлук во Бугарија) [Migrations through Documentation and Tradition (on Study-cases from Ruse, Varna and the Region Tuzluk in Bulgaria)], in: Миграции на Балканот. Билатерални истражувања. Редактор: Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Скопје, 2011, 13-72.

⁸ See: Георги Старделов, Нациите на Балканскиот историски контекст некогаш и денес (Македонско искуство) [Nations in the Balkan historical context then and now (The Macedonian experience)], in: Македонија. Прашања од историјата и културата, Скопје, 1999, 57-64; Блаже Ристовски, Периодизација на македонскиот литературно-културен развој [Periodization of the Macedonian literary-cultural development], *Filološke studije*, vol. 1, 6/2008, Zagreb, 53-69 (also: *Ibid*, Web. 20 December 2012. <http://philologicalstudies.org/dokumenti/2008/vol1/1/9.pdf>).

⁹ Васил Икономов, Старонародни песни и обичаи од Западна Македонија [Old Folk Songs and Customs from Western Macedonia]. Редакција д-р Кирил Пенушлиски, д-р Блаже Ристовски, д-р Блаже Петровски, Скопје, 1988, 69.

¹⁰ About historical tales: Танас Вражиновски, Преданието – меморија на народната историја [Tales – Memory of Folk History], in: Интерпретации. Европски проект за поетика и херменевтика. Специјално издание. Меморија и интерпретација. Приредувач: акад. Ката Ќулавкова, Скопје, 2008, 225-239.

¹¹ Јан Асман, Културната памет. Писменост, памет и политическа идентичност в ранните високоразвити култури [Cultural memory. Literacy, memory and political identity in the early high-developed cultures]. Превод од немски език: Ана Димова, Софија, 2001, 46-58.

¹² Heard by Ivan Veljanov and Blaže Novev from the village Izista in the Kičevo region, in Macedonia (Македонски народни песни [Macedonian Folk Songs]. Текста и мелодии записал Коста Џърнушанов, Софија, 1956, 274).

¹³ Heard from two women, Mare and Nade, from Prilep (born in Mariovo, a village near Prilep in Macedonia) (Песни, 13, 273-274).

¹⁴ Heard by Jordan Trenkov from Prilep, Cf. Песни, 13, 274-275. According to the data obtained from Jordan Trenkov, the publisher noted that the song was composed by Razdolov.

¹⁵ We find the song for Europe as *a harlot of Babylon* in a record from Struga and from v. Negrevo (Berovo region) in Macedonia, kept in the Archive of Institute for Folklore in Skopje (Блаже Ристовски, Македонскиот фолклор и националната свест. Истражувања и записи [Macedonian Folklore and National Consciousness. Researches and Records], Скопје, 1987, 159).

¹⁶ Самовила Македонска [Macedonian Fairy]. От Г. М. П. Народна Печатница на Б. Прошек в Софија, s. a.

¹⁷ Ристовски, Портрети, 4, 268, 269, note 44. Petar Draganov confirmed that the poem “Macedonian Fairy” had its own melody and was accepted as a song by his contemporaries. He referred to it as a political and patriotic elegia that became a folk song because it was sung by all those who originated from around Debar [a town in Macedonia] (П. Д.

Драгановъ, Македонско-Славянскій Сборникъ съ приложениемъ словаря [Macedonian-Slavic Collection with Appended Dictionary], I, С.-Петербургъ, 1894, 231).

¹⁸ Блаже Ристовски, Ѓорѓија М. Пулевски и неговите книшки „Самовила Македонска“ и „Македонска Песнарка“ [Ѓорѓија М. Pulevski and His Books “Macedonian Fairy” and “Macedonian Poetry-Book”]. Библиотека на списанието „Македонски фолклор“, 1, Скопје, 1973, 39-43.

¹⁹ Македонска песнарка отъ Георгѣя Пульевски [Macedonian Poetry-Book by Ѓорѓија Pulevski], София, 1879, 3-9.

²⁰ Cf. Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Идеологијата во песните од Ѓорѓија Пулевски и нашата современост [The Ideology in the Songs of Ѓорѓија Pulevski and Our Contemporaneity], *Македонски фолклор*, Скопје, 2006, 85-92.

²¹ Ристовски, Ѓорѓија М. Пулевски, 19, 49.

²² Блаже Ристовски, Ѓорѓија Пулевски и ослободувањето на Македонија [Ѓорѓија Pulevski and the Liberation of Macedonia], in: Македонија во Источната криза 1875 – 1881, Скопје, 1978, 322-325.

²³ Cf. Трајановски, Сознанија, 3, 19.

²⁴ On the migrants' memory, see: Biljana Ristovska-Josifovska, The Migrations as Reflected in Narratives Written by Migrants (Self-Identification and Presentation for Posterity), *Ethnologia Balcanica. Journal for Southeast European Anthropology*, 13/2009, Berlin, 2010, 107-119.

²⁵ Риста Огњановиќ-Лоноски, Галичник и Мијаците [Galičnik and the Mijaks]. Приредиле Оливера Јашар-Настева, Тодор Димитровски, Скопје, 2004, 104. Rista Ognjanovik-Lonoski (1870 – 1941?) was a scholar, professor and a collector of folklore material. From a point of view of a historian, “Galičnik and the Mijaks” is a historical source and personal testimony, as a representation of the local history and the modern social reality of the first half of 20th century in Macedonia.

²⁶ Ката Кулавакова, Дискурсот на меморијата и неговото толкување – кодот на меморијата [Discourse of memory and its interpretation – code of memory], in: Интерпретации. Европски проект за поетика и херменевтика. Специјално издание. Меморија и интерпретација. Приредувач: акад. Ката Кулавакова Скопје, 2008, 37-39.

²⁷ People's Republic of Macedonia was proclaimed at the *Antifascist National Liberation Assembly of Macedonia* (1944) at the territory of today's Republic of Macedonia.

²⁸ Филозофски факултет: 1946 – 1996 [*Faculty of Philosophy*: 1946 – 1996], Скопје, 1996, 15-23.

²⁹ Its main goals are researching, preserving and scientific analysis of documents, as well as publishing scientific works from the field of the national, political and cultural history. Its journal “Glasnik” has been published since 1957.

³⁰ The Academy journal “Prilozi” has been published since 1970.

³¹ Its journal “Istorija” has been published since 1965. The main tasks of this association were the advancement of science and culture, studying the Macedonian history and development of history curricula and the methodology of history teaching as well as collecting archival and other materials (Васил Јотевски, 55 години на Сојузот на историчарите на Република Македонија [55 Years of the Association of Historians of Republic of Macedonia], in: Историја, историографија и настава по историја (Прилози од Меѓународната конференција „Историја, историографија и настава по историја“ одржана од 21 – 23 ноември 2007 год. во Скопје). Уредник: Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Скопје, 2007, 17-25).

³² Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Едно видување на минатото во почетоците на македонската историографија [A Sight for the Past in the Beginnings of the Macedonian Historiography], in: Историја, историографија и настава по историја (Прилози од

Меѓународната конференција „Историја, историографија и настава по историја“ одржана од 21 – 23 ноември 2007 година во Скопје). Уредник: Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Скопје, 2007, 57-68.

³³ Ѓорѓија М. Пулевски, Славјанско-македонска општа историја [Slavic-Macedonian General History]. Подготовка Блаже Ристовски и Билјана Ристовска-Јосифовска, Скопје, 2003, 891-902.

³⁴ Пулевски, историја, 34, 892.

³⁵ “And in Stara Planina one small detachment of Russian army that kept crossing Šipka, for 8 days and 8 nights endured great defense against the attack of the whole army of Sulejman Paša, so General Radetzky came to help with the supporting army. But winter military stay at Šipka were very unbearable because of the cold, and had to stand in arms against the Turkish armies that attacked” (Пулевски, историја, 34, 893).

³⁶ Пулевски, историја, 34, 894-898.

³⁷ Блаже Ристовски, Столетија на македонската свест. Истражувања за културно-националниот развој [Centuries of Macedonian consciousness. Research on cultural and national development], Скопје, 2001, 9-25.

³⁸ Правилата – Уставот на Македонскиот вистанички комитет во Кресненското востание [The Rules – Constitution of Macedonian uprising committee in the Kresna Uprising], Скопје, 1980; Славко Димевски, Владо Поповски, Светомир Шкарик, Михаило Апостолски, Македонската лига и Уставот за државно уредување на Македонија од 1880 [Macedonian League and the Constitution for state foundation of Macedonia from 1880], Скопје, 1985; etc.

³⁹ For example, Манол Пандевски, Македонија и Македонците во годините на источната криза: 1876 – 1878 [Macedonia and the Macedonians in the years of the Eastern Crisis: 1876 – 1878], Скопје, 1978; Крсте Битоски, Македонија во времето на големата источна криза (1875 – 1881) [Macedonia in the Great Eastern Crisis (1875 – 1881)], Скопје, 1982; etc. International Conference has been organized on the occasion of 100 years since the Eastern Crisis (Shtip, 7 – 10 May 1976). The papers from the conference were published in: Македонија во Источната криза 1875 – 1881 [Macedonia in the Eastern Crisis 1875 – 1881], Скопје, 1978.

⁴⁰ Ристо Попларов, Санстефанската фикција и посебноста на Македонија [San Stefano Fiction and Separateness of Macedonia], Скопје, 1978.

⁴¹ Within the long-term project of the Macedonian and Russian Academies, The Macedonian-Russian scientific conference “Macedonia and the Russian policy in the Balkans from the Congress of Berlin to the First World War” was held in 2004 in Ohrid. The papers were published in: Македонија и руската политика на Балканот од Берлинскиот конгрес до Првата светска војна. Материјали од Македонско-рускиот научен собир одржан во Охрид на 27 и 28 септември 2004 [Macedonia and the Russian policy in the Balkans from the Congress of Berlin to the First World War. Materials of the Macedonian-Russian scientific conference held in Ohrid on 27 and 28 September 2004], Скопје, 2008.

⁴² Кресненското востание во Македонија 1878 – 1879. Материјали од Научниот собир одржан по повод 100-годишнината од востанието. Берово, 2 – 4 октомври 1978 година [The Kresna Uprising in Macedonia 1878 – 1879. Materials from the Symposium held on the 100th anniversary of the uprising. Berovo, 2 – 4 October, 1978], Скопје, 1982.

⁴³ *State Archive of Republic of Macedonia* since 1990 (Виолета Герасимовска, Архив на Македонија [Archive of Macedonia], Скопје, 1996; Иван Алексов, Државен архив на Република Македонија: 1951 – 2006 [The State Archive of the Republic of Macedonia: 1951 – 2006], Скопје, 2006, 15-26).

⁴⁴ Web. 20 December 2012. <http://www.holocaustfund.org>.

⁴⁵ Web. 20 December 2012. <http://mmb.org.mk>.

⁴⁶ The museum work is regulated by the *Law for Museums* (work and activity of the museums) and the *Law for Protection of the Cultural Heritage* (types, identification, ways and instruments for protection of the cultural heritage of Macedonia etc.).

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The Russo-Ottoman War (1877 – 1878) in Greek Historiography

Abstract: *This article is a review of the Greek Historiography on the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878. The general perception was that of a traumatic conflict very much related to the formation of a 'Greater Bulgaria'. In the first decades following the Russo-Ottoman War the historiographical trend was shaped by former fighters and politicians trying to justify their position through history. It was only in the last years when some scholarly works critically evaluated the events and the Greek policy towards them.*

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 – 1878 holds a significant place in the Greek historiography since it is significantly related to the process of the Greek integration. In the last quarter of the 19th century Greek foreign policy was concentrated on serious national issues with its irredentist policy of the 'Great Idea', at the centre. Burning national issues, especially the fate of the island of Crete, where an unsuccessful revolution took place in 1866 – 1869 and the permanent fear about the fate of the geographical region of Macedonia, especially after the Crimean War (1853 – 1856), kept the Greek governments on the alert. But at the same time Greece lacked the political will, the military power and the economic strength to impose its ambitions.

The Kingdom was still unstable, the political elites were unable to follow the road to modernization, the formation of an effective army was questionable and the problem of robbery spreading in the country, especially across the borders, caused difficulties in the implementation of a centralized policy. In this framework it was evident that any chance and success in the current national issues would happen mostly as the result of the intervention of the Great Powers, especially Great Britain, Russia and France. These three powers preserved their traditional footholds in Greece since the Greek War of Independence (1821 – 1830).

When the news about the declaration of the Russo-Ottoman War arrived in Athens, a massive movement by the Greek population pressed the government to enter the conflict on the side of Russia. King George I was anxious to do so, because of the economic weakness of his kingdom. The political parties were in a state of disarray.

On the other hand many irredentist organizations such as 'Αδελφότητα' [Fraternity] and 'Εθνική Άμυνα' [National Defense] were preparing to send armed bands to the Ottoman occupied areas populated by Greeks. For the whole year of 1877 the political situation in Athens was dominated by negotiations and hesitations. Simultaneously, the ambassadors of Russia and Great Britain in Athens tried to persuade the Greeks; the first to abstain from any military action, the latter to join the war by promising territorial gains.

When, at the beginning of 1878, the Greek government decided to enter the war it was too late. The Ottoman army had already been defeated and the newly established Bulgarian principality was intended to play a predominant role in the Southern Balkans especially with the incorporation within its borders of the majority of the geographical Macedonia. This was the historic result of the Treaty of San Stefano, which temporarily created a 'Greater Bulgaria'. The Greek army was forced to withdraw from the Ottoman territories, but in some historical Greek places like Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly local uprisings broke out. These momentary disruptions ended during the summer of 1878, after the Treaty of Berlin, which kept geographical Macedonia under control of the Ottoman Empire, thus putting an end to Greek fears about the possible domination of the Bulgarians in that region.

In this article I will try to highlight the perception of the Russo-Ottoman War by the Greeks. There is no doubt that the general perception was that of a traumatic conflict very much related to the formation of a 'Greater Bulgaria'.

The turbulent years

'A monstrous defeat for Greece'

When the Russo-Ottoman War ended and the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin were signed, a fierce debate opened within Greece about the responsibilities for the military fiasco and the diplomatic failures. Politicians, journalists and former bandits exchanged accusations trying to justify their position.

In the aftermath of the war, in 1878, the Greek Ministry for Foreign Affairs published a volume with a selection of 127 documents referring to the 1877 – 1878 events in Macedonia and Thessaly¹. The volume was submitted to the Greek Parliament with the aim of proving the crimes committed against the local Greek population by irregular Muslim bands. The diplomatic Greek network in these places was fully aware of these terrorist activities through its branches in various cities. It is obvious that the purpose of the publication was to justify the official Greek policy during the war and to prove it as inevitable because Greek interests in Macedonia were in danger.

Right after the end of the Russo-Ottoman War, Miltiadis Seizanis, who participated as a bandit in the revolutions organized by the Greek irredentist organizations, wrote a book entitled "The Greek Policy and the 1878 Revolution in Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly"². In his preface Seizanis argued that his intent was "to enlighten both Greeks and other Europeans" about the reasons of the Greek intervention and the benevolent feelings of the Greek revolutionaries. Seizanis had no doubt that the failure of the armed bands was a result of the official Greek policy which, he believed, had no intention of honestly helping the revolutionary move-

ment. He also accused the irredentist organizations of not having a specific plan. Seizanis remarked that, despite the reluctance of the Greek government, both he and his comrades intended to continue their efforts to liberate the unredeemed Greeks.³

In 1890, a former fighter during the Greek War of Independence and a close friend of the liberal Greek Prime Minister Harilaos Trikoupis, Georgios Kremos, published a "General History of Greece"⁴ where he argued that in 1877 Russia took the chance to implement the dream of Peter the Great, which was the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Kremos referred to the Treaty of San Stefano as a disastrous and monstrous moment, both for the Greeks and the Ottomans. He also used the word imprudence to describe the Greek official policy during the Russo-Ottoman War.⁵ But at the same time he underlined that the revolutionary movement in 1878 began thoughtlessly and without any preparation.⁶

The historian Tryfon Evangelidis⁷ agrees with what Kremos described as the dream of Peter the Great. Evangelidis eloquently described the reaction of the crowd in Athens when the news of the war arrived. Hundreds of demonstrators in the streets of the capital pressed the government to get involved in the military actions. With enthusiasm, military units left Athens for the Greek Ottoman borders.⁸ The author strongly criticized Greek politicians for the procrastination in entering the war on the side of the Russians. This was the major difference between his work and Kremos' book. Evangelidis was a supporter of the Russian interests in Greece and believed that Russia as an Orthodox country was the suitable ally for Greece. For Evangelidis, the Russo-Ottoman War was a unique moment in Greek history, but it was lost because of the hesitations of the Greek government. It was a great mistake, according to Evangelidis, who takes a strong position against the policy of Great Britain, which pressed Greece to join the Russian camp.⁹ Evangelidis refers to the Treaty of Saint Stefano as a total catastrophe for Greece.¹⁰

Epameinondas Kyriakidis in his book¹¹ argues that Russia started preparing a war against the Ottoman Empire right after the Crimean War, which was a real defeat for it. Since 1871, Kyriakidis wrote, Russian agents were sent to the Balkans in an effort to incite a Christian armed movement against the Ottomans.¹² Kyriakidis was born in Constantinople and he strongly believed in the Greek 'Great Idea', the unification of the Greeks. In that regard and quite ironically, he criticized the disagreement between the Greek political parties, which openly expressed their will for a military action, but in reality found many excuses for not doing anything. He also believed that the rejection of the Russian offer was a mistake for the Greeks who gave in to British pressure.¹³ Kyriakidis believed that the Treaty of San Stefano was a great triumph for Pan Slavism and a great injustice for the Greeks.¹⁴

Georgios Antoniou in 1880 argued that the Russo-Ottoman War was a product organized by the Pan Slavism Movement. But it gave Greece the possibility to liberate its brethren.¹⁵

Contemporary balanced settings

Moving to contemporary Greek historiography we can easily distinguish the scholarly work by Evangelos Kofos. Kofos is a historian working as a consultant in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His major work, "Greece and the Eastern Cri-

sis 1875 – 1878”¹⁶ is the most balanced analysis of the events of 1875 – 1878. Based on a huge variety of archival sources, such as the historical archives of the Greek foreign ministry and the archives of many other Great powers at that time, Kofos recounts the political maneuvers day by day and the diplomatic negotiations leading firstly to the Russo-Ottoman War and then to the Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin. Kofos describes the sentiments of the Greek population, just after the Treaty of San Stefano, which was viewed as a national catastrophe, possibly equal to the Fall of Constantinople in 1453.¹⁷ Kofos argues that during the Eastern Crisis the Greek kingdom was in a very weak position due to its military inability and the lack of diplomatic influence. This was the reason for the inertia and the disagreements between the Greek political parties, he sums up.¹⁸ In addition to the above-noted work, Kofos is the author of many other books, articles and selections of documents about the Russo-Ottoman War and its consequences.¹⁹

Lina Louvi in the collective volume “History of Modern Hellenism” characterizes the intervention by the irredentist Greek bands in Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia as a ‘political fiasco’, but he accepts that such initiatives helped the ‘Greek Question’ in diplomatic terms.²⁰ Vasilis Gounaris in the same volume argues that the tactic followed by the Greek armed bands in Macedonia was a mistake.²¹

Thanos Veremis and Ioannis Koliopoulos in their book “Greece: The Modern Sequel” are highly critical of the Greek policy following the 1877 – 1878 period. They argue that the Russo-Ottoman War challenged the reliability of the Greek government because Greek foreign policy was mapped by public opinion and the various patriotic organizations. Veremis and Koliopoulos wonder who was responsible for defining the national interest. For them the importance of the Greek uprisings has been overestimated by Greek historians. They believe that the change of British and French policy, which led to the Treaty of Berlin, was not a result of the irredentist Greek policy, but a consequence of their preference for a stronger Greece to replace the Ottoman Empire in the area against the feared Slavs.²²

The newly established trend in Greek historiography has already influenced the history taught in elementary and secondary education. In the textbook for the third grade in the high schools, the events of the War were recounted without any emotional elation²³. The same pattern was also used in the textbook for the third grade in elementary schools²⁴, as well as the history textbook for the sixth grade²⁵.

Conclusions

The Russo-Ottoman War was the starting point for a qualitative change in Greek foreign policy. With the fear of Panslavism, the traditional Greek policy of appeasement and non-interference towards the Ottoman Empire was abandoned. After 1878 Athens started to care more about Macedonia. It was also the first time that the Bulgarians, viewed as the ‘others’, were perceived as a possible threat to Greek national integration.

The Treaty of San Stefano was a national catastrophe, but in the long term it proved salutary for Greece. For the next four decades Greece intervened openly in the case of Macedonia through a vast educational and religious campaign. The Balkan Wars (1912 – 1913) were the culmination of Greek successes, since more

than half of the geographical region of Macedonia was incorporated into the Greek nation state.

¹ Διπλωματικά έγγραφα περί του ελληνικού ζητήματος κατατεθέντα εν τη Βουλή των Ελλήνων υπό του επί των Εξωτερικών Υπουργού [Diplomatic Documents on the Greek Issue submitted to the Greek Parliament by the Minister of Foreign Affairs], Αθήνα 1878.

² Μιλτιάδης Σειζάνης, Η πολιτική της Ελλάδος και η Επανάσταση του 1878 εν Μακεδονία, Ηπείρω και Θεσσαλία [The Greek Policy and the 1878 Revolution in Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly], Αθήνα 1878.

³ Ibid., 1-4.

⁴ Γεώργιος Κρέμος, Νεώτατη Γενική Ιστορία ως τέταρτος τόμος συμπληρωματικός της γενικής ιστορίας του Α. Πολυζωίδου [New General History], Αθήνα 1890.

⁵ Ibid., 740-744.

⁶ Ibid., 1216.

⁷ Τρύφων Ευαγγελίδης, Τα μετά τον Όθωνα ήτοι ιστορία της μεσοβασιλείας και της βασιλείας Γεωργίου του Α' (1862 – 1898) [History of the years after King Otto and of the King George A' era (1862 – 1898)], Αθήνα 1898.

⁸ Ibid., 389-407.

⁹ Ibid., 437-439.

¹⁰ Ibid., 494.

¹¹ Επαμεινώνδας Κυριακίδης, Ιστορία του συγχρόνου ελληνισμού από της ιδρύσεως του βασιλείου της Ελλάδος μέχρι των ημερών μας 1832 – 1892 [History of Contemporary Hellenism from the Establishment of the Greek Kingdom until nowadays 1832 – 1892], τόμ.2, Αθήνα 1892.

¹² Ibid., 544.

¹³ Ibid., 571.

¹⁴ Ibid., 591.

¹⁵ Γεώργιος Αντωνίου, Πολιτικόν κάτοπτρον των πολιτικών της Ελλάδος κατά τον εν έτει 1877 ρωσοτουρκικόν πόλεμον [Political Mirror of the Greek Policy during the Russo-Ottoman War 1877], Αθήνα 1890, 20-22.

¹⁶ First published in English, Thessaloniki 1975. See also the Greek translation, Ευάγγελος Κωφός, Η Ελλάδα και το Ανατολικό Ζήτημα 1875-1878, Αθήνα 2001.

¹⁷ Ibid., 155.

¹⁸ Ibid., 203-206.

¹⁹ Among them I choose, Η επανάσταση της Μακεδονίας κατά το 1878 [The 1878 Revolution in Macedonia], Θεσσαλονίκη 1969, a selection of archival sources from the Greek ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ο αντάρτης επίσκοπος Κίτρος Νικόλαος [Nikolaos. The Rebel Bishop of Kitros], Αθήνα-Γιάννινα 1992, the memoirs of the Bishop Nikolaos, one of the leading cadres of the Greek uprising in Macedonia in 1878.

²⁰ Λίνα Δούβη, «Το εθνικό ζήτημα. Ύλαβικός κίνδυνος και ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική» [«The National Issue. The Fear of the Slavs and the Greek Foreign Policy»] in Βασίλης Παναγιωτόπουλος (ed.), Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού 1770 – 2000 [History of Modern Hellenism 1770 – 2000], vol. 5, 38.

²¹ Βασίλης Κ. Γούναρης, «Μακεδονία 1871 – 1909» [Macedonia 1871 – 1909] in Βασίλης Παναγιωτόπουλος (ed.), Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού 1770 – 2000 [History of Modern Hellenism 1770 – 2000], vol. 5, 262.

²² Θάνος Βερέμης, Γιάννης Κολιόπουλος, Ελλάς. Η σύγχρονη συνέχεια από το 1821 μέχρι σήμερα [Greece. The Modern Sequel to 1821], Αθήνα 2006, 269-281.

²³ Ιωάννης Κολιόπουλος, Κωνσταντίνος Σβολόπουλος, Ευάνθης Χατζηβασιλείου, Θεόδωρος Νημάς, Χάρης Σχολινάκη-Χελιώτη, Ιστορία του Νεότερου και του Σύγχρονου Κόσμου [History of the Modern and Contemporary World], Αθήνα, 2010, 65.

²⁴ Ευαγγελία Λούβη και Δημήτρης Ξιφαράς, Νεότερη και σύγχρονη ιστορία [Modern and Contemporary History], Αθήνα 2006, 48.

²⁵ Ιωάννης Κολιόπουλος, Ιάκωβος Μιχαηλίδης, Αθανάσιος Καλιανιώτης, Χαράλαμπος Μηνάογλου, Ιστορία του Νεότερου και Σύγχρονου Κόσμου [History of the Modern and Contemporary World], Αθήνα 2012, 158-161.

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Memory Politics and Cultures in Turkey

Abstract: *The article gives an insight into memory politics and cultures in Turkey and into related discussions throughout the 20th century until today. Academic studies on memory politics and cultures have only begun recently, as this kind of research has always been linked to taboo topics such as the state's politics against non-Muslim minorities in the Turkish Republic, as well as the methodology of oral history is still weakly institutionalized in Turkey. Furthermore the state's monopoly in creating collective memories constituted a serious obstacle for alternatives in historical research. Although the ROW of 1877 – 1878 played a decisive role in the creation of modern Turkey at a political, social, cultural and demographic level and has therefore taken an important place in the popular memory, it has not caused an adequate manifestation in Turkish historiography and has not recently triggered a discussion within the framework of memory politics and cultures in Turkey.*

“A new awareness of the fundamental importance of human suffering in understanding history is required. It has to be combined with the cultural practice of mourning and forgiving and the new, fundamental elements of ambivalence and ambiguity in the concepts of historical identity. All these elements have the potential to lead to a new form of historical culture in general and of academic discourse in particular. I would not hesitate to characterise these forms as genuinely humanistic. So our academic criticism of the political misuse of historical cognition and of political interference should not only defend the achievements of an open, rational discourse in historical studies but it should be an incentive for a new humanism in history.”¹

In this paper I will first introduce a concise theoretical and conceptual framework of memory politics and memory studies in general. Then I will discuss the current memory politics in Turkey through a critical analysis of recent discussions while focusing especially on the collective memory on the ‘minorities’ in Turkey.

Individual or personal memory and especially collective memory have been a topic of intellectual interest for centuries, but Olick traces the contemporary usage of term collective memory to Durkheim's discussion on commemorative rituals in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and to Durkheim's student Maurice Halbwachs' 1925 study, *The Social Frameworks of Memory*.²

Different terms are used by scholars often in the similar (if not the same) meaning in the relevant literature since Durkheim and Halbwachs: Cultural memory³, social memory⁴, public memory⁵ and/or popular memory⁶, there are however important distinctions among these concepts.⁷ In this essay I will use the most generally used term of collective memory.⁸

Observing the recent increase in remembrance, memories, commemorations and memory studies, one can claim that there is a global 'memory boom' in the last decades:

"No matter what the specific conceptualization, what may be called social memory studies (Olick and Robbins 1998) has become a prominent feature of scholarly discourse in recent decades, when Western societies in particular have been experiencing a sort of 'memory boom' (Winter 2006). Indeed, explaining this boom has been an important topic for social memory studies. Scholars have variously sought to explain the rise of interest in the past, memory, commemoration, nostalgia, and history in contexts ranging from consumer promotions, popular culture, interior and exterior design, and public space, as well as the rise of reparations, apologies, and other forms of redress in domestic and international politics. Answers have included the decline of the nation-state as a carrier of identity, the end of faith in progress, the rise of multiculturalism, and postmodernity more generally."⁹

It is well known that selective use of memories, silences (oblivion) and distorted or invented past stories (modern myths) have been playing key role in the nation building process in modern world history. The common mechanisms and means in this process have been academic and popular historiography, education (especially school textbooks), official and civil commemorations, media (press, radio and TV), fiction (poems, novels, theatre, etc.) and place names.

The (still ongoing) construction of the 'Turkish nation' in the Turkish Republic after its foundation in 1923 exhibits a good example for this kind of politics of memory in the service of the nation-building process, as "Turkey is most shaped by its identity as a successor state to the collapsed Ottoman Empire."¹⁰

Politics of memory in Turkey: Neo-Ottomanism and liberal revisionism as a reaction to Kemalist republicanism

"Turkey has long been considered an archetype of social amnesia. However, the country has recently been undergoing an explosion of memory. Academics, artists, novelists, screenwriters, members of the legal profession, politicians, and of course ordinary citizens have been striving to recover pasts both real and imagined. Movies, novels, and TV series trigger debates on Ottoman wars of conquest, sixteenth-century palace life, everyday life in the tumultuous Balkans in the late nineteenth century, the private life of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (the founder of the modern republic), and the legacy of youth political mobilization in the 1970s. The recent memory wave also addresses the legacy of mass atrocities and authoritarianism: the 1915 deportation and mass killing of Armenians, discriminatory policies against non-Muslim minorities, the Dersim massacre of 1937 – 1938, the attacks against the lives and property of non-Muslims in Istanbul on 6-7 September 1955, violent repercussions of class

conflict in the 1960s and 1970s, various massacres against the Alevi minority since the late 1970s, military interventions in 1960, 1971, and 1980, numberless coup attempts and provocations since the 1960s, and of course the causes, patterns, and consequences of the violence between the Turkish state and the PKK insurgency.”¹¹

Recently, one strong trend in memory politics in Turkey has been ‘neo-Ottomanism’. Employed in the last decades more often for the new foreign policy of Turkish governments striving for more political, cultural and economic influence in the ex-Ottoman geography, the term neo-Ottomanism has also been, albeit less frequently, used for the recent focus at a domestic political and cultural level on the Ottoman past.

The interest in the imperial Ottoman past in modern Turkey can be seen as a familiar phenomenon for a country built out of the collapse of an empire:

“... historical legacies or memories of collapsed empires matter on a variety of levels for a successor state’s national identity. Imperial identities that are supplanted by national identities carry with them the expectations of international prestige and great power status that characterized the former grandeur of empire. As such, the identity of a former empire is directly affected by the imperial legacy that its successor state is bequeathed, and, more importantly, the interpretation of this legacy. The choices that a former imperial metropolis’ elites make in dealing with its imperial legacy are not only determined by rational self-interest and material capabilities, but also by the particular ideas that are enshrined in the formation of a national identity that might run counter to its own material and international interests.”¹²

Indeed the question of sympathy (even nostalgia) for the Ottoman past has always existed in the Turkish Republic, but this long-existing phenomenon could be seen as a kind of romantic, rather unsystematic and often self-Orientalizing representation of some elements in the Ottoman past can be seen among the nationalist and Islamist groups who (ab)use these elements sporadically in their political discourse of “romanticizing the Ottoman Past” in the service of constructing a “Neo-Ottoman Turkish Identity”.¹³

It has sometimes been a source of intellectual opposition among some marginal conservatives and mainly Islamists as a reaction to the modernist nationalist Republican (and often anti-Ottoman) politics of memory, but these people have hardly identified themselves with ‘Ottomanness’ and Ottomanism, or advocated the Ottoman Empire/system in its entirety, because it was neither Islamic enough nor Turkish indeed. However things started to change from 1990s onwards.

Recent sympathy for the Ottoman past in Turkey can be seen as part of the global ‘historimania’, i.e. obsession with the past, but recently there is a new phenomenon accompanying this rather non-political older trend. Apart from “an imperial re-collection, memory, and interest in the Ottoman experience as a great power in the region”¹⁴ at the international level, there is a trend on the domestic level towards taking the Ottoman (supposed) multi-culturalism and decentralism as a model for the post-national postmodern world:

"Some conservative and nationalist Turkish policymakers, especially Turgut Ozal (prime minister between 1983 and 1989 and president between 1989 and 1993), began to use Turkey's Ottoman legacy to resolve internal sociocultural tensions that resulted from cultural diversity, and to determine Turkish foreign policies, especially toward the Balkans. The Ottoman legacy was used to invoke a collective cultural memory by constructing a nostalgic narrative of Turkey's shared past. Coupled with competing elite groups' struggle over the country's collective memory, this was a deliberate attempt to reconstruct the present; it was 'cultural memorization'..."¹⁵

The continuity between the ever existing sympathy in Turkey for some Ottoman elements or usual use of history in public debates and the current rise in neo-Ottomanism is clear, but it is still important to see the quantitative and qualitative differences in the current neo-Ottomanist nostalgia and "uses of history in recent public debates in Turkey".¹⁶ In Turkey, (as in many other nation-states¹⁷) there has been a continuous 'war of memories' between the modernist state and oppositional conservative groups, and the characteristics of this 'war' have changed in different periods of Republican history according to modifications in the official discourse. Although hardly possible to offer a thorough analysis of it here, it is still possible to make some general observations on the always ambivalent place of the imperial legacy in the collective memory in Turkey:

"The imperial reputation of the Ottoman Empire and the historical memory of modern Turkey are filled with paradoxes. On the one hand, the Ottoman Empire is remembered largely in Turkey for its first 300 years of expansionist history that saw the Osman Tribe expand from along the Selcuk-Byzantine border in the late thirteenth century to rule throughout Anatolia and the Balkan Peninsula in the following centuries. On the other hand, the series of almost uninterrupted defeats at the hands of the West, including particularly the Habsburg and Romanov empires that began with the second siege of Vienna (1683) are remembered as being symptomatic of the decline and backwardness of the empire that was in dire need of modernization by the time of World War One. Like any modern nation, the Turkish Republic selectively constructed its historical narrative and focused attentions on the moments of triumphs, rather than dwelling on the anguish of defeats."¹⁸

Risking a certain amount of overgeneralization, one could agree with the widespread belief that during the first two decades of the Turkish Republic the Kemalist elite severed modern Turkey's link to the Ottoman Empire and hence to the Oriental/Islamic past in the more general context of the radical and total modernization/Westernization process in the country. Pursuing an opportunistic politics of memory, the new regime simultaneously cut many ties with the Ottoman past, "...while glorifying different aspects of the Ottoman legacy as evidenced by the Turkish military's strong emphasis on Ottoman warfare in its curriculum."¹⁹ Bakiner summarizes this Kemalist historical narrative in the first decades very precisely:

"Kemalist historiography is based on a selective reading of late Ottoman (from the eighteenth century up to the end of World War I) and early Republican (1923 – 1946) history. It claims the Republic as a clear rupture from the Otto-

man Empire, overlooking the cultural and political-institutional continuities. Accordingly, the Turkish Republic signifies a civilizational transformation away from the backwardness of the late Ottoman Empire. The shortcomings of the outgoing regime are scientific-technological, political, and normative at the same time; hence the Kemalists' constant reference to the all-encompassing notion of "civilization" (*medeniyet*) in diagnosing the problems and proposing solutions."²⁰

The Kemalist elite have managed to monopolise public memory through the use of all thinkable means controlled by the state and through a "policy of silencing alternative historical narratives".²¹

Recent Islamist challenges to the Kemalist politics of memory have led to a more explicit war of memory politics due to the Kemalist counter attack:

"The endeavours to construct a new past for the nation and an alternative collective cultural memory, especially among Islamists in the second half of the 1990s, inspired Kemalist groups to launch a new programme to transmute Kemalism into a social identity by remembering the Republican past. Debates on the past between the Kemalist secularist groups and the conservative and pro-Islamic groups turned on competing politico-moral standards and different lifestyles. (...)

The Kemalist establishment initiated commemorative activities to celebrate Atatürk's time, the formative years of the Republican regime and to retrieve the spirit of Kemalism. The ceremonies of Republic Day on 29 October gained particular importance for Kemalist and secularist officials and groups after the rise of the Welfare Party (the 'Islamic threat'), with its emphasis on the Ottoman past and celebration of the 'Conquest of Istanbul'. Republic Day has been celebrated since the 1930s as a 'holiday of reforms' or a 'holiday whereby people came to appreciate their own achievements'.⁵³ The rising tide of such commemorations in the 1990s seemed to be central to mobilizing social awareness of the achievements and civilized qualities of the Republic. Remembrance of the Kemalist past was directly related to the process of reconstructing Kemalism in the 1990s for the sake of the hegemony of the secularist establishment.⁵⁴ The effort to transmute Kemalism into a social identity was effected through organizing such social activities as rallies, conferences, concerts and balls; and establishing a network of Atatürkist/Kemalist civil societal elements, such as the Society for Atatürkist Thought and the Society to Support Contemporary Life."²²

I totally agree with Bakiner's statement about the current situation in the war of memory politics and about the memory policy of the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey:

"Is Turkey coming to terms with its past? I observe the replacement of the hegemonic framework of memory (Kemalism) by a multiplicity of alternative memories. However, despite the ever-louder presence of new historical sensitivities, policies that selectively silence those voices still inhibit a pluralistic public memory. The AKP's success at capturing voters' disenchantment with the shortcomings of the Kemalist modernization project has, far from promoting (self-)critical historiography, created the conditions for another exclusionary

and uncritical portrayal of the Ottoman and Republican past. The governing elite, with its broad-based political support, has been trying to stabilize the field of memory by replacing one dominant nationalist narrative with another. Thus, the government's efforts focus on closing the space for alternative memories. Nevertheless, the plurality of memory narratives and frameworks is likely to render the new hegemonic project out of step with social reality. The disarticulation of Kemalism as the organizing framework of officially sanctioned memory underpins the polyphonic character of contemporary public discourse.²³

In spite of a boost in a neo-Ottomanist politics of memory and general interest in Ottoman history in Turkey, it is interesting to observe that discussions on specific issues in the past have rather been concerned mainly with Republican history, especially through attempts by liberals and leftists towards deconstruction (demythologization) of official memory, discussed by Bakiner as attempts towards 'coming to terms with the past': "I observe an unprecedented interest in the country's recent and distant past, accompanied by a societal demand for truth and justice in addressing past human rights violations. The state has always been a central actor in constructing and disseminating interpretations of the past, but the disarticulation of Kemalism as an organizing memory framework has opened up the possibility of questioning the accuracy and legitimacy of state-sanctioned historiography."²⁴ This questioning took place through tackling neglected issues and especially by means of a revisionist review of the history of state policies towards the non-Muslims in Turkey, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Some specific issues in the Second Constitutional Period (1908 – 1918/23), like the *coup d'état* attempt in March 1909, have recently been a matter of public debate to a certain degree, because this period is seen an inseparable part of Republican history since almost all actors and institutions of the Republic emerged at that time.. Indeed there have always been (albeit rare) revisionist attempts towards questioning the Ottoman modernization history starting either with 1789 (i.e. with the enthronement of the modernist Sultan Selim III) or 1839 (when a clear state policy of modernization was declared through the Imperial Edict of Tanzimat). Indeed the roots of the Turkish Republic (hence the history of modern Turkey) are often traced back to the beginning of the long nineteenth century (1789 – 1908), and one can without much doubt state that the Russo-Ottoman War (ROW) of 1877 – 1878 and its consequences played a decisive role in the creation of modern Turkey at a political, social, cultural and demographic level. The ROW years not only witnessed the first parliamentary experience in the Ottoman Empire, coined the First Constitutional Period (1876 – 1878), but the direct consequences of this war can be seen in the enormous demographic changes that took place due to land losses and mass migrations. The subsequent despotic modernist Islamist regime (1878 – 1908) of Sultan Abdulhamit (1876 – 1909), during which the ruling elite of the Turkish Republic (Young Turks) emerged, has also been seen as an outcome of this war.

Although the ROW has (directly or indirectly) taken an important place in the popular memory, neither there is enough (academic or popular) work in the Turkish historiography on this war and its consequences, nor has it taken any place in the recent discussions regarding the politics of memory in Turkey.

The place of ROW in the popular memory in Turkey which can be traced in the limited literature, popular culture, place names, fiction etc, is a subject of a separate essay. I turn now to the recent politics of memory focused on the Republican past.

Recent revival of memory studies and oral history in Turkey

Academic studies and popular debate on memory politics in Turkey have started rather recently. The main subjects of these studies and debate have been some thorny issues and the way(s) they are remembered and/or silenced: Oppressive state policies in the service of the nation-building process and modernization in general, and especially the state politics against the non-Muslim minorities in the Turkish Republic, are among such issues. Critical studies and discussions on these (hitherto taboo) issues themselves have themselves recently started. There is a great need to study their place in the collective memory in Turkey, and oral history is the most appropriate way of doing so:

"Itself a relatively new interdisciplinary field, oral history and memory studies is a fledgling research area in Turkey. This provides a contrast with history, a well-established, hegemonic discipline historically allied with the state. While many academics in the field of oral history and memory studies outside Turkey were trained in history, and through their work challenged and transformed traditional historiography, in Turkey, practitioners of oral history tend to come from other disciplines such as folklore, anthropology, sociology, literature and women's studies. As a new field, oral history and memory studies is weakly institutionalized in academe: few universities offer courses in oral history and/or memory studies, usually on the initiative of individual academics based in other programs. In recent years, though, with the rise of identity politics and widespread debate in the media on national history, academics as well as NGO's, informal groups and individuals are turning to oral history as a means of rediscovering and reinterpreting the past."²⁵

While studying the collective memory/memories in Turkey, one of the main problems one would encounter is the changes in different periods. The periodization of the history of the Turkish Republic in terms of the politics of memory is an important problem. I would suggest the following periodization: 1) Early years of 'anti-Ottomanism' under the mono-party system (1923 – 1945); 2) Coming to terms with the Ottoman past under the multi-party system (1946 – 1960); 3) Polyphonic period with alternative memories more explicitly represented in public debate (1960 – 1980); 4) Back to mono-narrative under military dictatorship (1980 – 1990); and Rise of Neo-Ottomanism (1990 – today). A fuller discussion of this periodization and changes in the politics of memory in different periods must be attempted in a separate work.

Another important concern in collective studies in Turkey is the degree of influence of the official memory politics ('official memory') on ordinary people (individual, family and group memories), and to distinguish individual and social/cultural memories from political/public memories.²⁶ A bigger challenge is to study these radically different 'worlds of memories' (unofficial social/cultural memories) among

different groups in Turkey surviving underground, the main source for which is oral history.

Recent revisionist attempts in the academic and popular historiography in Turkey were mostly based on questioning the official memory and recognition of unofficial (hitherto underground) memories. They can also be seen as attempts towards 'confronting the past' through oral history or critical evaluation of conventional sources. Autobiographic memory (through life-story interviews) and eye-witness accounts of recent history have played an important role in the study of hitherto neglected traumatic events/issues like the Dersim genocide of 1937-38 and discussions on debated issues like repressive state policies in Kurdistan, the massacre on 1st of May 1977 in Istanbul, and sufferings of the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey.

Below is a good summary of recent studies on oral history and memory in Turkey by a scholar herself one of the initiators of these studies:

"Oral history research in Turkey in recent years has tended to focus on a number of key themes or topics. These include women's experiences (Durakbaşa and İlyasoğlu 2001, Çakır 2006, Bora 2005, Akal 2003), the experiences of elites educated in republican institutions (Tan 2007, Özyürek 2006, Akşit 2005), migration (Dinç n.d. ed.), the urban experience (Şenol Cantek 2003), urban poverty (Erdoğan 2002) and ethnic/religious identity, including Islamist (İlyasoğlu 1994), Alevi (Neyzi 2002), and Kurdish (Çağlayan 2007, Özgen 2003) identity. Few and far between are studies carried out in rural settings (Hart 2007, Candan 2007).

Whereas early work tended to rely on oral history interviewing, the 2000s evidenced the emergence of memory studies. In 2003, sociologist Meltem Ahıska organized a workshop at Boğaziçi University at which Andreas Huyssen, an important figure in the field of memory studies, was keynote speaker (Ahıska and Kolluoğlu 2003). Meltem Ahıska has made an important contribution to memory studies through her discussion of the concept of occidentalism (Ahıska 2006). According to Ahıska, the lack of value accorded to archives in republican Turkey is no mere oversight but derives from a deep sense of unease with the past. Esra Özyürek and Yael Navaro-Yashin, anthropologists teaching in the US and the UK respectively, have also contributed to research on memory studies in Turkey. Esra Özyürek showed how the early republican period was represented differently by secularists and Islamists vying for political power, and how republican iconography such as Atatürk's photographs and statist rituals such as commemoration of the establishment of the republic, were privatized and commodified (Özyürek 2006). Navaro-Yashin showed how Atatürk is mythologized in popular culture, continuing to live on in the Turkish psyche as a kind of sacred ancestor (Navaro-Yashin 2002). Current research on memory studies in Turkey is expanding to encompass new topics such as fiction, architecture, monuments, commemoration, museum and heritage studies (Neyzi f.c.).

To date, oral history and memory studies remains weakly institutionalized in Turkish universities. Courses, in so far as they are available, are offered by a small number of academics based in a variety of disciplines. Sabancı University, a relatively new private university structured on the basis of interdisciplinary degree programs, has incorporated oral history and memory studies into its undergraduate and graduate curriculum (Sabancı University Cultur-

al Studies Program). An oral history archive and oral history website were created to archive and showcase the oral history research of students (Sabancı University Oral History Website).²⁷

An important dimension of the collective memory of recent history (and more distant past) is the generational/transgenerational memory²⁸, which would help us to study important issues like ROW, the survivors of which cannot be alive anymore. Beside oral history focused on generational memory, close study of oral tradition and folklore would also be helpful in the study of such events in the relatively distant past.

Current discussions on memory politics in Turkey: Confronting the past through examination of silenced and/or thorny issues

Recent Turkish historiography re-viewing the history of Turkish state policies and public discussions on the controversial or hitherto silenced issues can be seen as a step in the transition from oblivion to obsession with the past,²⁹ discussed above.

Regarding the common issues and recent developments in the Turkish historiography, two most important (highly political and extremely politicized) issues are the Armenian genocide in 1915 and the policy towards Kurds throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. There has been a great wave of publications in Turkey on these issues which must be dealt in a separate essay within their most complicated context.

The disputes around the Armenian genocide always start (and usually also end) with the question of how to term the events in 1915: The alternatives vary from genocide, massacre(s) and/or forced migration (*tehcir*) to the Turkish claim of 'reciprocal killings' (*mukatele*) of the Turkish nationalists. The politicization of this issue and question of its naming has become so extreme that parliaments of many countries made it their duty to vote for condemning this event as genocide, and genocide denial is now criminalized in some countries. Analyzing the Turkish historiography on the Armenian question, Fatma Müge Göçek "... distinguishes three periods: the Ottoman investigative narrative (1910s), the republican defensive narrative (1953 onwards) and the post-nationalist critical narrative (1990s onwards)."³⁰ It is not possible to deal with this immense issue in this essay.

The Kurdish issue, on the other hand, may not be as widely known and disputed in the world as the Armenian Genocide, but it has been at least as burningly political (and even more actual) in Turkey, because of the ongoing armed struggle for the Kurdish cause in Turkey. That is why, the recent attempts towards disarticulation of Kemalist public memory (usually by non-academic authors/actors) on the Kurdish issue automatically takes on extremely political characteristics in Turkey.

It is hardly possible even to offer a brief analysis of the place of these two immense issues in the collective memory and their place in the recent politics of memory in one essay. Taking into consideration the fact that until recently these two issues had hardly been studied properly or alternative voices on these issues had hardly been heard (the alternative speakers had hardly found any room to survive) in Turkey, the current inflation of academic and popular publications is totally understandable, though this sudden increase is far from filling the gap caused by the

previous silence (or silencing) or of offering adequate reliable academic knowledge on which to base sensible discussions.

This increase can also be seen as a part of growing attempts towards a revisionist account of the Turkish Republic. The mythologized and/or taboo issues of the so-called 'War of Independence' (1919 – 1923) and its leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881 – 1938) with all of his deeds and works as the 'founder of modern Turkey' and 'father of the Turks' have been subjects on which oppositional statements may result in prosecution. This fact has, however, never stopped exceptional mavericks and (more importantly) recent attempts towards critical re-assessment of some other (for the establishment more peripheral or tolerable) secondary issues like the incidents of Çerkez Ethem (1920 – 1921) and Dersim Genocide (1937 – 1938), both of which make actually an important part of the official narrative around Atatürk's cult. As the main body of the works on these and similar issues have been non-academic (popular) books, it is important to note the lack of academic interest in such thorny issues, which might be due to a kind of self-censorship for reasons of social and political pressure or legal constraints.

Persecution and mass violence against the non-Muslims: A silenced issue in the collective memory and recent attempts towards remembrance

A more openly discussed critical issue has been the mostly suppressive and often brutal policy of the Turkish Republic towards its non-Muslim minorities since its foundation in 1923. Apart from the first coverage or mentioning in films and media in the last few decades, there have been several popular and academic books and articles published either on this theme in general or on specific examples of attacks/pogroms and suppression against the non-Muslims. These incidents had until recently been almost totally absent in the (popular and academic) historiography. It is not surprising, therefore, that the authors of the recent critical works published since 1990s often start their work by complaining about the lack of interest and deficiency of works and/or sources on these issues. They also criticize the problematic approach towards these issues in the general historiography whenever they are superficially mentioned. A comprehensive list of these works can be found an appendix to this essay, but it not my intention to offer a thorough analysis of all of them here. I will try, instead, to highlight some general characteristics.

There are a large number of the reprehensible events in the history of the Turkish Republic in general that have not been confronted by the historians. A kind of confrontation with these affairs started with the discussions on the non-Muslims in Turkey from the 1990s on. The main issues that have been in focus and on which individual monographs and/or articles there have been written are as follows:

- i) Thrace Events/Pogrom (*Trakya Olayları*) in 1934: a series of violent attacks against Jewish citizens of Turkey in June and July 1934 in the cities of in Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli, and Çanakkale the Thrace region of Turkey.³¹
- ii) Conscription of non-Muslims into Labour Battalions (*Yirmi Kura Nafia Askerleri*) in 1941 – 1942: Hasty and often brutal conscription of mainly adult male non-Muslims of Turkey (Armenians, Greeks and Jews) aged

- 18-48 during the World War II, who were not qualified as true soldiers, given no weapons and not wearing military uniforms. Most of them were gathered in labour battalions where no Muslims were enlisted.³²
- iii) Wealth/Capital Tax in 1942 – 1943 (*Varlık Vergisi*): The rigidly-enforced and discriminatory Turkish tax supposedly levied on the wealthy citizens of Turkey in 1942 with the stated aim of raising funds for the country's defence in case of an eventual entry into World War II, which affected the non-Muslims because of higher tariffs imposed on them usually in an arbitrary and unrealistic way. Around two thousand non-Muslims, who could not pay the enormous amount within the given time-limit of thirty days, were arrested and sent to a forced labour camp and twenty-one of them died there.³³
 - iv) Anti-Greek Pogrom/Riots/Events of September 6-7, 1955: Anti-Greek riots (organized mob attacks) that broke out in Istanbul, Turkey on September 6-7, 1955 and assaulted Istanbul's Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities for nine hours.³⁴
 - v) The expelling of the Greeks in 1964: Sudden and forced deportation of the Greek citizens living in Turkey who had been given the right to live in Istanbul (together with their usually Turkish-citizen Greek families) since 1930.³⁵

It is interesting to note, actually, that the awareness about these issues in Turkey, where any kind of alternative narrative have always been punished in one way or other, started earlier than the discussion of other taboo issues mentioned at the beginning, and that the establishment has seemed to be readier to tolerate revisionism regarding these issues. In other words, Turkey has been more readily confronting her past when the sufferings of the non-Muslims are in question. Possible reasons for this can be discussed in a separate essay but one should not forget in this discussion that the non-Muslims of Turkey are not seen as a threat to the establishment anymore and the dominant sentiment behind this revisionism is nostalgia.

Although one can claim that Turkey has been the least affected country in Southeast Europe from the developments after 1990, and that the authoritarian regime (of the cold-war era) founded at the beginning of the 20th century has mainly survived under the multi-party system after 1950, the recent trend of revising the history and confronting the problematic aspects in the Turkish history also started in the 1990s. The role of the regional and global changes in that period on this trend can be discussed, but it is important to note that there had been an almost total silence about abovementioned in Turkey until the 1990s. One main exception was a book by Faik Ökte, one of the main actors of the implementation of Wealth Tax in Istanbul in 1942 and 1943, who published his apologetic book one year after the end of the one-party regime in 1950.³⁶ The severe criticism of Ökte immediately after the publication of his book (in the press of that period and through a pamphlet accusing him of treachery)³⁷ shows the general difficulty and dangers for anybody attempting such confessional statements about the recent past.

Among all of these events, the Wealth Tax event has actually had a relatively exceptional place in the Turkish collective memory, as this event had been more critically mentioned in some general works and/or memoirs and there have been more works on this issue – though appearing only from the 1990s. The critical attitude to such works might be rather based on the concern of the authors about damaging the image of Turkey in the world and affecting the Turkish economy through scaring the bourgeoisie in general and discouraging entrepreneurship in Turkey, rather than human rights and minority rights paradigm.

Another issue that has been (superficially) treated with such (rather partial and implicit) apology in some works has been the pogrom of 6-7 September 1955 which started as an anti-Greek operation in Istanbul and ended as a pogrom against all non-Muslims all over Turkey.

One reason for the break of silence on this issue has been because of a campaign following the events against a few leftist intellectuals and activists, and the imprisonment of some of them. As a result of this, we have got two separate memoirs written by two victims of this campaign, two important figures in Turkish intellectual life. Hasan İzzettin Dinamo published a pamphlet in 1971 where he mainly gives an account of his imprisonment without telling much about the pogrom itself.³⁸ Aziz Nesin wrote years later, on the other hand, offering a more detailed story of this campaign together his personal testimony about the pogrom and referring also to the sources published afterwards.³⁹

Another reason for the peculiar place of the events of September 6-7, 1955 is the fact that the government of that period was put on trial in a military court after the military coup of 1960 and that incidents such as the September 6-7, 1955 events consequently became a matter of political rivalry between two main parties of the establishment.

The Turkish state has always claimed to be secular(ist), but the policies against non-Muslims existed from the beginning of the Republic on. Though centrally shaped and controlled and often based on invented tradition, the Islamic characteristic of the Turkish Republic should be kept in mind.

Regarding the historiographic side of these studies individually and in general, one can immediately observe that most of these works are based on a synthesis of conventional sources and personal testimonies gathered through oral history interviews or personal archives. Whereas the general attitude is to publish these new documents in the books, there is a tendency towards discussing these events in a broader framework of Kemalist authoritarianism in general and its minority politics especially.

Although the recent path-breaking publications have opened the way for confronting the oppressive state policies and mass violence towards the non-Muslims, it is difficult to ignore the fact that the role of the civilians – as puppets of elements within the state operating outside the law and/or as eager participants of the pogroms – has been relatively neglected in the revisionist historiography. One can claim that a kind of dehumanization of these events has been taking place by focusing on the more abstract and vague agents like institutions, officials or the state in general. It is true that it is much more difficult and problematic to analyze the role of the masses and/or individuals that actively took part in these sometimes violent events.

Without doing so, however, the wholeheartedness and completeness of any attempt towards confrontation with the past will remain in doubt. Besides, in current discussion it is usually others who are expected to recognize any possible wrongdoings – again something making the ‘confrontation’ questionable. As has recently been the case in Turkey, one invites, encourages and/or compels others to confront the past whereas confronting one’s own social or personal role in it remains out of the question. Here it is also worth noting that revisionist accounts usually evoke institutional and/or social responsibilities, instead of personal psychological confrontations. One common and explicit type of avoidance or negligence (or deficiency) is to blame the state institutions and the regime in general, which inevitably forces the discussion to remain on an abstract or non-personal level. In recent oral history research projects on taboo issues one encounters the general attitude of focusing on the sufferings of the victims and their demands from the state, whereas the individual perpetrators are rarely interviewed about their deeds to be given the chance to confront their pasts. One wonders whether the country is ready for this further step.

Conclusion

Finally, taking into consideration the fact that in spite of the contribution of the recent revisionist historiography, some Turkish academics still continue to write books on “the [Turkish] Republic and minorities” without mentioning any example of the abovementioned repressive policy of the Turkish republic towards the minorities and that the issue of the minorities is still discussed only as though it were a problem or headache for the Turkish state and nation,⁴⁰ one should be hesitant about claiming that the revisionist publications have yet had a positive influence in Turkey.

It is very important to underline, however, that parallel to the increase in the number of the publications by some courageous authors confronting Kemalist history, the critical and oppositional voices in these publications also becomes bolder to the extent that the Wealth Tax has been termed an ‘economic and cultural genocide’⁴¹ and the trend is becoming everyday more widespread as the number of the MA and PhD studies on these thorny issues has been increasing as well.⁴²

¹ Jörn Rüsen, *Using History: The Struggle over Traumatic Experiences of the Past in Historical Culture*, *Historiein*, 11 (2011), 18.

² Jeffrey K. Olick, *Collective Memory*, in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Detroit, 2007, 7.

³ Jan Assmann, *Kültürel Bellek: Eski Yüksek Kültürlerde Yazı, Hatırlama ve Politik Kimlik* [Cultural Memory: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination in Ancient Civilizations], trans. Ayşe Tekin, İstanbul, 2001; Astrid Erl, Ansgar Nünning, and Sara B. Young (eds.), *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, Berlin; New York, 2008; Peter Meusburger, Michael J. Heffernan, and Edgar Wunder (eds.), *Cultural Memories: The Geographical Point of View*, Dordrecht; London, 2011.

⁴ James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory*, Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass., 1992; Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, *Social Memory Studies: From ‘Collective Memory’ to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1998), 105-140; Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, UK; New York, 1989.

- ⁵ Kendall R. Phillips (ed.), *Framing Public Memory*, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 2004; Esra Özyürek (ed.), *The Politics of Public Memory in Turkey*, Syracuse, NY, 2007.
- ⁶ Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory: The Cultural Experience of the Turin Working Class*, Cambridge, 1987.
- ⁷ Aleida Assmann, *Re-framing Memory: Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past*, in Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree, and J. M. Winter (eds.), *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, Amsterdam, 2010, 35-50.
- ⁸ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser, Chicago, 1992; Maurice Halbwachs, *Kolektif Bellek ve Zaman [Collective Memory and Time]*, *Cogito*, 50 (2007), 55-76; James V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge, UK; New York, 2002; James W. Pennebaker, Darío Páez, and Bernard Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ, 1997.
- ⁹ Olick, *Collective Memory*, 8; For a concise discussion of memory studies see Olick and Robbins, *Social Memory Studies*.
- ¹⁰ Joshua W. Walker, *Turkey's Imperial Legacy: Understanding Contemporary Turkey through Its Ottoman Past*, *Perspectives on Global Development & Technology*, 8, 2/3 (2009), 498.
- ¹¹ Onur Bakiner, *Is Turkey Coming to Terms with Its Past? Politics of Memory and Majoritarian Conservatism*, *Nationalities Papers* (2013), 6, doi:10.1080/00905992.2013.770732.
- ¹² Walker, *Turkey's Imperial Legacy*, 496.
- ¹³ Cihan Erkli, *Through the Turkish Looking-glass: Turkey's Divergent Narratives*, *National Identity & Foreign Policy*, M.A., Georgetown University, 2010, 28-31.
- ¹⁴ Walker, *Turkey's Imperial Legacy*, 503.
- ¹⁵ Çolak, *Ottomanism vs. Kemalism*, 587.
- ¹⁶ Vangelis Kechriotis, *From Oblivion to Obsession: The Uses of History in Recent Public Debates in Turkey*, *Historein*, 11 (2011), 99-124.
- ¹⁷ "Recent work on memory culture emphasizes the continuous re-interpretation of historical remembrance in the context of social debates, as well as the fact that memory is a process, and a politically contested one. This leads to the co-existence of multiple and differing, hegemonic and marginal, cultures of memory." Sylvia Paetschek, *Opening up Narrow Boundaries: Memory Culture, Historiography and Excluded Histories from a Gendered Perspective*, in Angelika Epple and Angelika Schaser (eds.), *Gendering Historiography: Beyond National Canons*, Frankfurt/Main, 2009, 164-5.
- ¹⁸ Walker, *Turkey's Imperial Legacy*, 500.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 502.
- ²⁰ Bakiner, *Is Turkey Coming to Terms with Its Past?*, 6-7.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 6.
- ²² Çolak, *Ottomanism vs. Kemalism*, 598.
- ²³ Bakiner, *Is Turkey Coming to Terms with Its Past?*, 6; For a critical detailed analysis of currently ruling AKP's memory politics see Enno Maessen, *Reassessing Turkish National Memory: The AKP and the Nation. An Analysis of the Representation of Turkish National Memory and Identity by the AKP*, M.A., Utrecht University, 2012.
- ²⁴ Bakiner, *Is Turkey Coming to Terms with Its Past?*, 2.
- ²⁵ Leyla Neyzi, "Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey", in *Turkey's Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century* (eds.), Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem, Philip Robbins, Basingstoke, 2010.
- ²⁶ Assmann, *Re-framing Memory: Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past*.
- ²⁷ Leyla Neyzi, *Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey*, 4.

²⁸ José Marques, Darío Páez, and Alexandra F. Serra, Social Sharing, Emotional Climate, and the Transgenerational Transmission of Memories: The Portuguese Colonial War, in James W. Pennebaker, Darío Páez, and Bernard Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ, 1997, 253-275; Howard Schuman, Robert F. Belli, and Katherine Bischooping, The Generational Basis of Historical Knowledge, in James W. Pennebaker, Darío Páez, and Bernard Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ, 1997, 47-77.

²⁹ Kechriotis, From Oblivion to Obsession: The Uses of History in Recent Public Debates in Turkey.

³⁰ Ibid., 111 referring to Fatma Müge Göçek, Reading Genocide: Turkish Historiography on the Armenian Deportations and Massacres of 1915, in Israel Gershoni, Amy Singer and Hakan Erdem (eds.), *Middle East Historiographies: Narrating the Twentieth Century*, Seattle, 2006, 101-127.

³¹ Aktar, Ayhan, Trakya Yahudi olaylarını 'doğru' yorumlamak [Interpreting the Jewish Incidents of Thrace Right], *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 26, no 155, 1996, pp. 4-16, Anver, Levi, 1934 Trakya Yahudileri Olayı – Alınmayan Ders [1934 Jewish Incidents in Thrace – Not Taken Lesson], *Tarih ve Toplum*, Sayı 151, July 1996, pp.10-17, Bali, Rifat, Yeni bilgiler ve 1934 Trakya olayları I [New Information and 1934 Jewish Incidents in Thrace I], *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 31, no 186, 1999, pp. 47-55, Bali, Rifat, Yeni bilgiler ve 1934 Trakya olayları II [New Information and 1934 Jewish Incidents in Thrace II], *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 32, no 187, 1999, pp. 42-48, Aviyente, Selim, 1934 Trakya olayları: Bir aile dramı! [1934 Jewish Incidents in Thrace, A Family Drama], *Şalom*, 2008, and Bali, Rifat, 1934 Trakya Olayları [1934 Jewish Incidents in Thrace], Istanbul, 2008.

³² Bali, Rifat, İkinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Türkiye'de Azınlıklar – Yirmi Kur'a İhtiyatlar Olayı [The Minorities in Turkey during the Second World War – The Incidents of Twenty Classes], *Tarih ve Toplum*, No 179, 1998, pp. 4-18 and Bali, Rifat, Yirmi Kur'a Nafia Askerleri [The Incidents of Twenty Classes], Istanbul, 2008.

³³ Akar, Rıdvan, Varlık Vergisi. Tek Parti Rejiminde Azınlık Karşısı Politika Örneği [Wealth Tax: An Example of a Politics Against Minorities in the Single Party Period] Istanbul, 1992, Alpsoy, Şekip, Varlık Vergisi ve İçel'deki Etkileri [Wealth Tax and the affects in İçel], MA Thesis, T.C. Mersin University, Institute of Social Sciences, History Department, 2001, Kafaçoğlu, Arslan Başer, Varlık Vergisi Gerçeği [The Reality of Wealth Tax], 2002, Akar 2006; Polat, Ümmügülsüm, Varlık Vergisi ve Basının Yaklaşımı [Wealth Tax and the Approach of the Press], M.A Thesis, T.C. (Kütahya) Dumlupınar University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of History, 2005, Pur, Hüseyin Pervez, Varlık Vergisi ve Azınlıklar [Wealth Tax and Minorities], Istanbul, 2007, Çetinoğlu, Ali Sait, Varlık Vergisi 1942 - 1944: Ekonomik ve Kültürel Jenosid, [Wealth Tax 1942 – 1944: Economic and Cultural Genocide], Istanbul, 2009.

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БАЛКАНИСТИЧЕН ФОРУМ

1/2013

Година XXII

Съставители:

Петър Воденичаров, Доминик Гутмайер

Формат 70/100/16

Предпечат: Нурие Муратова

Издателство: Университетско издателство “Неофит Рилски”

2700 Благоевград, ул. Иван Михайлов 66

Печатница: Печатна база при ЮЗУ “Неофит Рилски”, 2700

Благоевград, ул. Александър фон Хумболт 4

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