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PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS IN THE RE- PUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*

1. Introduction

In our presentation we shall focus on the way the contents pertaining to the Ottoman-Turkish period were presented in the history textbooks used in secondary gymnasium schools, especially in the language and social sciences department, as part of the curriculum before the independence of the Republic of Macedonia as well as in the period after the proclamation of its independence until today. This choice was made in view of the fact that the material contained in the history textbooks used in the curriculum for these departments was the most voluminous, which was in accordance with the syllabus, and realised through the appropriate teaching aids.¹ Six history textbooks were taken into consideration, i.e. the

*We would like to thank Ms. Marina Gjorgijovska for tackling all the language sensitive translations.

¹ The focus of our interest are the following textbooks: Илија Кузманоски, Димитар Мицкоски, *Историја за III клас гимназија*, општествено-јазична насока (Скопје: Издавачко претпријатие „Просветно дело“, 1970); д-р Владо Картов, Илија Кузманоски, Димитар Мицкоски, Дамјан Лепчески, *Историја за III клас на гимназиите*, општа насока (Скопје: Издавачко претпријатие „Просветно дело“, 1977); Димитар Мицкоски, Трпко Панговски, Милка Тодоровска, *Историја*, III клас, просветна струка (Скопје: „Просветно дело“, 1986); Александар Трајановски, *Историја за III клас гимназија* (општа и јазична) (Скопје: „Просветно дело“, 1993); Милан Бошковски, Силвана Сидоровска-Чуповска, Јордан Илиоски, *Историја за II година гимназија* (Скопје: Институт за

textbooks from 1970, 1977, 1986, 1993, 2002, and from 2006. We shall also focus on the linguistic means used in these textbooks that belong to the so called scientific-textbook substyle of the scientific style. At the same time, we take into account the fact that this substyle has to be in compliance with the strict requirements of the syllabuses, that is to say with the aims and tasks of the particular degree in the educational process. The textbooks and the teaching aids need to be adapted to suit the students' age, as well as the level of knowledge they had already acquired, since with this substyle the expert addresses non-experts who are supposed to gain certain knowledge in that particular field. It means that within this substyle every term first needs to be defined and explained, and the facts presented in a gradual and comprehensible manner.²

2. General review

It is generally accepted that the textbooks compiled up until the independence of the Republic of Macedonia were rather voluminous (there were 317 pages to the 1970 textbook,³ and 222 pages to the 1977 textbook⁴). However, the history of the Macedonian people was addressed in the context of the history of the peoples of Yugoslavia, which means that there were no separate units dedicated solely to Macedonian history. Considering the period we shall focus on – the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 20th century – the dominating topics shall be those on the feudal social system, the European bourgeois revolutions and the creation of revolutionary movements and labour parties in the larger European countries, as well as on the uprisings of the nations on the Balkans, with a distinct overview on the ones of the peoples of Yugoslavia, etc., containing the terminology corresponding to the period in which they were created, which was, of course, in the spirit of the Marx-

национална историја, 2002); Коста Ациевски, Виолета Ачковска, Ванчо Ѓорѓиев, *Историја* за II година реформирано гимназиско образование (Скопје: „Табернакул“, 2002); Маријан Димитријевски, Живко Степаноски, *Историја* за II година реформирано гимназиско образование (Скопје: „Македонска искра“, 2002); Милан Бошковски, Силвана Сидоровска-Чуповска, Јордан Илиоски, Наташа Котлар-Трајкова, *Историја* за II година гимназија (Скопје: „Просветно дело“, 2006).

² Лилјана Минова-Ѓуркова, *Стилистика на современиот македонски јазик* (Скопје: Магор, 2003), 319.

³ It covers the period from the 17th century to World War I.

⁴ This textbook covers the period from 19th century to World War I.

ist philosophy and socialist ideology. The ethnic and religious affiliations, however, were not always in the foreground; the socio-economic aspect was also underlined. Within that framework, the Ottoman feudal system was presented as rather retrograde and inhumane, and the representatives of the ruling class were always presented in a negative connotation. As regards the linguistic expression, one could not escape the impression that the descriptions were somewhat essayistic, even using expressive linguistic means characteristic for the artistic-literary style and not for the scientific-textbook style, that is to say the scientific style in its broader sense, the basic function of which is not only to convey logical information but also to prove its veracity. Its objective is to activate the logical thinking with the recipient of the text, which is why the language of these types of texts is characterised with being logical and with the presence of evidence.⁵ Indeed, when it comes to the science of history, one should bear in mind that subjective and emotional elements could be found in such texts because historians use two methods of generalising – the logical method and the vivid descriptions⁶.

As for the terminology, these textbooks are dominated by the terms *Turkish Empire*, *Turkish state*, or simply *Turkey*, and accordingly – *Turkish army*, *Turkish (state) authorities*, *Turkish markets*, etc., but also (*harsh*) *Turkish slavery*.

As regards the textbooks used in the 80s and the 90s of the previous century, one could say that they represented a bridge between the old and the new methodology and syllabus. Thus, the textbooks from 1986 and 1993 were a lot less voluminous, and not only in the number of pages, but also due to the fact that the latest textbooks at the time were abundant in illustrations, genuine pictures, drawings, maps, etc., and accompanied by contents the function of which was to draw and keep the attention of the student. The textbook from 1993 had 167 pages and was informally divided into two parts.⁷ Generally speaking, the contents of this textbook was historically correct, filled with numerous data and information, though often irrelevant, about the processes and events. Although there was a tendency to avoid using stereotypes in describing and presenting the essential facts, the use of the same terminology present in

⁵ Минова-Ѓуркова, *Стилистика*, 318.

⁶ Минова-Ѓуркова, *Стилистика*, 221.

⁷ The first part of this textbook refers to the general and regional history from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the World War I, and the second part, which represents half of the total contents, is dedicated to the history of the Macedonian people and to Macedonia in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

the earlier textbooks could still be noticed. In that respect, the usual dreariness and the classification of facts and concepts by name were still present, which is why this textbook was also insufficiently comprehensible. From the aspect of terminology, there was hesitation regarding the use of the terms *Turks-Osmanlis*, *Turks*, *Osmanli (Turkish) state*, etc.

The textbooks in use since 2000 until today have been conceptualised on the basis of the new syllabus for the school subject history, which was last revised in 2005. In accordance with this syllabus, one can notice greater consistency and a higher degree of scientific treatment as regards the terminology used in the new teaching aids. On the other hand, as regards the subject which is in our focus, the provisions from several bilateral agreements between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Turkey have been applied, particularly those from the Protocol on Cooperation in the Area of Education of 1995, where Article 5 states:

“Both parties shall encourage the work of the respective scientific and expert institutions in objectifying the contents of school subjects in the area of social sciences.

Both parties shall encourage the cooperation and exchange of experiences in working on the comparative analysis of textbooks in the native language (Macedonian, i.e. Turkish language), history and geography.”⁸

Hence, the new textbooks contain more units on Macedonian history, and are characterised by being concise, historically correct, comprehensive, and at the same time the expressiveness is appropriately dosed, depending on the particular subject. Certain remnants and stereotypical descriptions of some events and people, which will be addressed further down the article, appear only as exceptions to the rule.

As regards the dilemma in using the terms *Ottoman Empire*, *Turkey*, etc., we shall make a few short comments. For example, throughout the Middle Ages the state itself was referred to as *devlet-i aliye osmaniyye*, meaning ‘sublime Osmanic state’. As is well known, this term comes from the founder of the dynasty, the first Sultan Osman, after whom not only the state but the whole of the dynasty as well was named as *Osmanic*, *Osmanli* or *Ottoman*. Hence, this term stayed in use throughout the whole period of the rule of this dynasty (from 1299 to 1923).⁹ In

⁸ *Службен весник на Република Македонија*, бр. 27/1995, VII.

⁹ Александар Матковски, „Османска, Османлиска, Отоманска или Турска Империја“, in *Гласник*, год. XXVI/1 (Институт за национална историја, 1982), 57.

view of the fact that this term did not have an ethnic indication as did the term *Turk*, which existed even before the establishment of the state, the earlier Macedonian historiography preferred and recommended the use of the term *Turkish Empire* (*Turkish state, the state of the Turks*). Besides the above mentioned, it was following the examples of similar usage in both the Western and the Russian historiography.¹⁰ That is why we can find this term used in the few compilation publications of the history of the Macedonian people.¹¹

In the more recent historiography, however, in order to make the distinction regarding the modern Turkish state, the use of the term Ottoman Empire was accepted, i.e. that period was called *Osmanic-Turkish* or rather – *Osmanic*. Hence, it was also accepted in the history textbooks that were in use in particular over the last decade in the Republic of Macedonia. However, terms containing the word *Turkish* vs the word *Osmanli* were still used side by side in certain editions.¹²

3. Comparative analysis

Further on, we shall focus on the more characteristic examples which we shall use to illustrate the presenting of the Osmanli Empire as well as the activities and the position of its representatives as regards the Macedonian people and, oftentimes, the non-Macedonian population sharing the same unfavourable standing. The history textbook from 1970 did not contain a single unit dedicated solely to the history of Macedonia. The one unit, which had only about 20 pages, was named *Social-Economic, Political, and Cultural Circumstances in Macedonia in the First Half of the 19th Century*,¹³ but the lessons on Illyrian movement in Croatia and the Slovenian revival movement were also moved there. The opening lesson of this issue, under the subheading “Stagnation in Agriculture”, contained the following text: “Macedonian peasants also suffered the constant plundering and terror committed by various krdzaliski gangs, made up of war deserters, janissaries and fallen Christians. The oppo-

¹⁰ Матковски, „Османска, Османлиска“, 58-59.

¹¹ *Историја на македонскиот народ*. Книга втора, Михајло Апостолски (ред.) (Скопје: Институт за национална историја, 1969); *Историја на македонскиот народ*. Том втори. *Македонија под турска власт (од XIV до крајот на XVIII век*, Александар Стојановски (ред.) (Скопје: Институт за национална историја, 1998).

¹² For example, see: Димитријевски, Степаноски, *Историја*.

¹³ Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 79-83.

nents of the imperial and local authorities, pashas, ayans¹⁴, and ka-jmakams¹⁵ would often join them in order to plunder the peasants and to gain personal wealth.” As an illustration for that, the example of Ali-Pasha Janinski and his fight against the feudalists from the Debar region was presented. The paragraph ended in the following sentence: “Such gangs that burned down and plundered everything could be found throughout Macedonia.”¹⁶

The next paragraph talked about the struggle of the central authorities ‘to defend from and persecute the bandits’ for the purpose of which, besides the regular army, Macedonian Christians were also engaged. In that respect, the following was stated: “Thus, the Macedonian protector Kuzman Kapidan, the kerserdar¹⁷ leader of the Turks and Macedonians, became famous for defending Ohrid and its surrounding area from the bandits from the Debar area.”¹⁸ A visible expressiveness in the expression could also be seen in the next subheading “Increase and Ethnic Changes within Cities”, which began with the following sentence: “The constant robbing, taking the land from the frightened peasants, the outrages and injustices they suffered, made the Macedonian peasants move to the cities where the safety of life was relatively greater.”¹⁹

As for the presenting of the economic environment and the reforms in Turkey, it is a general impression that the stress was put mostly on the social moment, that is to say on presenting the peasantry as a submitted class deprived of its rights. That is why these lessons also talked about the non-Macedonian population: “The period of 15 years, the time determined for serving in the army, ripped the Turkish peasants from their families and economy for a long time.”²⁰

Besides the above mentioned examples, one could find other places where there were syntagmas that were potentially perplexing, to say the least, for the students. Thus, in the part on continuing the reforms made by the central authorities and on the Gyulhan Hatisherif²¹ of 1839, it was

¹⁴ Head of district.

¹⁵ Governor of kaaza.

¹⁶ Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 81.

¹⁷ A military rank in the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁸ Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 81.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

²¹ Sultan's edict.

said: “The carrying out of the new reforms caused resistance again with the fanaticised Turks, Muslim feudalists and other reactionary circles.”²²

The other part dedicated to Macedonian history was within the unit *Peoples of Yugoslavia from the mid-19th century to World War I*²³ where two out of seven subheadings were dedicated to Macedonia. It was usual for the events to be presented in the form of gradation. Thus, there was extensive talk about the new taxes imposed on different classes of the population during the 70s, which is depicted in the following paragraph containing, again, somewhat unusual formulations: “This harsh position of the population in the villages and the cities was also joined by natural disasters, a large scale pestilence and barren years (1874–1875). Also, there was an increase in the plundering, robbing and thieving gangs, operating mostly in the Debar and Bitola sanjaks. All of that was also added to by the said settling of the Crimean Tatars and the Cherkess and the taking of land from the Macedonian peasants.”²⁴ Then follows a generalisation: “As an expression of dissatisfaction, and in order to protect the people from the Turkish outrages, the more daring people went into the mountains and became hajduks.”²⁵ Almost the same formulations are found in the 1977 history textbook as well.²⁶

The greatest expressiveness can be found in the parts where national uprisings were described, that is to say their consequences. Thus, we note the following: “The measures taken by the Turkish authorities became more and more energetic and harsh. The strengthened Turkish army, accompanied by bashi-bazouk,²⁷ left desolation all around. A large number of villagers and citizens were imprisoned, subjected to torture and convicted. Father Stojan himself, in order not to fall into the hands of the Turks, committed suicide. The frightened villagers who managed to save themselves ran into the mountains. The village Razlovci was burned to the ground. Berovski’s company was ambushed and broken, and he was gravely wounded,”²⁸ etc. The conclusion was that the “Razlovci Uprising ended in failure” (History 1970: 218), while the textbook from 1977 said that “this uprising was suppressed” (History 1977: 120). The principle of gradation was present there as well, in that

²² Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 85.

²³ *Ibid.*, 206.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁵ *Ibidem.*

²⁶ Картов и др., *Историја*, 118.

²⁷ Irregular army.

²⁸ Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 218.

the first sentences introduced the dramatic events which were later on listed and specified. We point out the formulation ‘in order not to fall into the hands of the Turks’, which could be found in publications as well as in the artistic literature (instead of *the Turks*, as regards certain later periods, *the Bulgarian/German invader* etc., were used) which did not explicitly point to or name anything, but rather hinted at things (compare the previous sentence, the meaning of which is – so as not to be subjected to torture and convicted).

But because of the inept formulations, in some places even the insurgents, actually, were not presented positively, even though it was the intention of the authors to depict their heroism. In that respect, explaining why the insurgents in the Razlovci Uprising had to start the uprising earlier than planned and describing how it all had begun, the authors wrote the following: “The insurgents first set about capturing and killing the Turkish clerks and burning Sipahi defters²⁹ and Kodzobashi³⁰ tally books, in which the debts of the villagers were kept.”³¹ This formulation was avoided in the 1977 textbook.³²

Here we also refer to the depiction of the Negush Uprising of 1822. In the part “Suppressing the Uprising”³³ the following was written: “The City of Negush was plundered, and then burned down. In this city, 1,300 people were slaughtered. For five days the Turkish asker³⁴ and bashi-bazouk... robbed, slaughtered and dishonoured. Hundreds of women and girls were sold for large amounts of money on the markets in Salonica. 120 villages were levelled to the ground and burned down, but first they were robbed. The villages Drzilovo, Bela Voda, Golichani and others, were never again rebuilt. The number of killed and captured was over 5,000 people. (...) The leaders’ families, that is to say the heads of the uprising, namely Zaphyrakis, Karatasho and Gatzo, were executed by the Turks.”³⁵ It should be pointed out that this part of the text was actually half of the total contents of that thematic unit, which means that half of it was dedicated to explicit descriptions of the actions and measures taken in order to suppress the uprising.

²⁹ A cadastral tax census carried out by the Ottoman Empire.

³⁰ Village elder.

³¹ Кузманоски, Мицкоски, *Историја*, 218.

³² Картов и др., *Историја*, 199.

³³ Мицкоски и др., *Историја*, 129.

³⁴ Арму.

³⁵ Мицкоски и др., *Историја*, 131.

The feudal system of the Empire and its representatives were addressed in the contents of the thematic unit with the heading *Macedonia at the Beginning of the 19th Century*, bearing the subheading “Social-Economic Changes in Macedonia”.³⁶ It contained the following: “The well known Turkish feudal Timarli Sipahis system was introduced in Macedonia too. On their feudal estates, the Sipahis led a carefree, rich and luxurious life, without being involved in the agriculture, craftsmanship, trading, etc. The Sipahis left all that to the enslaved population – the reaya. So, the reaya worked the land acquired by means of a Sultan Deed (ownership) and the land of their immediate lord – the Sipahi. That way the reaya led a kind of serfs’ life without being able to leave the land given to them to work on it. The reaya ... was supposed to pay the basic Turkish taxes and charges, like the tenth (the ushur), the arach (a military tax) and other taxes, of which the tribute in blood was the hardest. The Turkish authorities took the underage healthy male children from the reaya by force, converted and trained them, turning them into the best and the bravest Turkish infantry, also known as janissaries.”³⁷

One of the most common stereotypes was the one involving the Karposh Uprising in 1689, especially the description of his martyrdom. In that respect, the explicit descriptions common for earlier textbooks were not avoided even in the textbook from 2002, for example: “Khan Selim Giray ordered that the rebels’ leader Karposh be subjected to torture under the Stone Bridge. He was first impaled, then his body was mutilated by Tartar spears, and in the end he was cut into pieces and thrown into the river Vardar.”³⁸

4. Conclusions

From the above mentioned examples one can draw several general conclusions, such as:

– In all of the textbooks taken into consideration, one cannot say there was any fact-finding incorrectness, only that there was presentation of aspects which were not in the function of encouraging the logical thinking with the students, and the character of which was not educational;

– In presenting the other, here embodied in the Osmanlis, the authorities, the regular and irregular army, from the aspect of ethnic and

³⁶ Трајановски, *Историја*, 82.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 83.

³⁸ Бошковски и др., *Историја*, 2002, 77.

religious difference, there are long, emotionally charged and often unnecessary descriptions the character of which was not cognitive and could potentially upset the students, as well as cause unpleasant feelings and unrealistic images with the students, considering their age;

– There was also the issue of how well the texts communicated the ideas, as one of the key characteristics of the scientific style in general, in that unknown and alien words were used and, very often, archaic lexis as well (historical terms). Hence, if the textbook was not communicating well, if the level of students' previous knowledge was not taken into consideration, as well as their age, if it was written uninterestingly with no desire to draw the reader's attention to certain parts, then the whole of the weight as regards the learning of the material would fall upon the teacher.³⁹

– If one takes into account that the vivid descriptions in historical texts is in the function of breaking up the rather monotonous presentation of data, and in view of the absence of other accompanying contents and the small number of illustrations and pictures, it is precisely this condition that was not met by the older textbooks, since the extracts mentioned show that, in spite of the said negativeness, these parts were also dominated by fact-finding. Contrary to them, the vivid descriptions of the new textbooks, particularly the most recent ones, is in the function of broadening the students' knowledge, and those short texts are quite wittily named as *For the Curious* or *Find out More*, *If You Want to Know More*, *Consider this*, *Analyze the text*, etc. Though formally characterised as texts that are not mandatory in acquiring the knowledge from the particular lesson, being conceptualised like that, they still easily draw the students' attention and interest.

In contrast, we now present examples from the most recent textbooks. Regarding the aforementioned Negush Uprising and its ending, in the textbook from 2002 the following is written: "The clash between the insurgents and the army lasted more than 20 days, until the end of April 1822, when the city was taken and the uprising suppressed. The consequences of the uprising were particularly harsh for the people of this area."⁴⁰ In the same textbook, within the text on Razlovci Uprising, the end of the uprising was presented as follows: "... the Osmanli army and bashi-bazouk entered the village Razlovci and cruelly retaliated against

³⁹ Минова-Ѓуркова, *Стилистика*, 320.

⁴⁰ Бошковски и др., *Историја*, 2002, 139.

the population.”⁴¹ The same event was described in a similar way in another textbook from 2002.⁴²

In the textbook from 2006, that same topic was explained in the following way: “In the course of a week, the uprising developed quite successfully. But, the Osmanli authorities took quick and decisive measures against the spreading of the uprising. On 28 May 1876 (old style) / 9 June (new style) the uprising was brutally suppressed.” The following was a text which talks about the consequences of the said uprising: “The consequences of the suppressed uprising were harsh for the people who dared rise in this area. Many people were put in the Osmanli prisons. Running from retaliation and the reaction of the Osmanli authorities, a large number of families from this area left their birthplaces and forever emigrated to the neighbouring Bulgaria.”⁴³

There are somewhat more distinct deviations in the third textbook from 2002 which was also a subject to this review.⁴⁴ Generally speaking, it distinguishes from the others in that it contains larger and, in some places, quite unnecessary factography, as well as in the language expressions used which are closer to those contained in the textbooks from the 80s and 90s period, though it follows the concept of technical organisation and appearance characteristic for all other textbooks from 2002. As an example, we shall cite the part presenting the end of the Ilinden Uprising (named as “Suppressing the Ilinden Uprising”): “On August 13, the Osmanic army and the bashi-bazouk took Krushevo. In so doing, hundreds of people were killed, the houses were plundered and burned down, many people were tortured, and 150 lasses and women were raped. Many villages in the Bitola vilayet met a similar fate. And so they paid dearly for their attempt to gain freedom.”⁴⁵

Finally, in order for one to get a better idea of how differently textbooks from the earlier and the more recent times were conceptualised, we enclose several pages. One can notice that the pages from the older textbooks were written more densely, with rare black-and-white, often unclear, pictures, while the newer textbooks provide the students with visual aids so they can easily acquire more permanent knowledge without being burdened, notably from an ideological point of view.

⁴¹ Ibid., 142.

⁴² Димитријевски, Степаноски, *Историја*, 112.

⁴³ Бошковски и др., *Историја*, 2006, 151.

⁴⁴ Ациевски и др., *Историја*, 2002.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 172.

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PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER IN HISTORY TEXT-
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This article focuses on analysing the way in which certain topics in history textbooks for high school education in Macedonian language are treated in the period following the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, with a comparative review from the previous period. The period of the Ottoman reign is taken into consideration. The tendency in newer textbooks is to describe the event in facts and accurately, but without the emphasised presence of expressive descriptions, words and expressions (*subjecting to pain/torture, impaling, gang of bandits, etc.*), which can cause negative emotions in pupils.