

## **„EUROPE AS A TRAUMATIC PLACE OF OFFICIAL HISTORICAL MEMORY?": Figures of European in the Obligatory (Modern) Bulgarian History Textbooks (1917-2000)**

*APSTRAKT: The author put the analyze of the Bulgarian historical textbooks (1917-2000) in the context of the similar approaches world wide in regards to their role in formation of national and historical self-consciousness. By using modern analytical methods, the author examines »traumatic places of the European history« in the Bulgarian textbooks that have had important role in creation of the Bulgarian national identity. In addition, the subject of this analyze is a treatment or evaluation of the neighboring nations that live around Bulgarians, former adversaries or allies.*

### *Introduction: Theoretical Orientations*

The theoretical framework of our analysis is postulated, first, by considering the historical narrative in its capacity to „establish the identity of its authors and listeners”, persuading „the listeners of their own permanence and stability in the temporal change of their world and of themselves”.<sup>1</sup> Second, it refers to the concept of the constructed new status of history in the modern public space as a „resource for solving the problems of the national emancipation and identity, and for legitimizing the political élites’ power struggles”.<sup>2</sup> Third, it deals with the idea of the textbook’s role in constructing the political myth, understood as „widely disseminated narrative, with its cortege of images, which endows the group with its cultural homogeneity and moral unity”.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rösen Jorn, *Studies in Metahistory*, Pretoria, Human Sciences Research Council, 1993, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Grekova Maya, Liliana Deyanova, Snezhana Dimitrova, Milena Yakimova, Andrej Bundzhulov, Martin Kanushev, *Natsionalnata identichnost v situatsiya na prehoda: istoricheski resursi*, Sofia, Lik, 1997, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Carbonell, 1996, 7.

Forth, it is based on seeing the textbook as a „functional place of memory... a place, where a society... gives voluntarily in safe-keeping its memories or rediscovers them as a necessary part of its personality”.<sup>4</sup>

In this context of theoretical concepts, our analysis is focused on: 1) the ways the historical narratives (which have formed the structure of the educational content in the obligatory history textbooks) construct the national community, formulating its relation with „the surrounding world”; and 2) the images in which these links and relations are conceived and identified. This analysis examines the process of re-writing the history textbook (as a legitimizing resource of the changing political élites during the periods 1917-1946; 1946-1955; 1963-1984-1989; 1990-1993-1996-2000<sup>5</sup>) by scrutinizing the change or its absence in the relation „we-not-we” (and especially in the images of the borders that divide the group „here and now” from „the external-political-others”) in order to discern the value-normative scale of the historical narrative’s chain of events, which builds and carries the national identity. Therefore, our aim here is a verification of the hypothesis that the textbook narratives construct the national identity (the discourse about „us”) through the separation from and opposition to the other, which is always considered the „external-political-other-Europe-Balkan-countries...” (the discourse about „not-us”); thus the corresponding identities of Europe and of the European are set up and the constant dimensions which form the memory of the neighbour and construct the perception of otherness as an imperative part of the collective imagination of the Bulgarian nation are outlined. Hence, the discourse analysis of the history textbooks tries to point out the types of historical narrative which form the basis of the educational content and postulate the key connotations shaping the multilayer polysemantic image of the „external-other”.

Our study deals with the obligatory history textbook in its capacity of official pedagogic discourse. This discourse is charged, on one hand, with the function of national and civic education of the students,<sup>6</sup> and on the other hand, with the expectations to provide historical resources for solving the crisis of the national identity, caused by the changed direction of Bulgarian historical time as a result of the flow of world history. Therefore, our analysis stresses on the process by which the sum of textbook narratives normatively masters the past experience as articulated in the public space of history<sup>7</sup> in which incommensurable interpretations spread opposite and contradictory values and

<sup>4</sup> Nora Pierre, *Mémoire collective. La Nouvelle Histoire*, Paris, RETZ-C.E.P.L., 1978, 401.

<sup>5</sup> I. e. here we take account of the fact that the inter-war textbook contains in itself the conception of the linear time and the ideology of the state nationalism; the 1946 textbook reflects the positions of the popular front government; the 1954-1955-1960 textbook supports the imposing of the dictatorship of the proletariat and emancipates the proletariat class; the 1982-1989 textbook legitimates the strategies of the reformats communist elite; the 1990 textbook, 1993 textbook, 1996 textbooks stand behind the strategies of new post-communist elite's and legitimize their strategies of transition. (Cfs.: Bundjoulov Andrej, Deyan Deyanov, Liliana Deyanova, Milena Yakimova, Martin Kanoushev, Nina Nikolova, Svetlana Sabeva, Snezhana Dimitrova, *Prenapisvaniyata po nova bilgarska istoriya v gimnazialnite uchebniitsi po istoriya*, Sofia, Ministerstvo na prosvetata i obrazovanieto, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> Deyanov, 1995, 135-137.

images of national history; this kind of mastering past experience is achieved through the figures of reminder, understatement and omission, especially when dealing with the traumatic places of the common memory.<sup>8</sup>

Here, in this case study, the chosen theoretical approach requires the subject of our analysis to be the textbook whose content structure: 1) most lucidly displays the correlation between national and European history, and 2) most clearly displays the value normative scale of the historical narrative's chain of events re-producing the images and perceptions in which the community thinks and identifies itself. Recent sociological research shows that both the most stable interpreting scheme, that of re-evaluating the past in order to understand the present, and the most stable identifying marker, that of outlining the figure of the external political other, were created by the textbook narratives articulating modern Bulgarian history in the obligatory textbook for the 11th grade (covering the period from 1878 to 1944). This is a result from the use of modern Bulgarian history, firstly, as a chief legitimizing resource of the political élites participating in the power struggle, and secondly, as a resource for the solving of the national identity crises. The redirection of our analysis towards the sum of narratives articulating modern Bulgarian history and forming the structure of the official political discourse in the transition period (1993-2000) is influenced by „the new look at Bulgarian historic time from the 15<sup>th</sup> c. to the 17<sup>th</sup> c.” constructed in the public space of history. This look for the first time entails rethinking of the past (hitherto routinely labeled as „Turkish slavery”) in order to provide the historical resources for overcoming the „traumas of national identity” that have been reproduced in the narratives of the „dark ages of enslavement and violence”. This look requires for the first time the reinterpretation of the value-normative scale of the narratives that compose the Bulgarian history under the Ottoman Empire, the reinterpretation, which is a must for legitimizing the new European civil values, those of ethnic and religious tolerance. Last, but not least, the 11th grade textbook in Bulgarian history (covering the period from the 5th c. to 1995) remains the most widely read book of history (during the 1996-2000 period), because its content continues to determine the requirements of the graduation exams in Bulgarian secondary schools as well as those of university entrance exams in Bulgaria.

### *The Bulgarian Inter-War Socio-Cultural Context and the Construction of „Europe as a Traumatic Place of Common Memory”*

Recent Bulgarian research on both the behavior models of the Bulgarian „left” and „right” intellectuals,<sup>9</sup> and the Bulgarian cultural situation between the two world

<sup>7</sup> „Public space of history” is introduced to denote space as the opposite category to historic time, in order to understand the co-existence of different streams of the historic consciousness coming from historical science, the political discourses, the media, the memory of different groups, private biographic experience...” (Bundjoulov et al. 1995, 136).

<sup>8</sup> Grekova et al. 1997, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Elenkov Ivan, *Rodno i djasno*, Sofia, Lik, 1998.

wars<sup>10</sup> agrees on three points. The first point concerns the fact that the Bulgarian interwar socio-cultural context is a result of the discursive problematization of the intellectual experience of the war phenomenon, transforming the military values into philosophic parameters of both the „right” and „left” radical gesture. The second point refers to the interwar world being seen as one of crisis because of the idea of the „deadlock flinging of human beings into the postwar organization of life”,<sup>11</sup> and because of the feeling of „ruined national Bulgarian self-confidence”.<sup>12</sup> The third one shows that despite the differences in the generational cultural reflexes, the Bulgarian intelligentsia as a whole agrees on the origin of the crisis: the wrong choice for national development made after 1878. This development found its expression in the figure of „the great effort to implement the European political and cultural model, which led to the disintegration of the society, to turning our back to our own national history and feeling the shame of it”.<sup>13</sup> In other words, the Bulgarian intellectuals from the 1920s evoked the image of extreme crisis: the contemporary Bulgarian falls prey to the oblivion of his own past; an oblivion which is a function of the attempt to catch up with Europe.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the first phase of the tension in the relation between Bulgaria and Europe was formulated; a tension generated by the idea of „the leap” and „catching up with Europe”. The purpose of this idea, which dominated Bulgarian society from 1878 till the end of the World War I, was the creation of our own national time through commensurability and comparability with Europe.<sup>15</sup> Hence, the impossible realization of the postulated thelos of the Bulgarian time, i.e. the accomplishment of the European political and cultural model, was problematized after 1918 by Bulgarian intellectuals and constructed one of „the common traumatic places” of crisis and defeat („the leap that was too hard, and the catching up with Europe”). Thus, of the tension in the relation „Bulgarian-European” is outlined at different levels; a tension generated by conceiving Bulgarian history from 1878 to 1918 as an unsuccessful effort to catch up with Europe. The European space was constructed as a traumatic place of the common memory by the historical discourse.

In their search for ways to overcome the crisis, Bulgarian intellectuals formulated the idea of building our own national history, „our own national time and space”<sup>16</sup> a model which had to replace the previous one of the „leap and the catching up with Europe.” The implementation of this model demanded the unification of the scattered ethnic element into a common national body (i.e. achieving the national space) due to which the mass would be turned into a people (i.e. national history should structure this

<sup>10</sup> Daskalov Ruimen, *Bilgaria mezhdu Iztoka i Zapada*, Sofia, 1997; Stojanov Stilijan, *Literaturata na dvora*, Sofija 1998.

<sup>11</sup> Elenkov, 1998, 76.

<sup>12</sup> Stojanov, 1998, 53.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 60.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 84.

<sup>15</sup> Daskalov, 1997; Stojanov, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> Stojanov, 1998, 61.

mass, make it „realize itself in its moral values, in its thinking and traditions”,<sup>17</sup> make it gain national self-awareness). The achievement of the socio-cultural model, outlined above would postulate the relations between the Bulgarian and the rest of the world. Everything that encouraged the national history, the organization of the national space and the structuring of the national time would be identified as positive and vice versa: every action going against these processes, would be perceived as negative.

It may be concluded that research in sociology, literary criticism and culture studies unequivocally supports the thesis that the newly created situation in the interwar period, which produces the tense relations of the Bulgarian with the European indeed constructs this relation as a traumatic place of crises and defeats; a traumatic place of the common historical memory, articulating the negative images of Europe and the European. According to the interwar perception of Bulgarian intellectuals, firstly, Europe postulated its own model of modernization and strategies as an obligatory standard of civilization and measure for communication with the rest of the world, and, secondly, that same Europe impeded others in searching for their own way to progress and self-realization. Thus, the attempt to emancipate Bulgarian historical development from the terror of the absolute political and cultural authority of „Europe” led to the tension in the relations between the Bulgarian and the European.

Moreover, our own research shows, firstly, that the interwar Bulgarian historian establishment played an important role in conceiving the notion of the Bulgarian post-war crisis and outlining its content.<sup>18</sup> Secondly, the exit from this crisis was made possible by the effort of the same establishment to create a discourse of a valuable native-national-Bulgarian space. The cultural and political situation between the two wars produced the concept that the ethnocentric discourse is the only one able to emancipate and legitimize the people as a united national body in the surrounding world. Thus, in the interwar public space of history the national emancipation of the Bulgarian ethnos was transformed into a value-normative scale, which postulated the positive or negative identity of the corresponding behavior models.<sup>19</sup>

So, the first question is: how were these images presented in the obligatory textbook on New Bulgarian History (1878-1944); whether the official historical discourse articulated in the textbook narrative absorbed these images from the current social-cultural context or, conversely, softened their negative nuances. Another question is what happened to the images in the different historical, political and ideological time? Our analysis tries to answer these questions.

<sup>17</sup> Stojanov, 1998, 58; Daskalov, 1997; Elenkov, 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Dimitrova Snezhana, „Demokratzia” i „Duma” v debata za istoricheskata rolja na velikite sili”, in: *Nazionalnata identichnost v situazia na prehod istoricheski resursi*, Sofija 1997, 179.199.

<sup>19</sup> Snezhana Dimitrova, Naoum Kaytchev, „The happiness and progress of the nation are attainable only provided that not a single part of this people’s body hurts...”, Bulgarian historical education and perspectives of the national identity”, in: *Balkanistic Forum*, 1-2-3/1999, 56-90.

„Europe: The Selfishness of The Great Powers and the Symbolic Terror of Europe's Modernization Strategies”:  
*Images of Europe in the Interwar History Textbook*

The general and permanent image of Europe in modern Bulgarian history was forged by the figure of the Great Powers. The cliché Great Powers was introduced in Bulgarian political and academic disputes by the 19 century National Revival periodical press and public discussions, which endowed it with a special connotation: The Great powers' attitude to the Bulgarian national question. (Which was imagined and upheld as the right to national unification of the Bulgarians within the „natural borders” of the lands inhabited by ethnically homogeneous population, which used to belong to Bulgaria in the past. This unification could be accomplished only through Bulgarian emancipation from the Ottoman-Muslim world, through joining the European cultural-political space, through isolation and rejection of the previous patterns, understood and perceived as „foreign and backward”<sup>20</sup> - a dichotomy reflected in the opposition West - Orient. That opposition was imposed by European civilization itself for it formed the dominant modernization strategies and cultural imperatives).

In this context the Great powers' attitude to the solving of the Bulgarian national problem became a „measure” for their „fairness/unfairness”. This connotation determined the potential identities of the general image of the Great Powers. In some cases this image could reflect admiration to the Great Powers - the symbols of progress and development, in other cases it could be interpreted in the moral terms of „justice/injustice”. These identities were mutually complementary rather than exclusive; the dominant factor was always the Great Powers' attitude to the national destiny of the Bulgarians, which was seen and defended as „national unification within the natural ethnically just borders”. All textbooks in modern Bulgarian history imagined it as the sole reason of Bulgarian existence after 1878 (until 1944).

In this respect the most important „image” was that of the „unjust Great powers”, created by all textbooks in modern Bulgarian history which successively re-wrote the modern Bulgarian history: „bourgeois”, „Fatherland Front”, „Istmat” (Marxist historical materialism), „reformist”, „post-communist”. Though the textbooks provided dif-

<sup>20</sup> „New laws, new courts and methods following European patterns appeared in Bulgaria soon after the liberation.” (Stanev Nikola, *Hal-nova istoriya na Bilgaria 1878-1922 s ilustratsii*, Kniga I, ot Osvobozhdenieto do Balkanskata vojna, Sofia 1925, 115; „The Ottoman Empire because of its Muslim state- and legal view of life, and because of its incapability of perceiving the new legal, public and economic forms of life, couldn't go through a century of Renaissance and enlightened absolutism from which the Western countries passed on to Parliamentarianism, to personal, public and national equality.” Ibid, 151; „The Bulgarians begin to shake off orientalism..., ...Europeanization takes Bulgaria out of the sphere of oriental civilization and Bulgarian society obtains, relatively fast, the structure, the culture and spirit of European society..., ...in the lands under Turkish domination (this process) is slower and anguishing...”, (Guzelev Vasil, Kostantin Kossev, Milcho Lalkov, Lubomir Ognjanov, Mariya Radeva, *Istoriya na Bilgariya za 11 klas*, odobreno ot ministerstvo na narodnata prosвета, Sofia 1996, 341.

ferent historical narratives (reflecting the historical times dominated by different or even opposing ideologies), they all forged the negative identity of the „other” in the same manner: through transformation of the ”national liberation and unification of the Bulgarians in their ethnically just borders” into a norm for their progress and development.

According to this norm what the Great Powers did was classified and labeled as either positive or negative. Moreover, this norm determined the interpretation scheme and the logic of composition (preserved intact from 1917 to 2000 despite the changes in historical time) of the narrative of the San Stefano Peace (3 March 1878) and the Berlin Congress (1 June - 1 July 1878). That scheme and that logic centered the historical relation on the dichotomy: the San Stefano Peace (politically emancipating the Bulgarian nation in its „natural ethnic territories”) versus the Berlin Treaty (frustrating this emancipation and „partitioning the national body”). The story confronted the peace („the wreath” of the Russian military efforts to „liberate the Bulgarians from the Turkish yoke”) with the treaty (which revised the results of the Russian-Turkish War) in order to create the image „the Berlin Congress as the aim of other Great Powers” against „San Stefano as a Russian deed”.

It was this image, „the San Stefano Peace” versus „the Berlin Congress”, that created the first layer of Russia’s positive image and determined the initial negative identity of other Great powers as „amputators” (partitioners of Bulgaria and creators of an „obstacle to its progress”). Thus, the historical narrative generated the permanent opposition San Stefano - Berlin, which was imposed as an important evaluation strategy of the historical role of the Great Powers in the Bulgarian national destiny. It is interesting to point out that all the textbooks in modern Bulgarian history licensed by the Ministry of Education were based on this interpretation scheme, thus creating the relevant images of the Great powers.

Along with this, even the historical narrative of the modernization of the Bulgarian state (1878-1941) articulated in Nikola Stanev’s textbook, endowed the Great Powers (of the Berlin Congress) with a positive identity through the image of „Europe - the symbol and model for political and cultural progress”. N. Stanev constructed these positive characteristics in two ways. Firstly, he opposed Europe to the backward Ottoman Empire (a direct articulation of the progress-regress scheme) and to Russia (described as non-Europe, alien to certain institutions of political power). Secondly, he favoured the European modernization model and presented it as a sole possibility for Bulgarian liberation from the Ottoman Empire’s geopolitical space.) On one hand, the modernization discourse established the positive image of Europe by including the history of: 1. institutions of government (constitution, parliament, the executive, monarchy, army), 2. Industrial development and infrastructure building, 3. improvement in the everyday life of the population, and 4. progress in education (Stanev 1943). On the other hand, it introduced the idea that the „spirit of the people” is the basic premise on which the modernization strategies could be realized, allowing for the „state’s capa-

bility to advance without help from outside". This situation produced an ambivalent attitude towards Europe: extremely negative when „it” hindered the national emancipation of the people and caused new „pains and sufferings”, cutting off another piece of land from the „national body”, and exceedingly positive when „it” was a measure for the modernization process, helping the Bulgarian political emancipation from the „external political other” („the backward Ottoman Empire and Russia” versus „the other Great Powers”).

These ambivalent or even contradictory layers of connotation (the „injustice” versus the political-cultural imperatives) - as well as the opposition Russia-Europe - created the authority and the paralyzing power of the symbol „Europe”. In fact, these two connotation layers caused the terrorizing effect of the semantic content, which was injected into this collective image. According to the constructed historical narrative, the „Bulgarian destiny, its happiness and progress” were a permanent function of the attitude of Europe towards the nation. The liberation from the image’s symbolic terror was brought about by the communist textbooks issued after 1945, which rewrote Bulgarian history through the prism of the Marxist schema of sociological interpretation.

The first chapters of the new textbook, those narrating of the period from 1878 to 1894, implied, like the earlier books, that the people’s interest was vested in the emancipation of the Bulgarian nation from the Ottoman-Muslim world; they were similar to Stanev’s narrative in terms of both semantics and emphasized events in the chronological chain. The respective section was entitled „Affirmation of independent national existence for Bulgaria”.<sup>21</sup> The Berlin Congress was endowed with the historical identity from Stanev’s narrative. The congress was still referred to as „injustice” for it partitioned the people, while the San Stefano Treaty was „fair” for it contributed to national unification; hence Russia became „fair” and the Great powers-„unfair”.

However, relating „the past” with the help of the categories of both the economic interpretation scheme and the Marxist theory of historical formation, the 1946 and 1954 textbooks deprived the Great powers of their positive characterization as „bearers of progress”. The discourse on the modernization strategy of the Bulgarian state emphasized the opposition capitalism-socialism; by being labelled ‘capitalist’ the Great powers were classified as the symbols of reaction. Since the 1955 textbook shrunk the national narrative to fit the frameworks of the historical-materialist-party line (Bulgarian Communist Party) narrative, Russia was endowed with a doubly positive identity: „justice” and „herald of progress” (in this version „Russia, the liberator of the Bulgarian people from the Turkish yoke”),<sup>22</sup> was equivalent to „the USSR, liberator of the Bulgarians from the bourgeoisie”<sup>23</sup>). This story followed the composition

<sup>21</sup> Bozhikov Bozhidar, Bozhikov i Burmov, Aleksandar, Kurkchiev, Petar, *Bilgarska istoriya za 7 klas na gimnaziite*, Ministerstvoto na narodnoto prosveshthenie, Sofia 1946, 272.

<sup>22</sup> Burmov Aleksandar, Kosev Dimitar i Hristov Hristo, *Istoriya na Bilgariya*, Uchbenik za 9 klas na obshtobrazovatelните uchilishta, Narodna prosveta, Sofia 1955, 219-221.

<sup>23</sup> „The Red Army which had liberated Bulgaria from the German yoke... and cleaned the Bulgarian lands from the German burglars and their nasty helpers...” (Burmov at al. 1955, 423).

logic of the 1946 textbook: while the „bourgeois past” was connected with the pattern „doom-death-catastrophe” connotations, socialism meant, among other things, „salvation”.<sup>24</sup>

At the same time the Great powers acquired their double negative identity: „unjust”<sup>25</sup> (Ibid.: 356) and „reactionary forces”<sup>26</sup> (Ibid.: 293-295). „Images” which dominated the public space of history at the time and images that were borrowed from the political public space where Europe had a negative meaning because of the political opposition „communism versus. capitalism” with its geographic dimension („the Soviet Union vs. the USA & Europe”) This narrative categorically diluted the national identity in order to create an international one. The implicit education programme - a programme of civic behavior and national education - transformed the Bulgarian into a citizen and patriot, with obligations to „serve the interests of the class” (not the nation (Stanev’s version) or the people (the 1946 textbook’s version) which meant defense of the international space, not the national one. The figure constructing the new discourse of identity was „love to the Soviet Union”.

The 1982 textbook articulated the reformist narrative: it freed the national identity from the international historical-materialist discourse; the national theme was legitimized as an independent discourse (of the reformist communist élite). This narrative repeated the identities of „Russia” and „other Great powers” in terms of the „San Stefano versus Berlin” opposition (i.e. the account of the Berlin Congress is similar to Nikola Stanev’s)<sup>27</sup> Unlike the 1955 version, however, now the Great powers were reinstalled as „symbols of Progress” relevant for the modernization strategies<sup>28</sup>; the powers were expected to „cut off” Bulgarians from the Ottoman religious-political world.<sup>29</sup> Simultaneously the reformist narrative continued to oppose „Russia” to „Europe”, preserving the negative image of „capitalist Europe”, created by the historical-materialist approach. However, the emphasis was on the geopolitical interpretation scheme opposing the interests of „the Slavic world” to those of „the rest of Europe” rather than on the explicit dichotomy „socialism vs. capitalism”.

The reformist communist narrative in overcoming the simple schematic presen-

<sup>24</sup> „The Treaty of Paris from 1947, due to the help of the Soviet Union and the Bulgarian participation in the Patriotic war, is the best possible treaty because Bulgaria wasn’t deprived of any territories”, (Burmov at al. 1955, 438).

<sup>25</sup> About the treaty of Neuilly it says: „It was an unfair imperialist treaty, Bulgaria was deprived of Southern Dobrudja, Thrace, the Western Outskirts and the valley of the Struma river... because of the absence of Soviet Russia and representatives of those who were defeated...”, (Burmov at al. 1955, 356).

<sup>26</sup> About the modernisation there it is written: „Industrial progress is connected with the influence of imperialism and capitalism...”, (Burmov at al. 1955, 293); „...capitalists stripped big profits off the working people... with their loans they subordinated Bulgarian society to their interest...” (Ibid, 294); „...the foreign imperialists tried to gain positions in political relationships....”, (Ibid, 294), „... the peasants went bankrupt and manufacture was ruined...”, (Ibid, 295).

<sup>27</sup> Dimitrov Ilcho, Mito Isusov, Jordan Shopov, *Istoriya na Bigariya za 10 klas na ESPU*, Narodna prosveta, Sofia 1982, 15-16.

<sup>28</sup> This idea is inscribed in the Marxist interpreting scheme about the progressive role of capitalism and the bourgeoisie realizing the emancipation from the feudal regime and that is why it is not in conflict with the Marxist philosophy of history.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 46-49.

tation of Russia in the previous textbook shaped a sophisticated „image” of Russia as a „key figure” in Bulgarian history. The various aspects of this image were: the ideological vector of progress - the bright communist future; the emotional context of „Slavic brotherhood”; geopolitical strategies - the geographical predetermination of the interwoven „interests of Bulgaria and Russia”. That is why, the idea of the „continuity and stability of Bulgaria in time and space”, which is attempted by the reformist communist discourse, focused on the „saving role of Russia”, a role which was displayed in moments crucial for the national existence (in 1878 in San Stefano when Russia guaranteed „the resurrection of Bulgaria in its ethnically fair borders” and on September 9, 1944 when Russia saved Bulgaria from „the third national disaster - a result of the clumsy policy of the bourgeoisie which failed to solve the Bulgarian national problem”). While preserving the international schemes of the historical-materialist interpretation, the new narrative privileged the ethnic identity of the Bulgarians by proclaiming national emancipation in the „historically just borders” (always thought as „the lands of the ethnos”) as an expression of the universal measure of justice<sup>30</sup> (In this textbook the national theme was outlined as an independent legitimizing resource of the Communist party in power, parallel to the historical materialist narrative of the historical role of the working class. In addition, the progress of the Communist party was related to the growing inability of the bourgeoisie to solve the national problem. This meant that what the reformists had overcome was exactly the internationalism of 1948-1954, summarized in G. Dimitrov’s words that „Bulgaria has only one national question - the realization of the two-year economic plan”). This image was articulated by the same reformist stories, included in the historical interpretations, which formed the pattern of the textbook content (i.e. of the official pedagogic discourse aimed to ensure the proper civic and national education of the students). The same historical reformist interpretations dominated the public space of history and eliminated the alternatives; they „absorbed” in themselves the aim of Bulgarian historical time which was formulated by the current politics: the “victory of socialism” in strategic co-operation with its natural ally, past and present - Russia-the Soviet Union.

The historical narrative was transformed into an officially approved normative discourse, which accomplished the emancipation and the political legitimization of the communist party. In fact these historical interpretations of the reformists - articulating the image of the Great powers while preserving the value charge „progress-regress” of the Marxist scheme - forged both the image of the „natural ally then and now” Russia-the Soviet Union, and the negative vision of the Other Europe (non-Slavic and capitalist).<sup>31</sup> Naturally, through the reformist communist narrative the new political élites attacked the legitimizing resources of the former élites - a process which was part of the wider restructuring and reshaping of the socialist space.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 78, 95, 151.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 185.

*The Restored Positive Memory of Europe?:  
„Imagining Europe,, and the Textbooks of the Transition*

The post-communist textbook from 1993, in rewriting the 1982 reformist version, had to legitimize the strategies for modernization, Europeanization and liberalization of Bulgarian society, upheld by the new political élites (associated with the Union of Democratic Forces). These strategies privileged the European re-orientation (understood as a way for both „getting away” from the former USSR and overcoming the pro-Slavic geopolitical ideology).

At the same time, the 1993 textbook was envisaged as an attempt to provide historical resources for solving the identity crisis caused by „the ideology of the recent history textbook syllabi which mechanically separated Bulgaria from World history”, according to the 1992 official document of the Ministry of Education.<sup>32</sup> Conceiving the world in terms of universalization and globalization, and perceiving history as utilitarian human knowledge, aimed at creating „a culture of orientation in time and space” and „skills for relevant social communication”, were described as the two main reasons for the introduction of the new syllabus.<sup>33</sup> It was written and adopted in 1992; its content is still preserved intact, regardless of the political changes (the Socialist Party’s rule from 1995 to 1997; the interim president-appointed government in 1997; and since 1997 - the UDF government).

The realization of the new geopolitical tendencies and their social and cultural requirements predetermined the aims of the new history syllabus: „The syllabus is built on the idea that national history is part of world history and attempts to demonstrate their simultaneousness... The undermining of the recent idea of lacking synchrony in the developing of Bulgaria and the world is the test for the future cultural destiny of the Bulgarians...”.<sup>34</sup> The figure, which was building the new identity discourse, was that of „the leveling of Bulgarian and European historic time”, while the value-normative scale postulated the citizen virtues referred to as „respect towards the achievements of civilization... realization of national dignity... acts of patriotism... understanding of religious and ideological differences...”.<sup>35</sup>

The implicit textbook syllabus required a reinterpretation of the chain of events of the official historic discourse which aimed at explicitly outlining not only the „Bulgarian name” of culture and phenomena, that have established the coherence of the „national body”, but rather the European notions (thought as universal ones) of Christian civilization and the Middle Ages, notions of the transition to modernity through the institutions of parliament democracy, market economy and civil society. Here, the rewriting of the official historic discourse (the sum of historic narratives forming the textbook content) is seen as introducing new lines of events, which can relieve „the

<sup>32</sup> *Ukazanie za organizirane na uchebnata rabota po istoriya v obshtoobrazovatelните uchilishta za uchebnata 1992/1993.*, Ministerstvo na prosvetata i obrazovaniето, Sofia, 1992-2000, 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

meeting of the Bulgarian with the European” from the tension, and emphasize those „places” where such meetings occur without the tension and the conflict between „we and not-we”. One of these places is constructed by the narrative of everyday Bulgarian life painlessly assimilating the values of everyday European culture. The effect of overcoming the common traumas of national identity (now presented as „the cutting off of the Bulgarians from their natural historic environment - Europe”), is pursued by the required equal standing of the narratives stipulating the political-economic-social-cultural Bulgarian history, and by liberating the everyday, social and economic dimension from its functional dependence on the political.

The new implicit syllabus conceptualized, first, the paradigmatic rewriting of the official pedagogic discourse through marginalizing the paradigm of traditional political history, which till 1992 dominated Bulgarian historiography, and, second, the breaking of the frames of stereotyped linear time of progress as it introduces the times of social history and economic juncture. This change in the paradigm aims at „liberating” the textbook narrative from the oppressive determinism of the truly teleological sense of the historic narrative, postulated by the transitional communist textbook: the realization of the „happiness and progress of the Bulgarians in the building of the bright communist future”. The paradigmatic rewriting of the official pedagogic discourse is seen as possible only in the context of the application of the European theoretical historic orientations of the researches in order to situate the time of Bulgarian historiography into the historiographic time of Europe).

The logic of the interpreting scheme postulated by the implicit educational programme of the Ministry of Education imposed explicating the narratives which preserved the European identity of the Bulgarian past in the critical places of common memory: „the Ottoman rule” and the „unrealized Bulgarian modernity”. The narratives were supposed to prove that the „continuity and stability” of Bulgarians within „the temporal changes of their world and of themselves” are realized following the European model of development. The figures that now have to rule over the past experience and normalize the traumatic memory constructed hitherto in the public space of history („the Bulgarian and the European”) are: 1) „the saving role of the upheld European model for the geopolitical difficult Bulgarian historical destiny” and 2) „Europe’s memory of the Bulgarian contribution to European progress”. In the narratives, which are supposed to spread this idea and articulate these images, a mechanism is installed for rejecting historical interpretations that construct the negative images of European selfishness through the transfer of the guilt for „catastrophes and defeats in the Bulgarian past” to Europe.

Here, memory works through the inversion of narratives which spread different meanings and values for national history. (It was expected that the narrative of the Bulgarian traces in the political, cultural and cartographic memory of Europe as a deposit for the restitution of the Bulgarian historic memory through the activity of the élites of the Enlightenment (who based their histories of the Bulgarian people on sources from the place where the experienced past was preserved - Europe) would suppress the previous figure of the „guilt of Catholic Europe „which” abandoned the Christian world in the battle against the infidels”).

The rewriting of the official pedagogic discourse is sought in the inversion of accents, and in the development of those events in the narratives, which evaluate the structures that have guaranteed the preservation and survival of the „Bulgarian” under Ottoman domination. The building elements of the structure of the ethnos - nationality, religion and language - developed by preserving „Bulgarian-ness” under Ottoman rule, the structures of everyday life, remained „Bulgarian” as a manifestation of the European value models (commerce, education, family...) and postulated a wider frame of „enduring” in the „Muslim-other-foreign environment”. The imperative logic of the implicit educational programme tried to reconcile the „ethnic” (here understood as nation forming) with the „European” through: 1) displaying the values and meaning of the ethnic as guaranteeing the stability and continuance of the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire; and 2) presenting the European models as an indispensable prerequisite for the Bulgarian emancipation from the Ottoman space.

The logical conclusion left to the reader was that the realization of the thelos of Bulgarian history- „the rebuilding of the national state”- was achieved in the context of the successful adoption of modern European standards. The measure of success for the rewriting of the official pedagogic discourse was the ability to construct the narrative, articulate the positive images of historical processes and events and painlessly including „the Bulgarian in the European”.

This scheme was explicitly followed in the four Bulgarian history textbooks published between 1993 and 2000 for the 11th class of the Bulgarian secondary school, all of them rewriting the communist reformist narrative discourse. The structure of the four textbooks was organized around the event lines and the thematic direction postulated by the new history syllabus. The introduction underlined the European character of the Bulgarian past and outlined the authors’ ambition to give students clear ideas about the European dimensions of Bulgarian history. The successful rewriting of the textbook narratives according to the interpretation scheme of the implicit syllabus was achieved only by the narratives constructing the history of the Bulgarian lands within the frames of the Ottoman Empire during the 15-17 centuries.<sup>36</sup>

The 1993 textbook succeeded normatively to master and display, both explicitly and implicitly, the European identity of the Bulgarian past from the Ottoman period (15-17c.), one of the most traumatic places of common memory. This process started with the new classification of the period, by changing the traditional label „yoke” to „rule” (the period is titled as „the time of Ottoman rule”). While unfolding the multi-layer historical narrative, the text overcame the tension and fully adopted the inter-

<sup>36</sup> Bakalov, Georgi, Angelov, Petar, Georgieva, Tsvetana, Tsanev, Dimitar, Bobev, Bobi, Grancharov, Stoicho, *Istoriya na Bilgariia za gimnazialnata stepen na obshtobrazovatelните uchilishta*, Sofia 1993, Bulvest 2000; Guzelev et al., 1996; Delev, Petar, Angelov, Georgi Bakalov, Tsvetana Georgieva, Plamen Mitev, Staiko Trifonov, Iskra Baeva, Boika Vasileva, Evgeniya Kalinova-Jaidzieva, *Istoriya na Bilgaria za 11 klas, odobreno ot ministerstvoto na narodnata prosveta*, Otvoreno obshtestvo, Sofia 1996; Fol Alexander, Jordan Andreev, Vera Mutafchieva, Rajna Gavrilova, Ivan Ilchev, *Istoriya na Bilgaria za 11 klas, odobreno ot ministerstvoto na narodnata prosveta*, Anubis, Sofia 1996.

pretation scheme postulated by the renaming. The change of the term „yoke”<sup>37</sup> was the first step towards abolishing the negative identity of the time of „Ottoman rule”; an identity postulated and preserved by all previous textbooks published from 1917 to 1989, which labelled the period as „the years of Ottoman yoke”. The second step identified the „Bulgarian lands during the Ottoman period” with the figure of „a contact zone between civilizations”. The third one referred to the lack of internal conflict and tension between the images created by the act of the naming and images filtered through the textbook narratives, composing the history of that period.<sup>38</sup> Alongside with the images of „political violence and the system”, the text created those of co-existence and mutual penetration of different religions and ethnic cultures; this was stressed especially in the chapters covering everyday life. The civilizational discourse reinterpreted the „problematic figure of Ottoman violence” by placing it within the narrow context of political action. The figure is absent from the narrative of everyday life.<sup>39</sup> (The value-normative layers of the textbook narrative build the legitimizing historical resources of the civic behavior model of ethnic and religious tolerance postulated by the political environment.)

On one hand, the textbook narrative preserved the connotative levels displayed in the figure of the „Ottoman conquest stopping the natural historical process of the Bulgarians”; the text preserved the places of the official historical memory that construct the Ottoman arrival as causing a diversion from the norm: „the Bulgarians continue to follow the medieval model during the European Renaissance and the early modern period”.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, however, the new textbook’s discourse clearly displayed the places of common memory, expressing commensurable historical interpretations in presenting the values and essence of national and European history<sup>41</sup>. These commen-

<sup>37</sup> This act of renaming provoked one of the sharpest discussions in the political space and history’s own public space, showing the stable figures of the national identity, formed precisely through the construction of the Ottoman period as a yoke which legitimized the creation of the Bulgarian national state. The normative content of the narratives of the official historical discourse (1917-1993) turned the „yoke” or „slavery” into one of the most durable political myths, understood as „widely disseminated narrative, with its cortege of images, which endows the group with its cultural homogeneity and moral unity” (Carbonell 1995, 7).

<sup>38</sup> Bakalov, 1993, 302-303.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 304-308.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 309.

<sup>41</sup> In practice, the adroit equalization of the articles, having articulated the politic, social and cultural history of the Bulgarians under Ottoman rule, seeks for the „painless deal” with „the traumatic past” („Ottoman domination”). Because, on one hand, these narratives give positive identity to „our own past”, displaying the official historical memory through the „places”, where the strings of the continuum are hold (everyday life, economy, culture...), „naturally” bounding the Bulgarian with the European (the Christian civilization). On the other hand, this interpreting logic keeps the implicit idea of the „Ottoman regime” tolerance because the latter allows the preserving of the cultural and social spaces, where the Bulgarian community follows its own model of development, different from those of the dominating Muslim ethnos. And this interpreting logic becomes possible through the changed theoretical paradigm of the history, legitimizing and evaluating the reading of the past trough „our own epoch”, i.e. the narrative here is built through the notion of the tolerance during the Middle ages, connected with the idea of non-persecution, an idea which should change the perception of the „Ottoman period” as an intolerable and marginalize one of the basic historic resources of the intolerance, bearing the today’s date: „the narratives of the Ottoman yoke: time of permanent violence,

surable historical interpretations built the image of the European dimensions of the Bulgarian during the time of „Ottoman rule”, thus easily placing Bulgarian historical time within the context of European history. The narrative of the economic development of the Bulgarian lands created the image of „Bulgarian economy participating in the European commercial exchange... and joining generations of Bulgarians to the constantly changing European world”.<sup>42</sup>

The narrative of „the Bulgarian presence in the European cultural memory” created the notion of the „Bulgarian theme as part of the history of Christian Europe” and showed the „memory of the Bulgarians as weaved into Renaissance culture and through the Enlightenment”.<sup>43</sup> The idea of the legitimate place of the „Bulgarian state” in the European world was filtered through the layers of the political narrative: the „Bulgarians” were constructed as a subject of the European political world („as part of the general concept of Christian policy towards the Ottoman Empire”) even under the conditions of „lost political sovereignty” (15-17c.). This Bulgarian membership in the state system was displayed not only by the figure of the „preserved memory”, but also by the image of the „outside political prospects, seeking for Bulgarian reintegration in the system of Christian states”.<sup>44</sup> The value-normative centers organizing the mosaic of the historical narrative postulated the positive connotations of an identifying separator: „the Christian” in its role of „dividing and preserving the Christian from the Muslim world”. This narrative served as compensating counterbalance to the negative image created by previous chapters on medieval history („The guilty medieval Catholic West abandoning the Orthodoxy in the fight against the infidels”).

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social, religious and cultural oppression”, historical resources that feed one of the most stable figures of the national identity: the Turkish as „the eternal foreigner”.

At the same time this interpreting scheme allows crisis not to be provoked of the national identity through direct attack of the solid identity figures because it allows the negative identity of the Ottoman past to be preserved through the narratives, having articulated the politic history. For this „the violence” as a regulator in the relationships between the ruling Ottoman elite and the Bulgarian ethnos is seen in two perspective historic plans. First, it is outspread in the image „of the imposed foreign model”, which politic frame cuts the Bulgarians from the European model of politic development. Second, it is displayed in the process of development, where „the state of non-persecution” gradually gains (the end of the 17-18 century) the outlines of „politic, social and religious discrimination”, filtering the silhouette of intolerance. The last reading becomes again legitimized through the theoretical paradigm, rebuilding the past in „its own notions and expressional means”: thus the enlightened view, which puts new sense in the perception of „tolerance” („absence of social-politic and cultural discriminating practices”) changes the accents in the historic narratives; hence the relations, gradually becoming significant, are „the compatibility of the two worlds” in the every day life interaction as well as their confrontation in the state policy, which impedes and does not provide conditions of the Bulgarian economic and social-cultural progress; and here the Bulgarian past again gains European identity: the Bulgarian effort is directed towards economic and politic emancipation through assimilation of the European politic and economic norms- „capitalistic farming” and modern national state. Or here the success of the rewriting is in the emancipation of the history of „the social and every day life” from „the politic” through the outlining of the structures that display the positive identity of „the Bulgarian past” and show in these „places” the new image of tolerance as equal to that of intolerance, articulated by the actions on politic level.

<sup>42</sup> Bakalov, 1993, 309-310.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 312.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 312-313.

The same role functions were performed by the narratives of the Bulgarian Revival presented as a variety of encouraging possibilities depending primarily on the degree of adoption of European educational ideas.<sup>45</sup> The period itself was titled as „the Bulgarian Revival - part of the European process”.<sup>46</sup> and is showed in the figure: „the epoch... , which is not Phoenix, born from nothingness, but a natural continuance of our history in a constantly changing world, a part from which is the Bulgarian people”.<sup>47</sup> The emancipation of the Bulgarian space from the Ottoman cultural-political environment was postulated as achieved modernity through the newly created educational institutions and the adopted models of the European Enlightenment regarding the state-political construction.<sup>48</sup> Here, the connotation layer moved in the direction of the traditional image of „belated Bulgarian development in comparison with Western Europe”. Bulgarian historical development was placed on the arrow of „trying to catch up” and thus the tense relations between the „Bulgarian and the European” were reproduced<sup>49</sup>. The Marxist scheme of interpretation was preserved, looking upon societal development as a relation between the base and the superstructure. The ideological layer of normative official memory - the Marxist philosophy of history - reproduced the normative structure - scientism, objectivity, impartiality - of positive historical science.

Here, however, we need to open brackets to underline the quite painless paradigmatic transition or the „natural” return to the Marxist interpreting scheme because the transitional narratives are displayed through the structural Braudel’s neomarxist approach; at the same time this paradigmatic movement outlines one of the conditions of „painless rewriting” of the history, articulated through the approaches of the historic materialism; a condition which is pre-given by the historic theory movement (because of the inner methodological resistance of the historic materialism despite of external political and ideological pressure (W. Benjamin’s thesis on the philosophy of history / Benjamin 1985: 253-265/) towards the neomarxist structuralism (Braudel, Claude Levi Srausse...) and hence towards theory of the history of mentality and the history of notions, which in their turn display „the correspondingly social as emancipated from the politic”. Thus, first, the narratives, having constructed correspondingly the politic and social history are equal and the historiographic situation, dominated by the almighty eventual politic history, is overcome and hence some enervation of the provided by this history resources of the national identity is searched for. Second, here is put the mechanism of overcoming the situation, where the paradigmatic rewriting of

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 242-246.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 235.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 314.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 239-279; 320-339.

<sup>49</sup> „A significant role was played by the considerable delay in the development of bourgeois-capitalist relations in Bulgaria in comparison to the countries in Western Europe. This influenced the dynamics of the process and its forms, as well as the speed of the changes in the social structure and the political superstructure of Bulgarian society from the Renaissance” (Bakalov et al. 1993, 322).

history, which seeks for dealing with „the past, which hurts’, could be put into practice on a level of mechanical deposit of the new „places”, articulating the historic narratives, through which the tension around the traumatic national identity to be released. Because at such a historic movement during the theoretic debates the legitimizing of the rewriting of history is expected to be realized (the last long „thought about” and „constructed” as a crisis in the historic science in post communist ages of transition) in the „places”, where „the social is not a function of the politic”, or is „the politic marginalized and ephimistically dissolute by the social”; or here the attempt is directed towards realizing of these forms the historic narration, where „the addressee have the chance to agree or not to agree with them”.<sup>50</sup> The occurrence of this situation supposes „our own discussion”, where history becomes historic - i.e. ”the form, in which historic science itself reflects its grounds” is reached.

The narrative of the political emancipation of the Bulgarian space („rebuilding the modern national Bulgarian state”) displayed the same figure, which continued to downsize the „European” to the image of the political subject, the Great powers, the image negatively charged by the transitional official pedagogic discourses between 1917 and 1989. This predetermined the suppression of connotative layers, charged in the public space of history with the function to evaluate and postulate the accomplishment of Bulgarian modernity - „transition to market economy and civic society” - as a goal of the Bulgarian political time. This historical resource, legitimizing the „transition to market economy and civic society”, was expected to form the positive identity of the European modernization model, setting it as the sole possibility for social-economic-political progress of the nation „then and now”. This was supposed to be a narrative that could suppress the ethnic identity and outline the modernization layer of the Bulgarians’ national identity by referring their progress to the institutions and the authorities. The new textbook (1993) did accomplish some breakthrough (putting on an equal basis „modernization” and „ethnic union” in the normative-evaluating scale of „historical justice/injustice”), but did not manage to marginalize the narrative of „national union in the ethically fair borders” as a measure for „historical progress”.

The figure of the Great powers was articulated through two different historical discourses. The first one dealt with the events transforming the Bulgarian ethnos into a nation; it repeated the San Stefano - Berlin story. The second was concerned with the conversion of the „Culture-Nation” into „State-Nation”; it built the „image of Europe” as a civilization model, a goal for Bulgarian society. Needless to say, both discourses tried to deprive the image of Russia of its positive identity in order to obliterate the pro-Slavic geopolitical pattern, legitimized by the reformist narrative of 1982. Though the first discourse carried in itself the interpreting scheme and narrative logic of the San Stefano peace and the Berlin Congress from the previous textbooks, it changed the

<sup>50</sup> Rösen Jörn, *Za istoricheskata kultura i startegijete na narativnoto smisloobrazuvane*, Interview, Balkanistic Forum, 1-2-3/1998, 20-30.

emphasis in the chain of events by bringing to the fore the Russian incapability to defend the San Stefano boundaries (Bakalov et al. 1993: 468); in addition, the event „Berlin Congress” was marked with some positive color as the beginning of Bulgarian state- and political modernization<sup>51</sup>.

At the same time this discourse continued to shift the aspects of the „guilt of Europe”: the Berlin deal was blamed now for the ”territorial spoil” („a significant role was played by the considerable delay in the development of bourgeois-capitalist relations in Bulgaria in comparison with the countries in Western Europe: This influenced the dynamic of the process and its forms, as well as the speed of the changes in the social structure and the political suprastructure of Bulgarian Renaissance society”,<sup>52</sup> but also for „limiting actual Bulgarian independence”<sup>53</sup> However, the traditional negative European image was filtered at those event points, articulating the history of the institutional state-political construction - they built the image of Europe as a „civilization model”, capable of providing (through modernization and therefore progress) the emancipation of Bulgarian society „then and now”.

While the discourses dominating the post-communist textbooks discredited the role of Russia as a „key figure” in Bulgarian national destiny by their modernization rhetoric, they did not succeed to establish their own new measure for the „external political other”. The value normative scale through which the images were filtered and Europe and the „European” were perceived, was still based on the attitude of the „other” to „Bulgarian historical progress”, understood in the categories of the national ethnic union as a pre-condition for modernization. The idea which dominated explicitly and implicitly the textbook content was still expressed by the figures of „traumatic national destiny” and the unrealized telos of Bulgarian history - „the ethnic unification of the Bulgarians” guaranteeing their happiness and advance”. The figure evoked by the narratives produced the negative images of „Europe and the European” and thus intensified the crisis rather than solved the problems.

The rewriting of that textbook outlined one of the basic flaws in the construction of the official pedagogic discourse of the transition (1990-2000). The textbook was composed by academics. Each of them wrote on the period s/he specializes in. Therefore it was impossible to achieve a terminological and paradigmatic unity between the different narratives forming the textbook content. In addition, there was a potential possibility for implicit conflicts between interpretation schemes charging national history with different values and essence. The different schemes articulated narratives

<sup>51</sup> „An objective assessment of the historical processes needs to admit there were some positive sides to the treaty signed in Berlin. It regulated the new retreat of the Ottoman empire to the European southeast; the impediments to the building of the bourgeois state-political system were abolished in considerable territories; officially it recognized the independence of three states - Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro; it created a possibility for the reconstruction of the Bulgarian state tradition although in the conditions of a strongly curtailed territory and a limited autonomy” (Bakalov et al. 1993, 349).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 349

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 349.

that formed and presented the national identity in different configurations and different degrees of layer integration: regional (Macedonia, Trace, Dobrudga), national (ethnic, civic), supranational (Balkan, (East) European...). Exactly here the basic weakness of „our own historiography” - the not occurred theoretical debate, which had to clear „the work of the narrative sense-making”,<sup>54</sup> is displayed; the mechanisms, described by Freud as pushing away and suppressing, constructing the instructive layers of the collective non-conscious, are likely to have worked here. Once removed and suppressed on the explicit level, the Marxist schemes about the social-economic formations and the figures of anti-European pathos and ethnic nationalism returned in the textbook content on the implicit level. This resistance, which was initially removed, the avoidance of normative pressure (imposed by the implicit educational programme), the returning and filtering of the collective unconscious in the implicit content of some narratives, are repeated in the textbooks in history that entered the Bulgarian school in 1996 and having remained till now (May 2000).

*The long standing figures of identity: „Bulgarian desires and wishes” versus „European egoism”*

In 1996 the Ministry of Education approved three textbooks, which are based on the 1992 programme; they are still in use. All three of them follow the norm of history syllabi in structuring the content and in the overall way in which they present the chain of historical events making explicit the European character of Bulgarian history. But none of the textbooks manage to preserve the internal unity of the narratives aiming at postulating the European identity of the Bulgarian past; they fail to avoid the shift of the connotation levels towards emphasizing the specific „Bulgarian historical destiny”. This specificity is presented as a result of the mixture of European, Mediterranean and Near-Eastern traditions, religions, cultures and civilizations; a synthesis, predetermined by the central geographic position of the Bulgarian lands in the Balkans, transforming the historical Bulgarian space into a link between Europe and the East.<sup>55</sup> On one hand, such crossroads geography connects this space to Europe, while on the other hand it predetermines that the „outside space imposed a different way of Bulgarian evolution in comparison to the other European countries”.<sup>56</sup>

All the three textbooks fit into a common frame of composition, which includes the basic didactic discourses: author’s text, documentary sources, pictures illustrating events. The first one is expected to articulate the consensus knowledge achieved by official Bulgarian historiography that constructed the Bulgarian past in the respective

<sup>54</sup> Sabeva Svetlana, *Kontekstite v razkazite (kīm narativnoto konstruirane na sotsialnite obekti*, Balkanistic Forum, 1-2-3/1999, 46-55.

<sup>55</sup> Delev et al. 1996; Guzelev et al. 1996; Fol et al. 1996.

<sup>56</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 5.

time ( the Ottoman period, the Renaissance, the Modern and Contemporary periods). The second one, by unfolding the archives, manifests the documentary basis of the main narrative, it is supposed to create the perception of objectivity and scientism, thus legitimizing the corresponding narrative with the virtues of positive and indisputable knowledge. The third one deals with the function of visualizing the main ideas; the pictorial image should coincide with perceptions and figures created by the main discourse narrative. How are these expectations realized in practice by the relevant textbooks?

All these narratives reproduce the position of the 1993 textbook which emphasizes the assessment of the structure-building elements of Bulgarian national consciousness (the Bulgarian state system, religion, language, literature...) in its status of a guarantee for the survival of the „Bulgarian ethnos” under foreign political and religious domination.<sup>57</sup> That evaluation preserves the values of the „Bulgarian ethnic sign” and outlines its territorial space as: „...lands inhabited by Bulgarians remain outside their natural political center - the Bulgarian state... According to approximate data in the X-XV c. the Bulgarian nationality occupied territories of 200 000 square kilometers on the Balkans”.<sup>58</sup> This evaluation gives a negative identity to the „adoption of a model imposed from outside”, represented as „unfit and impairing the natural ways of our development”.<sup>59</sup> „...our historic destiny is a permanent struggle between the beginnings inherent to our national spirit and the strengthening Byzantism ... the Bulgarians had taken from the Empire what constituted its superiority over the rest of the world...but on Bulgarian soil it proved useless... The borrowing of foreign models deprived the Bulgarians of the chance to build their own national identity”.<sup>60</sup> This evaluation constructs the Bulgarian ethnic identity by pushing out and opposing western rationalism: „the West bet on inner discipline, on the individual, and on society. Because of this our life always lacks realism when establishing goals and the exact difference between the desired and the unattainable... and the feeling of „historic measure” remains foreign to the Bulgarian spirit”.<sup>61</sup>

Thus the different connotative layers slip over one another in the implicit content of the narratives, where the „collective unconscious”, controlled on the explicit level is unlocked and expounded by the figure: „the two worlds, which during the Middle Ages divided Europe between themselves, unfortunately still exist nowadays with exchanged roles. The West, which at the dawn of the Middle Ages was lagging behind, today has political power and spiritual strength... Its success started at the end of the Middle Ages”.<sup>62</sup> Figures that contained the traumas of „national identity” filter through

<sup>57</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 123-135; Fol et al. 1996, 136.

<sup>58</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 126.

<sup>59</sup> Fol et al. 1996, 138.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 138.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 137.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 138.

the problematic concepts and experience of the meetings of „the Bulgarian with the European”.

At the same time, the construction of different explicit and implicit levels of „the successful Bulgarian Middle Ages” (placed along the axis of progressive historic development and compatibility with European time) predetermined the change of the rhythm of historic time in the narratives articulating the period of the consequent Ottoman conquest. That change turned the Bulgarian past along the road to regress and decay, building the image of „unnatural historic development” - „a diversion from the European way of development”. That image is implied in the figure of „the assimilation and transformation of European development models” presented as a target for Bulgarian historic time and a measure of the „normal and natural”. According to that measure every diversion is represented by the figure of „the abnormal and unnatural”: „Bulgaria was the first European state to fall under Ottoman ruling... Its independent development was terminated, and its population was included in a formation, which was to go from the tribal phase to developed feudalism... As a result of that historic cataclysm its natural evolution was considerably delayed”.<sup>63</sup>

It is these connotation layers that the narratives of the three textbooks retain, thus they ascribe a negative identity to the „time of the Ottoman domination as a factor diverting, delaying and slowing down the progressive rhythm of Bulgarian historic time”. However, in a different way they manage to override the connotative layers of the narratives constructing the traumas of the national identity: „the exclusion of Bulgarians from European civilization space”. One of the textbooks<sup>64</sup> succeeds in rewriting the Ottoman period just like the textbook from 1993 had because the author is the same. The wider documentary and pictorial discourse pre-exposes the images of the thin laces of economic progress, educational efforts, and everyday life, inscribing the Bulgarians into „their natural European environment”; and part of the pictures outline the images of Bulgaria, preserved in the European memory: pictures of Bulgarian peasants, towns, documents, maps kept in European libraries and museums.

The other textbook<sup>65</sup> equates the narratives that preserve the negative identity of the Ottoman domination with those which display tendencies in the economic, socio-cultural everyday life of the Bulgarians, bringing them back to the „natural European civilization spaces”. The accent here still falls on the direction of the narratives which construct the tense relations between „the Christian and the Muslim civilization”; narratives which rather „elevate” the traumatic places of the national identity, without being able to explicate the connotation layers of the psychologically charged functions compensating positive memory of the „places” which include the streams of Bulgarian historic development in their „natural European environment”.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 146.

<sup>64</sup> Delev et al. 1996.

<sup>65</sup> Guzelev et al. 1996.

The third textbook<sup>66</sup> continues at the implicit level to articulate the images of „Ottoman political, economic, and social violence”, constructing the negative identity of the Bulgarian past (15-17c.). The pictorial discourse creates the notion of the Bulgarian lands as a „conflict zone between civilizations and religions”, keeping the narrative focused on the „official procedure” in the violent abductions of Christian children by Muslims; boys, brought up to be janissaries, collecting Blood tax; using Christian slave labour; punishment by hanging on a hook.<sup>67</sup> The negative identity is maintained with the „exclusion of Bulgarian from European historic time” through implying their non-simultaneity: the narrative about Bulgarian socio-cultural-political everyday life is comparable to events and phenomena of the European Renaissance and the liberal revolutions (these events measure the European time, represented in the rectangle, inserted in the author’s text). Here the positive identity of the period is stressed by the narratives which restore the economic development of the Bulgarians in the epoch of the Ottoman domination where the following „places” are constructed: „commerce, urban economy, markets...”. These include the Bulgarian economic space in that of Europe.<sup>68</sup>

At the same time, in these narratives the sliding of the connotation layers unlocks again the ideological unconscious, representing an ethnocentric consciousness in which the relations of „the group and the individual” with the „surrounding world” are conceived. Thus the relation with the „Turkish” is permanently identified in the image of the „perennial foreign-regressive-backward”: „the suppressed Christian people had got ahead of the ruling Muslim element economically and intellectually”.<sup>69</sup>

The narratives in the three textbooks continue to emphasize the role of the structures that had preserved the Bulgarian nationality (language, religion, family), to charge with positive identities the unofficial folk culture which was free from the restraint of the official norm, representing the figure of the „stimulating element that freed the creative energy of the people”.<sup>70</sup> They continue to explicate a wider frame that guaranteed the survival and emancipation of the „Bulgarian” from the Ottoman space - „the relations with Europe”: „...no matter how common and forcibly imposed on our people Muslim obscurantism was, it never managed to cut the Bulgarians’ umbilical cord - Europe remained their mother... because of this the transition to the Bulgarian Renaissance was performed somehow naturally, needless to say, it was prepared by a century-old desire, by the continuing accumulation of influences and positive knowledge, which made us in a specific way participants in the European historical process... Bulgarians were oppressed and robbed, but always informed... That was due to their permanent interest in what was going on in Europe”.<sup>71</sup> These fig-

<sup>66</sup> Fol et al. 1996.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 149-152.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 154-159.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>70</sup> Fol et al. 1996, 161; Delev et al. 1996, 186; Guzelev et al. 1996, 170-174; 187-188.

<sup>71</sup> Fol et al. 1996, 176.

ures, which spread the European influence onto the processes of Bulgarian historical development, are articulated in the two other textbooks through the terminology and discourse of „objective positive science”: „the visible cracks in the socio-cultural model imposed on the Balkan people during the 15c. were due to the influence of the perpetual penetration of West European civilization in production, commerce and everyday life...more and more new possibilities were discovered for the easy introduction of educational ideas, possibilities for education reform, for the birth of the national idea among the conquered peoples”.<sup>72</sup>

The textbook narratives that articulate the history of the Bulgarian Renaissance in these three textbooks present the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as „a natural way of development”, displaying European Enlightenment tendencies and seeking the emancipation of the „Bulgarian space” through the assimilation of the political models of European nation-states. These narratives succeed on the explicit level, in taking control over the terminology and determinism of the Marxist interpretation, to support the image of „delayed Bulgarian modernity” through the correlation with „European”; narratives which, in narrating the political history of the Bulgarian Renaissance, reduced again „the European” to political and economic European gestures towards Bulgarian socio-political emancipation, showing the figure of the Great powers with all the positive and negative identities that appear in previous textbook narratives.

The current textbooks also activate the narrative about the „national union in ethnically just boundaries”,<sup>73</sup> preserving the image of „European selfishness” expressed by the figure: „Europe was afraid of the creation of a big Balkan country”.<sup>74</sup> All the three textbooks clearly emphasize the dimensions of the „injustice” in the figure of Europe, which „severely cut” the „national flesh”.<sup>75</sup> The difference between the three alternative textbooks is in the correlation between narratives articulating the efforts for solving the national problem and narratives dealing with the political and social agenda of Bulgarians. One of the textbooks again stresses the myth of the „land”, meaning the ethnos, not the territory; Bulgarian lands being those inhabited by Bulgarian population: „...the classic Bulgarian lands are: Moesia, Thrace, Macedonia...inhabited by 4,4 million Bulgarians...”<sup>76</sup>

The history of the Bulgarian lands is placed center stage („liberating” and „uniting the lands taken from Bulgaria”; those who take lands from Bulgaria are either the Great Powers or the neighbors with the „blessing” of the Great Powers).<sup>77</sup> The authors of other textbooks attempt to moderate this, „guilt” by contemplating on „misguided Bulgarian diplomacy”, the „impatient Bulgarian character”, „the geopolitical situation of Bulgaria as a center of the Balkans, which makes it dependent on its neighbors” - all

<sup>72</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 199; Guzelev et al. 1996, 190-194.

<sup>73</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 272-274; Guzelev et al. 1996, 266-268; Fol et al. 1996, 252-253.

<sup>74</sup> Guzelev et al. 1996, 275.

<sup>75</sup> Fol et al. 1996, 252.

<sup>76</sup> Guzelev et al. 1996, 342.

<sup>77</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 379; 382.

regarded as reasons for the ultimate failure after the military successes in the course of the unifying wars.<sup>78</sup>

On the other hand, these authors emancipate everyday life discourse from political discourse (focused on the tension with „the external political other” and articulated by the value normative scale „fair/unfair”). Thus, they approach the idea of „Bulgaria trying to catch up”. It is an idea expressed by the figure of the „unsuccessful Bulgarian modernization”, belated because of „European political-economic egocentrism”. The history of everyday life discharges the image of „culture-civilization-Europe” from the value normative tension.<sup>79</sup> The sum of these narratives destroys the European - the simplistic „black and white” image of Europe introduced by the transitional textbook of 1993: „extremely negative” and „extremely/relatively positive”, in order to emancipate the Bulgarian history from the „terrorizing effect” of the „authority Europe”. But the „narrative points”, which are supposed to perform the emancipation from the paternalistic complex of Europe, in practice strengthen the negative features of the image, for they fail to introduce the distant impartial perspective on the „other”. This image is feasible only when „otherness” is outlined through its own measure and historical logic. Although the new textbooks published between 1996 and 2000 are devised to implement the goals of the history programme of the Ministry of Education<sup>80</sup> they succeed in keeping the European identity of Bulgarian history only at the implicit level. They continue to reproduce the negative connotations in the European image and the tense relations between the Bulgarian and the European at the explicit level. The narratives articulated here retain the traumas of the national identity: „the inability to reach Europe”.

Moreover: this interpreting scheme, taking the function to display the European identity of the Bulgarian past in the „Ottoman clamp” here gets into the net of its own implicit logic; the latter allows the history of the „Ottoman clamp” to be reconstructed through the everyday life and social as a pledge for the providing of the historic resources of tolerance, bearing the today’s date, as well as to preserve the „places” of the official historic memory, excluding the „Bulgarian from the European”; because here the politic is always displayed in the basic identity perception: „the Ottoman conquest stops the natural way of development of the Bulgarians”; thus the places of memory are constructed, articulating historic narratives, which would be used in the corresponding politic publicity for unlocking the negative perception for the „Ottoman clamp” of the Bulgarian past as well as of the latent negative image of the „European”; perceptions and images, put into the figure: „Bulgarian uniqueness, undeveloped and stopped by the Ottoman conquest”; a figure, implicitly keeping „the guilt of the Catholic West”.

The silhouette of the contemporary epoch (1944-1995) was, respectively, displayed and outlined in: 1) the narratives about economic processes, developed in the

<sup>78</sup> Guzelev et al. 1996, Fol et al. 1996.

<sup>79</sup> Guzelev et al. 1996, 335-341; Fol et al. 1996, 376-380.

<sup>80</sup> *Ukazanie...* 1992-2000.

figure of „social industrialization - trying to overcome the weakness of unsuccessful bourgeois modernity” 2) the history of the political period of „the mistakes of Stalin’s cult”, the „non-democratic rule of Zhivkov’s regime”, and the „difficult transition to political democracy and market economy, and the slow path to joining European structures”; 3) the time of cultural change - a result of the contradictory tendencies of the intelligentsia meeting with the norms of the dominant ideology, dissident actions and modest gestures of intelligentsia opposition.<sup>81</sup> In those narratives the implicit content displayed the economic and political determinism of the Marxist historical materialist interpretation scheme, on one hand, and on the other hand, they maintained the images of the world only through the tendencies of its ideological, political and economic opposition (capitalism versus socialism; NATO versus the Warsaw Pact; the European market vs. the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA); Western Europe versus Eastern Europe); an opposition which continued to be considered and conceptualized as predetermined in the geopolitical sense.

Through these narratives the image of „Bulgaria as a victim of outside interests and foreign geopolitical strategies,, was filtered, and the figure of the „people and the state” as an „object of extra-political action” was outlined. These images and figures carried the implicit suggestions of „doom” narrowing the role of the „subject - Bulgarian” to „an obedient performer of the Great Powers’ will”; role functions which always put Bulgaria in „a position to catch up with” and presupposed the inability to „search for our own way of development”; postulated possibilities and predetermined impossibilities which constructed the reasons for the Bulgarian crises. „At the end of the XXc. Bulgaria again was at a cross-road, again seeking the shortest way to becoming equal to the leading countries in Europe and the world, again facing the challenges of innumerable inner and outer political, economic and social problems”.<sup>82</sup> Thus ended the preface to Bulgarian history for the 11<sup>th</sup> class, the textbook most preferred by Bulgarian students and teachers.

### *Conclusion: The Defeat of The Norms...?*

Despite the attempts to overcome the frames of the „stereotyped past”, told in the context of linear time of progress, and to introduce the time of social history and the economic conjecture, the textbooks preserve the previous dominant value normative scheme which organizes their content. Hence the long standing views on Europe are preserved (its egoism and its lack of understanding of the „Bulgarian desires and wishes”), articulated by the textbook narratives at the explicit and implicit level. Moreover, the 1996 - 2000 textbooks offer no view on the alternatives of the past, or multiple possibilities of historical time which could create the narrative’s determinist

<sup>81</sup> Delev et al. 1996; Fol et al. 1996; Guzelev et al. 1996.

<sup>82</sup> Delev et al. 1996, 8.

chain. Hence the same historical narratives that articulate the evaluation of Europe construct the image of Bulgaria as a „victim of its geography and the Great Powers' egoism”.

The textbook of the transition in Bulgarian history for the 11<sup>th</sup> class failed to accomplish the psychoanalyzing functions with which it was charged: to create a compensatory positive memory that could soften the „traumatic common places of the common official historic memory” and to provide the communicative channels for positive construction of historic memories and experiences. These were expected to make possible the painless inclusion of Bulgarians into the spaces seen and conceptualized as „other-foreign and excluding them”, i.e. the spaces of (Western) Europe. The textbook failed to solve the problem with the historical resources needed to overcome the crisis of the national identity; in the structure of its educational content this crisis was rather explicated. The possible reason was, first, that the textbook had several authors, they were academics and scholars who belonged to different generations and historiographic schools, had different paradigmatic and theoretical orientations and different terminologies; and second - because the textbook programme of the Ministry of Education was authored by civil servants, recent graduates from the department of history of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, who openly defended the positions of the new political élites and refused to identify themselves with the official positivist scholarly discourse (of their own University lecturers and textbook authors) that basically developed in the schemes of the traditional political history of events, or with the structuralist approach of neomarxism to social and everyday life. Hence, in the first place some paradigmatic terminological tensions can be felt between the different narratives articulating the history of the respective period in one and the same textbook; and, in the second place, inner tensions appear between the connotative layers of the narratives written by one and the same author, where the collective unconscious is unlocked and the return and unfolding into the implicit content of the text of the figures of what has been repressed by the symbolic pressure of the official norm is allowed.

These tensions reflect the identity crisis of the respective author which results from the conflict between the interpreting scheme of the implicit educational programme and that of the historical discourse with which the respective author identifies himself (i.e. the discourse persuading „the authors and their audience of the permanence and stability in the temporal change of their world and of themselves”).<sup>83</sup>

The new textbook reflects the weak points of the Bulgarian historiographic situation in the conditions of transition: the raise of the iron curtain in the historiography did not open a Bulgarian debate in respect to the assimilation of the historic science, the theoretic orientations and the scientific achievements of the West-European researches in order the instructive levels of the new conceptual apparatus to be cleared and a consensus on its put in scientific circulation to be reached; then the Bulgarian his-

<sup>83</sup> Rûsen, 1993, 5.

toriography often assimilates rather mechanically theoretical models and stops on the terminologic development of the European historiography from the 60-70's: the structuralism, the theories about the politic modernization... Thus, in practice, is marginalized the debate, producing „the form, in which the historic science reflects its reasons”, and legitimizing the forms of the open historic narration, in which „the histories are told in way that the addressee have the chance to agree or not to agree with them”.<sup>84</sup>

In practice, the strategy of the „successful textbook” supposes an effort for legitimizing before the school institution the significance of the inter-discipline approach in the historic education in the time of virtual worlds, of the new levels of socialization and the switching identity (i.e. the changing status of memory and newly created levels in the relationships memory-identity); this strategy demands the idea of the utilitarian status of history as a „science for orientation in time and space” in the conditions of the getting thinner and thinner boundaries between the social sciences to be kept. For this, setting a historic perspective to one of the biggest problems of the present day - otherness, the new textbooks (1996-2000) should seek for the sensibilization of the pupils towards the cultural function of the historic knowledge in the social life. For this, showing the long and not always rectilinear way of social regulation and the state institutionalization of the relationships „we-not-we” they should try to give the historic context to the images and figures, through which the otherness (social, religious, cultural, political, economic...) is thought. Thus they could awake in pupils the sensibility towards the historic change, which relatives every privileged position of uniqueness in respect to the geographically and historically other. Or the history textbook should make pupils think about the Kant's idea: „the passion for presenting yourself or your own case as a exception is the basic human weakness, from which all the other begin”. The textbook is expected to make the pupils sensible towards the discovery of other social horizons and future perspectives of the relationships: we-not-we exactly through this inter-discipline approach to our own past, displaying the nets of norms and values, which connect and distinguish the different generations in order the world to become the young people live in more transparent, understandable and hence more comfortable.

This situation of rewriting the sum of the narratives that formed the educational structure of the history textbook occurred at the time when „Europe - the new geopolitical vision” was perceived as a perpetual external political orientation by both the new and the previous political élites who participated in the power debate; or this situation refers to the time when in the actual political space European values like Parliament and democracy, market economy and civic society, are regarded as a legitimizing resource of changing the power élites; it took place at the time when the restoration of the positive memory of the European identity in the Bulgarian historic past was appointed a target of the implicit textbook programme of the Ministry of Education.

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<sup>84</sup> Rüsen, 1998.

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