

EMPIRES AND PENINSULAS

Southeastern Europe between Carlowitz and the Peace of Adrianople, 1699–1829 (Society, War, Transition)

Faculty of History, Sofia University (Sofia)

Date: October 9-10, 2009.

Location: University of Sofia.

Deadline: May 15, 2009.

Participants are invited to present papers of about 20 minutes. The working languages of the Round Table are Bulgarian and English. The papers will be published in a separate volume. Applications should include an abstract of a maximum of 500 words, current post and contact address and be sent to one of the following email addresses: balkanroundtable@clio.uni-sofia.bg, vaniaracheva@abv.bg, mariabaramova@yahoo.com.

Applications in writing should be submitted to the following address: Round Table »Empires and Peninsulas«, University of Sofia Sv. Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of History, Boul. Tsar Osoboditel No. 15, 1504 Sofia, Bulgaria.

Homepage: <http://www.clio.uni-sofia.bg>.

The year 2009 marks the anniversary of two important historical events: it is 310 years since the Treaty of Carlowitz (1699) and 180 years since the Peace of Adrianople (1829). Both agreements frame an important transformative period in the history of Europe which includes the whole Continent as a geographical area. For Central and Western Europe this is the transition from the Ancien régime to a post-agrarian society, from Absolutism to the modern nation state. For the South East, for the Balkans, the 18th and the first third of the 19th centuries see the »emancipation of mentality«, a new mobility within the Ottoman Empire and a new concept of nationality. The period also witnesses the foundation of new (i.e. old pre-Ottoman) states in the Peninsula. For its part the Ottoman ruling elite thinks seriously about reforming the Empire, convinced that without such a »turn« the state will perish.

Between 1699 and 1829 Southeastern Europe was of great importance for European diplomacy. In this region Habsburg armies fought against the Sultan; it was here that the Eastern question emerged; and to some extent the Austrian War of Succession had its roots here. Russia had a traditional interest in the Balkans and the Black Sea region and waged several wars against the Ottomans, waving the flag of religion and ideology in the process. Russian political dominance in Europe after the Congress of Vienna (1815) had its origins in their control of the lands in the European South East. Moreover, it is well known that some of the conflicts during the Napoleonic Era led directly through the Balkans. Last but not least, in the »space between empires«, in the contact zones and buffer lands between Habsburgs, Ottomans and Romanovs, the new »Balkan elites« enriched their political experience by trying to use the so-called »external factor« to achieve some kind of sovereignty. At a later stage they adopted »European models« for reform of their society and state.

During these decades the »small« national societies in Southeastern Europe – amongst them the Bulgarians – are pushed forward by the »impact of transformation«. The changes that follow have their European roots, but also include a number of regionally specific features in the spheres of economy, culture and politics. This gives us an intriguing opportunity to trace some contemporary parallels.

The term »Common European History«, controversial though it may be, is without any doubt firmly linked to the past of the South East, not least due to the fact that in this region the power and influence of the great Continental Empires of Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Modern Era have always been present. The years between Carlowitz (1699) and Adrianople (1829) emphasize this assumption. The tying of the South East to modern European civilization becomes such a clear-cut tendency that the emergence of the new states in the Peninsula during the 19th century can only confirm the ongoing process of modernization.

The Faculty of History of the Sv. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia is pleased to invite you to take part in the Round Table *Empires and Peninsulas. Southeastern Europe between Carlowitz and the Peace of Adrianople, 1699–1829 (Society, War, Transition)*. Its aim is to stimulate research in and new approaches to specific and comparative topics within the history of Southeastern Europe. It is designed to attract scholars from different countries and different academic disciplines. We hope that the following sub-themes will arouse your scholarly interest:

1. Societies in Southeastern Europe – the Ottoman model, the Habsburg variant, »autonomous« and »peripheral« societies.
2. The Southeast in the policy-making of the European powers – economical and cultural penetration, wars, peace treaties, diplomacy.
3. Art of transition in Southeastern Europe – the transformation of Ottoman society; the modern nation in the South East – patterns of evolution; »modernization« as an economic, cultural and mental »re-orientation« in Southeastern Europe.